

'Assassins' Probe Gets Prime Time

The "unanswered" questions in the assassinations of John F. Kennedy, Robert Kennedy, Martin Luther King Jr., and the attempted assassination of George Wallace will be examined in a CBS News report that may preempt most of the network's nighttime schedule on November 20. According to Les Midgley, executive producer of "The Assassins," what is currently being checked out includes:

- The possibility of a "second Oswald" firing at J.F.K., as well as the first Oswald's CIA connections.

- The discrepancies in the R.F.K. shooting account, such as the powder burns on Kennedy vs. eyewitness testimony saying that Sirhan Sirhan's gun wasn't that close.

- James Earl Ray's financial backing and his eccentric movements before and after the King shooting.

- The alleged Charles Colson-Richard Nixon interest in Arthur Bremer, suggested by at least one of the White House tapes.

Midgley, who produced the CBS News special on the Warren Report in 1967, acknowledges that "there has been a rebirth of conspiracy theories, and after Watergate, I can understand that." The conspiracy theories flourish mostly on college campuses. "The idea for 'The Assassins' came from Dan Rather," Midgley says. "He was traveling around the country promoting his book on Nixon, and the questions he got weren't about Watergate, but about the Warren Commission and other governmental 'cover-ups.'" The first CBS News report on the Warren Report has been called a "whitewash." Midgley, naturally, disagrees, but says: "I hope like hell we can uncover some absolutely sensational stuff. . . . These are major criminal cases with some exotic people, and strange things going on. . . ."