

HELLBOX

MORE
JUNE '75

mail," one editor said later, "but we don't want to be known as the outfit that spoiled it for Newport."

—WILLIAM M. KUTIK

Drury's Two Lanes

"I'm a consumer expert. And I've done my homework. The new Chevrolets can save you up to eleven hundred dollars during the average time you'd own the car." The line is from a radio commercial sponsored by the Southern California Chevrolet Dealers. The voice is that of Treasa Drury, a pioneering TV and radio consumer reporter who at the time the commercials were on the air also held the unpaid but prestigious post of chairperson of the Governor's Consumer Advisory Council.

The uproar over the commercials was almost instantaneous. Leaders of several consumer groups angrily accused Drury of betraying the consumer movement, of selling her credibility.

But Drury didn't see it quite that way. She is a professional broadcaster, and broadcasters routinely read commercials, she says. While they were running, she points out, she continued to do consumer coverage, including a close look at the consent order obtained by the FTC against advertising claims made for the Chevy Vega. And she warned the dealer group in advance, she says, that she would follow up on any

complaints about its products that listeners sent to her.

But criticism of her part in the commercials continued, until finally in April, Drury resigned from the Consumer Advisory Council. "After all of this, if given the chance again I would say no to doing the ads," she says. But she intends to continue covering consumer news through a part-time radio job and several magazine and newsletter outlets.

There is certainly no lack of news for a consumer reporter to cover in Los Angeles. The L.A. District Attorney's Office is currently investigating the claim of an \$1,100 saving in the Chevy ads that Drury made; a law student who examined the substantiating material believes much of the saving is overstated. And the Governor's Consumer Advisory Council is working to finish a report begun under Drury's leadership. It deals with the role of the media in fraudulent advertising.

—ALEXANDER AUERBACH

White House Author

Portrait of an Assassin, the book about the Warren Commission co-authored by President Ford in 1965, may become the basis for a three-hour television documentary. MGM is currently negotiating with the White House legal office for rights to the book, which supports the commission's conclusion that Lee Harvey



Portrait of the Assassin
By Congressman Gerald R. Ford
A member of the Warren Commission

Oswald acted alone in assassinating President Kennedy. The book, which its publisher Simon and Schuster concedes "certainly didn't make the best seller list," is an account by Ford, a commission member, of the group's hearings and the members' reactions during the proceedings.

The project originated with Sheldon Davis and Sheldon Brodsky, independent producers with a company called Now Productions. Thinking that *Portrait* would make a nice "theater of life presentation," Davis first wrote to the President in February. His proposal received a negative response from White House counsel Philip Buchen. Davis then contacted John R. Stiles, the book's co-author. Stiles flew to California for talks and then got Ford interested. Talks soon began, with MGM representing Now. MGM is also presently trying to sell the package to CBS-TV.

Several areas remain unresolved in negotiations with the White House, including whether the production's airdate would come before or after the 1976 Presidential election. Other points still under discussion, according to Davis, are whether Ford may appoint persons to approve the script, and whether the White House may screen the daily rushes.

—ERNEST RODRIGUEZ

Account Closed

Not infrequently, reporters for news

Comic Caper

Is Patty Hearst sending secret messages in the funny pages? Mrs. Okie Smith of Lexington, Kentucky thought she was. Smith recently noticed an old Jan. 30 "Doonesbury" cartoon that had the words "Canaan Farm" spelled out in the background and the word "Pennsylvania" in the text. Since the cartoon had been published several weeks before the FBI discovered that Patty Hearst spent her last summer vacation

