

# London Awaits Proof That No Plot Was Behind Deaths

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LONDON, Nov. 25—The murder of Lee H. Oswald, who had been charged with the murder of President Kennedy, has blighted the image of the United States in Britain.

The reaction has been muted because Britain is still filled with the shock of Mr. Kennedy's death. But there is disbelief that the sequel to the President's murder could have happened, and anger and disgust that it did. The reaction was evident in questions

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put to Americans in London today, questions put with embarrassment in many cases.

The questions added up to the same thing: Was there a plot in which the Dallas police were involved and was lawlessness taking over in the United States?

Because the sympathy with the United States at the President's death is so strong, Britons did not argue with American friends' assurances that Oswald's death was an aberration.

## Americans Bewildered

But the assurances were not accepted easily, and, in fact, were not offered easily, a reflection of the bewilderment of Americans here.

At this distance from America, everything that happens there is put on the scales that forever weigh the United States' right to lead the Western world. It is not a right automatically accorded by Europeans.

It was won in two world wars. But the minutest action in the United States can jeopardize it. This may not be realized at home, but it is a fact that Americans abroad are made to realize almost every day.

Sometimes the United States is judged unfairly; there is a tendency in Europe to equate the United States with the action of a single unruly soldier abroad or with the vulgarity of a single tourist. This is a price paid for leadership.

## Seen as Single Tragedy

The two deaths have been put on the scales as a single tragedy that reflects a way of life that detracts from the role most Europeans believe it is America's

fate to play.

"It may be." The Yorkshire Post said editorially, "that both the shootings were manifestations of what might be called the Texan way of life—and death; that they were merely part of the violence which is too common in the United States."

Or as The Evening Standard's diarist put it: "It has been a shock to most English people to discover that the trigger-happy philosophy of the Western movie is still tragically part of American life today."

The words of Chief Justice Earl Warren at the bier have been widely quoted here: "If we really love this country, if we truly love justice and mercy, if we fervently want to make this nation better for those who are to follow us, we can at least abjure the hatred that consumes people, the false accusations that divide us and the bitterness that begets violence."

Yet after the murder of Oswald, The Evening Standard said, "It may be too much to hope even for that."

One way to heal some of the scars inflicted on the United States, many people here believe, is for the evidence against Oswald to be brought out fully.