

BREAKING THE SILENCE: THE DULLES BROTHERS

by Carl Doerner

While in Managua reporting on CIA and Reagan Administration efforts to destabilize the Sandinista government of Nicaragua in the 1980s, I had the good fortune to get to know New York Times and Boston Globe award-winning Latin America correspondent Stephen Kinzer, a journalist I've esteemed ever since for his energetic dedication to truth in news reporting.

These were the years of President Reagan's illicit arms sales to Iran and Colonel Oliver North's illegal funneling of the proceeds to arm the Contras attacking Nicaragua from Honduras. In neighboring El Salvador Reagan was supplying weapons and advisors, and death squads were raping and murdering churchwomen, killing Jesuit priests, and even the archbishop, Oscar Romero. It was an hour in our national history when we sorely missed earlier peace-oriented figures such as President Kennedy, Dr. King, Robert Kennedy and Eugene McCarthy, each of whom strove to turn America away from belligerence.

Reporting from fifty countries, from Managua to Tehran, Boston-born Kinzer has made an unsurpassed career of unveiling the truth about American mischief in the world. His book "Bitter Fruit," detailed Secretary of State John Foster Dulles' and CIA Director Allen Dulles' 1954 operation in support of United Fruit Company to overthrow the democratically elected government of Guatemala. That act launched 40 years of genocide in Guatemala, a stern warning of what happens when the US misuses its enormous power. (Incidentally, the Dulles brothers held personal investments in United Fruit.)

Later, Kinzer was in the Middle East to witness blowback from another coup engineered by the Dulles brothers. These two men literally ran our country during the Eisenhower years. They created the CIA operation in Iran to remove democratically elected Mohammed Mossadegh and replace it with the police state of Shah Pahlavi. This 1953 British-US intervention was about controlling Iranian oil. The coup eventually led to the 1979 Iranian Revolution, the holding of American Embassy hostages for 444 days, and, to this day, an Iran justifiably angry at the US.

Years earlier, it was President Truman's abandonment of President Roosevelt's spirit of peacetime cooperation with Russia and Truman's fashioning of the Cold War that created a stage upon which the Dulles brothers would perform their evil deeds. Truman ordered atomic bombing of Japan, in part as warning to Russia of US power, developed anti-Soviet NATO, favored economic recovery of Germany instead of our devastated wartime Russian ally, and created the CIA and the National Security Agency (NSA) now spying on Americans. Russia's reaction was to solidify its perimeter defense in Eastern Europe and strengthen its military capability.

Truman's 1951 National Security Assessment also abandoned Roosevelt's post war vision of self-determination for all nations. Busy stockpiling a vast nuclear arsenal, the Cold War oriented Truman and Eisenhower administrations refused to recognize strivings for independence from colonialism (in Vietnam) and from dictatorship (in Cuba and Nicaragua). Tragically, our country supported restoration to France of their former colonies in Southeast Asia, leading directly to the ten-year war in Vietnam. All such

liberation aspirations were treated as communist threats to capitalism. History has demonstrated they were not.

The Truman and Eisenhower years were the inception of secrecy, of secret government, and the demise of our democracy.

Others administrations continued along this path. George W. Bush invaded Iraq based on lies and his partner Cheney termed their two military adventures “a war that could last forever.” What we have is a ship of state, unmoored by Truman, drifting ever farther from our Constitution and appropriate national purpose.

Kinzer’s most recent book, “The Brothers,” is a thoroughly researched account of the Dulles family’s history and careers of Allen and John. In 1893, their grandfather, then President Harrison’s Secretary of State, sent American troops to Honolulu in support of Dole Company sugar producers. They overthrew the popular Queen Liliuokalani and made Hawaii a US colony.

Fresh out of law school, John Foster Dulles used his grandfather’s influence to enter the country’s preeminent corporate law firm Sullivan & Cromwell, whose specialty was bringing business enterprises and investors together to create larger corporations for the political power they might wield. With General Electric, US Steel and the Panama Canal among its creations, Sullivan & Cromwell could be said to have been the firm that invented modern capitalism. Allen too joined the firm. These two powerfully positioned men came to advance a government-military-corporate posture that seeks to control the world.

In his final speech, Eisenhower gravely warned against the national direction Truman’s and the Dulles brother’s actions had advanced. President Kennedy, Dr. King and others grasped this national drift; they spoke and acted against it. For doing so they were murdered on orders of those who profit from control of the world’s resources and from war. We need to shake off amnesia and break our silence about all of these crimes.