

Kennedy Home for Last Time; Thousands Watch Procession

By BOB CONSIDINE

NEW YORK — Sen. Robert Kennedy was home today from his successful political invasion of California in quest of the Democratic nomination.

He returned by jet last last night from Los Angeles. Dead.

All that was mortal of this slain brother of a slain President was transported in a mahogany coffin from La Guardia Airport to St. Patrick's Cathedral in mid-town Manhattan, his incredibly reserved wife, Ethel, mother of his 10 children and come next January his 11th, rode in the front seat of the long gray hearse that moved the 42 year old assassin victim to the basilica.

There, with only the shaken family and friends present, the box was placed upon its catafalque.

VIEW CASKEE

Beginning at 5:30 this



In hearse approaching cathedral, Ted Kennedy's protective arm is about Ethel Kennedy

—AP Photo

morning, countless thousands of peoples of all political and religious shades began moving past it.

Archbishop Terence Cooke, named only the day before as a member of a commission to study the causes and cures of the dementia that resulted in the slaying of Senator Kennedy and many others, met the dead candidate at La Guardia, then later at the enormous bronze doors of the cathedral.

The archbishop will officiate at tomorrow's Requiem Mass, after which the body will be taken to Washington by train, borne past buildings in which he served his country, and then buried in Arlington National Cemetery near his brother.

But comparatively few

were thinking that far ahead when the big Boeing 707, sent by President Johnson, whistled to its parking place.

MIXED CROWD

Aboard was an assortment of funeral parlor "keeners" (professional Irish mourners), statesmen, writers, show biz people, explorers, artists and athletes, and the widows of John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King, and scads of family of course.

Here, too, were Gov. and Mrs. Nelson Rockefeller, Sen. and Mrs. Jack Javits, Mayor and Mrs. John Lindsay, Ambassador Arthur Goldberg (who saw eye to eye with Bobbie in his opposition to LBJ's Vietnam policies) and hosts of others.

Some of the people who

drove out to the airport had bumpers bearing such stickers as "We Love Bobbie."

The first person to reach St. Patrick's after the arrival of the huge funeral plane was Archbishop Cooke. He had to change from the modest garb which he wore at the airport, to a purple robe with gold braiding and a soaring white mitre.

He came to the doors of the cathedral and waited there for 20 minutes before the sound of sirens indicated the arrival of the hearse and the mass of limousines that followed.

THOUSANDS WATCH

Several thousand New Yorkers watched the drama that then unfolded.

The coffin was rolled out of

its vehicle and many hands, including some of the children of the stricken senator, carried it up the few steps to the doorway where stood the archbishop.

And then behind the coffin came a ghostly, tired and completely spent parade of well known faces:

The doughty widow on the arm of Msgr. William McCormick, some of her children, the dead man's brother-in-law Steve Smith and wife, Sen. Ted Kennedy, still wearing a heavy brace to support the back he broke in a plane crash several years ago, Prince and Princess Radziwill, Robert McNamara, former secretary of defense, Mrs. Rose Kennedy in black but seemingly strongest of them all in spite

of her accumulated woes, several mini-skirted girls and their escorts and the two gigantic Negro athletes who managed to save the assassin from the wrath of themselves and onlookers at the assassination — Rosie Grier and Rafer Johnson.

ETHEL CALM

Ethel Kennedy's iron clad demeanor appeared to crack as she entered the cathedral behind the coffin. Suddenly the long pent up tears gushed forth and she needed the help of Msgr. McCormick and others to keep her from toppling to the marble floor.

But after a brief ceremony her restraint was like that of Jacqueline Kennedy, when Jacqueline faced the eyes of the world in November, 1963.