

mergers skirting the antitrust laws; and everybody is open to harassment by the Internal Revenue Service. My own publisher, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, I understand, came under direct pressure from the FBI. An assistant director of the FBI called a Holt executive and urged him not to publish my book. He said that "John," meaning J. Edgar, "the Bureau," meaning the FBI, and "I," meaning him, would be very upset if Holt did. When the Holt executive said Holt was committed to the book, the FBI man told him that this decision would not be the only consideration in John's mind when he picked a publisher for his next book. Until that conversation, Holt had published many of Hoover's works—including one called *Masters of Deceit*, which I imagine is a kind of autobiography.

PLAYBOY: If it what you've had to say about the assassination is true, why hasn't the Kennedy family spoken out? If the President was really killed by a conspiracy, wouldn't the Kennedys be the first to raise a public outcry?

LANE: The Kennedys are beginning to speak out, although rather softly. Richard Goodwin, who was President Kennedy's White House aide and speech writer and is now part of Bobby Kennedy's inner circle, recently criticized the Warren Commission and made a mild public request for a new investigation of the assassination. I can't believe Goodwin would have said this without first clearing it with the Kennedy family; so I think the Kennedys may share his opinions. Another Kennedy aide, Edwin Silberling, Chief of the Organized Crime and Racketeering Section of the Justice Department under Robert Kennedy, has written an introduction to an early anti-Warren Commission book. Silberling says this book "raises questions that deserve to be answered concerning the possibility that a conspiracy existed to destroy President Kennedy." Hugh Trevor-Roper published a major attack on the Warren Commission Report in the London *Sunday Times*. He told me later he indirectly received a message from Senator Robert Kennedy saying, "Keep up the good work."

PLAYBOY: Why hasn't Senator Kennedy spoken out directly?

LANE: That question must be directed to him for an authentic reply. But I'll give you my opinion. The assassination of President Kennedy is the most delicate, and the most potentially explosive, issue in American life. The Kennedys have a human motive to avenge their martyred brother, and they also have a political motive to do it in the most effective way. Remember, the Kennedys are waging a long-term political war with President Johnson, and the assassination issue may well play a very vital role in that struggle. I think it's significant that whenever

a Kennedy is asked about the Warren Report, he always says—and I paraphrase—"I've never read it, but I accept it." They've never read it! To me those statements indicate that the Kennedys are keeping their options open and biding their time until they can announce, "We have now read the Report—and we find it false."

PLAYBOY: Rumors are circulating that President Johnson is trying to pressure Robert and Jacqueline Kennedy into blocking publication of William Manchester's book on the President's death, or at least into deleting those sections most hostile to L. B. J. Is there any truth in this?

LANE: I'm not privy to President Johnson's thinking on the subject. But I have heard such stories. *The Wall Street Journal* recently reported that the Kennedy family "fears the wrath" of the President because of the revelations in the book.

PLAYBOY: The Warren Commission was a Presidential Commission, appointed by Johnson. Do you hold him responsible for its alleged transgressions?

LANE: Yes, absolutely. Harry Truman used to say about the Executive desk: "The buck stops here." President Johnson appointed the Commission and selected its members. He is responsible for their subsequent behavior, and he is responsible for the fact that the most vital material in this case is classified top-secret until September 2039. President Johnson is responsible for the fact that the crucial material evidence—the rifle, the bullets, the pistol, the autopsy X rays and photos—have either disappeared or been left to the tender mercies of the FBI, the Secret Service and the Dallas police. With one stroke of his pen, the President could make all this material available to the American people. He has chosen not to do so. It's not only Earl Warren who's at fault, although by their behavior, Warren and his colleagues have desecrated John Kennedy's memory. The Chief Justice and his six cohorts were just front men for Lyndon Baines Johnson. The buck stops at his desk.

PLAYBOY: *New York Post* columnist Pete Hamill recently wrote that everywhere he traveled in America, he came across a theory about the assassination. "The theory says that somehow, in some way, Lyndon Baines Johnson was responsible." On September 1, 1966, *The New York Times'* Moscow correspondent reported that "the Kremlin was mounting a campaign to challenge the Report's veracity and, by innuendo, to implicate President Johnson in the assassination of President Kennedy." Intentionally or not, aren't you adding fuel to the fire of these unsupported rumors?

LANE: That is not my intention. My desire is to find out who killed our President and why he was killed. I've appeared on radio and TV shows all across

the country and I've heard these rumors myself. I've been asked many times if Johnson was involved. I know these rumors have been strengthened by the recent publication of letters from Jack Ruby, smuggled out of the Dallas jail. One of these, a note to another prisoner, reads, "The only one who had anything to gain by Kennedy's death was Johnson. Figure that out." I personally think the rumors are unfortunate, but the awful thing is that until the archives are opened, until the facts are known, such speculation will persist—and will grow. Of course, I don't believe President Johnson had anything to do with the assassination—but until all the facts are known, I cannot base my disbelief on the evidence. President Johnson has a personal and political stake in dispelling these rumors once and for all. Only the facts can replace conjecture. I've appealed to the President to open up the National Archives, assemble the evidence and allow independent, impartial and qualified investigators in the fields of ballistics, forensics, handwriting and photographic analysis to examine every document and render an objective verdict to the American people. Since President Johnson has nothing to hide, he should deal honestly with the American people by ascertaining and releasing all the facts of the assassination. Until he does, there will be a shroud of suspicion hanging over his head, and over all our democratic institutions. And if he does not act voluntarily, then the American people, through the legislature and the courts, will have to act for him. We have waited for the truth too long—three years too long.

PLAYBOY: Do you believe you will succeed in discrediting the Warren Report and initiating a new investigation?

LANE: The Warren Report already stands discredited before the rest of the world. When Waggoner Carr, the attorney general of Texas, read the Report, he told the press: "It is a document which will last through the ages." I do not believe the Warren Report will survive the next six months. In fact, a Harris poll published last October in *The Washington Post* revealed that even then only one of three Americans believed Oswald was the lone assassin. History may come to know the Report as the "Warren Whitewash"; it may be ranked with Teapot Dome and the Reichstag Fire trial as a synonym for political cover-up and cynical manipulation of the truth.

PLAYBOY: You've devoted the past three years of your life to a critical investigation of the assassination. How long do you plan to continue your efforts?

LANE: Until the American people know how and why and by whom our President was killed on November 22, 1963.