

# Atlanta: After the High Emotion, a Letdown

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ATLANTA—Emptiness filled this city today. The crowds are gone. The camera crews have rolled up their trailing wires and left. Those who stayed, because they live here, were left drained of emotion.

Mrs. Martin Luther King Jr. is back with her family in the comparative privacy of their home. As her husband waged his battle for human rights, she had remained mostly in the background. The past six days have transformed her into a public figure.

Yesterday, she shared the spotlight with another woman widowed by an assassination: Mrs. John F. Kennedy. Coretta King had asked Jacqueline Kennedy to come to Atlanta and yesterday morning, before the hours of ritual that were to follow, the former First Lady visited the King home.

It was the second visit by Mrs. Kennedy to the red-brick cottage in a neighborhood of modest homes in northwest Atlanta. She had stopped by briefly Monday night. Yesterday morning, she was among the last groups to arrive following Harry Belafonte; King's sister, Mrs. Coretta Scott King; King's parents; and King's



Atlanta King, 19, weeps as her father's coffin is lowered into grave. Associated Press Wirephoto

Neighbors strained to catch a glimpse of Mrs. Kennedy as she, bareheaded, dressed in black and wearing perhaps just a touch of makeup, approached the grilled railings and long steps of the small front porch.

Mrs. Kennedy, smiling gently and speaking softly, entered the house, signed a guest book and clasped hands with Mrs. King. The women walked together down a long hall, Mrs. Kennedy stopping occasionally to speak to relatives and to give her hand to the four King children.

She told Yolanda, the 12-year-old, "I'm mighty glad to be here."

The two women then went into a bedroom for a five-minute conversation in which Mrs. Kennedy whispered words of comfort.

A witness to the meeting said Mrs. Kennedy had also spoken to King's father. "There was such a powerful mood in the room," he said. "Everybody was quiet. She and Mrs. King are two very powerful people—very graceful people."

Mrs. King maintained a dry-eyed composure throughout the long march in which her husband's mule-drawn coffin was followed by some 150,000 mourners, first to the service at Ebenezer Baptist Church, where King was co-pastor with his father, then to the outdoor serv-

ices at Morehouse College, his alma mater.

But after his body had been taken from the cart and placed in a hearse, after the final rites at Southview Cemetery, as the gleaming African mahogany casket was being lowered into the crypt, that composure deserted her for a while.

She lowered her head and wept.

Martin Luther King Sr. had controlled his emotions, too, for most of the day. But as the gray-haired clergyman watched his son's casket go down, he placed his head on the marble crypt and sobbed. And the Rev. Ralph Abernathy, King's closest friend and heir apparent as leader of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, surrendered to tears.

Today holstered and uniformed policemen stood guard as mourners filed past King's tomb in the tiny slopeside graveyard founded more than 100 years ago by freed slaves who wanted a place to bury their own. There had been no threats to molest the grave, a police spokesman said. The guard was just a precaution.

There was tension in the city. Last night, some 200 Negro youths had tossed bottles at passing buses. But today most were limiting themselves to bitter speeches.