



Billy Nolan Lovelady



Who was the man on the Depository steps?

Author Hints Oswald 'Framed' in JFK

Rush to Judgment. By Mark Lane; Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Mark Lane is not the first to challenge the Warren Commission findings on the weekend of infamy in Dallas that included the assassination of President Kennedy, the slaying of Patrolman J. D. Tippit and the televised murder of the alleged killer of both, Lee Harvey Oswald.



Lane

But he raises questions, cites witnesses whose testimony the Commission either did not hear or ignored in its conclusions and offers

graphic evidence which far transcends any yet published.

Who is Mark Lane? He is a New York attorney and former state legislator who was supported for office by John F. Kennedy. He was retained by Marguerite Oswald to defend the interests of her son before the Warren Commission. That he was thwarted in many of his attempts to do so is a main point of his book.

Lane's gravamen is that the commission gave a stunned nation what it wanted to hear: reassurance that both the assassin and Jack Ruby acted alone. This, Lane claims, the Commission achieved by relying on official evidence weighted with predetermined conclusions.

He charges that at best the Commission's investiga-

tory procedures were sloppy and superficial, at worst that they provided a document that would be a sop to the doubts of a wondering public.

Prosecution Brief

He says that the Commission prepared a brief for the prosecution rather than an



objective report. "Rush to Judgment," then, is Mark Lane's brief for the defense, not specifically for Oswald but for fact.

He presents some chilling information and raises some provocative questions:

—Why, when the motorcade was fired upon, was immediate attention focused on the fence, shrubs and trees of the grassy knoll near the railroad overpass ahead of the presidential car rather than on the Texas School Book Depository behind the vehicle? Railroad employees on the overpass thought shots came from the trees; seven said they saw a puff of smoke there. Patrolman J. M. Smith smelled gunpowder behind the fence when he rushed there from the Depository. Witnesses on the Depository fifth floor thought they had heard backfiring, noise apparently from below, not above, them.

—What happened to certain bystanders' photographs of the sixth-floor Depository window after they were confiscated by law officers?

—Why did the Commission conclude one bullet passed from the front of the President's neck through Gov. Tom



TELEPHOTO

Lee Harvey Oswald

Death

Sunday Journal & Star
Lincoln, Nebr.
(S. circ. 59,270)

AUG 14 1966

Connelly, shattering his rib and wrist without blunting or defacing the bullet? What of that undeflected bullet's upward trajectory through the President if it were fired from above?

—Why were the preliminary autopsy notes burned and x-rays and photographs of the President's wounds, deemed invaluable by the doctors conducting the post-mortem, seized before they were developed . . . by the Secret Service?

—Were Oswald and Ruby actually photographed on the Depository steps at the time of the assassination? Why such futile attempts of photographers to obtain pictures of Billy Nolan Lovelady, who claimed it was at the Depository door despite the fact that he wore a red-and-white striped sport shirt buttoned near the neck that day? Oswald, like the man shown, wore a dark shirt open halfway to the waist. Lane eventually got a picture of Lovelady, when or how this reviewer does not know. It arrived from his publisher as this was written and is not included in the book.

Evidence Altered

There is much more, of course. There are the matters of physical evidence altered, of testimony both subtly and

glaringly shifted in meaning, of the chain of evidence broken in the case of the four bullets recovered from Tippit's body. There is the enigma of Ruby, who pleaded to talk if only the Commission would take him to Washington away from Dallas; of witnesses threatened and reporters murdered.

Lane suggests the possibility of an intricate "frame" of Oswald and backs it with information worthy of consideration.

Somewhere in the tangle is the truth. Does it lie in the Commission report, in records sealed in the National Archives for 75 years (why?) or in lips silenced by conspiracy or fear?

If the Commission report is as faulty as Lane insists, then somewhere hangs a loose end to be pulled to reveal the truth. His disquieting book may offer a thread, if only to clarification of some of the more obvious questions he poses.

Who cannot say they are deserving of answers?

—Nancy Schwieder