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A STEP AHEAD FOR "WORLD OUTLOOK"

This issue marks what we consider to be a significant step ahead for World Outlook. As you will have already noted, there is a considerable difference in weight of the paper, size of type, and general appearance. The main aim of these changes is to lower the cost of postage, particularly airmail.

Also, by shifting from the mimeograph to the photo-offset process, we hope to make possible an increase in circulation. For some time we have felt inhibited in circulation-building efforts due to the qualitative difference in amount of labor required in turning out material on a duplicator after a certain point is reached.

From the beginning, World Outlook has been somewhat experimental. We felt that a political need existed for the kind of service we have sought to offer. This judgment has been confirmed beyond our expectations. World Outlook now has an impressive international circulation. Most gratifying has been the way in which many publications utilize the material it offers. In addition we have been both surprised and pleased at the number of individuals who have subscribed. Our attention has been repeatedly called to the fact that those who receive it tend to utilize it for reference and to bind it for permanent use. And we are still getting orders for complete sets of World Outlook, beginning with the first issue. These, we should add, are no longer easily filled. On top of this, biweekly editions are now offered in French and Spanish and we should not be surprised if editions appear in other languages before long.

When World Outlook began in September 1963, we were dubious about the cost.

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WORLD OUTLOOK specializes in weekly political analysis and interpretation of events for labor, socialist, colonial independence and Negro freedom publications. Signed articles represent the views of the authors, which may not necessarily coincide with those of WORLD OUTLOOK. Unsigned material expresses, insofar as editorial opinion may appear, the standpoint of revolutionary Marxism. To subscribe for 26 issues send \$7.50 or £2/15s. or 37.50 francs to: Reba Hansen, Business Manager, P.O. Box 635, Madison Sq. Station, New York, N.Y. 10010.

THE RISING DOUBTS ABOUT THE WARREN COMMISSION

By Arthur Maglin

A spate of new books and articles has increased the widespread doubt about the main conclusions of the Warren Commission's report on the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. A recent Harris poll shows that about three out of five Americans reject the "main thrust" of the Warren Report.

The main thrust of the report is that Lee Harvey Oswald was the lone and unaided assassin. Thus, it is not surprising that when the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals on October 5 threw out the conviction of Jack Ruby for killing Oswald, this tended to arouse suspicions about the Dallas events even further. Ruby will be retried, but he now stands a much better chance of getting off with as little as a five-year prison sentence.

All of this has operated to cast doubt on the workings and methods of the whole American judicial system, on the Federal Bureau of Investigation (which did the bulk of the Warren Commission's detective work), and on the trustworthiness of high government officials.

The new round of controversy over the Kennedy assassination really began to get rolling during this past summer. Books such as Whitewash by Harold Weisberg, Inquest by Edward Jay Epstein, and Rush to Judgment by Mark Lane* are perhaps the most significant examples of the new literature that has prompted the current interest in reopening the investigation of Kennedy's assassination.

Whitewash examines the whole of the Warren Report in the light of the twenty-six volumes of testimony and evidence upon which the report is supposedly based. The author reaches the conclusion that:

"Hard as it tried to avoid anything tending to show Oswald could not have committed the crime, the Commission could not keep from its record substantial evidence that he did not. How it could accept without question or comment so much nonsense, fantasy, and outright perjury is beyond comprehension. Perhaps the answer is that these were honest men neither intellectually nor emotionally equal to the task set for them."

Epstein's Inquest takes another approach. It examines the working methods of the Warren Commission to find out exactly how it came to its conclusions. Epstein pays special attention to the "underlying purpose" of the Commission. In discussing how U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice Earl Warren came to be appointed to head up the Commission, Epstein writes:

"The circumstances surrounding the Chief Justice's appointment to the Commission suggest the underlying purpose. Anthony Lewis, then The New York Times Supreme Court correspondent, reported that when Warren was first asked to serve on the Commission 'he flatly said no.' President Johnson then called Warren to the White House and spoke to him 'about patriotism, about the new President's urgent need to settle the assassination rumors, about the special trust people in foreign lands would have in an investigation over which he presided.' Warren thereupon agreed to serve on the Commission. J. Lee Rankin confirmed this account and said that 'Warren accepted, only with the greatest reluctance, because the President had made it plain to him that the nation's prestige was at stake.' These accounts clearly imply that one purpose of the Commission was to protect the national interest by settling 'assassination rumors' and restoring American prestige abroad."

Mark Lane's book Rush to Judgment, which has been on the best-seller list for

*Harold Weisberg. Whitewash: The Report on the Warren Report. Published by Harold Weisberg, Hyattstown, Md. 20734. 224 pp. \$4.95.

Edward Jay Epstein. Inquest: The Warren Commission and the Establishment of Truth. New York, Viking Press. 224 pp. \$5.

Mark Lane. Rush to Judgment: A Critique of the Warren Commission's Inquiry into the Murders of President John F. Kennedy, Officer J.D. Tippit and Lee Harvey Oswald. New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston. 478 pp. \$5.95.

several weeks, is written essentially as a defense brief for Lee Harvey Oswald. Lane principally utilizes the material available in the Report's twenty-six volume supplement of evidence and testimony. However, Lane also brings in a considerable amount of well-documented additional evidence. After all of this, Lane comes to the following conclusion:

"The Commission said that it viewed the Executive order by which it was established 'as an unequivocal Presidential mandate to conduct a thorough and independent investigation.' Its task was to dispel the 'numerous rumors and theories' which Oswald's murder had fostered and intensified. Among those were rumors of Oswald's innocence and of efforts to frame him, and of his participation, to a greater or lesser extent, in a conspiracy. Many of these were stilled by time, the Commission and a bidable press. After a critical reading of the Report, however, rumors must revive, for, to the previously unsubstantiated imaginings of those who for one reason or another disliked the Commission's case against Oswald, much documentation has been added.

"The Commission did not acquit itself of its mandate; it failed to conduct a thorough investigation; it failed to ask the relevant questions if their likely answers promised discomfort. Its failure shall in time, I believe, be complete, for half answers do not for long dispel rumors and contain doubts. I believe the final failure of the Commission to be that it has prepared a fertile ground for the cultivation of rumor and speculation."

Added to the powerful stimulant to public doubting about the Warren Report was the reopening of the case of Jack Ruby. The decision of the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals to throw out the murder conviction and death sentence of Jack Ruby and to order a retrial "came as added fuel to the fire" to the "apparently growing number of skeptics about the Warren Commission's explanation of the assassination," according to the "News of the Week in Review" section of the Sunday New York Times of October 9.

The Times goes on to say that, "Ruby's expressed motive for killing Oswald -- to revenge 'our beloved President' and spare his family the pain of a trial -- had seemed odd to many critics, since Ruby had not bothered to attend the Presidential motorcade." Ruby's reputation as the associate of underworld characters also tended to cast doubt on his asserted purity of motive.

The Times comments on "the persistent tendency for doubts about the assassination to spread as its aftermath unfolds." The Texas Appeals Court certainly acted in a way that would not reverse this trend by barring the testimony of police sergeant Patrick T. Dean as its grounds for setting a retrial for Ruby. The Times reports that "The three-judge court ruled unanimously that Judge Brown should have excluded from evidence testimony that Ruby had told a Dallas police officer shortly after Oswald's shooting that he had planned for two days to kill Oswald if the chance arose."

This may mean that Ruby will get off with a very light sentence. "District Attorney Henry Wade," continues the Times, "who prosecuted Ruby in 1964, said he would ask for the death penalty again at the next trial, but Phil Burlison of Dallas, one of Ruby's lawyers, said the Appellate Court decision had knocked out all the evidence of premeditation by Ruby. This would permit only a conviction of murder without malice, which carries a five-year sentence."

The books critical of the Warren Report, critical articles appearing in such liberal journals as The Nation and The New York Review of Books, and the new turn in the Ruby case have all resulted in numerous calls for an official reopening of the investigation of the events surrounding Kennedy's assassination. A former aide to President Kennedy, Richard N. Goodwin, has suggested that an independent group, supported by Congress, should check into whether or not the Warren Commission's investigation was adequate.

Representative Theodore Kupferman, a New York City liberal Republican, has introduced a resolution into the U.S. Congress for a joint congressional committee to re-examine the assassination case with a view to launching a new legislative investigation.

In an editorial-page column in the September 25 New York Times, Tom Wicker argues strongly in favor of reopening the Kennedy assassination case. Of the Warren Report he says that "the atmosphere has changed in the two years since the massive report and its 26 volumes of supporting testimony and evidence were published. In this country, the Warren Commission theory then was accepted widely, almost without ques-

tion, although doubt continued to prevail in Europe with its history of political assassinations and conspiracies.

"Now a number of impressive books -- and even more that are not so impressive -- have been published, all raising questions of the most serious nature. The Warren Commission's procedures, its objectivity and its members' diligence have been opened to doubt. Its major findings have been called everything from conjecture to prejudice to error. The damaging suspicion has been planted, here as well as abroad, that the commission -- even if unconsciously -- was more concerned to quiet public fears of conspiracy and treachery than it was to establish the unvarnished truth, and thus made the facts fit a convenient thesis.

"From the day of publication, for instance, Gov. John Connally of Texas has publicly denied the commission's contention that the same bullet passed through President Kennedy's body, then through Mr. Connally's chest and wrist to lodge in his thigh. The published analyses of the ballistics and autopsy evidence that have followed the Warren Report have tended to support the Governor, not the commission.

"Again, reporters who were present in Dallas that dreadful Friday afternoon clearly remember that the doctor who attended the dying President, in his first public statement, tentatively described a bullet hole in the front of the throat as having had the appearance of an entry wound. That this opinion was changed in testimony before the commission, which rested its findings partially on the idea that the hole was an exit wound, cannot erase the memory of what was said at first hand on Nov. 22, 1963.

"The point is not that the doctor necessarily was wrong the first time, or the second; perhaps there was sufficient reason for the changed opinion. Nor is it really possible to accept Governor Connally's judgment or vice versa, or to decide certainly any number of other points that have now been placed in dispute.

"The point is that the Warren Commission has not, after all, even quieted public concern about who killed John Kennedy, or why, and even less has it presented an ironclad and unarguable case that Lee Oswald, alone and without rational motive, was the assassin."

All of these calls for a reopening of the assassination case have elicited a reaction from members of the Commission and members of its staff. Arlen Specter, a key member of the Warren Commission's legal staff, stated, "There has not been a scintilla of new evidence disclosed in any of the books."

Former CIA director Allen Dulles, a Commission member, said, "If they have found another assassin let them name names and produce the evidence."

Normally, American judicial proceedings are supposed to follow the principle that a man is to be considered innocent until he is proved guilty. Here we have Dulles, one of Lee Harvey Oswald's judges, putting forth the demand that to question whether the Warren Commission established its case it is necessary to prove someone else's guilt. As for Specter's criticism about no new evidence being produced by the books, it too obviously misses the point. The books and articles critical of the report have generally charged that the Commission disregarded evidence that it already had when such evidence tended to hurt its case against Oswald as the lone and unaided assassin.

Outside the United States the revived controversy over the Warren Report has been different. In general, the foreign press was more skeptical of the official story from the beginning. The new wave of criticism has only tended to make the skepticism about the report more widespread.

A typical European reaction is to be found in the July 29 issue of the London New Statesman, which says:

"By its very composition the commission was almost certain to produce an inadequate report. The members all reached their rank and status in the U.S. by closing doors, eliminating doubts, shoring up the American mythology. The commission had a political job to do, to establish one more or less plausible version of the assassination events as an official 'truth'."

The New Statesman raises another side of the question:

"So far there is evidence for only modest revisionism. But even so, if the Warren commissioners are exposed as merely hapless dupes, other doubts about American history over the last two decades become more pertinent. Was the Rosenberg case also a fraud? The FBI's role then was every bit as curious as it is in the Oswald business. Was the whole U.S. position on the origins of the cold war fraudulent? John McCloy [another Commission member] and Allen Dulles had the same job in feeding the national mythology then as they did by 'wiping out' the 'dirty rumours' in the assassination investigation and preventing 'damage' to shining images."

The concern in high government circles and the editorial offices of the most influential newspapers in the United States over the current delayed reaction to the Warren Report, is clearly due to worry over the "shining images" of the American judicial system, the FBI, and the public honor of outstanding government figures. For if the American public loses its faith in the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, what government official will they ever believe and trust again?

WELCOME PREPARED IN NEW ZEALAND FOR LYNDON B. JOHNWATER

By H. Holland

Wellington

When the itinerary of President Johnson's visit to New Zealand was announced, Barry Mitcalfe, chairman of the New Zealand Committee on Vietnam, stated that orderly protest demonstrations would be staged.

This provoked an appeal from Prime Minister Keith J. Holyoake. "However much the Committee on Vietnam is opposed to American policies in Vietnam," he said, "I sincerely hope its members refrain from demonstrating on this occasion." Holyoake has followed a policy of supporting Johnson and involving New Zealand in the dirty war. The prime minister described as nonsense the statement by Mitcalfe that Johnson's visit was akin to the Emperor Nero visiting far-flung Gaul or Britain.

What is interesting in this situation is that for the first time in New Zealand's history an appreciable grass-roots protest movement has formed on a foreign policy issue. The Committee on Vietnam has fourteen chapters and more than 5,000 active members. It has printed considerable material against the war, demanding the withdrawal of New Zealand's troops and helping to make the war a sharp issue in the elections scheduled for November 26.

The fact that the prime minister deemed it expedient to make an appeal not to demonstrate is a measure of the committee's strength. Mitcalfe, taking a gamble it seemed, offered to call off the projected demonstrations if President Johnson would receive a deputation of eminent persons.

The prime minister rejected this offer -- which in the opinion of some of the committee's supporters should not have been made in the first place -- and the way was cleared for demonstrations against the visit. Placards were being prepared with such welcoming signs as "Lyndon B. Johnwater" and "Lyndon B. God."

Some of the more politically backward supporters of the committee proposed to carry banners such as "Robert Kennedy for President." The reasoning behind displaying such a slogan is (1) that it would get publicity overseas, (2) that it would constitute a subtle rebuke to Johnson for electioneering in support of the ruling party just before New Zealand's parliamentary elections. Thus if Johnson is canvassing in New Zealand for support for a partisan group in the November 26 elections, then New Zealanders have a right to do the same in the USA.

The only trouble with this line of thinking is that it blatantly ignores the fact that Robert Kennedy is in reality as much a warmonger as Johnson. Besides that, he is not at present campaigning for the presidency.

Still the times are changing and the torpor that has affected these islands has come to an end. The long sleep has been of approximately thirty years duration; but now we are beginning to rejoin the human race.