

20 Toil on Warren 'Defense'

By GENE BLAKE
Special to The Inquirer
And Los Angeles Times

LOS ANGELES, Oct. 22 — Nagging doubts about the Warren Commission report on the assassination of President John F. Kennedy are being explored in a massive study at the University of California at Los Angeles.

Directing the project is law professor ~~Walter~~ Liebeler, who served as an assistant counsel on the commission staff. Twenty law students, most of them in their third year, are participating.

Each has been assigned a particular topic in the report. They will go through the record, analyze the evidence on both sides and perhaps suggest what the commission should have gone into more thoroughly.

Results of the seminar will serve as the basis for some of the things to be said in a book Liebeler plans to write.

Liebeler says the study was spawned by two books critical of the Warren report—"Rush to Judgement" by attorney Mark Lane and "Inquest" by Edward Jay Epstein.

BACKS FINDINGS

Although Liebeler himself has been critical of some of the things done by the commission staff and is quoted extensively in the Epstein book, he is thoroughly in accord with the commission findings.

And he is appalled at the nature of the attacks questioning the conclusion that Lee Harvey Oswald was the assassin and acted alone.

Liebeler and his associates on the commission staff are particularly disturbed at what they claim are misstatements or distortions of the record. He says he has found at least 15 in the Lane book.

In assessing Lane's treatment

of the subject, Liebeler said he is "forced to the conclusion of dishonesty." He is kinder to Epstein, labeling him merely "incorrect."

Liebeler said Epstein, who wrote his book originally as a master's thesis in government at Cornell University, was overwhelmed by the stir it caused and has since abandoned some of his contentions.

"What is needed at this point," Liebeler said, "is one piece of work which sets forth both sides objectively. Lane doesn't. Epstein doesn't."

"There is evidence in the record not entirely reflected in the text of the Warren report. That doesn't mean it wasn't considered."

"It needs to be put in one short, concise place so the read-

ers can make up their own minds."

Liebeler is even wary of newspaper accounts of the controversy. If the dialogue is typical of reports the public receives on other subjects, he says, it's a wonder society has survived.

As an example, he cites a wire service report this week quoting him as saying autopsy X rays of President Kennedy showed all shots fired at him were from behind and above.

"I did not state that this was shown by the X rays, but rather that it was shown by the autopsy itself," Liebeler said.

"I did not and could not have made the statement about the X rays themselves showing that the shots were fired from behind and above for the simple reason that I have never seen the X rays."

In addition, while I am not an expert on such matters, I doubt that X rays could show such a thing one way or the other."

But Liebeler believes the pictures of the President's wounds would more likely confirm the findings. And he thinks such material, which he understands has been turned over to the Justice Department by the Kennedy family, should be made available to a responsible body.

He said the commission's working papers, now secreted in the national archives, may be available for study within 60 days.

The university will be asked for funds to permit students to go to Washington to analyze this material and perhaps to do further research in Dallas, Liebeler said.

An honor graduate of the University of Chicago Law School in 1957, Liebeler, 35, practiced law in New York before he was assigned to work with the commission. He is in his second year as an acting professor at UCLA.

16 Firemen Hurt in N. Y.

NEW YORK, Oct. 22 (AP).—Sixteen firemen were injured, none seriously, when part of a ceiling fell in Saturday during a grease-fed blaze which flashed through a cafeteria in the Bronx about six blocks from Yankee Stadium.

One firefighter suffered smoke inhalation and was admitted to a hospital. The 15 others were treated at the scene.

About 125 men and 40 pieces of equipment responded after flames leaping from a grease duct in the E. 167th st. cafeteria between River and Girard aves., set the ceiling afire and chased patrons into the street.

Twelve New York City firemen were killed early Monday as a floor collapsed and they fell into a fire-swept basement.

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