

9/30/91 LA TIMES

LIZ SMITH

Re-Examining RFK's Death

NEW YORK — Had senator Robert Kennedy not been shot, he would very likely have won the presidency. The bullets fired in the Los Angeles hotel kitchen prevented us from finding out what he would have done with it and how he might have changed the course of history. The very fact of Robert Kennedy's assassination should make American citizens — including millions born when he was murdered — very angry indeed," writes Anthony Summers in his foreword to a new book by Philip H. Melanson, "The Robert F. Kennedy Assassination: New Revelations on the Conspiracy and Cover-Up."

Melanson's scholarly work is centered around recently released Los Angeles Police Dept. files that have been kept from the public for almost 20 years. The author has made a complete study of this 50,000-page file, newly released under pressure. He concludes that the LAPD has altered, suppressed, ignored, covered up and even destroyed vital evidence in the case of the RFK assassination. Efforts are now under way to motivate a federal investigative body with subpoena power to re-examine the Kennedy assassination.

Melanson doesn't give us a definite answer as to who killed Bobby Kennedy. But the book will convince you that Sirhan Sirhan did not act alone. The author draws a fascinating conclusion about the "similarities" of the two Kennedy assassinations. Both assassinated presidents had "legends" created for them in advance of their crimes. In the case of the assassination, both were stationed in high-visibility crowded areas at the scene of the crime; the police and the FBI declared both men to be "lone gunmen," determining that fact within days; both appear to have been "patsies"; in both killings, local police and the FBI actively covered up evidence of conspiracy. Melanson says as many as three guns may have been fired in the kitchen and that Sirhan Sirhan may not have fired any of the shots that struck Kennedy.

□