

# Shirley Jones Bravely Faces 'Suicide' Time Spot For Series

By JULIA INMAN

SHIRLEY JONES was whistling in the wind, putting on a confident front. The reason? Her Partridge Family series will go into the suicide spot this fall, up against All in the Family and the fast-climbing Emergency.

Did she feel like a kamikaze pilot?

"No," she chuckled. "But my manager said, 'Why don't they ask for volunteers?'"

Bravely, she said she wasn't concerned, that she thought the show would be all right, that it would give Archie Bunker a run for his money.

"I don't know why ABC is doing it when we have a winning hand on Friday nights," she continued. No, she didn't scream and yell when she found out about the change, but she did ask why. She was told that the Partridges are ABC's most successful show and the network wants to bolster its Saturday night disaster area. She said she understood that.

APART from these reasons, the network may be bearing in mind the fact that next season will be teen idol David Cassidy's last year on the show.

"He only signed for four years," explained his step-mother. "I think he wants to do something else. He is young so he hasn't experienced that much in his career. In all honesty, I think David is a good actor. . . . But he's rich enough he doesn't have to do anything."

Did she sometimes get tired of having David brought up in every conversation about the show?

"No, it doesn't annoy me," she declared firmly. "I'm not competitive with David. I am well aware of how success has struck him at an early age. It happened to me too only I was a little younger."

THE QUESTIONS took an even more personal turn, going into Shirley's volatile marriage with actor Jack Cassidy.

They have been back to-



SHIRLEY JONES

gether again for four months after being separated for eight.

Would she want things to be calmer? Not necessarily.

"I never get bored," she said gracefully. "I don't want that. The ups and downs make life more interesting. Marriage is a difficult thing to make work, and I kinda like the way things have gone."

Cassidy incidentally will be spending the summer on the New England straw hat circuit preparing a British hit "Suddenly at Home" for its Broadway debut.

How does she escape the

inevitable week-in and week-out boredom of doing a series?

"At the end of the season, it gets wearing," she admitted. "But I have tried not to make the show my life. I'm not a mother to the children on the set. I don't socialize. I go to my dressing room and close the door. A lot of people think I'm distant, but it works very well for me and seems to work for the kids."

FOR THE first time in 3-4 years she has a single record of her own out, other than the records she makes for the Partridges. It is titled "Walk in Silence" for Bell Records with "The World Is a Circle" from "Lost Horizon" on the flip side.

Would she like to see any changes on the series?

"I'd like the stories to get more honest," she said thoughtfully, "It gets a little goody-goody now and then. . . . Conflict might help but they are slow to allow that on the show. . . . They're afraid of losing anyone."

How does she keep her equanimity in interviews with so many personal questions fired at her, a reporter asked.

Shirley put her chin up again and smiled, "I'm accustomed to it I guess. I don't have any skeletons to hide. Everything has been brought out."