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NEW YORK CORRESPONDENT

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Mr. Robert M. Ockene
Editor
The Bobbs-Merrill Company
3 West 57-th Street
New York, N.Y., 10019

Dear Mr. Ockene,

Enclosed you will find my opinion about Sylvia Meagher's very interesting book. I sincerely believe it should be made available to the public as a necessary reference book.

Very cordially yours



Léo Sauvage

Sylvia Meagher: Accessories after the Fact

In the "American Postscript" of my book The Oswald Affair, I wrote that Sylvia Meagher is "the only person in the world who really knows every item hidden in the 26 volumes of Hearings and Exhibits", that is, the evidence on which the Warren Report is supposed to be based. I should have added that she also knows all the items missing in those 26 volumes, that is, the evidence the Commission's members -or, more often, lawyers- preferred to ignore, or, knowing it, to forget.

After having unselfishly shared her information with most of the authors of recent books critical of the Warren Commission, most of whom neglected to acknowledge their debt, Sylvia Meagher has finally decided to publish a book of her own.

It confirms not only her scientific mind and the exhaustive thoroughness of her research, but the penetrating insight she has brought to the study of the case, and the logic of her reasoning. I thus have been made aware, through her book, of the possible significance of certain sets of circumstances which had not impressed me at first in my own research: the presence, for example, at the scene of the crime, of alleged Secret Service men who, if we are to believe the Warren Report, must have been false Secret Service men (p.26 ss); or (p.103 ss) the unexpected use by the Dallas police, on the very day of the crime, of Oswald's old Elsbeth Street address when the Dallas police claimed never to have heard about Oswald before his arrest.

Of course, being the last one to publish, though not to think, Mrs. Meagher is not the first in making a certain number of points. Even so, she is often able to add a new information, and sometimes a new angle. In any case, if the same points have been made, about some of the evidence, in several of the books criticizing the Warren Commission, it is because these points are not only significant but obvious. It is, indeed, hard to believe that the members and lawyers of the Commission did not see, or thought they could pretend not to have seen, gross inconsistencies or flat contradictions which no careful reader of the Warren Report failed to notice at first sight.

My only criticism of ~~my~~ Mrs. Meagher's book rests on the impression that the author, in her eagerness to give all the information available, may lead the reader to believe there is more in some of her demonstrations than she wanted to convey.

I shall mention, for example, the question (p.375 ss) of whether or not Ruby was present at Parkland Hospital on the 22-nd, or of whether or not (389 ss) he used the Main Street ramp to enter the basement of the Dallas police headquarters on the 24-th. The important fact, here, is the proof, on again, that the Commission was not simply looking for the truth, whatever it might be, but that it approached the situation in a devious, biased way, arbitrarily selecting and rejecting evidence even though, as in these examples, it is not always easy to understand ~~why~~ what possible reasons the Commission may have had to act in such a manner. I thus cannot imagine what difference is made whether Ruby was or was not loitering in front of Parkland Hospital after President Kennedy had been brought there. Mrs. Meagher shows how the Commission ignored and distorted evidence in order to state that Ruby was not near the hospital, when he probably was there, which incidentally would fit his character as a busybody and rubberneck, but could not prove anything for or against him. In pushing, however, her demonstration for six solid and unrelenting pages, Mrs. Meagher seems to go beyond her justified criticism of the Commission's deplorable methods. She seems, in fact, to attach some sinister meaning to Ruby's presence there, when it really did not permit any more valid conclusions than his absence.

But these are slight imperfections, indeed, and ~~easy~~ easy to correct if they are recognized as such. As a whole, I consider Sylvia Meagher's Accessories after the Fact a very good book, and an important contribution to the necessary re-examination of the official version given by the Warren Commission of President Kennedy's assassination.

Léo Sauvage