To Mr. Mark Lane belongs the credit of having been the first to raise an effective voice against the Warren Report at the time when that stately and shoddy document was still receiving the byzantine obeisances of the press of the United States and the English-speaking world generally. Most of the major questions which excite the twisted relations between the language of the Report and the evidence which the Report cites were first raised by Mr. Lane. His book, Rush to Judgment, established the real character of the Warren Report as being not a judicial or quasi-judicial finding but a brief for the prosecution against Oswald and Oswald alone. And his book also proves, to the satisfaction of anyone who reads it attentively, checking on the key points against the evidence cited by the Warren Commission itself, that a defense counsel of Mr. Lane's competence would have been able to secure the acquittal of Lee Harvey Oswald (unless the jury were hopelessly prejudiced by the pre-trial in the press).

To say this however is also to note a limitation in Mr. Lane's book. He writes as an advocate. As advocates do, he occasionally casts corners—for example, if the language of a witness can be construed in either of two ways, he construes it in the sense most favorable to his case. He does not push this procedure to anything like the same degree as the authors of the Warren Report itself have shown themselves prepared to do. But one is always conscious that he is presenting a case. To present a case, with the high professional skill which is his, is indeed his inestimable service to the public.

Sylvia Meagher's approach to the subject is quite different in that she is an author with a relativity slow and extremely careful. As author of the Subject Index to the Report and Hearings and Exhibits, (Scarecrow Press, New York, 1966), she has acquired a familiarity with the basic data which I believe to be unrivaled; certainly, as is amply demonstrated by the internal evidence of the Report itself, the authors of the Report were far inferior to Mrs. Meagher in their command of the data on which they claimed to rely. Accessories After the Fact is not a case against the Report but a methodical and exhaustive critique of it. It would not be true to say that it is a cold demonstration; Mrs. Meagher does not altogether conceal her entirely legitimate anger and scorn towards those who perpetrated this great fraud upon the public, towards those who hauled the fraud for its majestic integrity, and towards those who still resolve for the fraud their political acquiescence. She also shows—and it emerges in her dedication—deep indignation at the cruelty and injustice of the official world, not only towards Lee Harvey Oswald but towards the inconvenient witness in the case, as many of whom were bullied by Commission Counsel, truculent in the Commission's Report, and subsequently bullied in their personal lives and subjected to a mortality-rate millions of times higher than their comparable fellow-citizens.

"Speculation" vs. "Fact"

Mrs. Meagher does not conceal her feelings about these proceedings, but she keeps them well under control. Indeed the presence of strong emotion beneath her usually level and measured prose, gives her analysis at times an almost Swiftnian resonance. Her writing is lucid and crisp, touched at times by a dry wit, which one feels she would have liked to resist but which is almost imposed on her by the character, as once sly and hallucious, of the Report itself as it appears when systematically compared with the evidence from which it purports to derive. Comic effects which she may not necessarily desire are elicited by the parenthesis of summarizing what the Commission's Report, when analyzed, is found to say, as in the following passage: "One day in January, 1963, Oswald was cleaning his rifle (which was mailed by Klein's Sporting Goods some two months later in March, 1965). . . ."

Sometimes the comic effect is obtained not by any special use of language on Mrs. Meagher's part, but from the Commission's own manifestly posture, suddenly brought into contact with one more of the six tasks lurking in its evidence. Thus the Commission indulge in the practice of labelling various kinds of statements, which have in common only that they fall into the "innocent" category, as "speculation," while labelling as "fact" various theses which it wishes to communicate to the public. This is a procedure which struck awe into almost all the earlier commentators on the Report, from The New York Times to the New Statesman (but not into The Minority of One). Mrs. Meagher, facts in hand, is not easy to overthrow.

Warren Commission Report:
Speculation: The rifle found on the sixth floor of the Texas Schoolbook Depository.
Mrs. Meagher's footnote: "This so-called speculation is of course a mere statement of known fact accepted as fact by the Commission itself. The real speculation, that there was a substitution of rifles to incriminate Oswald, was not continued explicitly by the Report."

It is impossible in a review to give anything like an adequate impression of a book like this, whose task of demolition is conducted through a multitude of detailed investigations. The effect is cumulative and the book should be read in its entirety. Certain passages however stand out, like this one from the chapter, "The Autopsy and Medical Findings":

"Apologists who still insist, in the face of all the facts, that the Commission's accusations and conclusions are correct and honest say, in effect, that it is only innocent coincidence that:

(1) The bullet holes in the back of the clothes are too low.

(2) The entrance wound is shown well below the armpit on the autopsy diagram because of an error by Dr. J. Thornton Russell which happened to correspond with the clothing holes and erroneous eyewitness descriptions.

(3) Federal Agent Sibert, O'Neil, Hill, and Benefield mistakenly described the wound as too low and in a position corresponding with the clothing holes and the autopsy diagram.

(4) The chalk mark representing the site of entrance of a bullet is correspondingly low on the back of the stand-in for the President in photographs taken at the site re-enactment tests of May 24, 1964.

(5) The Commission did not question the autopsy surgeon about the low position of the wound when the autopsy diagram was admitted in evidence.

(6) FBI agents Sibert and O'Neil were not asked to give testimony.


(8) All three FBI reports are excluded from the Hearings and Exhibits.

(9) The autopsy photographs and X rays were not examined by the Warren Commission and although they were deposited at the National Archives (October 31, 1969) they remain unavailable for examination by independent experts, researchers, or any other individuals (including government agents and officials).

(10) The Commission published photographs of the President's clothes which do not show the bullet holes in the back, although it had in its possession photographs which do show them.

One can believe in innocent coincidence but not when it occurs epidemic proportions and works prepotently in favor of the Commission's fixed lone-assassin thesis.
to resist the demand which she here reiterated for a new investigation:

"The new investigative body should first and foremost the evidence against Oswald presented in the Warren Report and the Hearings and Exhibits, and present an objective and scientific evaluation of that evidence so that the ambiguity about his role in the assassination will, if possible, be dispelled. The new body must also be given access to the suppressed documents of the Warren Commission. The 75-year time vaxt must be opened and its contents must be put before the new body—and, at the appropriate moment, before the public, within our lifetime. The leads and clues which were not followed up by the Warren Commission, or which were incompletely investigated, now must be pursued with vigor, by independent investigators and not by the governmental agencies compromised by their role in the protection of the accused President."

There are those who think that a new investigation would be a waste of time. Such people, who often like it to be supposed that they are engaged in some mysterious and momentous activity on the far Left, regard the effort to reopen the Kennedy inquiry as a typical liberal soul-saving, a diversion designed to distract attention from the real issues such as the war in Viet Nam. Curiously the same people, in other contexts, are apt to agree that proof against the war in Vietnam are themselves a distraction in the real issues, and so on. It is necessary therefore to emphasize that the reopening of the inquiry into the murder of the President is a matter, not only of abstract justice and truth, but of policy and politics. The people who went to such pains to construct and present in authoritative the flimsy and improbable "long assassination" theory did so because the probabilities pointed to conspiracy and because the idea of conspiracy was politically unacceptable, both to Goldwater Republicans and to Johnson Democrats. It is essential to rescue from this amnesia of the people who are quite prepared to agree that it is the duty of a free people to resist the demand which she here reiterated for a new investigation into the assassination, then it is time for others to give a lead in this matter. It is from the late President's Senatorial brothers that that lead would most fittingly come.

POSTSCRIPT: It has become customary for the members of the Commission and their apologists to dismiss each new claim into the credibility of their report by observing that the new claim contains "no new evidence." In a manner which is wholly characteristic of the Commission, this evades the main issue, which is that the Commission has been shown to be unfalsifiable to the old evidence on which it claimed to rely. But the point has now been reached where they will be forced to admit that very significant new evidence has also come to light. Mrs. Meagher cites this in a footnote to Chapter 3 of her book: A truly startling piece of new information came to light early in 1967 when the Miami Police Department released a tape-recording of a conversation between a police lieutenant and an unidentified man who was an organizer for a reactionary segregationist political party. On November 5, 1967, this man "said that a plan to kill the President was in the works. He said Kennedy would be shot with a high-powered rifle from an office building, that the gun would be disassembled, taken into the building, assembled, and then used to do the deed." He said also, and this must sober any objective student of the Oswald case, "I'll pick up somebody within twenty-four hours, that's a promise!"

The tape-recording of this November 5, 1967 conversation was given to the Secret Service immediately, and when the President visited Miami on November 18 "police intelligence such extraordinary steps to guard the President. It was insisted that he abandon the plans to take a motorcade from the airport to the press conference."

With a verbatim transcript of the conversation in hand, the Secret Service proceeded to arrange for Presidential protection in Dallas without taking any apparent precautions directed at the plan described in the tape. The tape undoubtedly was transcribed at the Miami Secret Service office to the Protective Research Section in Washington but the Special Agents responsible for the advance planning of the Dallas trip and for the President's safety during the trip, in their testimony before the Warren Commission, never mentioned the tape in connection with the Presidential visits to either Miami or Dallas. The FBI, which picked up the Miami man five days after the assassination, also remained silent about the tape in testimony before the Commission; and if a written report was transmitted, it does not appear in the Exhibits. (Ibid.)

To dismiss this extraordinary taped description and warning of the tragedy played out two weeks later in Dallas as mere coincidence requires nothing less than a complete suspension of critical judgment. Such suspension is the first requisite of those who continue to resist a new investigation into what took place in Dallas on November 22, 1963.
The Lie Detector

THE LIE'S ABSENCE-MINDEDNESS IS A BLESSING; IT OFTEN LEADS US TO THE TRUTH

PEACE DEMONSTRATORS USED TEAR GAS

From a Washington dispatch describing a peace demonstration in front of the Pentagon, in The New York Times of October 22, 1967:

"Several tear gas canisters exploded outside the building at various times. The Defense Department announced that the Army had not used tear gas at any time and charged that the demonstrators did." 

WELL, ANOTHER CASE OF MISTAKEN IDENTITY

From a letter-to-the-editor in The New York Times of October 26, 1967:

"If the Pentagon can deny the use of tear gas, in the face of thousands of witnesses, by troops one mile from the nation's capital, it is clear that we are well past the point where we can accept what the Government calls truth 10,000 miles away.

ASSISTANCE THAT DOES NOT ASSIST

From a Washington dispatch in The New York Times of Nov. 1, 1967:

"Senator Fulbright... contended that many countries cited... were profiting more from the war than they were contributing in aid, that some were contributing only token amounts, that others had given up making contributions and that in other cases their aid to South Vietnam was far exceeded by their trade with North Vietnam."

"For example, he said, 18 of the countries mentioned by the State Department have each given only $25,000 or less over the last two years...

"Brazil, Ecuador, Greece, Guatemala, Laos, Liberia, Luxembourg, Turkey, Uruguay and Venezuela, while they have contributed economic aid in the past, "have not given one single dollar in 1967," he said.

"Japan, he noted, has given South Vietnam $2.2 million in aid since 1964 while it has profited from exports $18 million to South Vietnam in 1966 alone.

"Furthermore, he said in a statement on the Senate floor, Japan's trade with North Vietnam, in as much as that of Italy, New Zealand, the Netherlands and Brazil, far exceed their assistance to South Vietnam."

FROM OUR "WE TOLD YOU SO" DEPARTMENT

From the lead-editorial, "The Anti-Chinese Alliance: USA, USSR, India," in the November 1967 issue of this publication:

"Not only is the American escalation of the Vietnam war unilateral, but even the incomplete public knowledge of the developing American-Soviet relations suffers for discerning ever wider areas of anti-Chinese coordination. This is referred not only in Moscow's sudden and far-reaching concessions with regard to a treaty against the proliferation of nuclear arms, but even more so in efforts, obviously under way, to harmonize American and Russian domestic missile defense. The purpose is for the respective defenses to be directed only against China, without changing the prevailing strategic balance between the USA and the USSR themselves."

---from the publishers and the Book Clubs to the critics and The New York Times reviewers—that William Styron's Confessions of Nat Turner, a rich and ripe if not fruity product of the Plantation School of Southern Liberals, is to be the book of the year. By the Plantation School of Southern Liberals I mean those northerners Southerners who believe they alone know "their Negroes," who cannot be known by any Northern Abolitionist, as Styron implied, or God forbid! by any Black American Radical, such as those militants who are now continuing Nat Turner's work. No, only a Virginia gentleman who has grown up with the Southern Negro and who speaks his language can dare to penetrate his servile heart... Styron's central view of Southern Negro slavery reminds me dimly of Faulkner's drunk-Nat Turner's wart, No, only a Virginia gentleman who has grown up with the South. Abolitionist, as Styron implied, Or God for. the Plantation School of Southern Liberals to the critics virwere—that William Styron who cannot be known by any Northern Negro inind. have taken on the Southern history—the burden, that is, of interpreting the Negro to the ignorant Northern mind, or even to the ignorant southern Negro mind. I suspect the Styron-Nat Turner book may be as even bigger scandal than the Hereng-Saul Bellow book—excuse me, the Belas Hieron book. Our literature is now composed of synthetic Jews and synthetic Negroes. Also, official American culture during the Cold War period has offered us only a series of such scandals. And even with the advent of the new group of radical revisionist historians, and of such revolutionary black American writers as Malcolm X or the talented young Eldridge Cleaver—will it ever really end? Will things really be any better when the Ford Foundation takes over the financing of the Congress of Cultural Freedom, which has now modestly changed its name to the "Association for Cultural Freedom." But then I am wrong. Some things have changed, like names and titles and the faceless officials who manipulate all this. When the year of revelations has ended, and the sphinxes have subsided, and the dust has settled down again on the American-Soviet relations, the official American culture may still be up in the air."

SOUTHERN LAM, ROMANTICS, EXPATRIATES AND "REVISONISTS" OF THE CIVIL WAR EPOCH WHO CANNOT BE KNOWN BY ANY北方的北方人...

...it is clear that we are well past the point where we can accept what the Government calls truth 10,000 miles away.

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