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THE ASSASSINATION

Deep and Growing Doubts

The Warren commission report on President Kennedy's assassination had barely hit the archive shelves before its detractors began pounding their typewriters. The succession of critical autopsies on the official postmortem has had one predictable effect: an erosion of public confidence in the Warren commission's verdict. According to findings released this week by opinion analyst Louis Harris, Americans harbor deep and growing doubts that Lee Harvey Oswald alone killed John F. Kennedy.

Only one in three Americans," Harris reports, "is convinced that the Warren report contained the full story. The major reservation of the public centers on the question whether the assassination was the work of one man or as part of a broader plot."

Just as the Harris survey appeared so did yet another biting critique of the Warren Commission investigation—this one by Yale University's professor of law and legal history, Alexander M. Bickel, in Commentary magazine. In his thoughtful essay, Bickel accuses the commission of "hurried and superficial" findings and calls for the creation of a commission to conduct a new investigation to quiet doubts about the assassination facts. Simultaneously in Washington, New York's Republican Rep. Theodore Kupferman introduced a proposal for a special Congressional review of the Warren commission's investigation.

So far, all arguments for reopening the case have been firmly ignored by the Administration. But the prevalence of dissenters and the depth of doubts already signal an unchallengeable conclusion. So long as the memory of the late President endures, and the Kennedy name continues to be a household word, there will be speculation and bewilderment over the tragic events in Dallas in November 1963.