# Warren Commission Under Fire

L. A. TRANSPORT 10/2/ BY RICHARD G. HUBLER

RUSH TO JUDGMENT more judicious and doc- lieves is the massive im-

THE OSWALD AFFAIR by Leo Sauvage (World: \$6.95).

 As someone has said, to write about the assassination of President John F. Kennedy today is to stand between journa-Jism and history. It is also a tightrope walk between nightmare and reality. The grisly account of what was done is all too plain. The further facts— who did it and why—are still in varying degree of obscurity.

To writers like Lane and Sauvage, the simple conclusions of the report that Oswald alone, outside a conspiracy, committed the murder are beyond belief. Nor does the fact that basic documents and evidence are now sealed up in Washington archives for the next 75 years help matters.

## Still Debated

Such skepticism about such a crime is not new! The role of Secretary of War Edwin, Stanton in the death of Lincoln is still debated 100 years after. The first panic, the subsequent bumblings, the sins of omission and commission, have been paralleled.

evidence, verbatim testimony, judicious appendices, index, and most formidable of all-a list of 4,526 specific references to pertinent documents as well as names, places and footnotes. In its small compass, it raises critical questions.

#### Lone Assassin

As its author, Lane is not above the battle. He wa's attorney for the mother of Oswald. He spent 21/2 years in research, filming and interviewing witnesses on his own. His conclusion: \* . . . the case against Oswald as the lone assassin is refuted by the very witnesses upon whom the Warren Commission relied. The FBI report devastates the commission's conclusions that all of the shots were fired from the rear and that they were fired by a lone assassin." But Lane is careful not to point his finger further: "I have no theories as to who killed President or as to the why it was done."

Sauvage's book is less professional but no less interesting-and is superior in that it presents official pictures of the actual scene of the shoot-Of these two books, ing. His approach centers that by Lane seeins the largely upon what he be-

by Mark Lane (Holt, umented. The tone is probability that Oswald Rinehart, Winston: cool, factual and pointed; did the deed. As Ameriit has charts, diagrams, can correspondent for the reproductions of French newspaper Le Figaro for 13 years, Sauvage thinks it was a "racist conspiracy."

Sauvage reviews the whole case. Lane concentrates chiefly on the work of the commission. But the intemperate didacticism of Sauvage often gives him the appearance of special pleading. He seems to think that his is the sole theory possible. A good deal of his space is spent knocking down the ideas of others.

Nevertheless, between them the two books give matter for much thought, The nauseous stew of the Dallas Police Department; the mysterious #399 bullet; the commission treatment of Jack Ruby; the puzzling "prints" on the alleged weapon; the murder of Officer Tippit; discrepancies of time, procedure, photographs.

### No Evidence

There is no evidence of prejudice or deliberate lack of effort on the commission's part. There is the sense of pressure to arrive at a verdict with a deadline, of some slipshod and inadequate investigation.

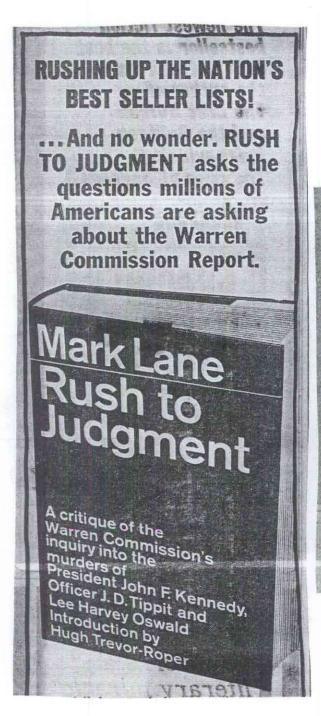
The case of the assassination of President Kennedy remains open. It is likely to remain so for generations to come.

Sauvage says that before the report those who proclaimed the dead man's (Oswald's) guilt \*asked those who had doubts to keep silent." Afterward, the doubters felt that \*silence would give consent to injustice."

Lane observes quietly that, "Hearsay evidence was freely admitted, while crucial eyewitness testimony was excluded. Opinions were sought and solemnly published, while important facts were rejected, distorted or ignored. Dubious scientific tests were said to prove that which no authentic test could do. Friendly witnesses gave testimony without fear of criticism or cross-exa-mination . . . helped to prepare their testimony in advance . . those who challenged ... were often harassed Important witnesses with invaluable evidence to give were never called

These are damning charges to make against the commission. They need detailed examination and refutation if the confidence of the country. in the report is to be unshaken.

An article replying to critics of the Warren Commission is now in preparation by Joseph A. Ball, attorney, who served as a senior staff member for the commission. It will appear in Calendar.



"Well-documented, persuasive. . . . a powerful case for the proposition that the Commission committed numerous errors in admitting, evaluating, and excluding evidence."

- New York Times Book Review

"If one-tenth of these facts should prove to be significant, then the work of the Warren Commission will be judged by history to be a scandal worse than Teapot Dome."

- NORMAN MAILER, Front Page, Book Week

"Other critics have covered much of the same material that concerns Lane, but none have been more thorough and painstaking."

- San Francisco Examiner & Chronicle

"Lane has proved his point against the Commission. It just did not do its job properly. . . . What is needed now is a commission to investigate the Warren Commission and its findings."

- FRANCIS RUSSELL, The National Review

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