

World of Books

Lane's Analysis of The Warren Report

William Hogan

SKEPTICISM: Does the Kennedy assassination remain the century's most gigantic mystery story? Critics of the official version of the tragedy, and of the Warren Commission Report, are very vocal this season, and cannot be ignored. When Edward Jay Epstein's scholarly "Inquest" was published last month, Richard H. Popkin, the philosopher and author of "The History of Skepticism," put forth a chillingly convincing argument in a long essay in *The New York Review of Books* that there were really two assassins in Dallas, one of whom is still at large.

Next week Holt will introduce an even more critical and no doubt controversial analysis of the assassination and especially of the Warren Report. This is "Rush to Judgment," by Mark Lane. It is the result of two years' investigation by this veteran defense counsel in criminal cases who has toured this country and Europe lecturing on what he feels are deficiencies in the Warren Report. (A third critical study, Lee Saubage's post-mortem, "The Oswald Affair," will be published in September.)

With logic and in astonishingly thorough fashion, Lane analyzes all available evidence dealing with the Kennedy tragedy. He has interviewed hundreds of people. He comes up with no "theory," but

does suggest that the Warren Report does not provide an adequate basis for judgment on the case.

"Rush to Judgment" carries the subtitle "A Critique of the Warren Commission's Inquiry into the Murders of President John F. Kennedy, Officer J. D. Tippit and Lee Harvey Oswald." It carries a scholarly introduction by Hugh Trevor-Roper. It presents a strong argument that the Warren Commission Report is not an impartial finding, but in effect a "prosecution" brief establishing Oswald's guilt. Lane asks scores of questions, cites omissions and contradictions in the Report—the function of which, he feels, was "to protect the national interest by dispelling rumors."

As our reviewer noted on Epstein's "Inquest:" "If the Commission had made it clear that the very substantial evidence indicated the presence of a second assassin, it would have opened a Pandora's box of doubts and suspicions. In establishing its version of the truth, the Warren Commission acted to reassure the nation and protect the national interest."

In his introduction to the Lane book, Professor Trevor-Roper observes: "We are shown that, in the Report, a whole series of conclusions are based on carefully selected evidence and that the full body of evidence, to say the least, does not point necessarily to those conclusions . . ."

We expect to carry a full-dress review of the Mark Lane book in a forthcoming Sunday book section. In the meantime, these critics must be taken seriously. They strongly suggest that the assassination is still an unsolved historical mystery. The Lane book especially may stir enormous controversy this fall.



Mark Lane