

In Rotunda of Capitol

Widow, Children Hear Tributes to President in Dignity, Elegance

By HELEN THOMAS
(U-Sed Press International)

WASHINGTON — John Fitzgerald Kennedy would have been proud of his wife Jacqueline and their two children Sunday.

They heard with dignity and elegance the tributes to him as a man and to his work in life that sounded in the Rotunda of the Capitol.

The 34-year-old widow of the President wanted to share the last tributes to her husband with the two children he so openly adored—Caroline, who will be 6 Wednesday, and John Jr. who is 3 today.

Wears Deep Makeup

Mrs. Kennedy wore a black suit with a black lace mantilla over her dark hair. She wore deeper makeup than usual, probably to hide tear stains. Even so, there were tear stains on her face as she walked up the steps of the Capitol, holding the hands of the children, both of whom wore powder blue coats and red shoes.

It was no surprise to many that Mrs. Kennedy brought the children. Her husband's great sense of history had prompted her and she has always wanted the family to share together in its life—the good and the bad. She knew her husband always liked to take the children along with him. Sometimes she had to put her foot down because of the attention they got.

Caroline Sunday had the look

of a child who understood the solemn occasion. Her face was pale. Every once in a while she would look up at her mother, as if for reassurance.

Hears Gun Salute

John Jr.—often referred to as “John-John”—had heard the 21-gun salute many times on happier occasions, but somehow the silence that prevailed and the sad faces around him, kept the active little boy quiet as the honors were rendered to his father.

Just before the eulogies began, John Jr. got restless and wanted to make friends around him. He was led away by a Naval aide.

Caroline stayed with her mother through the eulogies. Sometimes she would reach up and grab her mother's hand, as she had done often with her father. She knew that she must be very quiet but sometimes she would stare at the high painted ceiling of the Rotunda in fascination. Other times she would scratch her knee or swing her arms.

Back to Reality

Caroline yawned once but she was quickly brought back to real-

ity when she heard the voice of Senate majority leader Mike Mansfield (D-Mont.) reading his tribute to her father.

Then in a sad farewell, her mother took her by the hand and led her to the coffin in the hushed silence of the Rotunda. With Caroline watching, Mrs. Kennedy kissed the flag-covering the coffin.

Finally they left, to be rejoined by John Jr.

As they came out of the Rotunda, John Jr. on his mother's left, walked down the 36 Capitol steps carrying a tiny American flag clutched in a small fist.



LEAVING CEREMONY — Mrs. Jacqueline Kennedy walks down the steps of the Capitol with her children after ceremonies in the Rotunda for President Kennedy. John Jr. is holding an American flag. Behind Mrs. Ken-

nedy and the children are, left to right, Atty. Gen. Robert F. Kennedy, the President's brother, and two of the President's sisters, Mrs. Patricia Lawford, and Mrs. Stephen Smith.

—UPI Telephoto