

# European Suspicion Growing About Kennedy Assassination

BY DON COOK

LONDON — Jack Ruby has been tried and sentenced to death— but in Europe an ineradicable feeling grows and grows that "the riddle of Dallas" and "the mystery of the Kennedy assassination" are yet to be solved or explained.

Nobody quite comes down out of the clouds and says exactly what kind of a "plot" there could be which links Lee Harvey Oswald, Ruby, the Dallas police, the Communists, the right-wing extremists and the

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Federal Bureau of Investigation in one big conspiracy to kill President Kennedy and hush up the truth. But the feeling that there is or was a plot persists.

It seems, moreover, to straddle countries and society all over Europe. In London, a charwoman remarked to her American employers that she was convinced that President Johnson had been "in on the plot to kill President Kennedy" because he was so calm when he took office.

## Feeling of Plot

In Paris, a sophisticated Frenchman who has lived in the United States said in a conversation with this correspondent:

"I can't get out of my mind the feeling that it was all a plot. First you have Oswald, a known Communist sympathizer, able to get an American passport in one day and able to buy a

rifle and able to plant himself on a spot to kill the President without any surveillance. Then afterward you have all the covering up and confusion about the evidence.

"Perhaps it is only because I keep saying to myself that this is the way the French would act if they wanted to get rid of somebody—but I still think it was a plot."

In both London and Paris, the "plot theory" is being given a substantial boost by articles in two widely read weeklies—one written by a former Rhodes scholar in the British publication *The Spectator* and the other by a former member of the American Communist Party in *L'Express*.

*L'Express* article is by Thomas G. Buchanan Jr., who said he left the party in August of 1956 through lack of interest. He moved to France in 1961 and has been working as an electronics engineer.

## Dallas Police Linked

Why he decided to make himself an "expert" on the Kennedy assassination is not known, but his "study" of the affair has been spread through four issues of *L'Express*, and he went to Dallas to cover the Ruby trial for the weekly.

Buchanan's thesis is that the Dallas police connived to permit the assassination of the President, and then connived to have Oswald murdered so he could not talk. He writes:

"That a municipal book depot would employ a notorious Communist as a worker would seem very

normal in France, but the thought is impossible in the United States and especially in Dallas, the most rightist of all American cities. To be only suspected of pro-Castroism would be sufficient to be barred from even the most humble official job."

From that, Buchanan concludes that somebody in right-wing Dallas was in collusion with left-wing Oswald.

## Sales Suspended

When it was called to the attention of the editor of *L'Express*, Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber, that the author of his expose on the assassination was a former Communist Party member, he replied that "the fact interests me only moderately."

Neither the official version of the Kennedy assassination nor the Buchanan theory has yet been proven, he said, adding that he could not understand why so many Americans consider the slightest questioning of the official thesis of the murder to be a blow to the prestige of the United States.

However, Servan-Schreiber, who is one of the "brain trust" of presidential candidate Gaston Defferre, took the unusual action of suspending American sales of the last two issues of his weekly, containing Buchanan's reports from Dallas. He said he did not want to "inflame American opinion during the Ruby trial."

The article in *The Spectator* was written by Mordecai Rienberg, who was a Canadian Rhodes scholar

He is less sweeping in his thesis of what the plot might have been at Dallas but more meticulous in his examination of the evidence which is publicly known about Oswald and his activities, and more precise in his questions.

The article raises these points:

The Dallas police first stated that the rifle found in the school book depository building was a Mauser. They then changed it to an Italian carbine.

Paraffin tests on Oswald showed gunpowder on his hands but not on his face, indicating that he fired a pistol but not a rifle.

#### Shot From in Front?

Doctors first said the bullet which struck down President Kennedy entered his throat below the Adam's apple—which would have meant that he was shot from in front instead of behind.

There were three shots

fired, but evidently five bullets were gathered up or extracted after the assassination. The windshield of the Kennedy official car was penetrated by a bullet—but it has never been made clear whether it was from the front—or a ricochet.

Oswald left the book depository at about 12:32 p.m. and reached his rooming house at between 12:45 and 1 o'clock—but the best time he could have made in

traffic would have still made it five minutes later than the maximum time he is said to have gotten there.

Finally, says Brienberg:

"He had the financial resources to travel to Mexico, to print political literature privately and to pay a stenographer to transcribe a book critical of the Soviet Union which he was writing. The FBI early acknowledged that Oswald regularly received money through the mail, but it has not yet stated the source.

"Oswald had in his possession the private phone number and the automobile license plate number of the FBI official in charge of 'subversives' in Dallas. That information is not obtainable from the Dallas telephone directory. Moreover, the agent had contacted Oswald several

times before the assassination.

By such questions the "riddle of Dallas" is kept alive and talked about from top to bottom in Europe. An affair which Americans appear to regard as simple, open-and-shut and a closed case — awaiting only the confirmation of the Warren commission to confirm the details—is more and more regarded in Europe as a mystery and a plot.

#### Trial 'Disgraceful'

The "plot-minded" are perfectly prepared to fit Jack Ruby into the whole tangle—how they do not quite say. But in the meantime, the Dallas trial was a great boost for the Europeans ready to leap all over anything America, including its justice.

"No trial that I ever witnessed or heard of has been conducted amid such disgraceful scenes," writes the Cassandra columnist of the London Daily Mirror, William Connor.

— "The judge who presided over these horrible and macabre proceedings was an exhibitionist weakling if I ever saw one. Dallas has had its ball game. The big "D" stands for "damned".