

'Secret' Film on 'Plot' to Kill Kennedy

Los Angeles

Filming is under way here on a movie called "Executive Action," which deals with a conspiracy to assassinate President Kennedy.

Starring Burt Lancaster, Robert Ryan and Will Geer, the movie will be released by National General Pictures before the end of the year, to coincide with the 10th anniversary of Kennedy's death on November 22. Edward Lewis ("Seven Days in May," "The Fixer") is the producer, and David Miller ("Lonely Are the Brave") is directing from a screenplay by Dalton Trumbo, Donald Freed and Mark Lane.

Herbert Magidson, a Los Angeles businessman active in the antiwar movement, put up most of the money for the film, described as a "big budget" production.

The producer is trying to withhold more detailed information about the production until shooting is completed in two or three weeks.

According to his press representative, Steve Jaffe, there have been rumors of Central Intelligence Agency interest in the project, and one crew member reported a CIA threat to sabotage the production.

Although no one has attempted to halt the production, the locations are being kept secret, and Freed guards on the set. One source reports that the company has already done some filming in Texas and Tulsa, Okla., which is doubling for

Dallas in a number of scenes.

Jaffe refuses to disclose the contents of the film, but a novelization of the screenplay by Freed and Lane, will soon be published. All parties agree it is "very close"—though not identical—to the final shooting script. The novel describes a complex assassination plot designed and executed by Texas oilmen, retired right-wing military personnel, CIA agents, anti-Castro Cubans and the Mafia.

In the Freed-Lane scena-



ROBERT RYAN
Conspirator

rio, Lee Harvey Oswald is only a decoy planted to divert investigators from the four real assassins; the murder of Oswald is planned in advance, and Jack Ruby is a member of the labyrinthine conspiracy network. The precise details of the film's plot cannot be verified, but Oswald is definitely a character.

Lancaster, Ryan and Geer play three of the high-level conspirators. Freed and Lane wrote the first screenplay of "Executive Action" two years ago. Freed is also the author of "Inquest," a play about the espionage trial of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, and "Agony in New Haven," a book about the Black Panther conspiracy trial.

Lane, author of "Rush to Judgment"—one of the earliest and most controversial critiques of the Warren Commission report—supplied much research material for "Executive Action." Both authors traveled extensively, and talked to CIA informants and other witnesses while working on their script.

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