

NYT-6-18-67  
Movie ~~by~~ Seymour

## Raking Muck

**M**UCKRAKING may be potentially dangerous but it also can be gratifying if you're Emile de Antonio, director of "Rush to Judgment," the documentary film edition of Mark Lane's best-selling book now at the Carnegie Hall Cinema. The serious business of opposing the Warren Commission's official, voluminous report on President Kennedy's assassination was "far from easy," he revealed last week. "But as a devout muckraker you have to take chances. You know you'll run into some trouble, but I'm happy we did it, since the film not only turned out the way we wanted it to but also has been well received here, in Los Angeles, San Francisco, New Orleans and in Europe. And," he added contentedly, "I'm starting another film—a fictional one—that also will be a muckraker."

No newcomer to the political documentary, Mr. de Antonio, who collaborated with Dan Talbot on the memorable Senator McCarthy-Army trial feature, "Point of Order!", made it plain that he was "dissatisfied" with reports of the assassination. "After reading some of Lane's articles, I called him early in 1964 and we agreed to make a filmic plea for the defense. We were able to raise the film's \$72,000 budget from some Britishers, including director Tony Richardson, playwright John Osborne, producer Oscar Lewenstein and a group of American backers. Lane and I had a

handshake agreement. We worked on a format for the movie and then, after an exploratory trip to Dallas, I took a film crew of four down to Dallas in March, 1966.

"We got stock footage from TV stations but our major material came from interviewing people to illustrate our contention that there were gaping holes in the official versions of the tragedy," he went on. "I talked to about 100 people, of whom about 30 are seen in the film, and that, oddly enough, is where our trouble was. We were never threatened, you understand. But getting witnesses to speak was another matter. Most of them were ready to do so and then they would call to say they had been threatened and begged off. I couldn't blame them, of course. We could easily leave Texas but they had to continue to live there with their families. Anyway, we got some who did testify, despite threats, and we're eternally grateful to them.

"On the other hand," he added, "there was my own crew, which got pretty jittery after hearing about threats and wouldn't even start their cars for fear of bombs. I was the guy who had to turn those keys and after a while," he said, smiling ruefully, "I got jittery too. There were quite a few potential witnesses who were suspicious from the start, thinking I was either an F.B.I. man or just another crackpot — the

## Deep in the Heart of Texas

By A. H. WEILER

woods were full of them—and wouldn't come near us. But, by and large, we had no opposition from officials. Anyway, it was a tough and sensitive job but eminently worthwhile."