

man. Complained Speaker Tip O'Neill: "Sprague was running the committee." Sprague demanded a "bare bones" \$13 million budget for two years, lobbied House members in a grating fashion, and freely granted press interviews.

Rubbed the wrong way, Congressmen began to counterattack. Some pointed out that Sprague's budget request was almost eight times the \$1.7 million expended for Nixon's impeachment inquiry and Ford's confirmation hearings put together. Congressman Dale Milford demanded "hard evidence" that the Warren Commission had been wrong in declaring that Lee Harvey Oswald had acted alone when he shot Kennedy. Just before the House vote last week, a report leaked that the Justice Department had confirmed its finding that James Earl Ray had indeed been acting alone when he shot King.

Still, the Congressmen could not risk disbanding the committee altogether: they might be accused some day of somehow taking part in a conspiracy to cover up the truth. The House ordered the committee to come up with a "realistic budget" in two months' time and to produce evidence that the investigation might lead somewhere.

No sooner said than Henry B. Gonzalez, the committee's new chairman, claimed that he had "new evidence" proving conspiracies in the two murders. Where was the proof? He could not say: it was secret. He also suggested that "sinister forces" were out to scuttle the probe. Who were they? FBI agents whom he could not name. Just such unsubstantiated allegations have been raising doubts about the shootings for years. The long struggle to clear up the Kennedy and King assassinations is still far from over.

HOUSE INVESTIGATOR RICHARD SPRAGUE



INVESTIGATIONS

Shrinking Sprague

John Kennedy has been dead for more than 13 years and Martin Luther King Jr. for nearly nine; yet many Americans still wonder if the full truth has been told about their assassinations. Last week the House of Representatives voted 237 to 164 to continue still another investigation of the deaths—but for only two months at this point. The main reason for the restriction is an abrasive and aggressive man named Richard A. Sprague.

A tough ex-district attorney from Philadelphia, Sprague, 51, is the chief counsel and staff director of the Select Committee on Assassinations. During the past few months, he has shocked the House by acting like a Congress-

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