

A Look at Look's Plant: Security Is Watchword

By Jimmy Breslin

CHICAGO—The R. R. Donnelley and Sons printing plant is a complex of gloomy eight-story red brick buildings connected to each other by enclosed bridges and underground tunnels.

The buildings sit on the lake shore on the south side of Chicago. They are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, printing many of the Nation's major magazines.

One of the magazines Donnelley prints is Look. Last night, in one building, the Calumet Building, the high presses on the fifth floor spun out parts of Look magazine's issue dated Jan. 10.

It contains an article on Vietnam by the military writer, S. L. A. Marshall, and another article titled, "The Unfaithful Executive" by Art Buchwald.

There is no picture on the cover. Against a field of royal blue there are the large white letters, "The Death of a President." Underneath, in a lighter blue than the cover, stands "By William Manchester."

Four lines take up the right side of the cover at the bottom. The words read, "Beginning the most personal, most detailed account of a national tragedy. The only book Mrs. John F. Kennedy asked to be written about her husband."

Large Pressroom

By going through more doors, you wind up in a large pressroom where gray printing units are turning out sheets of rough stock paper on which, a pressman standing in the door said, the press-

es are imprinting the first installment of "The Death of a President."

"There was no way to get into the room without authorization and none was possible because the visit to the building itself was of a highly unofficial nature.

Uniformed guards and a foreman in a white shirt were seen approaching the area, and leave was taken. Outside, on a darkened, empty street running between two of the buildings, the guard sat in a station wagon while his partner stood on the sidewalk and talked into a two-way radio.

They were there to prevent people from going into the buildings and coming out with copies of the Manchester book.

Theft a Problem

The number of people supposedly having copies of the manuscript has been much overrated. But here in Chicago, there would be no way to stop the first 20,000 words, at least, from getting onto the streets.

"There have been all kinds of people around trying to get in and steal some of the book," a pressman was saying in the all night Donnelley Company cafeteria on the first floor.

"Have you seen any of them trying it?" he was asked.

"One got in here the other day," he said. "A lot try to get in. We got orders to report anybody who seems to be a stranger. There are a lot of buildings and passageways and if you see somebody trying to figure out where he is, you figure he's up to no good and you're supposed to tell."

"If the magazine don't come out," another said "everybody would stick one in his shirt. I wouldn't get involved myself because I've been here 12 years. But you can bet that they'd be bootleggin' a lot of copies of that issue out of

here. Just like whisky during prohibition."

If the dispute is almost settled, as one side confidently is reporting, it would end a situation which never should have started, and now produces more national comment than it should.

THE GENERAL OPINION

of the book is that, at least in the version first passed around last summer, Manchester had gone too deeply into the terribleness of the day: Jacqueline Kennedy scratching at the darkness late at night. And, Manchester reported, Jacqueline Kennedy sitting in the car with her husband's head in her lap and covering the wound with her hand and trying to put him together again.

And right here, more than anything else, must be the trouble over this book. The book was started with a contract calling for Mrs. Kennedy and Robert Kennedy to have approval over what Manchester wrote.

On a cold, literary business judgment it never should have been signed. But beyond this, it was a contract between a woman who had gone through this day, and then after it stood up for us in a way you never will be able to forget, and a writer who immersed himself into the material and began to live it. As a writer must, until it wrecked him inside, too.

Manchester wound up mentally exhausted in a hospital. No project with this much emotion as its base can conclude satisfactorily. Perhaps grief, rather than censorship or broken agreements, is at the bottom of it all.

It was Pierre Salinger, who is on the opposite side of the fight from Manchester, who said, "I don't know how the guy lasted. I know I couldn't live with the subject the way he did. I feel sorry for him."