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Lawyer Attacks 941 Warren Report

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A MEMBER of the Warren Commission, Rep. Gerald R. Ford, writing on the commission's report on the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, said: "Let those who scoff at the report bury themselves for 10 months in the monumental record. After that, if they persist in their skepticism, that's their privilege."

A surprising number of people have accepted the challenge. Several books and magazine articles in varying degrees critical of the report have appeared this summer. More are yet to come. All are the products of at least 10 months' study of the 26 volumes of the "monumental record" and its implications.

One of the most imposing is *Rush for Judgment*, by Mark Lane (Holt, Rinehart, Winston, \$5.95).

Mr. Lane, a New York lawyer and Democratic politician, had early doubts about the exclusive guilt of Lee Harvey Oswald. He agreed, on request of Oswald's mother, to represent her dead son before the commission. That the commission chose not to entertain such representation may explain Lane's energetic, critical study of the case over more than two years, supported by what he calls the Citizens Committee on Inquiry.

The result is this book, a minute examination of testimony and materials, some not included in the commission record, leading to the conclusion that "the commission covered itself with shame". Lane's implication is that there was a conspiracy, perhaps enlisting Oswald, Jack Ruby and Dallas law enforcement officers. He places great weight on the commis-

sion's inability to agree on the number of shots fired, the conflicting reports of the direction of the shots and the nature of the President's wounds, and the unofficial connections between Ruby and the Dallas police.

Lane's most damaging charge is that the commission leaped to conclusions to satisfy its own concept of Oswald's guilt and that its "rush to judgment" was designed "to protect the national interest by dispelling rumors." The commission's role he describes as that of an advocate, not a court.

Well, Mark Lane, too, is an advocate. His is an interesting brief, but not a convincing one. He confesses, "I have no theories as to who killed the President or as to why it was done."

The part of his book most deserving of respect is the introduction provided by the reputable British historian Hugh Trevor-Roper, who also has been a skeptic and remains so after reading the many volumes of the record. "While all these doubts remain," he writes, "who can say that the case is closed?"

Chances are that it never will be. But as yet there has been no widely convincing challenge to the commission's conclusion that Lee Harvey Oswald alone was responsible.

Superlatives befit novelist John Barth. His "The Sot-Weed Factor" contained what may have been the zaniest, bawdiest, most erudite American fiction of the early 1960s. It has now been surpassed in these and other categories by zany, bawdy, erudite Giles *Goat-Boy* (Doubleday, \$6.95), an allegorical satire of the present rather than of the past as was "The Sot-Weed Factor".

The title role is played by George Giles, raised in a goat herd, where he acquires a good part of his outlook on life. That life is embraced by New Tammany College, a campus of world-wide proportions. Giles is destined to become Grand Tutor of the West Campus, in conflict with the East Campus.

There is enough there to make clear the relatively simple outlines of the allegory. But there is nothing simple about John Barth's filling in. It can no more be described in the limitations of this space than could be "Gargantua" or "Don Quixote", with which "Giles Goat-Boy" has much in common.

For those who may read only one novel this summer, this big (730 pages) book should be the one.