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Bob Considine

The Book Leaves Bobby in Cold

The third installment of "Death of a President" in Look Magazine, which Stan Swinton has nicknamed the Manchester Guardian, makes LBJ appear to be a stowaway aboard Air Force One as it winged back from Dallas on that blackest of days.

The piece makes you wince. It adjusts feet of clay on just about every passenger except Jacqueline Kennedy and the dead man.

Reading it — and it is reading you cannot put down, for all your distress — causes astonishment that anyone could conceivably believe there might be a Johnson-Robert Kennedy ticket in 1968. At this point in the unreeling of the tragic story I'd question whether LBJ will even support RFK in '72.

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IT HASN'T BEEN a peaceful time for Mrs. Kennedy, these past few months. She has read and heard criticism in press and public for the first time in her life, and that must hurt her deeply. But she retains millions of admirers, of course. One of them, Mrs. Rosemary Happ of Oceanside, N.Y., may well speak for all of them when she writes:

"I intend to speak my mind loudly in the future whenever I'm in the company of a group who tosses snide remarks about Jacqueline Kennedy's 'image.'

"I wonder how many of them would have held up emotionally in the face of her catastrophe? I simply cannot imagine a more horrible terror being inflicted on a wife. Even if a husband is lost in a plane crash, the widow is spared the memory of the actual killing, and can live with memories as she knew him when last she saw him.

"This poor girl must live with horror every single day from the time she awakens in the morning until she succeeds in finding sleep at night.

"I don't care what she is, what she does, what her image — she deserves to be left alone. She deserves a nation's undying sympathy and understanding, understated and with dignity. Let's leave her alone. She can't have much peace of mind during even her best days."

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ONE OF THE EDITORS involved in the suits and counter-suits which swarmed around The Book found himself dumped from the Christmas card lists of both Jacqueline Kennedy and Senator Robert.

But, astonishingly, he received a Christmas card from Sen. Teddy Kennedy — for the first time.

It made him nervous.

"I wonder if he's trying to tell me something?" he asks.

Hear Bob Considine on KGO Radio (810) Monday through Friday at 5:50 p.m.