

# Studies on Kennedy's Assassination of President John F.

**THE KENNEDY ASSASSINATION AND THE AMERICAN PUBLIC**, edited by Bradley C. Greenberg and Edwin B. Parker. Stanford University Press, Stanford, Cal. 392 pages. \$8.95.

By **GEORGE MORRIS**

**THIS VOLUME** is a collection of articles and studies of public reaction to the assassination of President John F. Kennedy in the hours and days immediately after the deed. Sponsorship and financing of this project came mainly from the Institute of Communication Research of Stanford and from the Department of Communication of Michigan University. The two-score contributors are mostly experts in academic or research institutions in sociology, psychology, communication, public opinion sampling and related fields.

The book is quite technical and hardly for a wide audience. But it contains a summary of sampling of public reaction taken during the crucial event and can be of some value to future analysts of the Kennedy assassination and the related events.

The volume is among the numerous works continuing to come off the presses on the Kennedy assassination. And the more of that material that comes to the public, the more doubt develops on the Warren report. We also have such increasing doubts in studies of the Warren report by legal experts that have appeared in law journals, and just the other day the report was sharply criticized by doctors, criminologists and lawyers at the 18th Annual meeting of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences in Chicago.

A current 75-cent popular book, out in the paperback stores, by Sylvan Fox, titled "The Unanswered Questions About President Kennedy's Assassination" is a devastating criticism of the Warren report.

"The Kennedy Assassination and the American Public" however doesn't deal with the Warren report, nor is it concerned with the evidence on the crime.

ple thought and said in the hours when the news flashed and the days after.

Much of the content was an outcome of the planned studies by a group of social scientists

who gathered in Washington two days after the assassination. The event offered a unique opportunity to study the behavior of people in a moment of crisis.

It would be futile to attempt to detail the contents within the scope of a review. But I know many of our readers would be interested in the public reaction towards Communists in view of the widely publicized stories alleging Oswald was a "Marxist," or "Castroite" and the seizure by the John Birchites upon this to paint a "redplot."

All the opinion polls cited and studies agree basically that there was no increase in anti-Communist reaction as a result of the assassination. Paul Sheatsley and Jacob J. Feldman, summarizing the results of the national survey of public reaction, says: "One might have expected an increase in anti-Communist feelings or sharp decline in the belief that 'most people can be trusted.' But, in spite of their almost total preoccupation with the event and the strong emotions and even physical symptoms that it produced, Americans did not change their views of the world. The assassination

of their President did not make them more or less anti-Communist, it did not affect their attitude towards civil rights and did not erode their basic optimism about other peoples' motives."

In another place the analysts said, "It would seem that even at the most generous estimate, only a minority of the public blamed the assassination even indirectly on Communists..." Even in Dallas itself, a sampling of opinion a week after the assassination showed only 10 percent attributed the killing to "Communism or Communist sympathies."

A spot study of sentiment in a New England manufacturing town, predominantly of 15,000

clusions on attitude to Communists. The surveys were also broken down on the basis of educational level and showed that the less-educated were those most likely to blame "Communists" or "radicals." Another conclusion was that among the third of Negroes who suspected an "ideological" motive, two thirds of them thought it was most likely a segregationist.

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- DeLoach \_\_\_\_\_
- Mohr \_\_\_\_\_
- Casper \_\_\_\_\_
- Callahan \_\_\_\_\_
- Conrad \_\_\_\_\_
- Felt \_\_\_\_\_
- Gale \_\_\_\_\_
- Rosen \_\_\_\_\_
- Sullivan \_\_\_\_\_
- Tavel \_\_\_\_\_
- Trotter \_\_\_\_\_
- Wick \_\_\_\_\_
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- Holmes \_\_\_\_\_
- Gandy \_\_\_\_\_

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