

MAGAZINES

Agony Relieved

The subject matter helps. In his second *Look* installment of *The Death of a President*, William Manchester is dealing with true historical drama—the assassination of President Kennedy. In this case, his Jackie Kennedy-authorized access to the people involved helps produce an authoritative, powerful account of the Dallas tragedy. Politics are left aside, and those caught up in the event emerge as neither heroes nor villains. The Secret Service is pictured somewhat confused and leaderless, but other than that, no one involved should have anything to complain about—unless it is the personal pain of having to relive Nov. 22, 1963.

Even Manchester's description of Vice President Johnson is sympathetic. His portrait of L.B.J. after the assassination is that of a man overwhelmed: "While he had already succeeded to the office, he didn't realize it, and the slumped figure in the hospital bore little resemblance to the shrewd, assured President Johnson the country came to know." Kennedy's assistant press secretary, Mac Kilduff, reported that on addressing Johnson as "Mr. President" for the first time, he "looked at me like I was Donald Duck." In the confusion, Secret Service agents urged Johnson to take the J.F.K. presidential plane out of Dallas. It was L.B.J. who balked at the idea and flatly refused to board the plane until he had express approval from Kennedy's staff. As for Lady Bird, she insisted on going first to do what she could to comfort Jackie Kennedy and Nelle Coynally.

Sole Assassin. In the hour following the assassination, normally lucid people did strange things. Since the murdered President had been scheduled to

make a luncheon address at the Dallas Trade Mart, Lady Bird's press secretary, Liz Carpenter, assumed that the Vice President would make the speech. She hurried to the mart only to discover, of course, that scarcely anyone was there. In Parkland Hospital, medical attendants struggled to remove the critically wounded Governor's clothes. It was Connally, finally, who had the presence of mind to remind them, "Why not cut them off?"

The merit of Manchester's account lies not so much in the new details he supplies as in the methodical way in which he reconstructs events. His own exhaustive investigation led him to conclude that the same bullet which passed through President Kennedy's neck also struck Connally—thus making Lee Harvey Oswald the sole assassin. He also narrates a harrowing little episode involving Caroline Kennedy. Fearing that an attempt might be made on the lives of the Kennedy family, a Secret Service agent named Tom Wells picked up Caroline from some friends and started driving her away in an unmarked car. Another motorist spotted Caroline in the car, and thinking she had been abducted, gave hot pursuit. After a high-speed chase, Wells finally managed to escape.

No Promises. As far as the quality of the narrative is concerned, Jackie's controversial excisions seem to make no difference. What they actually amount to cannot be known until *Look's* installment can be compared with the unexpurgated version which is scheduled to appear in West Germany's *Stern* this week. *Look* tried to keep *Stern* from running any more of the deleted material by applying for an injunction, but a German court refused to grant it. *Stern's* editor, Henri Nannen, has hinted that he might consider "negotiating"

future excisions from the version it publishes—but has promised nothing.

Otherwise, *Look* had nothing to be upset about. The issue containing the first installment sold some 1,300,000 newsstand copies, or close to three times the normal number. The second is expected to do even better.

Price Spurt

Along with other consumer items, the U.S. public is now paying more for magazines. Last month *Reader's Digest* and *Look* raised their newsstand price from 35¢ to 50¢. *TIME* increased from 40¢ to 50¢. Last year the *Saturday Evening Post* and the *Saturday Review* jumped from 25¢ to 35¢. *Newsweek* and *U.S. News & World Report* rose from 35¢ to 40¢. *Cosmopolitan* and *Redbook* from 35¢ to 50¢. *Holiday* spurted from 60¢ to 75¢. *Town & Country* from 75¢ to \$1.00.

The increases were substantial, explain the publishers, because costs—especially wages and printing-plant expenses—have risen sharply. To date, there has been no audible squawk from readers, and newsstand sales of most magazines have not suffered. To be sure, newsstand sales generally account for only a small percentage of overall sales, most of which are by subscription. But then, it is likely that subscription rates will also rise soon.

NEWSPAPERS

Self-Medication

For the past four months, the British national press has been undergoing the most severe crisis of self-confidence in its history. First, an outsider—Canada's Lord Thomson—took over the London Times, symbol of Fleet Street stability. Then Harold Wilson's economic squeeze caused a drastic cutback in advertising. Finally, last week, a report confirmed the newspapers' worst fears: the industry is in dire trouble.

The papers were swallowing their own medicine; they commissioned the report themselves. Begun a year ago by a subsidiary of the London *Economist*, the analysis was supposed to have been quietly circulated among the sponsoring publishers and unions. But the Guardian, which was not a party to the agreement, got a copy of the report and leaked salient portions. The leak forced the publishers to release the entire 555-page report. It is now the talk of Fleet Street—much to its own discomfort. For the report lays the lion's share of the blame for the industry's decline on a "small number of highly individualistic proprietors," some of whom have "little interest in modern management methods and techniques, yet retain almost absolute authority over their organization."

Habit of Succumbing. Partly as a result of this old-fashioned management, said the report, four of the 18 nationally circulated newspapers are likely to close down by 1970. Only two—Lord



WILLIAM MANCHESTER

Nothing to complain about—aside from the pain.



GERMANY'S "STERN"