

question now remains—olved so far as the death of President Kennedy is concerned. The evidence of Oswald's single-handed guilt is overwhelming."

But historians know that often enough, the more they study a complex event, the less they know about it. For each question answered, seven more spring up to take its place. The Warren investigation, with an unlimited budget, a full-time staff of 26 and complete access to the massive investigative apparatus of the United States Government, was the largest historical inquiry ever undertaken. Inevitably, it would produce a paper mountain of conflicting reports, contradictory testimony, expert disagreement and unanswered questions. By publishing the 26 volumes of hearings and exhibits—containing considerable evidence contradicting its own findings—the Warren Commission implicitly acknowledged the inscrutability of fact. Doubts were to be expected; it's surprising only that they took so long to surface. Discussions of their validity may occupy scholars for generations—or even centuries.

The ripples preceding the wave of criticism came first from England. The day the Report was issued, Lord Bertrand Russell denounced it as a white-wash and subsequently formed a "Who Killed Kennedy?" committee to pursue its own investigation of the assassination. And late in 1961, Hugh Trevor-Roper, Regius Professor of History at Oxford University, published a scathing attack on the Commission in the pages of England's establishmentarian London Sunday Times. According to Trevor-Roper, the Report was not only inaccurate but "slovenly." In America, less prone to conspiratorial views of history than intrigue-rife Europe, criticism was slower in coming. The first two books attacking the Commission, Thomas Buchanan's "Who Killed Kennedy?" and Joachim Joesten's "Oswald: Assassin or Fall Guy?" contained wild speculations that generally discredited them as serious criticism. But the flood was only beginning. In October 1965, Pulitzer Prize-winning newsman Sylvan Fox, then-city editor of the New York World-Telegram and Sun, published a paperback entitled "Unanswered Questions About President Kennedy's Assassination." On May 9, 1966, Harold Weisberg, a former Senate investigator, privately published "White-wash: A Report on the Warren Report." Seven weeks later, Viking Press published "Inquest," by Edward Jay Epstein, a 31-year-old Cornell graduate student. Originally Epstein's master's thesis, the book sold moderately well. Then, on August 15, Holt, Rinehart & Winston published Mark Lane's "Rush to Judgment," which has since forged its way to the top of the best-seller list. And on September 8, World published "The Oswald Affair," by Léo Sauvage, American correspondent for Le Figaro of Paris.

This barrage of books prompted The New York Times to comment editorially on September 1, 1966, that "Debate on the accuracy and adequacy of the Warren Commission's work is now approaching the dimensions of a lively small industry in this country." The original band of lonely doubters had multiplied to a small army. So drastically had the climate changed that The New York Times' White House correspondent, Tom Wicker, commented on September 25, 1966: "A public discussion group in New York sought to hold a round-table session about the Warren Report. . . . The major difficulty for the group was in finding anyone of stature who was willing to defend the Warren Report and its findings." Wicker went on to demand appointment of a new Commission to investigate the assassination. On September 28, New York Congressman Theodore R. Kupferman, citing the slew of critical books on the Report, asked the House of Representatives to establish a Senate-House Committee to conduct its own investigation of the Warren Report. Shortly thereafter, Lane also called for a reopening of the investigation. In the November 1966 issue of The Progressive, Harrison Salisbury, who had earlier felt that "no material question remained unsolved," reversed his field and wrote that he was convinced "there are questions—some of them of major importance—which must be answered."

The one man most responsible for these doubts and demands is New York attorney Mark Lane. He has been investigating the assassination since early December 1963, and since the publication of "Rush to Judgment," he has been called everything from a liar to a national hero. In a lead review for the Chicago Tribune, Jon Waltz of the Northwestern University Law School faculty wrote: "This latest critique of the Warren Commission Report is truly horrible. [It] passes beyond the merely superficial, being frequently dishonest as well. Lane's fevered arguments have no semblance of logic or even of organization. He presents a phantasmagoric hodgepodge of unrelated and often wholly irrelevant second-guessing. If, in assembling his collection of quibbles, Lane had any ultimate purpose other than confusion and profit, it goes unstated. . . . the catalog of this book's distortions and apparent fabrications, large and small, is a long and sorry one. . . . no one will thank Lane for his book." But many people did—including Norman Mailer, who concluded his review in Book Week with a hurrah: "Three cheers for Mark Lane. His work is not without a trace of that stature we call heroic. . . . Lane's book proves once and forever that the assassination of President Kennedy is more of a mystery today than when it occurred." He called Lane's 400 pages of evidence "staggering facts. . . . If one tenth of

them show proved to be significant, then the work the Warren Commission will be judged by history to be a scandal worse than Teapot Dome."

The hub of all this controversy, Mark Lane, was born 39 years ago in New York City, where he has lived most of his life. Currently, however, he travels through Europe and America lecturing on the assassination, frequently appearing on TV and radio talk shows, and stopping off occasionally in Denmark with his young wife, whom he met while in Copenhagen three years ago. They plan to settle in California shortly.

After serving in Army Intelligence during World War Two, Lane attended Long Island University and received his law degree from Brooklyn Law School. For 12 years he practiced law from a storefront in East Harlem; then, in 1958, he gained local prominence when he charged that young people confined in New York State homes for the mentally defective were being brutally treated by attendants. Governor Rockefeller opened hearings on the issue, and a number of guards were dismissed. In 1960, Lane was elected to the New York State Assembly, representing the black-and-white ghettos of East Harlem and Yorkville. He ran with the strong endorsement of Eleanor Roosevelt and Senator Herbert Lehman, with whom he had earlier helped establish a reform movement within the New York Democratic Party. He also had the endorsement of Senator John F. Kennedy, who moved into the White House at the same time Lane attended his first legislative session in Albany. In 1961, Lane became the first legislator to be arrested on a Freedom Ride—in Jackson, Mississippi. After two stormy years in the state assembly, he found himself ostracized as a troublemaker by a bipartisan preponderance of his fellow assemblymen, and did not run for re-election.

When President Kennedy was assassinated, Lane initiated what his supporters have termed "his lonely crusade." His involvement began in December, when Mrs. Marguerite Oswald appointed him—at no fee—to represent her dead son's interests at the Warren Commission hearings. The Commission refused to accept Lane as a defense attorney, but it did permit him to testify. Thus began his three-year investigation—independent, if not impartial—into the circumstances surrounding President Kennedy's assassination. Lane traveled to Dallas eight times, interviewing scores of witnesses, assisted by a group of amateur investigators who called themselves the "Citizens' Committee of Inquiry." The fruits of his researches and his conclusions comprise his book "Rush to Judgment"—and a film of the same title to be released this month.

PLAYBOY interviewed Lane in his two-and-a-half-room walk-up apartment in

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