

Personal Staff Member Reveals...

JACKIE WAS INJURED WHEN JFK WAS SHOT

by RAY HIRES

Jackie Onassis has lived in almost constant pain from a mysterious neck injury — suffered almost 10 years ago during the tragic assassination of her husband, John Kennedy.

The injury, which has been a well-kept secret, was revealed for the first time by Inge Kofler, Mrs. Onassis' masseuse.

"I have seen Jackie when her face was twisted with pain, begging — 'Please help me, Inge. I can't bear it anymore,'" said Miss Kofler in a recent interview in London.

"Few people realize it, but she is plagued by terrific physical pain almost every moment of her life," said Miss Kofler.

"The injury is one of the reasons she seems to have a stiff, haughty bearing that malicious people are quick to put down to arrogance," she said. "It has taken a lot of courage to hide the agony she has had to bear."

Miss Kofler, born in Austria, was a nursery maid for Princess Clotilde Obolensky's four-year-old son when she first met



MASSSEUSE Inge Kofler knew secret of Jackie's injury



JACKIE did not find out about Jackie's injury until a year after their marriage

Jackie Onassis in Athens. "I met her at a party given by Professor Georgakis, the general director of the Greek national airline. Since we both spoke French (Jackie still does not speak Greek) we became instant friends," said Miss Kofler.

"Jackie asked me how an Austrian like myself had become a nursery maid to the child of a Greek princess. Later, when I told her I was also a masseuse, she asked me if I would like to be her masseuse.

"She told me she had a pain in her neck that doctors all over the world had tried to cure," said Miss Kofler. "But I had no idea at that time how serious it was."

The injury reportedly occurred on Nov. 22, 1963, during the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. Jackie was riding with him in an open convertible when rifle shots snuffed out his life. Jackie's mysterious neck injury apparently occurred during the wild ride to the hospital.

It was several days afterward that the pain became severe enough for her to complain.

At first it was believed the pain was caused by nothing more than a delayed whiplash. But Jackie failed to respond to treatment.

Allegedly, she kept the secret from her second husband, Aristotle Onassis, for almost a year after their marriage.

He reportedly found out when he learned that, during Jackie's trips to New York, she was seeing an orthopedic surgeon.

"During the assassination, she had suffered a severe shock — which left her with a damaged nerve in the neck," explained Miss Kofler. "I don't think it can be repaired."



JACKIE has managed to keep her injury well-hidden

There has been speculation that the reason Jackie did not feel the pain until several days after the day of the assassination is because she was in severe mental shock at the time.

During Miss Kofler's employment, she became more than a masseuse to Jackie Onassis — she became her confidante.

"A woman doesn't hide many things from the girl whose job it is to keep her body in trim. The relationship is too intimate for secrets," said Miss Kofler.

Miss Kofler admitted to becoming very angry at the critics of Mrs. Onassis.

"One newspaper said that she was overbearing and looked over her surroundings with a rigid glance," she fumed. "What they did not know is that when she looks like that, she is in great pain."

"Jackie trusted me and she told me things she would never have dreamed of disclosing to anybody else," said Miss Kofler. "I know she is a woman



JFK AND JACKIE, photographed the day of the assassination, had no idea of what was to come

in love and whatever the gossips say, the man she loves is Aristotle Onassis.

"Inge,' she told me once, 'when Ari and I are in public we are always watched by photographers. So we have to be restrained. This is why people think we don't care for each other.'"

Miss Kofler recalled one occasion when Jackie picked up a newspaper and immediately saw a photograph of her husband Ari and Maria Callas. But

instead of becoming angry, she burst out laughing.

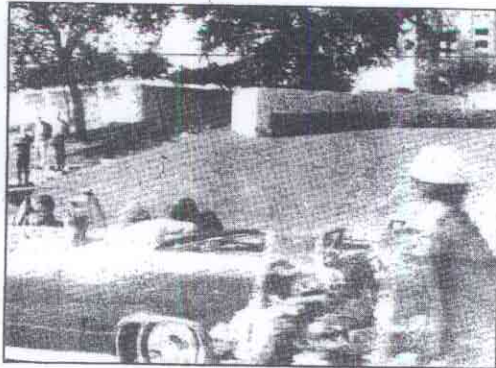
"That's a very old picture," Miss Kofler quoted her. "Ari hasn't worn that suit for ages." Jackie obviously thought it was funny that the newspaper was using an old photograph to fan rumors of a new romance between Ari and Maria.

"I would give Jackie massage treatments either in her house in Glyfada, the exclusive coastal district near Athens, or on the Island of Skorpios," said Miss Kofler. "When she was on the island and needed a quick massage, she would send a helicopter to Athens for me."

Miss Kofler becomes very upset when she reads stories critical of Jackie Onassis — whom she considers a close friend.

"If they only knew of the constant physical pain she must endure, perhaps they would be more kind."

But despite all her wealth, Jackie Onassis must continue to live with the nightmare of Dallas. And she will probably continue to be plagued by bad publicity — and a haunting pain that sometimes gives her a rigid, haughty appearance.



MOMENT OF JFK'S ASSASSINATION was also moment when Jackie was hurt