

## Inquest

### The Warren Commission and the Establishment of Truth

EDWARD JAY EPSTEIN

INTRODUCTION BY RICHARD H. ROVERE

The eminence of its members and the authoritative appearance of its Report have caused nearly universal acceptance of the conclusions of the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy, commonly known as the Warren Commission. On the other hand, among the minority who refuse to believe that the case is closed, many adhere to the view that the Commission, acting consciously, conspired to stifle the truth. This disturbing book espouses neither of these positions.

Mr. Epstein, a young scholar, began this book with the intention of writing a case study of the nature and activity of an extraordinary government Commission. He has accomplished this task brilliantly. But in the course of interviewing all members of the Commission but one, and many members of its staff, he discovered that the official version of the Kennedy assassination fails to contend with serious contradictions presented by the evidence. *Inquest* clearly traces the process by which this official story came into being; it does not indulge in theoretical speculation about a deliberate suppression of crucial evidence. Mr. Epstein instead proposes an explanation based on the concept of "political truth": the Commission, sincerely convinced that the national interest would best be served by the termination of rumors, and predisposed by its make-up and by the pressure of time not to search very deeply, failed to answer the essential questions about the tragedy.

*Inquest* includes hitherto unpublished government documents and illustrations. Although the author's revelations are startling, he nowhere makes unsupported claims; his style is cool and objective. A sober, new view of the way the Commission dealt with the central event of our recent history, this book is destined to induce widespread discussion and debate.

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EDWARD JAY EPSTEIN, born in New York City in 1935, has worked in documentary films, holds a graduate degree from Cornell, and is now in a doctoral program in government at Harvard University.

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