

# The Oswald Case: Who wants the

**WHEN THE WHITE HOUSE** announced on Nov. 29, 1963, the formation of a Presidential Commission to inquire into the assassination of President Kennedy and the murder of Lee Harvey Oswald, its statement was clear. President Johnson was instructing the commission, headed by Chief Justice Earl Warren, "to satisfy itself that the truth is known as far as it can be discovered, and to report its findings and conclusions to him, the American people and the world."

On Feb. 3, 1964, more than two months after this mandate was given, the commission heard its first witness (as far as can be determined) in secret session. The witness was Mrs. Marina Oswald, wife of the slain man suspected of the assassination. After her first appearance, lasting more than five hours, Warren "gave notice," according to an Associated Press report of the hearing, to reporters that Mrs. Oswald's testimony

may not be released "in your lifetime." It may involve matters of national security, he said.

With all due respect for the judicial integrity of Warren, we suggest that there is a striking contradiction in the Presidential mandate and the first important public statement on the commission's work by its chairman. Further, we are persuaded that the national security, and the public interest at home and abroad, will best be served by the fullest disclosure of the facts—not only within our lifetime but at the earliest possible moment after all the evidence has been gathered, tested and evaluated.

**I**N THE BIZARRE circumstances surrounding the murder of Oswald, his widow is perhaps the most important material witness who can throw some light on the man and his motives. It has been widely rumored—with enough tangential evidence unearthed to warrant a full investigation—that Oswald may have

## truth kept down?

been in the service of the CIA or the FBI, or both. If this proves to be a fact, then the national security will be ill served by suppressing the information; if it is established that it is not a fact, or that Oswald was in the service of a foreign government or a shadow organization in the U.S., then this information also must be fully disclosed.

If the implication of Warren's comment is that such information will not be disclosed, we must suggest that the commission chairman re-examine his own words at the Capitol rotunda service for the murdered President. He said then:

"What moved some misguided wretch to do this horrible deed may never be known to us, but we do know that such acts are commonly stimulated by forces of hatred and malevolence such as are eating their way into the bloodstream of American life."

"It has been said that the only thing we learn from history is that we do not learn. But surely we can learn if we have the will to do so. Surely there is a lesson to be learned from this tragic event."

In an interview with the New York Herald Tribune Dec. 29, the commission's chief counsel, J. Lee Rankin, said that the investigation "will be a penetrating analysis worthy of historical record." Surely we can and must learn from such a record—if we are permitted to look at it.

**O**N THE RECORD of what has been permitted to be disclosed, and on the record of the attempts by police and governmental authorities to suppress information, and to leak what they want the public to know of this strange case, an impartial observer might well draw this conclusion:

Persons in high authority in the United

States seem to fear that if the full truth were told about the Nov. 22 week end in Dallas and its aftermath, some powerful institutions and agencies in this country might be shaken to their roots. What the full truth is we do not presume to know; but we do know that if the facts on which this truth must be constructed continue to remain suppressed, the image of the United States in the eyes of its own citizens and the citizens of the world will be forever tarnished.

The NATIONAL GUARDIAN regards it as an obligation and as a public service to continue to press for full and open inquiry into the assassinations of both Kennedy and Oswald. It does so in the belief, as we said editorially in our issue of Dec. 28, that there is "widespread doubt and incredulity in the public mind both at home and abroad over the handling of the assassination of President Kennedy by the police and investigating agencies." One week earlier, in an introduction to Mark Lane's penetrating brief on the Oswald case, we said: "The GUARDIAN's publication of the Lane brief presumes only one

thing: a man's innocence until proved guilty. A presumption of innocence is the rock upon which American jurisprudence rests. Surely it ought to apply in the 'crime of the century' as in the meanest back-alley felony."

We reiterate that position now and insist in addition that the finest kind of public service a newspaper can render to the nation is to go after the facts in this case despite any and all obstacles that may be placed in its way. For until the full facts are made available, no American can rest easy.

**T**HERE IS NO QUESTION that the public at home and abroad remains sorely troubled by the double assassination. A Harris Poll (Washington Post, Jan. 31) reported that one American in four does not believe that Oswald was Kennedy's assassin or has serious doubts. The ratio abroad is much higher. In view of these doubts, many questions remain to be asked and to be answered:

- Why has no one—except the rival TV networks which were frozen out—objected to the appearance on CBS before millions of Americans of Marina Oswald, exactly one week before her private session with the commission?

- Why, if it is so vitally concerned with national security, did the commission not insist that Mrs. Oswald's first testimony be made before the commission—particularly in view of the fact that Mrs. Oswald had been held incommunicado by the federal police (in a perfect setting for brainwashing) for nine weeks; and why did the commission not object to this incredible state of affairs?

These are some of the questions to which the GUARDIAN seeks answers; and they are questions which will be raised at meetings which the GUARDIAN is sponsoring this month in several cities (see listing, p. 4) at which Mark Lane will be the principal speaker (an order blank for the New York meeting Feb. 18 is on p. 8). We urge you to come to these meetings and let your voice be added to the cause of truth. —THE GUARDIAN