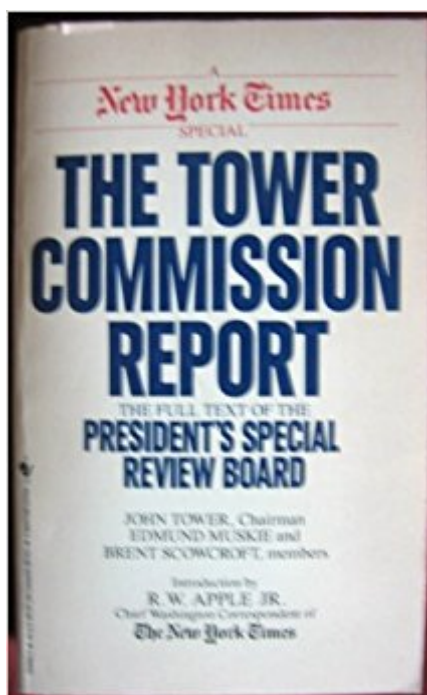


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The Tower Commission Report



Synopsis

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Customer Reviews

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The so-called "Iran-Contra Affair" of 1986 has almost dropped out of public memory, superceded by more recent and compelling events. At the time, it threatened to destroy the credibility of the Reagan Presidency. The Tower Commission was formed in late 1986 to formally investigate disturbing news that the Reagan administration might have violated its own policy of not negotiating with terrorists, by selling arms to Iran; and might further have violated Congressional restrictions on supporting the Nicaraguan Contra insurgency. The Commission's results, presented in February 1987 and packaged for public consumption by the New York Times, are a dry, restrained, and precise narrative that belies the accompanying political furor. The basis of the scandal was President Reagan's desire to redeem American hostages held in Lebanon by the radical Islamist group Hezbollah. Members of the National Security Council, among them Oliver North, sought to do a deal with Hezbollah-sponsor Iran to get them back. The result was an off-the-books, poorly vetted covert operation that liberated few hostages while embarrassing the US when it was exposed. Even more troubling was the diversion of funds from the Iran operation to support the Contras, a violation of the spirit, if not the letter, of Congressional mandate. The report lays out in fairly exhaustive detail what happened, and why it was wrong. It tends to exonerates the President, but on the unfortunate basis

that he was not in control of his own staff. It leaves incompletely answered, for lack of evidence, exactly who knew what and when."The Tower Commission Report" is highly recommended to student of the US National Security establishment for its fascinating insights into the interaction between policy and covert operations. The scandal was the motivation for many of the present restrictions on the US Intelligence Community.

Nixon's impeachment was thoroughly prepared and he left a lot of unanswered charges when he resigned. The Tower Commission Report reviews the evidence gathered before the resignation was received. It is a massive condemnation of the Justice system and all of the departments involved in "Operation Chaos". This was Nixon's name for his attempt to destroy the peaceful expression of dissent by the "Movement". The report recommends the creation of legislation to correct the problem which results in the Omnibus Safe Streets Law.

This is actually a pretty interesting read despite the lack of, say, the complete testimony of Oliver North. I agree with the below reviewer's assessment, except for one thing, the Tower Commission was created by REAGAN to investigate IRAN-CONTRA. The ERVIN Commission investigated Watergate fifteen years before.

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