

House Assassination Probers Facing the Ax as Costs Mount

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Washington (News Bureau)—A House administration subcommittee chopped \$500,000 out of the \$3 million budget for a committee investigating the assassination of President Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr. yesterday amid growing complaints that little has been accomplished during the 15-month investigation.

A showdown may come today when the full House Administration Committee, which oversees the spending of House committees, meets to decide whether the Assassinations Committee should be shut down completely.

Rep. Joseph Minish (D-N.J.), an Administration Committee member who originally supported the investigation, said yesterday that he is getting mail complaining about the cost of the investigation. It could reach \$5 million by the time it is completed at the end of the year. There have been no public hearings so far, and none is planned until the fall.

Nothing Conclusive.

"Have you found out anything at all?" Minish asked Assassinations Committee Chairman Louis Stokes (D-Ohio).

Stokes replied: "At this stage we would not be able to give you any type of conclusive result. We can't say that we have found a conspiracy."

Stokes has insisted that he cannot go into great detail about the investigation because potential witnesses would be tipped off. We also argued that the panel has an obligation to the CIA and FBI not to release their documents.

But unlike most committees, the assassination panel is dealing with material as much as 14 years old that could probably be declassified.

"There hasn't been a single leaked document anywhere," Stokes said. But a House Administration Committee member, Rep. J. Herbert Burke (R-Fla.), said: "That's because the committee has nothing to leak."