

# Jackie, After the Assassination

## 1963 Interview Unsealed

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BOSTON, May 26—A week after President Kennedy's assassination, Jacqueline Kennedy charted a future that she hoped would include privacy for herself and a rocket named after her husband.

"I'm not going to be the Widow Kennedy," she told journalist Theodore H. White in comments released today for the first time by the John F. Kennedy Library. "When this is over, I'm going to crawl into the deepest retirement there is."

Excerpts of the Nov. 29, 1963, interview were published previously in *Life* magazine and White's 1978 memoir, "In Search of History." Today the library released the full record of that interview—34 pages that include White's hand-written notes and revisions in Mrs. Kennedy's handwriting.

White donated the papers to the library in 1969 but said they could not be released until one year after the former first lady's death. Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis died of cancer on May 19, 1994, at age 64. White died in 1986.

Speaking of her 3-year-old son, Mrs. Kennedy said: "I want John-John to be a fine young man. He's so interested in planes; maybe he'll

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# Jackie's First Thoughts

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be an astronaut or just plain John Kennedy fixing planes on the ground."

She also recalled that her daughter, Caroline, "held my hand like a soldier. She's my helper; she's mine now."

John F. Kennedy Jr. is now a lawyer and publisher. Caroline is also a lawyer and co-wrote a book on the Bill of Rights; she's married and has three children.

[Reuter reported that the interview says Mrs. Kennedy's first thoughts after the president's death included where she would live. "That first night [former defense secretary] Bob McNamara had said he'd buy back our old house in George-

town," she said. "I wanted my old house back. But then I thought—how can I go back there to that bedroom? I said to myself, 'You must never forget Jack, but you mustn't be morbid.'"]

Mrs. Kennedy also said she wanted several things to memorialize her husband.

"I wanted that flame and I wanted Cape Kennedy. . . . All I wanted was his name on just that one booster, the one that would put us ahead of the Russians," she said, apparently referring to the rocket to the moon.

The eternal flame still burns at JFK's grave at Arlington National Cemetery.

And while Cape Canaveral was renamed for Kennedy on the very day

of White's interview with Mrs. Kennedy, the rocket that went to the moon was not. Cape Kennedy reverted to Cape Canaveral in 1973, although the NASA base there continues to be called the Kennedy Space Center.

White became close to the Kennedys when he chronicled the presidential campaign in his bestseller "The Making of the President, 1960."

The interview marked the first time "Camelot" was linked to the Kennedy administration in print. In the excerpt published decades ago in *Life*, Mrs. Kennedy recalled that her husband loved the recording of the musical "Camelot."

"The lines he loved to hear were: 'Don't let it be forgot, that once there was a spot, for one brief shining moment that was known as Camelot,' " she said.