

## *Not a Federal Crime*

Of all the strange events and contradictions highlighted in the Warren Report none is more anomalous than the fact that the assassin of President Kennedy committed no Federal crime. Congress long ago made it a Federal offense to attack or murder various categories of Government employes, including judges, U.S. Attorneys, FBI agents and postal inspectors. But no similar protection has ever been extended to the President and Vice President or members of the Cabinet.

This critical deficiency in the law was brought to light at the time of the assassination last November, and numerous bills were introduced to correct it. But there the action ended. Both the House and Senate Judiciary Committees waited for the inevitable recommendation of the Warren Commission, and now that recommendation has come at a moment when Congress is trying to finish its most urgent tasks and adjourn. It is easy to understand why the committees did not wish to take any final action until the Commission had reported, but they could at least have held hearings and have had bills ready for action as soon as the endorsement came.

Majority Leader Mansfield has suggested that Congress remain in session until it can pass bills making it a crime to assassinate the President and otherwise tightening the system for his protection. These are not minor items. Both are important from the viewpoint of the national security. Even at this late date Congress could manifest its concern by enacting the best of the bills to bring the full resources of the Federal Government into play in case of any future attack upon the President.