

'Four Days in November,' Documentary on Assassination

AFTER the extensive television coverage devoted to every aspect of the assassination of President Kennedy, it would be impossible for a two-hour film documentary to provide a fully satisfactory summation.

To its credit, "Four Days in November" tries. The film that David L. Wolper brought into the Rivoli, Cinema II and other theaters yesterday offers a sincere and serious recounting of one of the shattering tragedies of modern times.

The producer has assembled newsreel clips from the vast stockpiles of film reportage and molded them into a straightforward chronology of the principal events during the four-day period from the assassination through the funeral.

With sober narration by Theodore Strauss, tremblingly orated by Richard Basehart, it gives poignant glimpses of the actions of the President and his wife in their hectic hours before the fatal motorcade, interspersed with ominous still photographs of the empty rooms inhabited by Lee Harvey Oswald and Jack Ruby at the time.

Most of the familiar scenes are there, including an 8-mm. recording of the Kennedy car as the bullets struck. The accused assassin is glimpsed during his frequent shuttles down the corridors of that incongruous Dallas police station. Jack Ruby is seen firing the shot that downed Oswald.

There are also records of

The Program

FOUR DAYS IN NOVEMBER, screen play by Theodore Strauss; produced and directed by Mel Stuart; presented by David L. Wolper; released by United Artists. At the Rivoli, Broadway and 49th Street; Cinema II, Third Avenue and 60th Street, and other theaters. Running time: 122 minutes.

many of the small ironies that preceded the event. One that strikes home is a breakfast the morning of Nov. 22 during which the President listened to the Texas state song with its foreboding lyrics: "The eyes of Texas are upon you/ You cannot get away... The eyes of Texas are upon you/ Till Gabriel blows his horn."

The filmmakers do not often dwell upon such easy effects, though there is abundant evidence of selectivity in choosing their material. They have chosen to include an excerpt from a press conference by Richard M. Nixon, in which the former Vice President, hours before the assassination, criticized President Kennedy's trip to Dallas as politically motivated, for the purpose of mending fences. For the most part, however, Mr. Wolper and his collaborators have suppressed editorial opinion and let the absorbing material speak for itself.

If the over-all impression leaves a viewer with a gnawing sense of dissatisfaction, this is partially because a brief documentary could hardly do justice to an event of such historical complexity. The same troubling questions of motivation, coincidences and ifs are more disturbing

than ever at the end of this superficial summary.

Possibly, too, television has put an end to the valid purpose of motion-picture documentaries of current events. This is a drama that millions of Americans watched unfolding in its full immediacy from the intimacy of their homes. Seeing at a distance in a large auditorium, surrounded by a formal audience, could never quite have the same impact.

EUGENE ARCHER.

6 OCT 1964



DAVID L. WOLPER presents

FOUR DAYS IN NOVEMBER

In the memory of man few events have shocked the world as those Four Days in November. Here, with scenes never presented before, is a complete motion picture chronicle of that incredible time in Dallas. Here is the minute-by-minute, hour-by-hour, day-by-day story—with every detail revealed, every question answered.

Executive Producer DAVID L. WOLPER Produced and Directed by MEL STUART
 Narrated by RICHARD BASEHART Music by Elmer Bernstein
 Narration written by Theodore Strauss Released thru UNITED ARTISTS

STARTS TOMORROW AT A SELECT THEATRE NEAR YOU

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& 49th St. | CINEMA II
3rd Ave.
at 60th St. |
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Flatbush &
Church Aves. | ELM
Ave. M. &
East 17th St. |
| QUEENS | EARLE
Jackson Heights
Reesevelt Ave. & 72nd St. | |
| BRONX | ASCOT
183rd St. & Grand Concourse | |
| NASSAU | FRANKLIN
Franklin Sq.
Hempstead Tpke. | GABLES
Merrick
Merrick Road |
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Hicksville Mid-Island
Plaza, Broadway |
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Bay Shore
Sunrise Highway | PLAZA
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