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Special to The New York Times
WASHINGTON, Nov. 22 — President Kennedy's assassination threw the American political scene into turmoil today.

It removed at a single blow the man who would have been renominated for a second term in the White House by acclamation nine months from now. It elevated into the Presidency and the leadership of the Democratic party an older, more conservative man still emerging from his Southern heritage.

It increased immeasurably for the leaders of the Republican party prospects of electing a President next November.

The shock of the President's death stilled the official voices of politics in the capital. But so profound was the potential effect on the government and leadership that private consideration could not be silenced.

Despite the many questions raised, one political consequence seemed clear in the hushed, almost ashamed, assessments that observers undertook this evening: The death of the President gave new life to Republican hopes.

Whatever political liabilities might have encumbered him, John F. Kennedy was an incumbent President, one whose person and personality had been impressed on the American electorate.

All Changed Now

Republican leaders knew this, while they loudly scored what they saw as his weaknesses, they saw Mr. Kennedy as a figure to be reckoned with politically. Their candidate would almost surely be the underdog.

Now, in the flash of a gunshot, all that is changed. The Republican Presidential candidate, whoever he may be, will be running against a man with nine months in the White House—or none at all—instead of nearly four years of unremitting public exposure.

When the first shock of the tragedy has subsided and politicians talk again, they are sure to feel that the Republicans face a new, more favorable course next year. And this is likely to affect their choice of a candidate considerably.

There is one final tragedy about today: Kennedy had a sense of history, but he also had an administrative technique that made the gathering of history extremely difficult. He hated organized meetings of the Cabinet or the National Security Council, and therefore he chose to decide policy after private meetings, usually with a single person.

The result of this is that the true history of his Administration really cannot be written now that he is gone.

He had a joke about this: When he was asked what he was going to do when he retired, he always replied that he had a problem. It was, he said, that he would have to face two other members of his staff, McGeorge Bundy and Arthur Schlesinger Jr., to the press.

Unfortunately, however, he was the only man in the White House who really knew what went on there during his Administration, and now he is gone.

Asks 'Defense' Of Oswald To Sift
Possibility Of Larger Conspiracy *

To The Reporter Dispatch:

The course of action of the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy (the Warren Commission), will leave many questions unresolved as to the possible existence of a conspiracy which planned the assassination. For example, the job in the School Book Depository, which Oswald quite readily got when he applied for it, as his last unemployment check ran out. Did "conspirators" arrange for Oswald to get this job, there, at that time?

The Commission's counsel, J. Lee Rankin, says that the Commission is "not engaged in determining the guilt of anybody." In Heaven's name, if the Commission will not do that, then who will? Supposing Oswald to be the dupe of a conspiracy, isn't there going to be any official inquiry into the possible guilt of the conspirators, or even into their possible identity? The mechanism for doing this would be to conduct a "defense" of Oswald, trying to find every bit of evidence that would throw the blame on others. This is what a defense lawyer would normally do, and it would go far toward exposing any conspirators. Call this a "devil's advocate" in reverse. If you will, the Catholic Church has long recognized the need for a "devil's advocate" and never was this device more needed than in the present case, to get all possible facts thoroughly explored.

The fact that the Warren Commission's hearings will all be closed to the public will merely serve to raise doubts, increasing with time, that the Commission is able to face the unpleasant possibility that the assassination of President Kennedy was an "inside job" planned by conspirators some of whom may hold high places in the American business, governmental, military, or political scene.

Appointment of the Commission has had the result (whether planned that way or not) of keeping concealed from the public the various pieces of physical evidence in the case. Among these are the ballistic test photographs of the bullets and rifles, the certified autopsy reports, the medical report of the removal of the bullet from Governor Connally's thigh, and the transcripts or tape recordings of the many hours of interrogations of Oswald by the Dallas police on Nov. 22, 23, and 24, 1963.

Perhaps in Oswald's own recorded words we could find some leads to the conspirators who may still be moving freely in Washington or Dallas circles. Perhaps he told who it was who took the snapshot of him holding a rifle in a Dallas back yard in April 1963. Perhaps he named the man who drove him to the rifle range for target practice early in November 1963. Did he name a person working at the School Book Depository who asked him to bring the rifle to work on that fateful Friday, so he could borrow it for the weekend?

The members of the Warren Commission (with one notable exception) all hold full-time and important jobs, and may not be able to devote enough time to the affairs of the Commission to do a thorough job. We have heard that the FBI report given to the Commission was not a very "tight" legal document. Thus, providing a team of (say) three well qualified, highly regarded, intelligent criminal lawyers, paid by the Commission to sift the evidence and present a defense of Oswald before a legal Court of Inquiry (such as the State of Texas originally proposed to set up) would seem to provide the only sure way to leave no stone unturned in seeking the truth.

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* Read :

Seeds of Doubt
by Jack Minnis and Staughton Lynd
The New Republic, 1244 19th St., N.W., Washington 36, D. C.
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