

ATTORNEY DENIED RIGHT TO CROSS-EXAMINE WITNESSES

Lane cites curb at Oswald

ATTORNEY MARK LANE, "unofficial" defense counsel for Lee Oswald, the man accused of assassinating President Kennedy in Dallas Nov. 22, told the GUARDIAN following his appearance before the Johnson-Warren commission: "I do not feel that my presence at the hearing mattered very much. I cannot adequately defend my client without the right to cross-examine witnesses."

Lane, named to defend Oswald by Mrs. Marguerite Oswald, mother of the slain suspect, was summoned before the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy, March 4. The former New York Assemblyman read his "Defense Brief for Oswald" (GUARDIAN, Dec. 19) and released some of the information he has gathered from his own investigation on Oswald's behalf, including statements about a meeting reported to have taken place two weeks before the assassination at Jack Ruby's Carousel Club. Attending the meeting, Lane said, were patrolman J. D. Tippitt, whom Oswald is alleged to have shot soon after the Kennedy assassination; Bernard Weissman, a New York ultra-conservative who placed an anti-Kennedy advertisement in a Dallas newspaper the day the President was killed, and a third person whose name was divulged to the commission in private.

OPEN HEARING: Commission chairman Warren agreed to Lane's request at the outset of the hearing to admit the press and public. "The commission," Warren said, "does not operate in a secret way." The Chief Justice later announced that future hearings would be held in public if witnesses so requested.

Lane was not invited to testify in his capacity as Oswald's attorney. The commission named an "official" counsel for Oswald three weeks ago after major witnesses had been called. During the hearing, Warren rejected Lane's request for permission to examine witnesses and have access to the commission's documents.

The commission began taking testimony March 9 from several eyewitnesses to Kennedy's assassination, including Secret Service agents and bystanders.

The windshield from Kennedy's limo-

usine was brought into the hearing as evidence. Several persons have asserted the glass was damaged by a bullet, indicating that more than three shots were fired. Panel members did not comment.

HOOVER STATEMENT: In apparent response to the growing public doubt about Oswald's role, if any, in the assassination, FBI director J. Edgar Hoover issued the following statement March 7:

"To set the record straight, and to refute the misinformation which has been maliciously circulated, I want to state unequivocally that Lee Oswald and Jack Ruby were never FBI informants; that they were never employed by this bureau in any capacity; nor did they ever render any services for or receive any money from the FBI." An FBI spokesman said the statement was made because "we thought it time to put a stop to the rumors." The Central Intelligence Agency previously denied any connection with Oswald.

Speculation that Oswald was employed by one or both of the intelligence agencies arose from these still unexplained circumstances: (1) Oswald, who defected to the Soviet Union for two-and-a-half years, was granted a new passport to visit Russia last June after only one day of consideration by the State Department—a unique decision; (2) Chief Justice Earl Warren's announcement that matters of "national security" may



MRS. MARGUERITE OSWALD AND MARK LANE, COUNSEL FOR HER SON
The Presidential Commission balked at any cross-examination

impose a new blackout on certain aspects of Oswald's past; (3) the FBI's failure to keep close watch on Oswald the day Kennedy was shot in Dallas, though the agency was aware of his background and knew that his job at the Texas Schoolbook Depository situated him in close proximity to the Presidential motorcade; (4) Reports that the FBI supplied information helpful to the defense of Jack Ruby, who shot Oswald two days after Kennedy was slain, on the implied condition that nothing be mentioned during Ruby's trial about Oswald's alleged deed; (5) numerous contradictions in the case against Oswald.

COMMENT BY LANE: Commenting on Hoover's denial, Lane asked: "Can we really expect the FBI to admit the truth if my client had been an agent?" Mrs. Oswald has stated that she believed her son was an agent for the CIA.

Lane announced he is continuing his series of public meetings intended to generate public interest in the Oswald case. He is scheduled to speak in the San Francisco Bay area from March 16-22. On March 23, he will address students at Reed College in Portland, Ore., and then return to California for a week of engagements in Los Angeles, March 23-27. Following the meetings, Lane plans to return to Dallas to continue his investigation.