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Russian Translation

Warren Report Ban

WASHINGTON — (UPI) — The U.S. Government is wondering what to do with several thousand copies of a Russian translation of the Warren Commission report on the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

The Kremlin recently decided to ban further distribution of the report inside the Soviet Union, putting a new dent in Soviet-American relations and short-circuiting a costly effort to put the young president's death in perspective.

The action also has led U.S. officials to believe it was part of a continuing Soviet attack on President Johnson.

CONSPIRACY

The story began soon after U.S. publication of the Warren report in September, 1964. The U.S. ambassador in Moscow, Foy D. Kohler, reported that the report failed to shake most Russians in their suspicion that Kennedy's death was the work of a conspiracy.

The central conclusion of the Warren report was that assassin Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone.

The U.S. Information Agency decided to translate the 888-page report into Russian and circulate it in the Soviet Union. It hired a private firm, the Institute of Modern Languages in Washington, to make the translation. About ten Russian language scholars worked on it for months.

USIA originally planned to send up to 10,000 copies to



FOY D. KOHLER
Unshaken suspicions

Russians through the mail. Later it decided to distribute a much smaller number to such key Soviet citizens as government officials, scholars and editors. Some 5,000 copies were printed at a cost of about \$13 a copy — a total of about \$65,000.

Beginning last June it distributed some 650 of these in Russia. But on August 24 a U.S. Embassy official was summoned to the foreign ministry in Moscow and told that the Russians considered the Warren report a slander.

The Warren report absolved the Soviet Union of complicity in the Kennedy assassination. But it described Oswald's criticisms of Soviet life during his stay in Russia.

Additionally, U.S. officials believe the Soviet press has gone out of its way since last fall to cast doubt on the Warren report. It has picked up in considerable detail books and articles challenging the commission's findings, including Joachim Joesten's conclusion that the assassination was a right-wing plot to put President Johnson in office.

In the eyes of U.S. officials, this has taken on proportions of a "campaign" against Johnson as part of Russia's overall condemnation of the U.S. role in the Vietnam war. These officials surmise that the Russians felt further distribution of the Warren report ran counter to this campaign.

Even so, USIA officials consider the project at least a partial success if some of the 650 copies distributed actually were read by Soviet citizens. Meantime, the United States is awaiting a reply to an appeal to the Kremlin to reconsider the ban.