

## 50% IN U.S. WEPT AT ASSASSINATION

Reaction to Kennedy Death  
Reported by Psychologists

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LOS ANGELES, Sept. 4—As many as half the adults in the United States wept after the assassination of President Kennedy. A comparable number had trouble sleeping. Upward of 40 per cent felt loss of appetite and fatigue. And around one out of five suffered stomach upset.

This was reported today by psychologists who went to work immediately after the event last Nov. 22 on a scientific nationwide sampling of public reactions.

The findings were reported today as the nation's psychological profession opened its annual convention. As many as 7,000 of the organization's total membership of 22,000 is expected to participate in the five-day meeting at the Biltmore and Statler Hilton hotels.

One of the major assassination-reaction surveys was made by the University of Chicago's National Opinion Research Center, under the direction of Drs. Paul B. Sheatsley and Norman M. Bradburn, with a carefully chosen cross-section of 1,400 persons.

### Attitudes Toward Oswald

A study of attitudes toward Lee Harvey Oswald, the alleged assassin, and his killer, Jack Ruby, was made by Seymour and Norma Feshbach of the University of Colorado. The subjects were 315 college students and 64 citizens of the college town of Boulder.

The over-all reaction to the assassination was judged in the Chicago survey to have manifested a remarkable degree of psychological stability among the nation's citizens.

The physical symptoms experienced by many people were classified as quite normal. Manifestations of apathy, undue alarmism, guilt obsessions and anti-Communist hysteria were, the scientists commented, "gratifyingly" observable only among "a very tiny fraction of the American public."

On the question of where blame for the assassination really rested, there were two sets of responses. On the generalized question, a majority of those surveyed cited mental illness or "a generalized hatred", 16 per cent cited Oswald's presumed status as a Communist; 15 per cent blamed Leftists generally for the crime; 5 per cent blamed segregationists or Right-wingers generally, and 3 per cent appraised Oswald as a Right-wing extremist.

### Castro Is Mentioned

When pressed about broad group or organizational association with the occurrence of the event, 37 per cent of the respondents mentioned Cuba or Premier Castro; 32 per cent mentioned the Soviet Union; 26 per cent segregationists; 15 per cent the people of Dallas, and 15 per cent members of the John Birch Society or other Right-wing adherents.

Twenty-two per cent thought the Secret Service was to some extent at fault.

The psychologists cited as an "anomaly" the fact that in a number of surveys "a majority of the public expressed the opinion that the assassin did not act alone, but rather was part of a larger plot."

This was called "difficult to reconcile with the fact that, in response to open-ended or even direct questions, only small minorities of the public blamed the Communists or other conspiratorial groups."

The "conspiratorial" notion, in the face of extensive factual evidence to the contrary, was assessed as "not an indication of widespread paranoia, but as a normal response to a bizarre and threatening situation."

### 'Require Explanation'

"People require explanations of important events," the Chicago researchers commented, "and in many cases what has been called 'cabalism' provides the most understandable and acceptable one."

"It is hard for most people to understand an event in terms of the psychic processes of a mentally ill person, and it is threatening to face the fact that there are at large among us mentally ill persons capable of capriciously ending the life even of a President."

Amid much convention discussion of the educational "drop-out" problem, a Los Angeles psychologist suggested that many drop-outs had reasonable justification.

Dr. Thomas C. Greening, who gives courses at the University of California at Los Angeles, said:

"From my own experience, and from my observations of teachers and students who have been my patients, I must conclude that the school system is a notoriously and inept means of providing a truly human education."

"Young people, though angry, guilty and confused, often have the innate wisdom to sense this, and drop out in large numbers from high schools, colleges and graduate schools."