

Harris: 2/3 Now Believe Assassination Was a Plot

By LOUIS HARRIS

For the first time since the assassination of President Kennedy in 1963, a sizable majority of the American people (66 per cent) believes that the shooting was not the work of one man but was part of a broader plot.

Within the past 60 days public confidence in the Warren Commission report has been pared nearly by half. Seven out of every 10 Americans are convinced that there are still many "important unanswered questions."

A major contributor to this swelling doubt is the investigation into the assassination by New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison. Nearly two out of three people say they have been following the events. Among these there is an even division of opinion on the merits of the Garrison inquiry: 45 per cent believe it will shed new light on the assassination, while 46 per cent think not much will come of it.

All in all, one American in four has been converted to a belief in the conspiracy theory alleged by the New Orleans inquiry. One in three of the less well educated and one in five of the better educated have changed their minds.

From the beginning the group most prone to criticize the findings of the Warren Commission and to believe the assassination was part of a broader conspiracy has been the less well educated, low-income segment of the population. Although only half of those in this group have followed Garrison's activities, they have been most inclined to believe his allegations. People under 35 are

more likely than their elders to suspect that Lee Harvey Oswald was not alone in the killing.

Since last September the Harris Survey has asked carefully drawn cross sections of the public:

"Do you feel the assassination of President John F. Kennedy was the work of one man, or do you feel it was part of a broader plot or conspiracy?"

| | MAY '67 | FEB. '67 | SEPT. '66 |
|------------------------|---------|----------|-----------|
| Part of a broader plot | 66% | 44% | 46% |
| Work of one man | 19 | 35 | 34 |
| Not sure | 15 | 21 | 20 |

A breakdown of the May results by key groups is revealing:

| | PLOT | ONE MAN | NOT SURE |
|----------------------|------|---------|----------|
| Nationwide | 66% | 19% | 15% |
| By age: | | | |
| under 35 | 70 | 15 | 15 |
| 35-49 | 65 | 21 | 14 |
| 50 and over | 65 | 18 | 17 |
| By education: | | | |
| Grade school or less | 71 | 13 | 16 |
| High school | 69 | 15 | 16 |
| College | 57 | 30 | 13 |

With the rise in belief that the assassination was part of a broader conspiracy, conviction that the Warren Commis-

sion told the full story has dropped sharply:

"Do you feel that the Warren Commission report on President Kennedy's assassination told the full story, or do you feel that there are still many important unanswered questions?"

WARREN COMMISSION REPORT

| | MAY '67 | FEB. '67 | SEPT. '65 |
|---------------------------------|---------|----------|-----------|
| Told full story | 18% | 30% | 32% |
| Still many unanswered questions | 72 | 59 | 54 |
| Not sure | 10 | 11 | 14 |

The Garrison investigation in New Orleans has been followed by nearly two out of every three people—64 per cent—in the country. The 64 per cent were asked:

"Do you feel that the New Orleans investigation into the Kennedy assassination will shed real light on the killing, or don't you think much will come of it?"

| | WILL SHED LIGHT | LITTLE COME OF IT | NOT SURE |
|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------|
| Nationwide | 45% | 46% | 9% |
| By education: | | | |
| 8th grade or less | 46 | 40 | 14 |
| High school | 48 | 44 | 8 |
| College | 39 | 54 | 7 |