

PLOT ON KENNEDY STILL SUSPECTED

Theory Persists in Europe Despite Warren Report

Special to The New York Times

LONDON, March 13 — The suspicion of conspiracy in President Kennedy's assassination persists in Europe, even as the whole subject fades out of current attention and into history.

Only in Britain can it be said with any assurance that the Warren Commission's report on the assassination has substantially dispelled doubts. Elsewhere, the report seems to have left most prejudices unaffected.

These are the findings of New York Times correspondents asked to appraise local views 15 months after the tragedy in Dallas.

As would be expected, the issue of how the assassination came about has largely dropped out of conversation. Public charges of conspiracy have just about ceased.

Nevertheless, the general report is that underlying opinions have altered little. If people are questioned about the President's death, many will still respond that there must have been a conspiracy of some kind.

Few Convinced in Rome

"Although discussion of the assassination has considerably died down, the feeling remains that one day the full truth may be known. Few Italians are really convinced that there is no more to the story than what was published in the Warren report."

From Bonn, a correspondent reported that the Warren Commission volume had been a best-seller but that it "did little to dispel the prevalent notion that the assassin was probably the instrument of a powerful organization of the radical left or right."

"The report came too late to rekindle public debate," the Bonn writer added. "There was some reaction, generally critical, from the educated minority, but the people as a whole had already ceased to wrack their brains about the tragedy."

The Paris report was that the subject had just about dropped from sight and that the Communists, who had kept interest alive for some time with charges of rightist conspiracy, had turned to other topics.

The Warren Report was not available in Moscow, and the typical Soviet citizen knows nothing about it. The Soviet Press printed a brief summary of its findings and then quoted some skeptical comments from the West.

An Impact in Britain

In Britain, the conspiracy theories never achieved the widespread acceptance that they had on the Continent. And there are indications that, among the informed few who read it, the Warren Report did have an impact.

A major effort to attack the report was made by Prof. H. R. Trevor - Roper of Oxford. Answering articles exploded all his points, however, and he has not been heard from recently.

This week's New Statesman carries a lengthy article on the report by Lord Devlin, one of the most respected of English judges, now retired. The piece appeared in the United States in *The Atlantic Monthly*.

Lord Devlin, surveying the critics, says the average reader of the report need not worry that he has not studied it closely enough "if this is the best criticism that can be produced by those who have spared neither time nor money in the dissection of the report."

"It is no doubt distressing to the logical mind," Lord Devlin writes, "when after an immense investigation two extraordinary murders occurring in the course of the same story are explained only as disconnected and senseless actions."

"But life is often more distressing than logical. And what is the alternative? Perhaps one day the critics will produce one. If they can suggest one that is even faintly credible, they will deserve more public attention than they are likely to get by making charges of suppression that are more than faintly ridiculous."

Findings Again Attacked

A second and more detailed attack by Vincent J. Salandria of Philadelphia on the Warren Commission's findings that only one assassin was involved in the shooting of President Kennedy is published in the current issue of *Liberation*, an antiwar monthly that one of its editors has described as "non-Communist."

Mr. Salandria, a lawyer and consultant to the American Civil Liberties Union, says in the 18,000-word article:

"We maintain that the evidence gathered by the Warren Commission certainly indicates the existence of one entry wound in front of the President's neck and a separate wound in his back. To avoid this obvious conclusion the Warren Commission appears to have involved itself wittingly or unwittingly in fabrication and withholding of vital evidence."

To bolster his original contention, made in the January issue of the magazine, that the bullets that killed President Kennedy and wounded Gov. John B. Connally Jr. of Texas had come from at least two directions and therefore showed a conspiracy, Mr. Salandria quotes at length from the testimony of physicians and a nurse who examined President Kennedy's wounds at Parkland Hos-

pital in Dallas and the testimony of a Secret Service agent Glen A. Bennett, who had been riding in the car behind the President's.

Mr. Salandria says that the medical examinations in Dallas were made before a tracheotomy—an opening of the trachea to facilitate breathing—had altered the wound in the front of the President's neck. He recapitulates that Dr. Rufus Baxter said the neck wound was "unlikely" to be a wound of exit and "would more resemble a wound of entry"; that Dr. Charles James Carrico described the wound as "fairly round, had no jagged edges"; that Dr. Ronald Coy Jones had described it as the sort "you would see in a bullet that is entering rather than exiting from a patient." and that a nurse, Margaret M. Henchcliffe, had testified:

"An entrance bullet hole—it looked to me like. I have never seen an exit bullet hole—I don't remember seeing one that looked like that."

The article quotes also from Mr. Bennett's testimony that he had "heard a sound like a firecracker" to which President Kennedy did not seem to react and had then heard another shot that hit the President's back, and a third that "hit on the right rear of the President's head." Mr. Salandria comments: "Bennett's failure to see the President react after the first shot is consistent with the President having been hit in the soft tissue in the front of the neck which impact would not have been visible to Bennett."