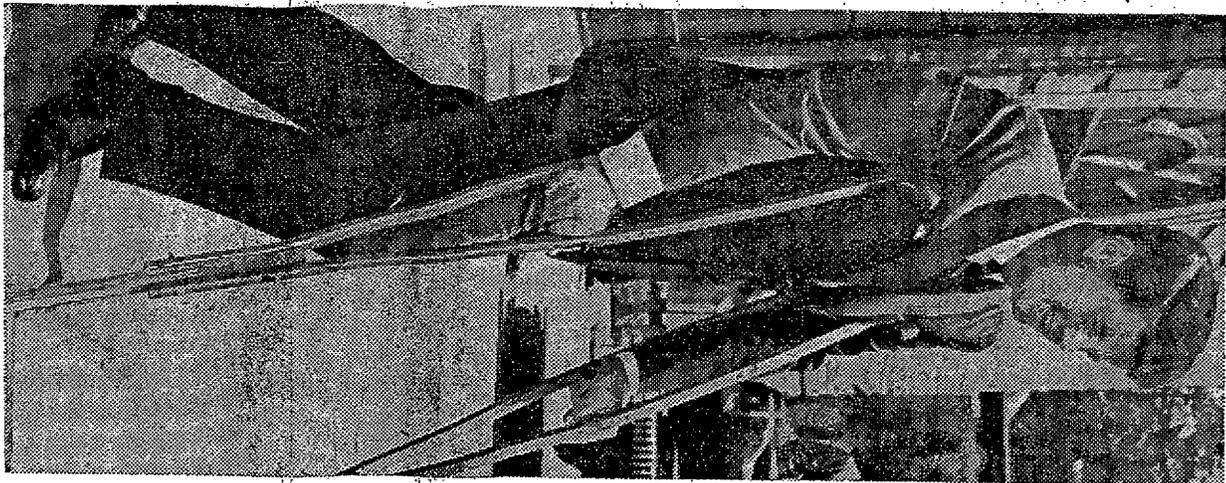


2-19-67

German Magazine Which Is Defying Jackie Claims:



KENNEDYS

HID JEK'S

DISEASE

KENNEDYS HID JFK'S DISEASE

By **BILL CONNOLLY**

President Kennedy was ill with a dangerous disease when he was murdered — and his family has hidden the fact for three years.

This is the startling pronouncement of the editors of STERN, the West German magazine which has refused Jackie Kennedy's plea to omit parts of the serialization of the book, "The Death of a President."

The magazine said the President — see page one for 1961 photo of him using crutches — was suffering from Addison's disease, a destructive hormone ailment which can be fatal. It is characterized by extreme weakness, loss of weight and low blood pressure.

And, according to STERN editor Egon Vacek, the fact is being kept from the public by the Kennedys for two reasons:

- It might harm the memory of JFK.
- It might ruin the political career of his brother, Robert.

"The Kennedy family tried to keep it a secret that the President had Addison's disease," said Vacek.

"A sick Kennedy died in Dallas."

The Kennedy family recently delivered to the National Archives in Washington 14 X-ray films, 25 black and white and 26 color photos taken of the President immediately after he died.

The family stipulated that for the next five years the photos be available only to a few high-ranking experts and members of the Warren Commission, which investigated the assassination.

"Why did the Kennedys remain silent for so long?" asked Vacek. "They kept these photos even from the Warren Commission.

"They kept silent because they had something to hide. The X-rays would have revealed the sickness of the President.

"The Kennedys wanted to spare the President's memory from any criticism that he had hidden his illness from the American people.

"They also kept quiet because it could have been dangerous to the political future of his brother, Rob-

ert.

"Americans don't like to have a sick president. If it were revealed that President Kennedy was ill with such a disease it might have harmful effects on the chances of Robert's becoming president later."

Vacek said that in the autopsy report on President Kennedy, there is a detailed description of the microscopic examination of the brain, heart, lungs, liver, kidneys and spleen — but no mention of the adrenal glands.

He said this showed that the Kennedys wanted to hide the fact that the President had Addison's disease — which would have been revealed by examination of X-rays — and that he had suffered quite a bit from it.

Vacek said that it was clear the details about Addison's disease were left out of the autopsy report by the fact that one of the autopsy doctors destroyed his notes on the examination. Said Vacek: "He wanted to help the family."

Vacek said that because the Kennedys kept their information and photos secret, speculation as to the actual facts of the President's assassination began spreading.

He said the family remained silent



SICK PRESIDENT: The German magazine STERN says our late President John F. Kennedy was suffering from Addison's disease — which can be fatal. It is characterized by extreme weakness and loss of weight.



SECRETIVE: STERN magazine claims Jackie Kennedy knew her husband was ill with a dangerous disease, but she remained silent with the rest of the Kennedy family.

of the adrenal glands at the Kennedys' request.

Vacek said that a change in political climate finally prompted the family to send the photos to the National Archives last November 2.

"Robert Kennedy decided to follow in the political footsteps of his brother," Vacek said. "He became a senator from New York. And Robert felt he ought to remain silent, until such time as the Kennedy family made a second run for the White House.

"The Kennedys knew that if the truth were revealed early, it could have hurt Robert. The American people don't only want to know the political ideas of their politicians, but also the color of their pajamas, what they feed their pets — and their health.

"So the Kennedys remained silent, including the widowed Mrs. Kennedy. But recently a public opinion poll showed Rob-

ert's position was greatly strengthened, and his popularity was exceeding that of President Johnson.

"Robert could not any longer remain silent without damaging his chances for the presidency in 1972 — or maybe even 1968," said Vacek. "So the photos were sent to the National Archives."

But, Vacek said, the conditions placed upon the photos by the Kennedy family will prevent any public disclosure of the real facts of the President's health for a long long time.

"For the first five years, only the Warren Commission and a few top experts can see them," he said.

"After that, only with the permission of the Kennedys can pathologists and other experts examine these photos.

"They will remain hidden from the public as long as the widow, her children, the President's brothers and sisters live.

"Almost no one will see them before the year 2000."

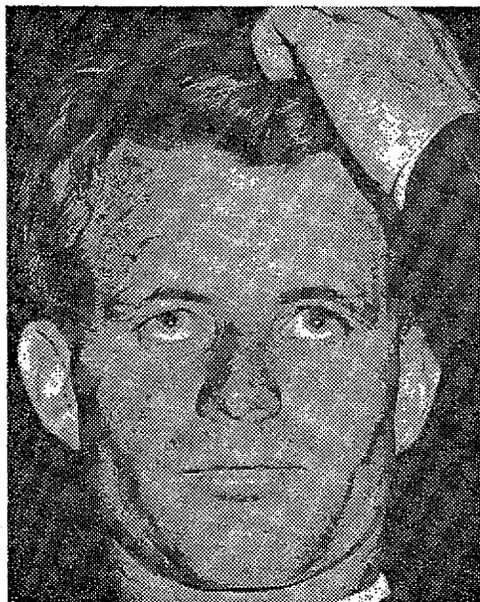
Vacek said that with Robert Kennedy's political stature greatly improved and his chances for the future presidency much brighter now, the Kennedys felt it would harm him if the X-rays were to be kept solely in the family any longer.

He said the family also felt it would be harmful to keep alive the great speculation concerning the murder — with some critics charging Robert with covering up information about a conspiracy.

"Two doctors who took part in the autopsy on Nov. 22, 1963, finally saw these photos for the first time when they were sent to the National Archives three years later after the assassination," Vacek said.

"They later explained that the X-rays supported their autopsy report which showed President Kennedy was shot

(Continued on next page)



CAREER MAN: STERN also claims that another reason JFK's illness was kept secret was because it might ruin brother Robert's political career.

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even when critics began convincing the American public that Lee Harvey Oswald was not the only killer.

Vacek said he was convinced that Oswald was the sole killer and that the X-rays prove it.

"The family didn't keep silent because of a sinister reason that they wanted to cover up the fact that there were others involved," Vacek said.

"The autopsy proves the Warren Commission report was correct in saying the President was shot only from the back. The Kennedys had no doubt who killed the President — Lee Harvey Oswald."

Vacek said that in 1964 Robert Kennedy told him: "I am not only the murdered man's brother but also the attorney general, with the largest police force in the world at my command.

"Do you believe that I wouldn't do my best to get the real murderers if I had any doubts?"

Vacek said that X-ray films of persons suffering from Addison's disease show calcium around the adrenal glands — and that is just what the family wanted to keep hidden by not making the X-rays of the President public.

He also said the autopsy report was changed to delete any mention

(Continued from preceding page)

twice from the back — as the Warren Commission also reported.

"These photos and the real autopsy report show that there was one killer, Oswald, and no conspiracy. Critics charged that the autopsy report was changed to hide a conspiracy, but it was changed only because the Kennedys wanted to hide the President's disease."

Vacek said this silence helped contribute greatly to all the speculation surrounding the President's death — but the silence was simply to protect the President's memory and help Robert's political future.

"There is no medical reason against a man who suffers from Addison's disease

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ENQUIRER

JFK's Secret Illness

becoming president," Vacek said. "But politically it could have been dangerous to Robert. Americans want a healthy president.

"The memories of crippled President Roosevelt, who died in office, later prompted Presidents Eisenhower and Johnson to disclose at the last moment the full details of even harmless colds — and of course the full details of their complete recovery.

"After his gall bladder operation, President Johnson even pulled out his shirt to show reporters, pho-

tographers, TV cameras and the American people that the wound had healed completely."

Vacek said that historian Theodore Sorensen hinted in his biography of Kennedy that it was the affliction with Addison's disease which complicated President Kennedy's back operation in 1954 and forced him to fight for his life after the surgery.

The views presented by STERN came as the magazine was in the midst of a battle with LOOK magazine over serialization of William

Manchester's book; "The Death of a President," which describes the events surrounding the murder of President Kennedy.

LOOK bought serialization rights to the book, but Jackie Kennedy threatened to sue unless certain passages in it were deleted. After much ado, and negotiations, LOOK reluctantly agreed to omit the passages and the deleted serialization is now being published in the magazine.

But STERN had purchased from LOOK the original version for serialization in West Germany and STERN has refused to make the deletions requested by Jackie Kennedy.

It is publishing the original serialization and LOOK said it will sue STERN or doing so.

Feb. 19, 1967