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Onassis Said to Have Planned Divorce; Provided \$3-Million for Widow in Will

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By JOHN CORRY

Under the will of her late husband, Mrs Aristotle Onassis receives \$3-million, a bequest far less than published reports indicated she would receive, according to friends of the Onassis family.

Shortly before his death, Mr. Onassis reportedly decided to divorce his wife and asked that a lawyer begin proceedings.

Mr. Onassis's will, several sources told The New York Times, also stipulated that trust funds of \$1-million be set up for each of the children from Mrs. Onassis' marriage to the late President Kennedy.

The children, Caroline and John, will receive incomes from the fund until they are 21 years old. Previous reports indicated that they would inherit as much as \$15-million each.

When Mr. Onassis died in Paris on March 15, estimates of his wealth reached as high as \$500-million. The sum left to Mrs. Onassis is said to be the minimum amount Mr. Onassis could leave her under Greek law. Earlier reports had estimated that Mrs. Onassis would receive up to \$200-million.

Last Dec. 3, John Meyer, Mr. Onassis's closest associate, called Roy M. Cohn, the lawyer. Mr. Meyer told Mr. Cohn that Mr. Onassis wanted him to be his attorney in a divorce action against Mrs. Onassis.

"He called me when Mr. Onassis was with him," Mr. Cohn said yesterday. "He said it was absolutely definite, and that Mr. Onassis wanted to end the marriage."

Mr. Meyer, who was in Flo-

rida yesterday, declined to comment on the telephone call. An associate of his said that Mr. Meyer would not answer questions until "the [Onassis] family has decided what to do about Jackie."

Several friends of the Onassis family have said that Mrs. Onassis wants more money. However, Christina Onassis, Mr. Onassis's daughter by his first marriage, is said to be bitterly hostile to Mrs. Onassis. Miss Onassis, her friends say, was instrumental in persuading her father to seek a divorce.

Reports of Mr. Onassis's failing health began circulating in December, shortly after Mr. Meyer spoke to Mr. Cohn. Then, in February, it was announced that Mr. Onassis was suffering

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from myasthenia gravis, a debilitating muscular disease. Friends of Mr. Onassis say that it was poor health, rather than a reconciliation with Mrs. Onassis, that led Mr. Onassis to drop the divorce action.

Under Greek law, Mrs. Onassis is entitled to a minimum of one-eighth of her late husband's assets. However, Mr. Onassis's wealth was spread through about 100 interlocking companies in an arrangement so complex that only he seemed to understand it.

Through 30 companies, Mr. Onassis owned nearly 100 ships, and through other companies he shared ownership of the Olympic Tower at 51st Street and Fifth Avenue. His personal holdings, including paintings, jewelry and apartments on three continents, were said to be worth \$50-million.

Bad Investments

Much of Mr. Onassis's wealth, however, was held through trust companies, and his will apparently reflects this. Experts on Greek law say that Mr. Onassis, by having his wealth in trust, could have written his will in such a way that Mrs. Onassis would receive far less

than an eighth of his total assets.

Friends of the Onassis family also say that published reports of a pre-nuptial agreement between Mr. and Mrs. Onassis were greatly exaggerated. They say that shortly after Mr. and Mrs. Onassis were married in 1968, Mr. Onassis gave his wife \$2-million, and that Mrs. Onassis invested this in securities.

Mrs. Onassis's investments, the friends say, did not do well and part of the \$2-million was lost. Subsequently, Mrs. Onassis asked her husband to replace the money she had lost. Apparently, Mr. Onassis refused the request.

Rumors of a divorce between Mr. and Mrs. Onassis date as far back as 1970, although they were always denied. In 1970, however, Mrs. Onassis speculated to her own friends and family that in time Mr. Onassis would divorce her.

In 1973, after the death of his only son, Alexander, in a plane crash, Mr. Onassis, his friends say, went through a long depression. Before Alexander's death, Mr. Onassis was known to be considering a divorce.

After the death, however, he and Mrs. Onassis had a reconciliation, and for a while began appearing in public together more frequently than they had in the past.