

Mark Lane - Joe Dolan show, KNEW Oakland, 18 April 1967.
Transcribed from tape. #43

Dolan: Mark Lane is now on the line. Mark Lane? Hello?

Lane: Hello?

D: Yes, Mark - good morning.

L: Good morning to you, Joe.

D: Mr. Mark Lane, delighted to have you back in the Bay Area. First of all I would like to ask you to substantiate or amplify on the statement you made with Mort Sahl to the effect that when the people of this country discover the facts behind the death of President Kennedy they're going to be outraged and shocked. Would you please amplify on that?

L: Yes. I've spent the past two weeks - I went to New Orleans, and I spent - to speak to the Young Men's Business Club there, and I met Jim Garrison, the District Attorney of New Orleans, and I spent a week with him, every single day, some hours I met with him and with his staff and I have seen the evidence which he has gathered. I am very impressed with his grasp of the case and with his staff and overwhelmed by that which they have discovered. Nothing, I think, can stop him from walking into that courtroom in New Orleans and presenting the evidence, and when he does there's going to be a sense of shock I think that's probably never been equalled in our country's history.

D: Now, Mr. Lane, that is such a sobering statement. Now, I know that you're an attorney and a criminal defender, former member of the New York State Legislature, and so on. You've been the world's foremost critic of the Warren Commission, and I am sure that you would not make an irresponsible or whimsical statement. And that this is what you honestly and maturely feel.

L: I've seen the evidence, Joe, and I know what the evidence shows. It shows that a very powerful domestic force, which remains part of the American structure now, planned the events which culminated in the assassination of President Kennedy, and that anti-Castro Cubans executed the program. They didn't participate in the planning stage, but they pulled the trigger. Mr. Garrison has this evidence. It's overwhelming; it's documented in terms of eye-witness testimony, in terms of various documentary testimony, and he's going to present this and when he does, of course there'll be a great sense of outrage in the country, and with good reason, because it will then become plain why the government felt it had to issue a report which bore no relationship to the truth, because the kind of disclosures which will be made there in that courtroom are just the kind which no

government has ever voluntarily made about itself.

D: You actually feel that some domestic agency or some domestic organization is behind this?

L: Yes, I think there's no question about it. The evidence is conclusive, in my view.

D: How did Garrison manage to get this when the FBI and other agencies of our government could not?

L: I asked him about that, of course. For instance, he said the FBI had an army of 6,000 men conducting the investigation but he said it was very much like they knocked on the door - like that old radio program - and said, There's nobody home I hope I hope I hope. If you go in with that attitude, that you hope there'll be no answer, very often you won't find any. But I think he's being charitable. He has a staff of ten men, they've worked now since last October on the case, they're looking for answers, and I think the FBI, the Secret Service and the Dallas police were not looking for the facts, therefore they never found them.

D: And Mr. Lane, in short then, you still feel that the Warren Commission rushed to judgment and that their publication is a tissue of contradictions and shortcomings?

L: Yes. In fact, you know, this is what the court said in New Orleans. The first opportunity for a legal opinion regarding the Warren Commission report, the first time it was -

D: Right into your phone now, please.

L: Yes. The first time it was introduced into court was in New Orleans, and it was introduced by Clay Shaw, charged by Garrison with conspiracy to assassinate President Kennedy. He introduced it as a defense document and the court ruled that it is not admissible; the Warren Report - first judicial ruling - the Warren Report is filled with contradiction and with hearsay. And the other judge said "Hearsay? - it's hearsay five or six times removed from the original source." It's the only judicial ruling on the report itself.

I was very flattered when I met Garrison, who told me that when he was flying from New Orleans to Washington with Senator Russell Long, Long told him that he had just read my book and it raised very, very serious questions in his mind. He said to Garrison, I think you'd better read it and see whether or not you should start an investigation because Lane alleges that things took place in New Orleans. And Garrison read the book, then he secured the 26 volumes of evidence, checked out the

citations, said they were accurate, put one man on the case, and then two, and now he has half of his staff working full time, and he's uncovered remarkable information.

D: Mr. Lane, in short now, you actually feel then that the conspirators and the motivating force behind this dreadful event is now available to Mr. Garrison, the rest remains to be proven in court.

L: Yes, I think very definitely.

D: That's astonishing. Now, I'd like to ask you please, if you don't mind giving us an opinion, what do you think of the book which is now running serialized in the Chronicle, "The Truth About the Assassination," by Charles Roberts.

L: Well, first of all I think it's not a book. It's 118 pages, it's portentously referred to by its publishers as a book but it's a pamphlet. It's not about the assassination, it's about me, and I think it has nothing to do with the truth. Mr. Roberts put this thing together in a period of two weeks and has sold it - not to the public, nobody's buying the book as I understand it anywhere in the country, although there's a massive advertising campaign for this subsidized book. It's massive and it's totally unrelated to the possible profit, because full page ads - huge ads in the New York Times - are not the kinds of things you can do for a paperback book which sells for one dollar. I know this since my own book is out in paperback. At the present time (unintelligible) ... the publishers say it's impossible to advertise it. It's the No. 1 bestselling paperback in the country and has been for months, it has sold 3/4 of a million copies, but still in terms of economics it cannot be advertised because it only sells for 75 cents and you have to sell so many copies from one ad that it's not worth while. This is a subsidized book; the advertising has nothing whatever to do with what the publishers hope to gain.

D: That's a very disturbing allegation. Subsidized by whom, do you think?

L: Well, we're not sure about this. I discussed this with my own publishers, and they tell me there's no question about it. The advertising campaign makes it plain that it's a subsidized book and it's not written for the purpose of the publisher making money because he cannot possibly, with the advertising.

D: Well, I must say even in my limited knowledge of the economics of the book publishing industry, that makes sense. If the full page ads are used

to promote a dollar book - and I have it in my hands, it is a very skimpy and sketchy piece of work, there's no index or anything of the sort - I don't see how that bears any possible relation to profits. Now, what about the Chronicle running this, do you think this is a sound thing to do?

L: No, I'm very disturbed about this, because the - my book was the bestselling book in the Bay Area and .. (unintelligible) .. in the Bay Area for a six-month period, No. 1 best seller for a six months period. The Chronicle would not run anything which I said about the case; would not run a portion of the book at all, and now in yesterday's paper the Chronicle ran a front-page major headline, "The Truth about Kennedy," which is an excerpt from the pamphlet.

D: Mr. Lane, could you hold on for just a moment, please? If you'll hold on for just a moment, we'll be right back with you.

(Commercial.)

D: The time now is 12 minutes before 8 a.m. I have Mr. Mark Lane on the wire; he'll be with me for just a few more minutes. Now, Mr. Lane -

L: Yes.

D: About the Chronicle running Mr. Roberts' book: what did you say you asked them to do?

L: Yes. I spoke with them yesterday and I said it seems to me rather unfair of them to run just one side, particularly now since it's been completely discredited. It's nothing more than an effort to defend the Warren Report which according to the polls 2/3 of the American people have already rejected. I said there are very personal attacks in there, in fact one chapter which consists of only nine pages makes 60 references to me; President Kennedy is mentioned twice, I'm mentioned 60 times. I said fortunately my parents didn't give me a middle name, otherwise the pamphlet would be twice as long. I said, however, all I ask for is an opportunity when libelous material is printed about me in the Chronicle is an opportunity to respond in a letter, which I'd like to be guaranteed will be printed, in answer. And they said No, there's no such agreement. So I think it's rather unfair, and I just said Well, I'm not going to be buying the Chronicle until you stop running those stories, until you start presenting something which is factual regarding the death of the President.

D: Well, I'm surprised because really the Chronicle is to my way of thinking a very, very enlightened and progressive paper.

L: Oh yes, the Chronicle actually has been perhaps the fairest paper in the

country on the question of the assassination.

D: Well now, Mr. Lane, before I leave you, I have a copy of a letter which a friend of mine received from Fred M. Vinson, Jr., from the Department of Justice.

L: Yes.

D: And he gives three reasons as to why the Kennedy affair has not been exhaustively explored or completely revealed to the American public. But it's the first reason he gives which to me is the most significant. He says it contains - why the reason this will never be revealed, or not for 75 years - defense information, top secret, secret and of a confidential nature, disclosure of which would be of grave danger to our nation, jeopardize our international relations and prejudice our defense. Now this is a whale of a mouthful from the Department of Justice about the Kennedy assassination. Can -

L: Well, since they say Oswald did it and did it alone, I can't see how that other material could in any way affect the things Mr. Vinson is speaking about. Can you understand that?

D: No, this is the first inference that comes into my mind. How could Oswald, this aberrant loner as they say, this Marxist, shooting from the sixth floor window of the Depository - how could all of this affect, jeopardize (I've got it right here) jeopardize international relations of the country, prejudice our defense, and disclosure would cause grave damage to the nation?

L: Well, I think that from the view of those who are at the present time - the administration and controlling our destinies - I think from their view, full disclosure about the facts would be extremely uncomfortable, and they are aware of the fact that there will be a very sharp reaction by the American people. I don't think it has anything to do with national defense, there is no foreign power at all involved in the assassination, but I think in terms of their own defense, that it would be somewhat weakened by the full disclosure. Which will come, there's no way to stop it from coming, because Garrison has it, and if he should live long enough to present it and I'm sure that he will, then it will be presented in the courtroom. Nothing can stop him. He's the most dedicated person I've ever met in my life, and I know the press presents him as somewhat of a clown, but his communication problem with the press is that he will quote Vergil, for example, and say "Let justice be done though the heavens fall," and a

reporter will say "What's Vergil's last name?" It's basically a communication problem, I think.

D: A campaign assistant for Calvin Coolidge.

L: Yes, we have an intellectual in a district attorney's office and that happens rarely. There's one thing about him that I've noted for some time: every time there's a Supreme Court decision which increases the rights of the defendant and thereby of course restricts the rights of the police and of the prosecutors, Garrison issues a statement saying "I support that entirely; that's what this country is all about, individual liberty, not catching crooks, it's the rights of the individual." And I think he's very likely the only district attorney in the country who has consistently taken this position. He's a rare guy and we're very lucky to have -

D: Mr. Lane, you're going to Louisiana again. Please, if you'll keep in touch with me by tape and by telephone, we'll pursue this matter further.

L: Fine. I'll be down there on the 28th. They've invited me to address the Louisiana State Bar Association annual convention. I'll be talking with Jim Garrison and I'll certainly be in touch with you. I wonder if I could say one additional thing?

D: Yes, go right ahead.

L: The media - as an example, the Chronicle at the present time - in this country for more than three years has really done everything to prevent the American people from knowing the facts. And there are very few outposts like yours, and for a long time now you have made it possible to raise serious questions which affect the destiny of the American people and I as one citizen am very grateful to you for what you've done.

D: My goodness! Well, you put me on a pedestal, my wife puts me under one. Thank you very, very much for calling, Mr. Lane, and we'll be with you again soon.

L: 'Bye. Been nice talking to you.

D: 'Bye - bye-bye.
