

CHAPTER 23

The Unrushed Judgement

In a sense "Plausible Denial" is self-descriptive of Lane because that is what he arranged for some of his cribbing. But he is not by any means alone in the literary light fingering that is fairly common in the JFK assassination industry.

It is impossible to include all those who made an industry of the JFK assassination. It is not possible even to list them all. They include those who presented conspiracies of their concoction or adoption as solutions to the JFK assassination and those whose solution was of a theorized non-conspiracy, those of the official mythology and those who endorsed and supported it. As I once wrote the *Washington Post*, I am the lonely man in the middle (Reprinted in JFK: The Book on the Film, New York, Applause Books, 1992, pp. 296-8), espousing no theories, sticking entirely to fact. Virtually 100 percent of what I've written is official fact.

Those who make up this new industry range from the little-known and unknown of the innumerable would-be Sherlock Holmes to the largest book publishers and TV networks. While most of those who are little-known or unknown in their fascination with and promulgation of those many theories of the crime are sincere and well-intended, all are not. Increasingly in recent years their ranks have swollen with those who have little or no knowledge of the established fact of the crime and theorize from the profundity of their ignorance.

On the other extreme there are the Commission's former counsel. As lawyers, all of them are more than merely competent. All had some knowledge of the fact the Commission did establish. All were part of the whitewashing, the covering up of the actualities and the refusal to investigate the crime itself, and all endorsed and continue to endorse the official mythology they put together. All knew or had ample reason to know that they were part of the official perpetration of the enormous fraud of the official "solution."

In reaction to the powerful indictment of them in Oliver Stone's powerful movie, JFK, they staged a coast-to-coast press conference to present their claim of their purity of purpose and honesty of performance

as the Commission's counsels. When they did that I decided to write a book about them titled Honorable Men, using the words as Marc Antony used them in his oration over the assassinated Julius Caesar. My research for it consisted of their own records on the Commission, bracketing it with their noble statement of their performance they described as impeccable and some of their memos from the Commission's files. We then had a furnace "blow-back" from a faulty nozzle just installed. It coated everything in our home with fine ash that reached into every corner and crevasse and coated every surface, every edge. Our insurance company recommended a firm of professional cleaners. When they were finished two weeks or more later much was mislaid or moved from where it had been and what was missing included the box of files of research for Honorable Men. It is not now possible for me to do that work all over again and that book I'll not be able to write now. The kindest thing that can be said about those young lawyers the careers of all whom prospered from their part in the official corruption of our history by the Warren Commission is what I believed until I got deep into the work of these past three decades: that they had been trained in the adversary system of justice and were its victims.

Under our adversary system, which appears to be the best yet for achieving justice, each lawyer has his opponent and the judge to keep him honest and to prevent his abuse of the system. They had no adversary on the Commission and no judge. Only their consciences. They were further protected by the total secrecy in which they worked.

Even then, the best face that can be put on their great failures is that they did not resist temptation in the absence of opposing counsel and a judge.

But in fact there is not one of them who did not have abundant reason for at the least having the deepest doubts about what they did and most of them without question, knew they were perpetrating the fraud they foisted off on our history and on the sorrowing people. They did it anyway and prospered from it. Arlen Specter, the former Philadelphia, Pennsylvania assistant district attorney, by virtue of the area of his work, is the most serious offender. His area was the medical evidence and the related ballistics and scientific testing. He fathered the bastard of the single-bullet theory. And he parlayed that greatest of all the many

corruptions of fact and truth into a seat on the United States Senate. That was after switching from the liberal Americans for Democratic Action to the conservative Republican Party. His most spectacular performance in the Senate was to use his immunity to assure the seat on the United States Supreme Court for the unqualified black who was the blackest of reactionaries, Clarence Thomas. Specter did that by charging the diminutive woman law professor Anita Hill with perjury in having said that Thomas had harassed her sexually, including in talking about porno films. Has Specter said any such thing outside his Senate function she could have sued him. Knowing he could not be sued, and having failed to investigate what could easily have been investigated to determine whether or not what she testified to could have been true, Specter established his own manhood by hiding behind those most transparent of skirts, Senatorial immunity, and he charged her with perjury.

And that on coast-to-coast live TV.

For confirmation and for confirmation hearings the FBI conducts the investigations at the request of the President or of the committee of the Senate. Its supposed investigation of Thomas did not disclose any allegation of sexual harassment. That indicates its investigation was not all that diligent, nor surprising given Thomas' known reactionary political views and views on racial issues in accord with his political views. Once the charge surfaced, the FBI did not investigate it on its own or at the committee's request. All Specter need have done had his intentions been honest and honorable was to ask the FBI to go to the relatively few places that then rented porno films and ask if their records reflected any rentals to Thomas or if they recalled it. That could have provided a definitive answer. But neither Specter nor the committee's Democrats did that.

Unless Thomas, if he had rented such films, had used a phony name or had someone else get them for him.

But if the stores had insisted on identification, if Thomas had rented such films as the one with the name that got the most attention, "Long Dong Silver," the FBI could have known in less than a day's work for a couple of agents.

Specter's avoidance of any investigation at all before condemning Hill as a felon on coast-to-coast live TV brackets his Commission career as I state and document it in NEVER AGAIN! and to a lesser degree in several of my earlier books, particularly in the first of the Whitewash series and in Post Mortem.

In varying lesser degrees Specter's fellow Commission counsels performed in their protected star chamber as he did. Without their failure, the failures of each and every one of them, the fraud of the official assassination mythology would have been impossible and that particular corruption of our precious history and of our national honor would not have been possible.

They have prospered, all of them. Some in their law practices, some as law professors, one became a judge and one whose record on the Commission was so liked by the Commissioner who became our only unelected President, Gerald Ford, he appointed David Belin to run another of those whitewashing Presidential commissions, that one whitewashing the CIA.

Ford is the only Commissioner who commercialized his malfeasance, nonfeasance and misfeasance on the Commission. He put John R. Stiles, his former campaign manager, later his White House counsel, on the public payroll to ghost first a book, Portrait of the Assassin (Simon & Schuster, 1965, Ballantine Books paperback reprint, 1966), as well as his own private "Warren Report" for LIFE magazine. For the book they stole- and I mean this literally- a TOP SECRET Commission executive session transcript and sold it in the book. That was its executive session of January 27, 1964 at which the Commission agonized over the report that Oswald had worked for the FBI and what they would do about it.

When Spiro Agnew was forced to resign as Richard Nixon's vice president as a result of the assorted dishonesties and corruptions with which he had been charged in federal district court in Baltimore, Maryland, Nixon, then staggering under the danger of impeachment for his Watergate offenses, nominated Ford to succeed Agnew. That required Senate confirmation and that vote was preceded by a hearing of its Judiciary Committee, at which Ford testified under oath. Asked by its chairman about the propriety of selling the book and LIFE article Ford went further than defend the propriety of what he did. Under oath he then added this testimony:

"We did not use in that book any material other than the material that was in the 26 volumes of testimony and exhibits that were subsequently made public and sold to the public generally."
(Whitewash IV, page 12)

The question was material. Materiality is the requirement that false testimony qualify for the charge of the felony of perjury. That testimony was 100 percent false and thus was perjury. Ford and Stiles opened their book with that TOP SECRET transcript and used it extensively. Not satisfied with stealing what was classified TOP SECRET and selling it, they changed it materially, changing its meaning and at the same time covering ass for Ford, the Commission and the FBI. My friend Paul Hoch, of Berkeley, California, took six pages of their book in which they did steal and did use and did misuse this TOP SECRET transcript and compared that with the actual transcript.

I had had to sue under FOIA a decade later, in 1974, when it was still classified TOP SECRET, to get a copy of that transcript. There were 30 such changes Ford and Stiles made in what they presented as verbatim. I reproduced those pages in facsimile along with Paul's itemizations of the liberties Ford and Stiles took with that transcript in Whitewash IV. (pages 124-30) The large black TOP SECRET stamps are visible through the lines scratched through them on all of its 85 pages; each and every one of them. I printed that transcript in facsimile in the same book, Whitewash IV, pages 36-121, inclusive.

Ford thus was the one who really started this JFK assassination industry. It is appropriate that he followed his establishing it by perjuring himself to become our only unelected President when Nixon resigned to escape impeachment. Ford then pardoned Nixon, who had made him President, so Nixon could not be punished for his offenses.

Ford's pal Belin became the longest-winded of all the former Commission counsel, making and seizing opportunities to appear on oped pages, sometimes making Ford coauthor, in unending appearances, particularly on TV, and in two books in which he regurgitates the Commission's rancid cud of its mythology. He is always welcome to the media whose own ass it covered in publishing him.

There is, of course, much less excuse for error when it is by those of the original sin of that fraudulent Report. But there is no other way for them to defend themselves or their fraud of a Report. They

cannot do it with truth.

Referring to their outpouring as mere error is to praise them all. They all knew better, Belin in particular.

Not only does Belin know because he is no fool- he knows because I confronted him with his own record in a debate at Vanderbilt University, in Nashville, Tennessee in the fall of 1975. He could not refute a single part of his record I thrust right in his face then and he hasn't since. (I address this in more detail elsewhere.)

What these able men did on the Commission and later is their personal tragedies as it is also out national tragedy.

What some of the critics did is also tragic. Perhaps in some way the most tragic of all is Mark Lane.

He is, without question, able, articulate, imaginative, clever, daring and well-grounded in the law and its practice. He also has taught the law.

Lane was the first of those of us generally known as and lumped together as "critics" to get a really large exposure nationally and then internationally.

For this he is indebted to the national left-wing weekly newspaper, *The National Guardian*. It was organized and edited, until years later it was taken over by those much more radical, by the former successful Hollywood writer, British-born Cedric Belfrage, and former New York *Times* reporter Jim Aaronson.

The *Guardian* organized speaking appearances for Lane and some of its subscribers did various investigations for him.

Lane was also the first to believe that he owned the subject of the JFK assassination.

He also got Marguerite Oswald, Lee Harvey's mother, to engage him to represent her dead son before the Warren Commission. When the Commission refused to recognize him as Oswald's counsel, Lane appeared before it as Marguerite's. (Whitewash, pp. 79-80)

Instead the Commission recognized the American Bar Association as providers of Oswald's supposed counsel. (Whitewash, pp. 78, 79, 90) One of the two lawyers to whom it delegated that duty was Lewis

Powell. (Whitewash, pp. 78, 80) Powell was later a Supreme Court Justice.

This decision did not create one of the Commission's brighter moments, of which it had markedly few in any event. Little attention has been paid it. Oswald's supposed counsel were more often absent than present at the Commission's secret hearings in Washington at which Members of the Commission were present. Oswald's supposed bar association counsel were never present at the staff-conducted secret deposition taken out of town, the means by which most testimony was adduced.

Powell's most unusual "representation" of Oswald's interest, hardly a qualification for sitting on the Supreme Court, was his demand before the Commission in its examination of the home-made paper bag in which Oswald is alleged by the Commission to have carried that rifle to the Depository building the morning of the assassination. When the Commission got to where a single Oswald fingerprint was said to have been identified on that bag, Powell demanded that it be protected and preserved.

How that in any way was in Oswald's interest in neither stated nor apparent. Powell said nothing at all about preserving the Commission's evidence that was exculpatory of Oswald, as much was. This is particularly true of the evidence relating to that same alleged bag.

All the evidence and all the testimony is that the rifle was well oiled. The FBI examination of that alleged bag disclosed not a trace of oil. Unless there was a magical oil to go with so much other magic in the official mythology, that so-called bag never held that rifle and thus there was no way of showing that Oswald had carried the rifle to the scene of the crime, that morning or ever.

All the testimony is that the bag Oswald did carry, like a grocery bag, he held with its top crumpled in his fist as he walked swinging it above the ground. He then laid it on the back seat of fellow-worker Buell Wesley Frazier's old car, where it bounced around all the way to Dallas.

When Frazier parked his car and sat in it running the motor to charge the weak battery a bit more he saw Oswald carry the bag against his body, cupped in his hand and with its top tucked under his armpit.

With that supposed rifle rubbing against it all that time the paper that does easily hold oil when oil is touched to it, had no trace of oil on it. There also is not a wrinkle on it anywhere from its official history of

having been crumpled in Oswald's hand while he carried it. And there is no fingerprint at all on the bottom where he allegedly held it as he walked from the parking lot to the building and into it. Nor is there any fingerprint at the top where he supposedly carried that heavy rifle jouncing around in the imagined bag as he walked to Frazier's car with it and then held it in other places to lay it out across that back seat.

Thus the Commission created a magic bag and a magic rifle, in addition to its magical oil, to go along with its magic bullet, its Exhibit 399 of its most basic theory, of that single bullet inflicting all seven non-fatal wounds on the President and on then Texas governor, John Connally, emerging from that career unequally in either science or mythology, virtually unscathed and unmarked.

As Oswald's lawyer Powell had nothing to say about all this exculpatory evidence.

Or, for that matter, about the great volume of its other exculpatory evidence the Commission either ignored or misrepresented.

So there is little question about it, Lane could not but have served Oswald's interest better than the bar association did.

Lane was then a youngish and leftist former New York State legislator. Why "former" will soon interest us. His career as a critic was launched by the Guardian and it was largely responsible for the help he got.

Those interested in this will look in vain for any reflection of it in any of Lane's books. They will find it reflected in those Guardian back issues if they can find any.

The Guardian was not too left-wing for then-leftist Lane when it came to giving him his start as a critic. But when it came to public acknowledgment of his debt to it in his books, it became too left-wing for any acknowledgment of his debt to it.

In these two little-known matters, why Lane decided not to run for re-election to the state legislature and why he was impelled not to acknowledge his association with the Guardian, are two of the many indications of the kind of person Lane is.

That Belfrage's daughter Sally later was responsible for his being published when Lane had failed to

deliver any manuscript for his book when he had a contract with Grove Press for it and neither delivered the manuscript nor returned the advance, only a nominal \$1,800, Lane also found unworthy of mention in any of his books, beginning with his first, Rush to Judgement.

My sources on this are those with first-person knowledge.

Oscar Collier had been Lane's agent. When I met him he ran Twentieth Century Publishing, officed in New York City's PanAm building astride Park Avenue. It is Collier who told me that he had been Lane's agent and had gotten him the advance from Barney Rosset, who then owned Grove Press. A book critical of the official assassination mythology was a natural for Rosset and for Grove. Lane's failure to perform, to either deliver his manuscript or return the advance, so soured Rosset on the subject of the assassination he would not speak to me about it by phone and would not even look at Whitewash.

But Collier overcame his disenchantment with Lane when making money from him became possible. That was with Lane's Code Name Zorro, his 1977 book co-authored with Dick Gregory. In addition to being published by Prentice Hall in this country they also published it in England, Australia, Canada, India, Japan and Singapore. It was also published by Whitehall Books, Ltd., Wellington, New Zealand.

A press conference to launch the book was scheduled for the National Press Building in Washington. Lane's reputation as a literary lightfinger and an announced feature of his press conference led me to there. It was Oscar Collier who for some reason was gloating who greeted me at the door. We return to Lane's supposed King assassination book later because it has very little to do with the fact of that crime and because its little contact with the supposed facts of that crime range from non-existing to obviously wrong.

When I met Sally Belfrage she was and had been a manuscript reader for the New American Library, the New York book publisher. Jerry Agel, who then published the weekly Books, took me to her Greenwich Village apartment. Her father was then the Guardian's "editor-in-exile," living in Cuernavaca, Mexico. His exile had been arranged as part of the nefarious red-hunting of those mostly not red in any event by the man from whom we have the name by which such anti-American activities are since known, Joe McCarthy.

I had by then published Whitewash. Belfrage's first words were that she was sorry she had not

known about it sooner.

In her account, when Lane finally did turn out a manuscript and New American Library had declined to publish it- Lane claims only a dozen such rejections- she introduced it to the Bertrand Russell people in England. She said that a former boyfriend of hers whose name I remember as Ben Sonnenberg edited and rewrote some of it and the Russell people persuaded the British publisher, The Bodley Head, to contract it. It was The Bodley Head that placed it with Holt, Reinhart & Winston in this country. This does not appear on its copyright page.

In his Acknowledgment (page 25) the first of those Lane thanks for their "suggestions" is Bertrand Russell. He also says "I am deeply indebted to Benjamin Sonnenberg, Jr., whose numerous and invaluable suggestions have found their way into this volume."

Without identifying him with the Russell group, Lane thanks Ralph Schoenman for his support. Schoenman actually then ran the Russell group for the then aged professor. Without associating any of them with the Guardian Lane extends thanks to a number of "amateur investigators."

By the time Lane's Rush to Judgement appeared there was nothing of any real significance in it that was at all new. Although for his ninth book, Plausible Denial, its New York publisher, Thunder's Mouth Press, claimed it was the first book on the Warren Commission, my 1965 Whitewash and Edward J. Epstein's Inquest (New York, The Viking Press, 1966), preceded it.

Holt, Reinhart advertised it extensively and sent Lane barnstorming. He was remarkably good at it. Uninhibited, too.

Ego that he is, Lane added what should normally be text in an appendix and to make space for it what was advertised in advance as what the appendix would include was eliminated. Lane used Epstein's work and mine instead, without attribution. What he used from Whitewash is what he forgot in writing his book, the phone call with Helen Markham that Vincent Salandria, Philadelphia lawyer and one of those "amateur investigators" whose connection with the Guardian is not indicated, arranged for.

Markham was a witness to the killing of Dallas police officer J.D. Tippit. Her garbled account was

often self-contradictory.

Lane was the first to make nationwide appearances talking about the JFK assassination. He was on TV, radio, on talk shows, and in newspaper interviews, and he appeared before collegiate and other audiences. Holt, Reinhart knew how to promote books. Lane was ideally suited to promote himself as well as his book. He did both effectively from coast to coast and then abroad.

Having no publisher and no funding I was not able to do that and Epstein lacked the disposition and made only a few appearances. So the field was wide open for Lane and he made the best of it, cleverly identifying all criticism of the Warren Report with himself. That appears to have been the beginning of his belief that he owned the subject to which, in fact, his book was a Johnny- come-lately.

It was only about five months later that news of Jim Garrison's entry into the JFK assassination industry first came to light. Lane was then traveling in Europe. As soon as he heard of Garrison's supposed assassination investigation, Lane told the press in Europe, reported in our papers, that he would rush to New Orleans and give Garrison the benefit of his unequalled knowledge of the JFK assassination. He did rush to New Orleans. After seeing Garrison it was an entirely different Lane who spoke to the press. His ego was carefully hidden. He emerged with the highest praises for Garrison. He said that Garrison had solved the crime and that at trial he would shock the world with the proof of it that Lane indicated Garrison had shared with him. Lane then even moved to New Orleans.

That was the beginning of a new Lane career and a new source of his enrichment.

Through the Program Corporation of America he was booked from coast to coast for mostly collegiate appearances. At each from the many reports I got he was careful to say that he did not speak for Garrison and then he proceeded to give the impression that he was doing just that. Garrison was a hot item then and that made such well paid for appearances even more attractive.

A student who was at one of Lane's appearances described him as doing everything except having sex with the microphone. Anything that Garrison had said, and he did say much, and anything that seemed like it would be attractive to those collegiate audiences is what Lane told them.

He became even more famous and even more identified was criticism of the JFK assassination, this time wrapped in Garrison's cloak to excite the kids even more.

(Before I arranged for all my records and my work to be a free public archive at Hood College, here in Frederick, I gave all my assassination clippings to my friend history professor Dave Wrone, at the University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point. He was then working on the only professional bibliography on the subject. For that reason I also persuaded my friend the late Jim White, who spent a long lifetime as an Associated Press reporter here and abroad, to give his even more extensive file of clippings to Wrone. Thus I cannot use Lane's precise words.)

In between his speeches to college and university and a few other audiences Lane was working on another book. With his usual modesty he titled that book A Citizen's Dissent, so that it and the attention it got would associate all criticism of the Warren Report with him and with him alone. Published by Holt, Reinhart copies were available in early June, 1968.

My fourth book had appeared eight months earlier but that did not discourage Lane's pretense that he alone was the little boy with his finger in the dike, of also being Horatio alone at that bridge.

Long before then Lane had lost his welcome on TV. He wanted to be on TV in Washington very much. But none of the major stations would have him. He knew that I had arranged for a series of appearances on the then weakest of TV stations and the poorest and he asked me to share one with him. I agreed to have him on the one I had scheduled to coincide with the annual convention of the American Booksellers Association. Those conventions then were always the first week of June and then were always in Washington's Shoreham Hotel.

In those days there was a successful radio program, "Authors' Roundtable." It was syndicated to more than 300 radio stations, giving authors and publishers a large audience interested in books. It was owned by a man whose voice on commercials had made him wealthy. I've forgotten his name but probably have it in some old records to which I now do not have ready access. Dorothy Mattimore actually ran it for him. He was besides being its owner, the voice of the interviews.

That June, according to Dottie, he had just gotten married. When he did not show up to do the interviews Dottie attributed that to his bride's development of a hazardous hangnail. When he did not show up, women's voices in those blighted years not being acceptable on radio, Dottie asked me to ad lib all the interviews of the many authors whose books I had then not even seen.

It was quite an experience, quite a challenge, and after a couple of those interviews went well, I began to enjoy it.

I remember that one of the first was of two women Miami reporters. They had just published a book reporting that when the older people who had retired to Florida wanted to get married they could not afford to because their Social Security checks would have been reduced, women then being discriminated against if they remarried. So, they lived instead in what was then spoken and thought of as in sin.

Retired James Gavin, JFK's intellectual general, had a new book. In my interview with him he said that JFK had made clear to his generals that he intended withdrawing from Viet Nam after the coming election and that before then he would withdraw a small number of soldiers. I remember clearly Gavin's account of what Kennedy did when he called in those generals he wanted to understand his policy. As Gavin told me, in close to these words, Kennedy told them, "Viet Nam is a political problem. What can I do to persuade you that political problems are not susceptible of military solutions?" If Kennedy had succeeded in persuading the military all of subsequent history would have been different. (As John Newman's excellent JFK and Viet Nam (New York, Warner Books, 1992), the generals had their own policy, their own agenda, and who in the hell was a mere President of the United States to tell them how they should think and act what policies they should have.)

In that interview that greatest of our political commentators, the humorist Art Buckwald, demonstrated that there is no quicker mind than his. I asked him what I thought would be a tough question, "Tell us, Mr. Buckwald, what is the real CIA?" It took him no longer than twice repeating, "What is the real CIA?" to have his answer fully in mind.

"The real CIA," he said without a stutter or even a smile, "is two hidden divisions of the Agriculture

Department." The rest of his answer was to the effect that all the rest of the CIA is for show only, to hide its real working in those two secret parts of the Agriculture Department.

Buckwald liked that so much he later used it as a column.

But when it came to Lane I asked Dottie to interview him.

Because I had also promised Lane that I'd drive him to that TV studio in advance of the show, I drove him, Dottie, and my wife there long enough in advance for Dottie to interview Lane before the show began.

That was at then Channel 13, far out in the northern part of the city near where its northeast and northwest sections join. If I remember correctly, the call letters of that since defunct station were WFAN. The show was that of John Hightower, Jr., son of a well-known AP reporter of that period. In those days there were commercial breaks at the beginning and end of shows and one quarter, half-way and three-quarters into it. Cameras were large and bulky and when the shows were recorded, that was on film. Cables snaked all over the place.

Lane was not long in reflecting his appreciation of my help in getting his book on more than 300 radio stations throughout the country, for his TV time in Washington when his agent and publisher could not arrange it, and for his transportation. It was in the first quarter of the show and it was not very long before its inflammatory nature was apparent.

"Bobby," he intoned, "says there are too many guns between him and the White House."

Although we did not then know it, that was the night Robert Kennedy was shot to death in Los Angeles. It was the night that his victory in the California primary indicated he had a good chance of becoming our next president.

What Lane did in his unending effort to make himself appear to be the real insider, the one who knows everybody and everything, was outrageous for several reasons. Each of them angered me. I then on live TV exposed him for what he was by telling the story behind what he had said and that it was entirely unconfirmed.

Early on a Monday morning shortly before then the phone in my Fontainbleau Motel room on Tulane Avenue in New Orleans, near its border with Jefferson Parish, had rung. Jones Harris was on the line. Jones is known as a Warren Commission critic. He told me where he was in the motel and asked me to join him for breakfast. I then was about ready to leave but I went to his room.

Jones is the son of Ruth Gordon, the great actress. His father was Jed Harris, the famous Broadway producer. The word is that when his mother found out that she was carrying a baby she refused to marry his father. Whether or not true, Jones was of independent means. He was in New Orleans, he told me, because he owned an interest in a boxer who had just fought there.

He had always represented himself as a Bobby Kennedy man. I knew of nobody who disputed it. He indicated this in a way to suggest that his was a close or an inside connection. While eating he told me that he had recently been with Bobby and his people when Bobby had been asked about his brother's assassination and when Bobby had said he trusted and believed the official account or that he had no reason not to trust it. As Jones explained it, he had been told by one of Bobby's party that he had said that not because he believed it but because he believed that "there are too many guns between him and the White House."

While it was obvious that Jones provided no confirmation for this story, that he was supposedly so close to Bobby and his supposed supporter and because Garrison then was supposedly still investigating the assassination, I asked Jones to go to his office with me. Although it was warm and that was about 20 blocks away I suggested that we walk so I could get a little exercise. My real reason was to give Jones more time to talk to see if he would add to what he had said. He did not. I took him into Garrison so he could repeat it to him. I then left for my own planned work.

If there had been any basis for the story it was then entirely unconfirmed. We had no way of knowing whether Bobby had said any such thing and I personally doubted it. We did not know who allegedly told Jones or whether he had any connection with Kennedy at all. But with an ongoing investigation right there in New Orleans, I did believe that Garrison should know the rumor.

Lane's airing of it on TV was as though it was his story and confirmed even though he knew that it

was unconfirmed and that I had taken it to Garrison along with its source.

As it turned out almost six years later when I confronted Harris with it, he admitted that he had not only made it up but rather than being a Kennedy man he had always supported Richard Nixon and hated Kennedy politically.

Going public with it as though it was the established truth and fact, especially in Washington, was at the least irresponsible. Before daylight in Washington it was also inflammatory because Kennedy had been shot.

Always one to present himself as pure and truthful and as the victim of those he gave the impression envied him and his pretended knowledge, when the break for the commercials came Lane glowered at me and said, "I have a good mind to punch you in the nose after the show is over."

"Why wait? Why don't you do it now?" I challenged him.

Despite the differences in our ages the much younger Lane merely muttered to himself for the benefit of the show's host and production crew.

When the show ended my nose was unpunched.

But Dottie, with her trusty reel-to-reel high quality tape recorder had taped it all, along with the rest of the show. She'd put her recorder down with its mike open when she entered the studio. She picked it up when she left. She gave me the reel of tape.

Beginning in Rush to Judgement with one of his dirty tricks that it soon was clear is his usual practice I wanted as little to do with Lane as possible. That trick was his means of getting even with Warren and the Commission's general counsel, J. Lee Rankin. Lane regarded both as personal enemies because they refused to recognize him as Oswald's lawyer.

In presenting what he represented as verbatim quotations from the Commission's testimony Lane had changed them. With Warren and Rankin he used their names when they asked questions. With all the others he replaced their names that in all instances the transcript did give with "counsel." As a result the reader's anger was focused on Warren and Rankin and all the others, those who did most of the questioning, were

faceless and nameless. The reader could be angry or disappointed with only Warren and Rankin. All the others were thus immune.

A few days later I had a chance to read Lane's personalizing of all criticisms of the Commission as his in his A Citizen's Dissent. Although I did not have a high opinion of Lane as a person, of his morals, ethics and other standards of personal conduct, I was astounded how corrupt and dishonest that book is, how unabashed Lane was in all dishonesties in it, and how in it he made himself out to be the innocent victim of all the world's evil forces because of his work, and from his books, his alone, naturally, on the JFK assassination.

It was to be a stunning, a shocking display of the corruption, dishonesty and ego that in coming years were among the hallmark of so many all of whom were indiscriminately referred to as all alike, as "critics."