

# Oswald's mother asks Lane to take up case

By Jack A. Smith

**M**RS. MARGUERITE OSWALD, mother of the man accused of assassinating President John F. Kennedy, has retained Mark Lane, civil liberties attorney and author of A Defense Brief for Oswald (NATIONAL GUARDIAN, Dec. 19, 1963), to represent her late son before an investigation being conducted by the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy. In a statement to this newspaper Jan. 13 and to the general press the following day (see box, this page), Mrs. Oswald said she contacted the New York attorney because "he was the only one I had faith in."

It is not known whether Lane will be permitted to appear before the commission. According to panel counsel J. Lee Rankin, two days before Mrs. Oswald's disclosure, the commission does not intend to concern itself with the guilt or innocence of Lee H. Oswald. "The commission is not engaged in determining the guilt of anybody," he said. "It is a fact-finding body."

Lane, spearhead of a drive to assure posthumous justice for the 24-year-old ex-Marine, had previously been assured by Rankin in an answer to the Defense Brief and an accompanying letter from Lane that "the views contained in your letter will be given appropriate consideration by the commission prior to the preparation of any final report."

According to Rankin, the commission will devote three to six months investigating six specific areas relating to the bizarre "crime of the century" in Dallas Nov. 22. They are: (1) Oswald's activities on the day of the assassination; (2) his life and background; (3) his career in the Marine Corps and temporary defection to the Soviet Union; (4) his murder by Jack Ruby; (5) Ruby's story, and (6) the conduct of the FBI, Secret Service and Dallas police, who were supposed to protect the President as well as right-wing "hate" movements whose propaganda may have created the psychological climate for murder.

**WIDOW SEQUESTERED:** The counsel also disclosed that Mrs. Marina Oswald, 22-year-old widow of the slain suspect, will testify before the commission later this month. She has been held incommunicado by Secret Service agents since her husband was dispatched by one bullet from Ruby's gun as he emerged under heavy guard from Dallas police headquarters Nov. 24.

Rankin said the commission would de-

pend primarily on information supplied to it by the three agencies whose activities themselves are under scrutiny—including, presumably, reliance on the FBI to disclose whether or not Oswald was an undercover operative for that agency. The Houston Post on Jan. 1 published a front-page report from a staff correspondent indicating that Oswald may have been a paid informer for the U.S. government.

Ruby's trial, scheduled for Feb. 3, promises to be as gaudy and flamboyant as the respective reputations of the defendant, a strip-club operator, and his chief counsel, Melvin Belli, whose ten-gallon cowboy hats have won him a certain local affection in Texas. Dallas District Attorney Henry Wade announced Jan. 6 that an intensive investigation revealed "no evidence whatever" of collusion between local police and Ruby, whose singular presence at the "restricted" scene of Oswald's scheduled transfer to another jail remains unexplained.

**COMMISSION MEETS:** The seven-member commission, headed by Chief Justice Earl Warren, has not convened since before Christmas. A meeting is planned the week of Jan. 19. Explaining the lengthy interval between meetings of a commission charged with so urgent a task, Rankin said Jan. 9 that "it has been difficult to get the members of the commission to meet right away . . . because of their busy, conflicting schedules."

Rankin himself will lead the inquiry into the activities of the FBI, Secret Service and Dallas police, an inquiry concerned specifically with the question of the efficiency of these organizations in protecting the President during his tour of Dallas. The panel undoubtedly will seek to learn why the FBI, aware that a known defector and political maverick was situated along the Presidential motorcade route, did not include him in a list of persons submitted to local authorities and the Secret Service for surveillance that day.

The commission is expected to be guided in the main by an FBI report stating that Oswald "alone and unaided" shot and killed President Kennedy. In view of its announced rejection of pleas for a defense of Oswald, it does not appear that the commission is prepared to venture beyond the official report save for details concerning the denial of civil rights to Oswald during his two days in police custody and dereliction of duty in protecting the President. "We think it

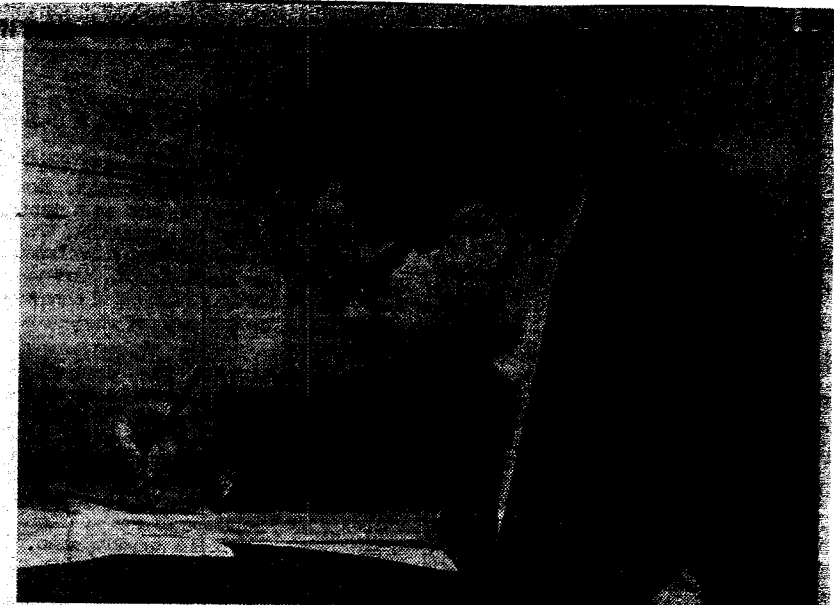
would be wise," Rankin said Jan. 11, in disclosing what the commission intended to accomplish, "to reassure this country and the world not only that we can protect our President but that accused criminals can be treated fairly."

**WIFE TESTIFIES:** According to reports released through the Secret Service, Mrs. Marina Oswald's testimony before the panel will verify the official version of the assassination. Information that the widow would testify against her husband was first issued six weeks after Oswald was killed, during which time the Russian-speaking woman was not allowed contact with other than government agents or persons approved by the government.

Mrs. Oswald and her two young children are sequestered in a private house in the Fort Worth-Dallas area. All statements allegedly made by her are promulgated by James H. Martin, a motel owner who has been named her "business manager" by suggestion of the Secret Service. The statements, obviously, are first cleared by the federal agents.

Martin has repeatedly maintained that Marina Oswald was "free to come and go as she pleases" but prefers the protection of the Secret Service. When Mrs. Oswald's friends or relatives have attempted to see her, they have been told she prefers to be alone. Officials of the Dallas Civil Liberties Union were rebuffed Jan. 10 in a letter said to have been written by Mrs. Oswald herself.

"Let me thank you for the attention you are giving me," the note said in Russian. "I don't think you have anything to worry about. What you read in the newspapers—everything is correct. I don't object to the Secret Service



Guardian photo by Robert Taylor  
**CIVIL LIBERTIES ATTORNEY MARK LANE**  
*The only one Mrs. Marguerite Oswald has faith in*

...and I am very grateful for their...  
 ...I want said...  
 ...I don't want...  
 ...of what...  
 ...understand...  
 ...I would see with...  
 ...a very nice...  
 ...I wouldn't...  
 ...as kind...  
 ...I would...  
 ...also give much time...  
 ...I also want to...  
 ...thank you again for being so kind as to...  
 ...I repeat I am in as good...  
 ...to be...  
 ...after what has happened.

Mrs. Paine is the woman who befriended the Oswalds and extended hospitality to them for two months before the murder.

**PRESSURE INDICATED:** Mrs. Oswald was said to have implicated her husband first in a statement Dec. 31 allegedly made by her to Martin, who announced it to the press. At that time, she was said to have charged that her husband "admitted" firing at Maj. Gen. Edwin Walker in Dallas earlier last year. On Jan. 7, the world was told that Mrs. Oswald "was convinced that her husband assassinated Kennedy." The fol-

lowing day, Oswald's mother said she did not believe the wife actually made such a statement. On Jan. 9, it was asserted through Martin that Mrs. Oswald "was convinced by the evidence against her husband."

It is being increasingly speculated that Mrs. Oswald, alone, frightened Oswald of her rights, unable to speak for him and hidden for information by agents of the Secret Service and FBI, has been pressured and manipulated into making her present attitude an attitude which apparently did not manifest itself until the sixth week of her ordeal.

**COUNTER-AGENT:** The Houston Post article was first second by a large newspaper questioning whether Oswald was an undercover agent for the FBI. The Philadelphia Inquirer first posed the question Dec. 8. Post writer Lori Hudkins asked: "Was Lee Harvey Oswald a stooge pigeon for a federal government agency? That's the question being asked by many people in responsible positions here."

The article stated that Oswald has been in contact with Joseph Hosty, FBI agent in Dallas. "He had Hosty's home phone, office phone and car license number," Hudkins quoted Dallas assistant district attorney Bill Alexander as saying. When she questioned Oswald's mother, the reporter said, she would not confirm or deny that her son had been "an informant in anti-subversive work."

Hudkins said the failure of the FBI to inform local police of Oswald's whereabouts the day Kennedy was assassinated has "led to speculation by police and the sheriff's deputies in Dallas that Oswald might have been an informant because he was not in Dallas on the day Kennedy was shot. Check out one of your own copies."