

THE HARRIS SURVEY

Many Still Feel Full Kennedy Story Untold

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BY LOUIS HARRIS

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Even after the publication of the Warren Commission Report, a majority of Americans still remain unconvinced that the full story of the assassination of John F. Kennedy is known. A just completed special survey of a nationwide cross-section of the public reveals these findings:

Some 31% of the people still believe that Lee Harvey Oswald had accomplices, even though the commission said he was the late President's sole assassin. Another 13% just aren't certain whether Oswald did it alone or with others.

While 87% are now convinced that Oswald was the murderer, 2% believe he was not, and 11% are not sure.

Too Involved

The reasons people feel Oswald had accomplices center on the belief that the assassination was too involved and carried out too efficiently for one man to do it alone; the conviction on the part of some that Jack Ruby was paid to kill Oswald; the Russian and Communist background of the assassin; the feeling that Oswald wasn't smart enough to do the job all by himself.

The survey, completed after the issuance of the commission report, followed an earlier one taken just prior to release of the report. Thus, the Harris Survey can report the public's ideas about the Kennedy assassination before the report and

to what extent the commission's findings changed these beliefs.

The Warren Commission report achieved remarkable coverage among the American people, with 94% attesting to having heard about it.

People were asked:

From what you have read or heard, do you feel the full story is in the Warren Commission Report? Or do you think there are still a lot of unanswered questions about who killed President John Kennedy and how it was done?

UNANSWERED QUESTIONS

Total Public

Table with 2 columns: Question, %

For the most part, however, the vast majority of Americans are convinced Oswald was the killer, as indicated in answers to this question:

Do you feel that Lee Harvey Oswald was or was not the man who shot President John Kennedy?

OSWALD'S GUILT

Table with 2 columns: Question, %

The biggest source of lingering doubt surrounds the question of whether Oswald had accomplices. Both before and after issuance of the report, a cross-section of the public was asked:

Do you feel Lee Harvey

did he do it alone?"

OSWALD ACCOMPLICES?

Table with 2 columns: Question, %

While the report dispelled doubts about Oswald having accomplices in the minds of 11% of the public, a majority of those people who believed earlier that Oswald could not have done it alone did not change their minds on the basis of the commission's findings.

The reasons for this lingering doubt are fascinating:

Why do you feel (Oswald had accomplices, did it alone)?

REASONS FOR OPINION

Table with 2 columns: Reason, %

WHY DID IT ALONE

Table with 2 columns: Reason, %

(Note: Percentages add to more than 100% because some people gave more than one reason for their beliefs.)

The Warren Commission report cut in half the number of people who previously felt that the assassination was too intricate and involved an operation of one man to

with one in nine persons. An equally large number are probably chronic doubters who tend to feel the story about almost any important public event is never quite told.

A number of people feel that the key to the assassination rests in explaining why Ruby shot Oswald. Some believe Ruby was paid to do it, while others still recall the initial television reports that Oswald was seen in Ruby's night club before the murder. The last claim, of course, was specifically discredited as untrue by the commission.

It is possible, of course, that the future will turn up facts beyond those found by the Warren Commission. But it is more likely that speculation about the assassination of John F. Kennedy will continue among millions of Americans, as appears to have happened throughout the world.