

NYT

11-25-66

Unanswered Questions

There are enough solid doubts of thoughtful citizens, among the shrill attacks on the Warren Commission, now to require answers. Further dignified silence, or merely more denials by the commission or its staff, are no longer enough.

We have come to this conclusion not because of any of the specific charges brought by the dozens of books, TV shows and articles about President Kennedy's assassination but because of the general confusion in the public mind raised by the publication of allegations and the many puzzling questions that have been raised.

Since the whole purpose of the commission's appointment and mission is being eroded a little at a time by the clamor, it would seem the commission itself has the most reason to answer. Certainly, it should be given the chance.

Its members and staff, in varying degree, of course, have full knowledge—or should have—of the investigations, evaluations and decisions that went into the report. Until they have spoken, the demands for special Congressional committees, foundation studies and inquiries by prestigious people seem premature. The Warren Commission itself is composed of leading members of Senate and House and responsible citizens, headed by the respected Chief Justice.

Perhaps every detail will not be settled. History can never be as neatly packaged as fiction, and people are still writing and reading about the assassination of President Lincoln a hundred years later. But enough responsible inquiry has been aroused to deserve responsible answers.

"The members of the Warren Commission have performed a difficult task well," was the comment in these columns when the report was issued more than two years ago. "Their report in no way excludes others from investigating this tragedy, but they have set an admirable standard in the quest for truth."

Further clarification and answers to unanswered questions by them now would be a logical epilogue.