

JACK ANDERSON

Jackie Keeps Kennedy Ties

WASHINGTON — One of the few persons to penetrate the wall the Kennedys have thrown up around Ted since his accident is his former sister-in-law, Jackie Onassis.

Soon after the tragedy, the former first lady reached Sen. Ted Kennedy by overseas telephone and expressed her

her deep sorrow. She couldn't have been more gracious, say intimates. She also telephoned his brother-in-law, Steve Smith, who serves as business manager for the clan, to ask whether there was anything she could do.

That's the way it has been with Jackie since she married Greek shipping magnate Aristotle Onassis. She has carefully maintained her ties with the Kennedy

family. Rose Kennedy, for example, spent the Easter holiday as Jackie's guest aboard the Onassis yacht Christina.

Afterward, Jackie sent the family matriarch some books on Greek history and invited her to come to Greece for a visit.

But if the relationship between Jackie and her former family seems warm, intimates say it is and it isn't. Jackie always resisted the suffocating embrace of the clan even while she was its most illustrious in-law. She didn't like the one-for-all-and-all-for-one spirit that encroached on her independence.

* * *

NOW A TINGE of aloofness is manifest in her independence. For despite the surface sweetness and seeming closeness, say intimates, Jackie takes a satisfaction in having escaped the Kennedy hold. Sometimes she gives the Kennedys the impression that she feels above and beyond them.

Jackie's former sisters-in-law used to refer to her teasingly as "The Queen," because of her regal manner and her constant awareness

of the effect she creates. Today, she is still "The Queen," who lives as royally, dresses as dazzlingly and entertains as extravagantly as any monarch.

Since her marriage last October, she has been on a glorious spending spree. She walks into any store of her choosing, helps herself to whatever she wants and strolls off, trailed by servants burdened down with bundles. She pays no cash, signs no bills. Her face is her credit card. Store owners, recognizing the famous lady, realize that Aristotle will make good.

She buys \$1,000 and \$2,000 gowns by the dozen. Her collection of furs is fabulous. Her jewelry, by one estimate, is worth a cool \$5 million.

She has also traveled the world over, living for short periods in various villas and apartments in Athens, Paris, Buenos Aires, Montevideo, Monte Carlo, New York and her favorite island retreat of Skorpios.

The villa on Skorpios was furnished by Onassis's former love, opera star Maria Callas, at a reported cost of \$503,000. Jackie decided to throw all Maria's expensive furniture out and is flying in her own selections from as far away as New York City.

When Jackie jets across the oceans, she always buys four tickets because she doesn't like to have people sitting near her. Even though her husband owns Olympic Airways, she prefers Pan American. She also likes to cruise on the Christina, a veritable sea castle, which is usually overflowing with the Beautiful People.

SINCE JACKIE and the children no longer are eligible for Secret Service protection, Onassis has hired Pinkerton guards at a cost of \$1,200 a week to follow her wherever she goes.

How much has it cost Onassis to be married to the widow of President Kennedy and number one catch in the world? News sleuth Fred

Sparks, a Pulitzer Prize winner, has carefully traced their spending since the marriage. He calculates that the marriage, thus far, has cost Ari an astounding \$20 million.

During their courtship, he sent Jackie a bouquet of flowers every other week from May until October. With each bouquet came a gold or diamond bracelet — trinkets that cost him an estimated \$130,000 before he landed the world's most exclusive lady. For a wedding gift, he gave her a 40-karat diamond worth close to \$1 million.

Insiders say the Onassises are quite happy. Jackie managed to spend only about \$125,000 on herself during her marriage to the late President Kennedy. She positively delights now in being able to buy anything she wants, including the stores. And Ari doesn't seem to mind her fabulous spending.

Only the children, apparently, preferred life with the Kennedys, and sometimes seem to resent their new stepfather. Jackie is aware of her children's feelings, but depends on Papa's pocketbooks to assuage the pain.

Note: Incidentally, intimates insist that Jackie is not pregnant, despite recent pictures of her in a dress that had a maternity look.

NORTH KOREA put President Nixon on the spot by demanding a written apology before the three downed helicopter crewmen will be returned.

During the 1968 election campaign, Nixon denounced then-President Johnson for issuing a similar apology in order to get the 81 Pueblo crewmen back. Nixon promised that he would never permit the United States to get into such an embarrassing position again.

Now the President must either eat his words or leave three Americans to suffer in a North Korean prison.



JACK ANDERSON