

Questions Persist On Assassinations

Washington — During the violent 1960s, assassins gunned down President John F. Kennedy, his brother Robert and the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. In 1972, a gunman shot Alabama's Gov. George Wallace, putting him in a wheelchair for life.

Millions of Americans simply aren't satisfied with the official verdicts. Investigators keep uncovering new facts, offering fresh theories and suggesting possible conspiracies.

Sen. Richard Schweiker (R-Pa.), has produced circumstantial evidence that President Kennedy may have been murdered in retaliation for CIA attempts on Cuban Premier Fidel Castro's life. The senator has submitted his findings to the Senate Intelligence Committee for further investigation.

Coretta King, widow of the martyred civil rights leader, suspects that her husband also was the victim of a conspiracy. She has asked the congressional Black Caucus to help reopen the investigation.

IN CONGRESS, however, there is a strange reluctance to inquire too deeply into the Kennedy and King assassinations.

The late J. Edgar Hoover once indicated that higher authorities wanted the FBI to "convince the public" that Lee Harvey Oswald, acting alone, killed Kennedy.

On Nov. 26, 1963, less than a week after the assassination, the FBI director noted that the FBI's investigative report was supposed "to settle the dust, insofar as Oswald and his activities are concerned . . ."

The Warren Commission, headed by the late Chief Justice Earl Warren, was appointed to review President Kennedy's assassination. It specifically requested information on political assassination attempts in other countries, but the Central Intelligence Agency failed to mention that its operatives had been trying to knock off Fidel Castro.

On Sept. 7, 1963, Castro told the Associated Press he knew about the attempts and warned that two could play the same game. Later that month, Oswald turned up in Mexico



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City, where he visited the Cuban and Soviet consulates. It is known that he spoke to a Soviet KGB agent.

A Mexican informant, Sylva Duran, later informed the U.S. Embassy that she saw Oswald inside the Cuban consulate on Sept. 28. She said she overheard the Cubans talk to Oswald about assassinating someone and saw them pass money to Oswald. President Kennedy was murdered on Nov. 22. The next day, CIA Director John

McCone informed the new President, Lyndon Johnson, about Oswald's activities in Mexico. The Mexican informant's account was subsequently reported to the President, but she repudiated it under questioning by Mexican police.

Years afterward, Johnson told intimates he was convinced Castro was behind the Kennedy assassination, but no federal agency has done anything about it.

Schweiker's investigation has merely raised more questions. He told us it would take at least 50 investigators, with the power to subpoena witnesses and take sworn testimony, to pin down the facts.

Sen. Daniel Inouye (D-Hawaii), chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, which has the jurisdiction, assured us that he didn't intend to let Schweiker's report "gather dust," but that other priorities will prevent his committee from getting to it until early next year.

ON THE HOUSE SIDE, two unheralded congressmen, Reps. Thomas Downing (D-Va.) and Henry Gonzales (D-Tex.), are pressing for a full investigation of political assassinations. Downing wants to concentrate on the John F. Kennedy murder. Gonzales would widen the probe to include the other assassinations. And the Black Caucus will insist upon investigating the King shooting.

Downing is a quiet Southern conservative who has spent 18 years in the House avoiding controversy, but he has become convinced that there was a conspiracy by more than one person to murder President Kennedy.

Downing doesn't claim to know who was behind the conspiracy, but he recently received 1,000 CIA documents on the Kennedy assassination. He told us the information "clearly indicates that the CIA never believed" that Oswald acted alone.

DOWNING AND GONZALES must get past the powerful House Rules Committee before they can get authorization for a special investigation, but Chairman Ray Madden (D-Ind) told us that authorization cannot come until next year.

The questions, meanwhile, won't go away.