

FOR SYLVIA MEAGHER

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AUTHOR OF ESQUIRE ARTICLE COMMENTS ON WARREN COMMISSION REPORT

JOHN WINGATE: "Tonight's lineup--special edition interview, the woman who indexed the entire report of the Warren Commission is my guest this evening. She will blast the Warren Report on the Kennedy assassination and will tell you why, point by point."

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"Three years ago today to this hour I sat in a radio studio in Washington, having been dispatched there along with newspaper colleagues, Jimmy Breslin and many others in an Air Force plane. The plane picked us up at Kennedy Airport an hour and fifteen minutes after the assassination of John Kennedy, and deposited us in the nation's capital for the sad four-days assignment that was to follow.

"Then came the Warren Commission investigation into the assassination, and now come louder and louder protests against the Warren Report, and new demands, including the latest, from Life Magazine, for a new investigation of the assassination.

"Tonight my guest is Sylvia Meagher, the woman who indexed the entire 26 volumes of the Warren Report and writes of her views in the current Esquire Magazine.

"Sylvia Meagher, now working at the United Nations, are you satisfied at all that the Warren Commission Report was thorough and complete?"

MEAGHER: "No, Mr. Wingate. On the Contrary I'm not at all satisfied with the report. It's a slovenly document. It is stuffed with error and misrepresentation of fact and there are many important omissions of testimony."

WINGATE: "You are charging misrepresentation of fact?"

MEAGHER: "Oh yes. Yes, I am and I can prove it."

WINGATE: "All right. Now we'll get to that in a moment; just let me ask you this question: Do you believe there is any doubt that Lee Harvey Oswald alone assassinated President Kennedy?"

MEAGHER: "Yes, I'm certain that he didn't commit this assassination alone and I also feel that there is considerable doubt that he had any part in it whatsoever."

WINGATE: "What?"

MEAGHER: "There is considerable doubt that he had any part in it whatsoever."

WINGATE: "All right. Let's get now into this misrepresentation of facts that you charge."

MEAGHER: "Yes. Well, do you want some examples?"

WINGATE: "Yes."

MEAGHER: "They're rather lengthy, I'm afraid..."

WINGATE: "Well..."

MEAGHER: "But I thought to be brief."

WINGATE: "Give me a couple of those you consider best."

MEAGHER: "Well, some of the doctors in Park Lane Hospital testified on two occasions. One of the doctors on the first occasion of his testimony gave a particular opinion regarding the shots that struck Governor Connally. When he appeared a month later and testified again before the Commission he was shown for the first time the bullet that had been found on the stretcher and other material evidence.

"As a result he completely changed his original opinion. Nevertheless, in the report the statement is made that three doctors from Park Lane Hospital independently rendered the opinion that, well--what they did was to refer to his original opinion to omit the fact that he had subsequently changed it."

WINGATE: "And this you say is deliberate misrepresentation."

MEAGHER: "Well, I don't see what else it can be since even the citation is to his first testimony and completely ignores his

second testimony so that anybody who reads only the report will have no way of knowing that he testified a second time and changed his opinion."

WINGATE: "In your view, what was the source of the shots, Miss Meagher?"

MEAGHER: "Well I believe that the motorcade was in crossfire. I think some of the shots came from behind the car; other shots, and I believe the fatal shot, undoubtedly came from the grassy knoll, from the fenced area..."

WINGATE: "And not from the Book Depository."

MEAGHER: "Not from the Book Depository. No sir. And I base that on a number of things, mainly on the Zapruda film which shows that the President's body upon impact of that fatal bullet through the head was sharply thrown backward and to his left."

WINGATE: "Now, do you know that Texas Governor John Connally holds the view there were two different bullets that hit him and Mr. Kennedy?"

MEAGHER: "Yes, I do, and he's testified to that in completely categorical terms."

WINGATE: "Now the Warren Commission's Report, which you indexed, says that Mr. Kennedy's throat wound was an exit wound. Do you have reason to doubt this?"

MEAGHER: "Yes, I doubt it. I am very inclined to believe the original impressions of the doctors and one of the nurses at Park Lane Hospital; these were people that were very experienced in gunshot wound cases. They all thought and even wrote in their reports of that day that this was a penetrating wound--not all of them; some of them wrote it. Some of them said it to the press and so forth, and in fact Dr. McClelland, one of the doctors who was in the emergency room involved in the treatment of the President, told the commission in his testimony that if today he saw that same wound without being burdened by all of the assumptions and so-called facts, that had been presented to him, he would say it was an entrance wound."

WINGATE: "Do you believe that Lee Harvey Oswald killed the patrolman Tippett?"

MEAGHER: "No, I don't believe that he did. I believe the identifications of the witnesses are valueless in every case. I couldn't go through each one of them and analyze why it has no value, but my main reason is the fact that Oswald could not have reached the Tippett scene on foot in time to kill the man."

WINGATE: "Now do you have some backing for this?"

MEAGHER: "Yes, because he left his roominghouse a few minutes after one and was seen standing motionless at the bus. Tippet was killed at one-fifteen at the latest; there is some reason to think it was considerably earlier, by perhaps five minutes, because one of the witnesses, Mr. Baldy (?) looked at his watch; he's the only witness who did look at his watch. He said it was one-ten, and he was one witness that the commission did not call.

"In any case one of the Commission's attorneys reenacted the walk from Oswald's roominghouse to the scene of the Tippet shooting. It took him over 17 minutes."

WINGATE: "Well if you know if he were involved, Oswald, in such a thing a demonic fierceness might have overtaken him so he'd have gone faster than usual--like a football game, team, coming from behind to win."

MEAGHER: "Excuse me, the person who shot Tippet was seen to walk at a very normal pace down the street, being followed by the car. There is no indication that person was running. There's no indication that he drove part of the way in anybody's vehicle. Of course the Commission has not claimed that he did. They claim that he walked."

WINGATE: "Now..."

MEAGHER: "... and I feel he could not have reached there in time."

WINGATE: "How do you believe the unusual character Jack Ruby, the alleged killer of Oswald, fits into all this?"

MEAGHER: "Well, It's very hard to say how he fits in since his interrogation by the Commission was extremely superficial and very deferential almost because of his rights on appeal, and I think that was perhaps proper to some extent, but nevertheless was entirely too superficial, even taking into account that he was under appeal and as he did not testify in his own trial there was no cross-examination of Ruby at any time.

"Now the Report makes rather a different picture of Ruby's background, activities and characteristics than does the testimony and evidence in the 26 volumes; you get quite a different picture there than the picture that's presented in the report."

WINGATE: "Deliberate misrepresentation, you feel?"

MEAGHER: " I feel a lot of that was error and a lot of it was slanting."

WINGATE: "Now..."

MEAGHER: "I believe there were some quite inadvertent errors, errors of carelessness. There was one paragraph in which the Commission says two people saw something or other and then they give you three names. It was apparently written so hastily, so carelessly that in fact there are two different descriptions of Governor Connally's back wound in the Report, right inside the main report.

"On one page it's called a small, neat entrance hole and another page it's called a large wound."

WINGATE: "Now very quickly on this--you realize that in such a case, the assassination of the President, for example they're still debating how Lincoln was really shot. This can become, this can become--no--this sort of thing can become a cause celebre. It was taken up by European leftwingers who may or may not be right; we don't know.

"This kind of story can be labored a lot, you know."

MEAGHER: "Well, all that I ask, and I think most of the other critics ask, is an examination of the facts and not an examination into the backgrounds of the people who are stating the facts. I don't think that's very relevant; the facts have their own value, and they should be judged simply on that basis not by whether it's a European or American or left or a rightwinger whose advocating a particular fact and I differentiate this from theory because I have confided my study purely and simply to the facts."

WINGATE: "That was Silvia Meagher, the woman who indexed the Warren Report. She doesn't like it."