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Britons Riled by JFK Show

Lane Squelched On BBC, They Say

Compiled from Dispatches

LONDON — Viewers of a television debate on the Warren Report jammed the British Broadcasting Corp.'s switchboard complaining that an American critic of the report was not given a fair hearing.

The callers side with New York lawyer Mark Lane, who contended several times during the 4½-hour program that he was not being allowed the same chance to speak as two former counsels to the Warren Commission which investigated the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

"THE method adopted by the BBC tonight has done a grave disservice to truth," Lane told British chairman Kenneth Harris at one point.

After an on-camera telephone consultation with the program's producers, Harris replied: "I don't want to hear criticism of extraneous matters such as the BBC or me."

The commission's conclusion that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone in the assassination was defended by former counsels David Belin, a lawyer in Des Moines, Iowa, and Arken Specter, Philadelphia district attorney.

Lane is author of "Rush to Judgment," a book attacking the commission's findings. His 100-minute movie of the same name was shown publicly for the first time on the program.

THE film includes Lane's interviews of witnesses of the

assassination who disagree with the commission's report as to where the shots came from. Harris insisted that Lane had let the movie present most of his arguments.

Lord Devlin, a prominent jurist, and Alexander M. Bickel, Yale University professor of law and legal history, summed up.

Bickel said the commission's conclusion that a single bullet hit Kennedy and Texas Gov. John Connally was not convincing. He suggested that the investigation be reopened, possibly by a full-time group of two or three retired judges.

Lord Devlin disagreed, arguing that there was no reasonable doubt of Oswald's guilt, and added:

"EVEN a dead president is entitled to some bodily privacy. Let him rest in peace."

The film also sought to prove the late Jack Ruby was an agent of the Dallas Police Department, that at least eight key witnesses had died mysteriously and that the Warren Commission had attempted to suppress material evidence.

Bickel concluded there was no shadow, no scintilla of evidence pointing to a conspiracy.

As for Ruby, he said:

"Poor deranged, unstable Ruby — if he was the conspirator, God help the rest of the conspiracy."

BICKEL emphasized there was no question as to the honesty and sincerity of the Warren Commission and its findings. But he declared the "central question" is still the "one-bullet" theory.

Lane clashed frequently with the program moderator, Harris, a noted BBC newsman who spent some time in the United States interviewing key witnesses and Warren Commission members. Harris repeatedly cut off Lane in mid-sentence for not keeping to the point.

"I didn't come 7,000 miles for this," Lane said bitterly at one point.