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- Belmont
- Mohr
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Europeans Skeptical On Kennedy's Death

By Robert H. Estabrook
The Washington Post Foreign Service

PARIS, Dec. 16.—"You can't tell me," said the Belgian, "that there wasn't a conspiracy in the assassination of President Kennedy. We know better."

"Someone paid Oswald to shoot the President, and then arranged for Ruby to murder Oswald to cover the tracks. Isn't that the way your underworld operates?"

That assertion is typical of the doubts and skepticism that linger in Europe more than three weeks after Mr. Kennedy's death.

Despite stories about the FBI report finding no evidence of a plot, few here will believe it. Ask almost any European, and you get the same response, with only slight variations.

In Moscow, where commentators have contrived to place the blame alternately on far-rightist groups in the United States and on "Trotskyite elements," the current line is that the assassination was carried out by Murder, Inc.

In Paris, where readers are inured to exposes of the innermost secrets of kings and queens, the complications are taken several steps further. The plot in America is said to involve the Mafia, Cosa Nostra, Big Steel, the arms industry and the kidnaping of Frank Sinatra Jr.

Only in Britain has the FBI report tended to quiet speculation. Even there, for two weeks popular papers carried on a running debate about sinister aspects which some writers contended were covered up.

The belief that Dallas police connived in Ruby's murder of Oswald and then attempted to hide the evidence is widely held here. Reporting from Washington in Le Figaro, Leo Sauvage implied a similar intent in the national investigation.

"The atmosphere which is developing around the inquiry in Washington is beginning to be sadly reminiscent of that which marked the inquiry in Dallas," he wrote.

L'Aurore involved the munitions manufacturers. "If peace were to break out," asked Jean Grandmougin, "would not everything which depends upon the armament industry

in America be doomed to crumble?"

"Kennedy revealed himself as a dangerous reformer. Did he not fall from the shots of those who, notwithstanding the H-bomb, oppose any change?"

Radio and television have joined in the guessing game. One novel version was that Oswald had been in touch with the Mafia and had gone to Mexico because that country is a "well known" Mafia center. Another was that American steel barons were involved because President Kennedy had opposed them.

Other commentators have asserted that there are many versions of the OAS (the French secret army which violently opposed an Algerian settlement) in the United States. The John Birch Society and Ku Klux Klan were singled out. America, said one broadcaster, is "rotten" with crime.

But perhaps the highest-orbiting speculative rocket was launched by Jean-Claude Servan-Schreiber, an otherwise conservative analyst, in a front-page article in Les Echos.

- The Washington Post and Times Herald
- The Washington Daily News _____
- The Evening Star _____
- New York Herald Tribune _____
- New York Journal-American _____
- New York Mirror _____
- New York Daily News _____
- New York Post _____
- The New York Times _____
- The Worker _____
- The New Leader _____
- The Wall Street Journal _____
- The National Observer _____
- People's World _____

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Everyone has read, he began, the statements of "gangster Valachi" about the "supreme association of crime," Cosa Nostra, which has "deep-rooted political branches" in every American city and state. "Who says that Dallas is not under its control?"

One of the major actions of President Kennedy and Attorney General Robert Kennedy, Servan-Schreiber continued, was to move against Cosa Nostra. Hence the organization had to counterattack.

"The kidnaping of the son of Frank Sinatra, who was known as a close friend of Kennedy, tends to show that matters will not rest there. If I were Bob Kennedy, I think I would be careful!"

Almost the only approach not given credence on a continent which loves conspiracy and American films, is the simple one: That despite occasional mistakes, Americans tend to have confidence in their law-enforcement agencies.