

INTRODUCTION TO ACCESSORIES AFTER THE FACT


As a Senator investigating certain aspects of the Warren Commission inquiry, I have found Sylvia Meagher's ACCESSORIES AFTER THE FACT to be an indispensable research tool.

Yet to fully appreciate the significance of Mrs. Meagher's work, it is necessary to go back to the fall of 1964, when the Warren Commission Report was released.

Most Americans initially accepted the Commission's findings that Lee Harvey Oswald assassinated President Kennedy, acting alone. Some had doubts, but dismissed them because of the reputation of the men and agencies who served the Commission, the major media's immediate endorsement of the report, and the hyperbolic and wildly speculative assertions of some Warren Commission skeptics.

Fortunately, Sylvia Meagher had the courage to cast a critical eye -- and more importantly an objective eye -- on the Warren Report.

It wasn't until Watergate and my service on the Senate Intelligence Committee that I began to question much of what I had accepted about the report. And when I had questions, there always seemed to be answers in ACCESSORIES AFTER THE FACT.

The significance of this book cannot be overstated. It is by far the most meticulous and compelling indictment of the Warren Commission Report. Through her painstaking attention to detail, Sylvia Meagher has exposed the gross inconsistencies between the Commission's Final Report and the 26 volumes of evidence it reviewed. One need only 

Introduction to
ACCESSORIES AFTER THE FACT

- 2 -

read her passage on the appearance of the "magic bullet" at Parkland Hospital, or the Oswald Police lineup, to appreciate the degree to which the Report has been devastated.

In addition to ACCESSORIES AFTER THE FACT, Mrs. Meagher has made a second major contribution to research in this field, by compiling a complete index to the Warren Report and exhibits. For reasons yet unknown, the Warren Commission chose not to index its 26 volumes. Thus until she compiled her comprehensive index, critical analysis of the Warren Report was, in Mrs. Meagher's words, "tantamount to a search for information in the Encyclopedia Britannica if the contents were untitled, unalphabetized, and in random sequence." It was virtually impossible for a serious student of the assassination to wade through the more than 20,000 pages of documentation. This accomplishment, together with ACCESSORIES AFTER THE FACT and its own index, clearly establish Sylvia Meagher's major contribution to understanding this tragic incident in our nation's history.

As this is written, I am investigating the effectiveness and truthfulness of U. S. intelligence agencies in investigating the assassination for the Warren Commission. Where our inquiry will lead only time will tell. Whether a full-scale reopening of the entire assassination investigation will result is still uncertain. But one thing is clear: Sylvia Meagher's ACCESSORIES AFTER THE FACT was instrumental in finally causing a committee of Congress -- with

Introduction
ACCESSORIES AFTER THE FACT

- 3 -

full subpoena power, access to classified documents, and a working knowledge of the nuances of the FBI and CIA -- to take a second official look at what happened in Dallas November 22, 1963.

Senator Richard S. Schweiker (R-PA)
Washington, D.C. October 5, 1975