

# Bar Head Will Represent Oswald in Warren Inquiry

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WASHINGTON, Feb. 25—The Warren commission appointed an "independent lawyer" today to protect the interests of Lee H. Oswald,

President Kennedy's accused assassin. Walter E. Craig of Phoenix, Ariz., the president of the American Bar Association, was selected for the job. He will not work for the commission but will be given access to all its materials.

The commission, headed by Chief Justice Earl Warren, explained the appointment at some length in a statement. The reason indicated was that Oswald had been killed and would never be able to defend himself at a trial.

But the statement said the commission was not, by this action, casting doubt on Oswald's guilt. It said that two months of investigation had "not caused the commission to doubt the reasonableness of the action of the authorities in charging Oswald."

## Will Press for Facts

Mr. Craig, the commission said, will have the job of "examining every facet of the case pointing toward the involvement of Lee H. Oswald, in his absence, and in fairness to his family advise the commission in that regard."

The statement, perhaps reflecting some recent criticism of the commission's performance, said the panel would leave "no stone unturned in faithfully reporting all the facts surrounding the assassination."

The decision to appoint a special lawyer for Oswald's interests represents a change of view on the commission's part. The panel had rejected pro-

posals to have an outside counsel represent Oswald, saying that this was not an adversary proceeding but a neutral fact-finding effort.

The belated nature of the appointment may come in for some criticism. Several witnesses whom an independent lawyer might have wanted to cross-examine have already testified, including Oswald's widow, Marina.

The choice of Mr. Craig was also questioned by some informed observers here today. He was nominated by President Kennedy to be a Federal District judge in Arizona and was confirmed by the Senate last Sept. 25. But he has not yet taken the oath or assumed the bench. Carrying out this new assignment would obviously

mean further delay in his becoming a judge.

## Lane Pledges Cooperation

Former Assemblyman Mark Lane, who was designated by Oswald's mother as her son's unpaid defense counsel last month, said here yesterday that his "fullest cooperation" was available to Mr. Craig.

Mr. Lane said, however, that the appointment of the president of the ultra-conservative American Bar Association may raise more questions than it resolves in the light of past commission statements.

For instance, he said, J. Lee Rankin, commission counsel, wrote him Jan. 23 that "the commission does not believe that it would be useful or desirable to permit an attorney representing Lee Harvey Oswald to have access to the investigatory materials within the possession of the commission or to participate in any hearings to be conducted by the commission."

## Warren Bars Counsel

Later, Mr. Lane said, Chief Justice Warren personally told

him "that Oswald was not on trial and that counsel would not be permitted to represent him."

Mr. Lane said he had obtained statements and documentary evidence "establishing the innocence of Lee H. Oswald." He questioned whether the commission would "begin its proceedings anew" and whether Mr. Craig would make an investigation of his own.

The New York lawyer said he still considered himself to be counsel for Oswald. He said he had been discussing with professors at leading law schools a potential court action in Oswald's behalf on the ground he had been denied his rights by local law-enforcement authorities.