

'Rush to Judgment': a film, an indictment

By Gary Schoener

Monday and Tuesday the University audience will have the chance to view a truly extraordinary film, "Rush to Judgment."

Its producers are Mark Lane, lawyer and author of the former No. 1 bestseller of the same name, and Emile De Antonio, professor of literature and film director.

The film is an attack on the conclusions and methods of the Warren Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy. It is a plea for the defense and as such is not objective, a fact conspicu-

ously noted at the outset.

The film consists primarily of a series of interviews with witnesses. Many of the interviews were filmed at the positions in Dealy Plaza in Dallas where the witnesses stood on the day of the assassination, while others were taken from newsreels.

Much of the impact of the film derives from these interviews. The witnesses whose names are thrown around carelessly in the many volumes about the assassination suddenly become real people.

There is Mrs. Acquilla Clemens, a housewife and witness to the killing of police officer J. D. Tippit, whose very existence is denied by the Warren Commission. She explains that she saw two men at the scene of the Tippit slaying, neither of whom resembled Oswald, and that a man with a gun under his belt came to her home and told her she might "get hurt if she talked."

Lee Bowers Jr., a railroad switchtower operator, was the only man to command a view of the area behind the "grassy knoll" from which many spectators thought shots were fired. He saw three mysterious cars cruise around that area prior to the shots.

He also saw two men in that area and thought he saw a flash or puff of smoke where they were standing when the shots were fired. He was killed in an unusual automobile accident three months after the interview.

Warren Reynolds Jr., who appears in the film, was shot through the head (but miraculously survived) after telling the FBI that the man he saw fleeing from the scene of the Tippit killing was not Oswald.

The actors in this film are some of the heroes of that dark Friday in Dallas. Lane and De Antonio located many witnesses only to find that they had been pressured into silence by the FBI, police, or their own employers.

In addition to the interviews, the film presents physical evidence. Some examples include documents and diagrams relating to the ver-

city of the autopsy, a picture of the bullet which allegedly caused all the wounds of the President and Gov. Connally but which is pristine and undamaged in any way, and a picture of a car parked behind the home of Gen. Edwin Walker which was tampered with in an obvious fashion while in government hands.

"Rush to Judgment" represents a unique form of documentary cinema, probably best described by its director De Antonio as "art brut"—the raw material of life. It may well represent a landmark in cinema as well as social and political commentary and criticism.

(Schoener, a graduate student in clinical psychology, published a series of articles on the Kennedy assassination in the Minneapolis Star last year.)