

# The Burgeoning Fissures of Dissent: Allen Dulles and the Selling of the CIA in the Aftermath of the Bay of Pigs

SIMON WILLMETTS

*University of Hull*

## Abstract

This article documents the efforts of Allen Dulles, upon his forced retirement from the Central Intelligence Agency in the aftermath of the Bay of Pigs, to promote his former agency in the face of mounting public criticism of its activities. It argues that the first wave of critical press regarding the CIA in the early 1960s was an early indication of the breakdown of the Cold War consensus – a phenomenon usually identified as occurring later in the decade in response to the escalation of the Vietnam War. Dulles, who as head of the CIA for most of the 1950s relied upon a compliant media to maintain the CIA's anonymity in public life, was confronted by an increasingly recalcitrant American media in the following decade that were beginning to question the logics of government secrecy, CIA covert action and US foreign policy more generally. In this respect the Bay of Pigs and the media scrutiny of the CIA and US foreign policy that it inspired can be regarded as an early precursor to the later emergence of adversarial journalism and a post-consensus American culture that contested the Vietnam War and America's conduct in the Cold War more generally.

The very word 'secrecy' is repugnant in a free and open society; and we are as a people inherently and historically opposed to secret societies, to secret oaths and to secret proceedings . . . [T]here is little value in opposing the threat of a closed society by imitating its arbitrary restrictions . . . But I do ask every publisher, every editor, and every newsman in the nation to reexamine the nature of our country's peril. In time of war, the government and the press have customarily joined in an effort based largely on self-discipline, to prevent unauthorized disclosures to the enemy . . . For the facts of the matter are that this nation's foes have openly boasted of acquiring through our newspapers information they would otherwise hire agents to acquire through theft, bribery or espionage . . .

President John F. Kennedy, Address before the  
American Newspaper Publishers Association, 27 April 1961  
(seven days after the failure of the Bay of Pigs invasion)

I would like to thank the AHRC for providing financial support to conduct the research upon which this article was based. I would also like to thank Hugh Wilford for his extremely helpful feedback and suggestions on an earlier draft of this article. Finally, as ever, Richard Aldrich deserves special mention for lending his continued support and encouragement on occasions too numerous to detail here.

Even before the exiles were on the beach, Castro could read about them in the American newspapers. On 7 April 1961, ten days before the Bay of Pigs invasion, the *New York Times* ran a story on its front page that reported the build-up of Cuban exile forces in Florida and Guatemala preparing for an imminent attack.<sup>1</sup> The article's author, Tad Szulc, picked up his scoop in 'the strange atmosphere of Miami, bulging with refugees and revolutionaries' where, as he wrote, 'the preparations against Dr. Castro is [*sic*] an open secret. They are discussed in the streets, Cuban cafes and restaurants and almost everywhere that two or more Cubans congregate. Local newspapers openly refer to incidents in the [exile training] camps.' Apparently patronizing the same Cuban restaurants, the CBS news correspondent in Miami, Stuart Novins, reported on 5 April on *World Tonight* that 'plans for an invasion of Cuba were in their final stages.'<sup>2</sup> Karl Meyer, Latin America correspondent at the *Washington Post*, also picked up the same story and published it under a pseudonym in the *New Republic*.<sup>3</sup>

These reports were preceded months earlier by details in the American press of the Cuban exile training camps in Guatemala. *The Nation* had mentioned them in November 1960 and the *Los Angeles Times* and *The New York Times* followed with similar stories in January 1961.<sup>4</sup> News reports continued unabated right up to and even during the invasion, revealing key operational details to the Cubans. This unprecedented coverage of a CIA covert operation helped dissuade President Kennedy from providing sustained air support to the rebels, thus sealing their fate. Szulc's sceptical response to the US government's attempts to pass off the pre-invasion bombing of Castro's airbases as the work of escaped Cuban pilots, for example, helped convince Kennedy to make the fateful decision to cancel the second round of airstrikes.<sup>5</sup> Long before American media coverage of the Vietnam War turned the tide of public opinion against it, the press played a decisive role in helping to bring about the premature operational failure, for good or ill, of an American Cold War misadventure.

Some scholars have downplayed the significance of the press criticism of the CIA in the aftermath of the Bay of Pigs, arguing that it was 'mostly covered over by the blanket of Cold War consensus'.<sup>6</sup> This was certainly true of the decade preceding the Bay of Pigs, a period in which the CIA controlled both the manner and the timing of its institutional

<sup>1</sup> Tad Szulc, 'Anti-Castro units trained to fight at Florida bases', *New York Times*, 7 April 1961.

<sup>2</sup> Stuart Novins cited *ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Richard J. Aldrich, 'American journalism and the landscape of secrecy: Tad Szulc, the CIA and Cuba', in this volume.

<sup>4</sup> See *ibid.*, p. 190 n. 3.

<sup>5</sup> David Wise and Thomas Ross, *The Invisible Government* (New York, 1964), pp. 17–20.

<sup>6</sup> Tity de Vries, 'The 1967 Central Intelligence Agency scandal: catalyst in transforming the relationship between state and people', *Journal of American History*, 98/4 (2012), pp. 1075–92, at p. 1076. See also Kathryn Olmsted, *Challenging the Secret Government: The Post-Watergate Investigations of the CIA and FBI* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1996).

publicity.<sup>7</sup> The CIA's involvement in the Iranian and Guatemalan coups in 1953 and 1954, for example, went almost entirely unreported in the press.<sup>8</sup> Indeed, the first time extensive details of these two formative CIA covert operations leaked out was, with Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) Allen Dulles's blessing, in Richard Harkness and Gladys Harkness's three-part encomium of the CIA, published in the *Saturday Evening Post* in 1954.<sup>9</sup> For the most part, however, as an internal history of CIA public relations activities recalled, 'often as much time [during the 1950s] was spent deflecting media queries with the standard "no comment," as answering them'.<sup>10</sup> During an age of consensus the CIA could afford to remain reticent. The so-called 'golden age' of covert action was facilitated by a complaisant media who acquiesced in the CIA's polite requests for anonymity.<sup>11</sup>

The Bay of Pigs, by contrast, inspired a wave of critical articles, books, TV documentaries, radio shows and many other forms of media exposure that brought CIA covert action to widespread public attention for the first time, and often in a critical light. In this respect the claim by Tity de Vries, that it was not until the *Ramparts Magazine* revelations in 1967 that the CIA 'found itself under heavy fire' by the media for the first time in its history, is misleading.<sup>12</sup> In 1962 Andrew Tully, for example, published the first widely read history of the CIA to appear in the United States; it included a chapter entitled 'Catastrophe in Cuba'.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>7</sup> The most notorious aspect of the CIA's extensive relationship with journalists during the 1950s was Operation Mockingbird: a covert campaign by the CIA to maintain a network of journalists within both the American and foreign press. For more on this, as well as the wider consensus that existed between the CIA and the American media in the 1950s see Hugh Wilford, *The Mighty Wurlitzer: How the CIA Played America* (Cambridge, MA, 2008), pp. 225–48.

<sup>8</sup> John Foran, 'Discursive subversions: *Time Magazine*, the CIA overthrow of Mussadiq, and the installation of the Shah', in Christian G. Appy (ed.), *Cold War Constructions: The Political Culture of U.S. Imperialism* (Amherst, 2000), pp. 157–82.

<sup>9</sup> Richard Harkness and Gladys Harkness, 'The mysterious doings of the CIA', *Saturday Evening Post*, 30 Oct. 1954; Richard Harkness and Gladys Harkness, 'The mysterious doings of the CIA', *Saturday Evening Post*, 6 Nov. 1954; Richard Harkness and Gladys Harkness, 'The Mysterious Doings of the CIA', *Saturday Evening Post*, 11 Nov. 1954. The background to the articles and the extent of the CIA's assistance to the authors is detailed in David Shamus McCarthy, 'The CIA and the cult of secrecy', unpublished PhD thesis, William and Mary College, 2008, pp. 101–3.

<sup>10</sup> Public Affairs Advisory Group Fact Sheet, undated though likely produced in 1978–79, CIA Records Search Tool [hereafter CREST], CIA-RDP86B00985R000100030010-8, US National Archives, College Park, MD.

<sup>11</sup> When a television producer asked DCI Walter Bedell Smith about the possibility of producing a series about American espionage in cooperation with the CIA, he was politely informed 'that the C.I.A. deliberately cherish anonymity'. The TV producer in question respectfully acceded to Smith's request – '[w]e understand and respect your viewpoint and have taken immediate steps to delete all references from the script. In summing up, I am sorry that I cannot think of anything more brilliant to say, than the time-worn bromide – "you can't blame a fellow for trying"'. See Eugene B. Rodney to General Walter Bedell Smith, 8 Aug. 1951, CREST, CIA-RDP80R01731R003100150019-6.

<sup>12</sup> De Vries, 'The 1967 Central Intelligence Agency scandal', p. 1076.

<sup>13</sup> Andrew Tully, *CIA: The Inside Story* (New York, 1962), pp. 243–56. A British Marxist, Gordon Stewart, wrote the first history of the CIA in 1953: Gordon Stewart, *Cloak and Dollar War* (London, 1953). For a more detailed discussion of this and other early histories of the CIA see Richard J. Aldrich, 'CIA History as a Cold War Battleground: The Forgotten First Wave of

Tad Szulc's book on the Bay of Pigs appeared the same year, and in 1964 journalist Haynes Johnson published a more sympathetic, though no less revelatory, account that was told from the point of view of the Cuban exiles.<sup>14</sup>

But by far the most significant milestone in this first substantive wave of critical press for the Agency was David Wise and Thomas Ross's *The Invisible Government*.<sup>15</sup> Published in 1964, Wise and Ross's bestselling critique of the CIA – and US government secrecy more generally – opened with four damning chapters on the Bay of Pigs. Its central thesis, indicated by the title, was that the Agency had grown so powerful, and its special operations had become so out of control, that it constituted a 'government-within-a-government', largely unaccountable to the American people and with 'quasi-independent status'.<sup>16</sup> As John Prados argues, *The Invisible Government* 'would be considered pretty tame fare today', but in 1964, before the anti-war movement had gathered momentum, before the Tet Offensive swung American public opinion against the Vietnam War and generated a profound and widespread questioning of American foreign policy, Wise and Ross's book marked a significant early milestone in the erosion of consensus by the burgeoning fissures of dissent.<sup>17</sup>

The growing public unease regarding the activities of the CIA throughout the 1960s and 1970s, which began in the aftermath of the Bay of Pigs and culminated with the series of Congressional investigations of CIA misdeeds in the mid-1970s, were centrally significant to the break-up of the Cold War consensus. Though the effects of the socio-political fragmentation of America during the 1960s were complex and far-reaching (so much so that it is often regarded as the crucible of an entirely new epoch in American history and culture: postmodernity), the cause, at least as far as public faith in American foreign policy was concerned, was relatively simple: the American people, en masse, stopped trusting their government.<sup>18</sup> The intellectual defenders of the liberal consensus, people like Richard Hofstadter who published his seminal essay 'The Paranoid Style in American Politics' in *Harper's Magazine* the same year as *The Invisible Government*, regarded the increasing political paranoia that accompanied the widening credibility

---

Agency Narratives', in Christopher Moran and Christopher Murphy (eds), *Intelligence Studies in Britain and the US: Historiography since 1945* (Edinburgh, 2013), pp. 19–46.

<sup>14</sup> Andrew Tully, *CIA: The Inside Story* (New York, 1962); Tad Szulc and Robert E. Meyer, *The Cuban Invasion: The Chronicle of a Disaster* (New York, 1962).

<sup>15</sup> Wise and Ross, *The Invisible Government*.

<sup>16</sup> John Prados, *The Family Jewels: The CIA, Secrecy, and Presidential Power* (Austin, 2013), p. 205.

<sup>17</sup> See for example the chapter on *The Invisible Government* in Tom Engelhardt, *The End of Victory Culture: Cold War America and the Disillusioning of a Generation*, revised edition (Amherst, 2007), pp. 181–6.

<sup>18</sup> For statistical analysis of the decline in American public trust in government, see 'Public trust in government', *Pew Research Center for People and the Press* [webpage], 13 Nov. 2014, <<http://www.people-press.org/2014/11/13/public-trust-in-government/>> [accessed 20 Nov. 2014].

gap in the 1960s and beyond as a dangerous socio-psychological pathology that threatened the great traditions of pluralism, pragmatism and the existence of a rational public sphere that they regarded as vital prerequisites for the healthy functioning of American democracy.<sup>19</sup> But as more recent challenges to this Hofstadterian paradigm have argued, the heightened suspicions of this era were not without foundation.<sup>20</sup> For there was another more recent tradition of American government that for the first time in the 1960s fell under considerable and sustained scrutiny by the American media: secrecy.

After the Bay of Pigs the CIA became a lightning rod for the public's wider anxieties regarding US government secrecy. It became a 'symbol of public unknowing', as Timothy Melley writes, and as a result, its public mythos, which began to take shape in the aftermath of the Bay of Pigs, exerted a profound influence on American culture – even to the point, as Melley implies, of provoking the epistemological crisis (or the collapse of trust in all forms of 'official' or authoritative knowledge) that precipitated the onset of postmodernity. 'The skepticism about the possibility of disinterested knowledge and language that postmodernism sponsors . . .', writes Ann Douglas, 'makes most sense when taken as a straightforward description of the extremes of official dishonesty characteristic of the cold war era.'<sup>21</sup> It is no coincidence that the CIA features prominently in so many archetypally 'postmodern' novels. Indeed Don DeLillo, a canonical postmodern author, has gone so far as to describe the CIA as 'America's myth'.<sup>22</sup>

The ambitions of this article are more modest than this positioning of the Agency's myth, particularly during the 1960s and 1970s, as a centrally symbolic cultural hieroglyph of postmodernity. Rather, it takes as its focus the attempts by Allen Dulles, upon his forced retirement from his position as head of the CIA after the Bay of Pigs, to paper over the cracks of those burgeoning fissures in America's Cold War consensus by promoting his former Agency to an increasingly suspicious American

<sup>19</sup> Richard Hofstadter, *The Paranoid Style in American Politics and Other Essays* (New York, 2008), pp. 3–40.

<sup>20</sup> Mark Fenster, *Conspiracy Theories: Secrecy and Power in American Culture* (Minneapolis, 2008); Timothy Melley, *The Covert Sphere: Secrecy, Fiction, and the National Security State* (Ithaca, 2012); Kathryn Olmsted, *Real Enemies: Conspiracy Theories and American Democracy, World War I to 9/11* (Oxford, 2009).

<sup>21</sup> Ann Douglas, 'Periodizing the American century: modernism, postmodernism and postcolonialism in the Cold War context', *Modernism/Modernity*, 5/3 (1998), pp. 71–98, at p. 76. Cited in Melley, *The Covert Sphere*, p. 36.

<sup>22</sup> Don DeLillo, *The Names* (New York, 1982), p. 317. For an excellent discussion of Don DeLillo's fiction as a postmodern challenge to traditional historical representation, functioning in terms of what Linda Hutcheon described as a 'historiographical metafiction', which challenges the historical profession's claims to an unmediated access to a past reality, see Thomas Carmichael, 'Lee Harvey Oswald and the Postmodern Subject: History and Intertextuality in Don DeLillo's *Libra*, *The Names*, and *Mao II*', *Contemporary Literature*, 34/2 (1993), pp. 204–18. For an analysis of Don DeLillo's discussion of the CIA in *The Names*, and the power and mythology of the CIA as an acronym in DeLillo's fiction see Dennis A. Foster, 'Alphabetic pleasures: "the names"', in Frank Lentricchia (ed.), *Introducing Don DeLillo* (Durham, NC, 1999), pp. 157–74.

public. And yet, the growing recalcitrance – or worse, the disinterestedness – with which Dulles’s frequent advocacy of the CIA in this period was met, is suggestive of those wider shifts in the public’s and the media’s attitude towards secrecy, the CIA and US foreign policy that were both the cause and the consequence of the breakdown of consensus.

Dulles’s penchant for publicity, however, stood in marked contrast to the approach of his former Agency. During his tenure as head of the CIA Dulles had carefully promoted the CIA’s reputation through controlled leaks and by agreeing to talk to sympathetic journalists. Nevertheless, reticence remained the most common strategy in the face of media scrutiny. After Dulles’s retirement, the CIA attempted to respond to the rising tide of criticism of their activities by plugging the dyke with draconian measures. For example, having covertly obtained galleys of *The Invisible Government* and Haynes Johnson’s Bay of Pigs account prior to their publication, Langley appealed to Deputy Attorney General Nicolas Katzenbach to prevent their release. New DCI John McCone even met with Wise and Ross who demanded certain excisions and threatened Random House editor Robert Loomis with espionage charges. The threats fell on deaf ears. Exasperated, McCone’s last-ditch plot was to purchase all 20,000 copies of the book’s first run.<sup>23</sup> Random House, however, remained resolute in its promise to deliver Wise and Ross’s critical history of the Agency into the hands of the American people. Finally, upon its release, McCone authorized the crafting of a critical book review that could be placed in the foreign press.<sup>24</sup> *The Invisible Government* and Haynes Johnson’s Bay of Pigs account were not the only books the CIA would try, and fail, to censor in this brave new post-consensus era. As John Prados has documented, the Agency continued throughout the decade to try to undermine critical publications with punitive measures – a particular bête noire was the Kennedy assassination conspiracy theories that flooded the market in the latter half of the decade and traded off the widening credibility gap that America’s increasingly contested foreign policy inspired. The Agency evidently had not been reading its Greek mythology: once Pandora’s box was opened, the lid could not be sealed shut.

The now-retired Allen Dulles, who preferred the legend of Troy to the myth of Pandora because it leant the weight of antiquity to his advocacy of American intelligence and covert operations, nevertheless still understood, unlike his former Agency, that the Bay of Pigs marked a turning point in the history of CIA public relations. After the men were on the beach, the CIA could no longer rely on an overwhelmingly compliant American media to acquiesce in their polite requests for anonymity whilst still encouraging the occasional beneficial publication.

<sup>23</sup> Stanton Peckham, ‘Reader’s roundup’, *Denver Post*, 28 June 1964.

<sup>24</sup> Prados, *The Family Jewels*, pp. 203–5.



The CIA was now a celebrity, and like all celebrities, the battle to safeguard its reputation required continuous media engagement. Understanding this, Dulles, perhaps just as concerned with his own individual legacy as the CIA's – although the two had always been contingent upon one another during his tenure – embarked in his retirement upon a public relations campaign to promote his former Agency. What he could not anticipate, however, is how far America had ebbed, and particularly the American media, from an age of consensus that marked his post-war intelligence career, towards an age of dissent that confronted him in retirement. For the first time, the assumptions that undergirded the so-called 'golden age' of covert action came under heavy fire from the American media. With it, the mythical edifice that had perpetuated the belief that, as Bradley Smith put it, America 'could retain superpower status cheaply . . . [by] making its central intelligence agency into something that it hoped could produce shadow warfare magic', began to erode. President Kennedy, an avid reader of the James Bond novels, had authorized the CIA's invasion plans in part because he believed in that myth. He was not alone in this belief; before April 1961, it was a myth that, for the most part, went entirely unchallenged. 'The system', as novelist Don DeLillo later characterized it, 'would perpetuate itself in all its curious and obsessive webbings, its equivocations and patient riddles and levels of delusional thought, at least until the men were on the beach . . . After the Bay of Pigs, nothing was the same.'<sup>25</sup>

## I

A month after his retirement, on New Year's Eve 1961, Dulles gave an interview to NBC's *Meet the Press* – the first of numerous appearances during his retirement to defend his increasingly embattled former agency. Though refusing to be drawn at any length on Cuba, he did raise the issue of the unique time pressures he and his agency were under: knowing Castro's pilots were being trained in Czechoslovakia, and that Soviet MIGs were on their way to Cuba, he argued that the United States had a window of six months between November 1960 and April 1961 to overthrow Castro via means less than full-scale war. This unique time pressure, Dulles implied, might in part explain some of the failures in the planning and execution of the operation.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Don DeLillo, *Libra* (New York, 2006), p. 22. Alan Nadel identifies the Bay of Pigs as the beginning of the end of the Cold War consensus. He argues that the failed invasion precipitated a loss of faith in the authority of the official story, with its straightforward binary narratives of the Cold War, and in so doing paved the way for the postmodern scepticism of the proceeding decade. See Alan Nadel, *Containment Culture: American Narratives, Postmodernism, and the Atomic Age* (Durham, NC, 1995), pp. 157–203. For more on the relationship between US government secrecy, postmodernism and the breakdown of consensus see Melley, *The Covert Sphere*.

<sup>26</sup> 'Dulles gives timing on Cuba invasion', *New York Times*, 1 Jan. 1962; Interview with Allen Dulles, *Meet the Press*, National Broadcasting Company (NBC), 31 Dec. 1961, Television.

Dulles repeated this defence a few months later, on the anniversary of the invasion, in an extended interview for a CBS special report entitled *The Hot and Cold Wars of Allen Dulles*.<sup>27</sup> The interview, conducted by the esteemed ‘Murrow boy’ Eric Sevareid, was a prime example of consensus journalism, and can be entered as evidence in support of the view that the post-Bay of Pigs criticism of the Agency was covered over by consensus. Most of Sevareid’s questions could have been lifted from a Dulles press release. They covered the familiar and flattering territory of Dulles’s wartime OSS career, including his leading role in Operation Sunrise and the comic incident when Khrushchev met Dulles and joshed that they both read all the same reports (an anecdote Dulles enjoyed telling frequently). At the end of the interview Sevareid also asked whether the CIA was responsible for leaking Khrushchev’s de-stalinization speech – to which Dulles smugly replied that he was ‘willing to accept that charge’. Dulles even blamed the fallout from the Gary Powers affair on Khrushchev, arguing that the Soviet premier had long known of the U-2 programme’s existence and had feigned outrage and cancelled the Paris summit in order to cause confusion and division among the western powers.

One rather unorthodox analysis of US foreign policy that Dulles did offer concerned the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Dulles had been privy to intelligence from Japanese cables towards the end of the war that suggested Japan was on the brink of surrender. As a result he travelled to the Potsdam conference to advise President Truman on his fateful decision. Though Dulles admitted profound respect for ‘the men who made that decision’, he added that ‘there was a failure to interpret available intelligence as to the extent of the Japanese collapse, and of their inability to effectively carry on the war.’ It was a remarkable claim – one that corroborated some of the arguments of the nascent Cold War revisionists – particularly as Dulles came from the heart of the American foreign policy establishment. Nevertheless, it was an analysis that once again underlined the importance of accurate intelligence and the perilous consequences when policymakers misinterpret that intelligence. But there was another related lesson that Dulles wished to impart from this example: that it was/is the President, for good or ill, who dictates the course of American foreign policy.

In the case of the Bay of Pigs, Kennedy and Dulles, on the face of things at least, were in agreement: Kennedy had indeed accepted public responsibility for the debacle and allowed Dulles a ‘decent interval’ after the event before forcing him into retirement. But, as Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones has argued, Kennedy’s *mea culpa*, though superficially noble, was also a canny exercise in damage limitation, and the opening foray in a

<sup>27</sup> *The Hot and Cold Wars of Allen Dulles*, Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS), 26 April 1962, Television.



protracted battle between Kennedy, Dulles and his former Agency implicitly to ascribe culpability for the failed invasion. ‘Victory has a hundred fathers and defeat is an orphan’, Kennedy famously ruminated to the press; in so doing he ‘gently prodded the speculation’ that Kennedy had fallen on his sword to save the Agency.<sup>28</sup>

Sevareid began his line of questioning on the Bay of Pigs by asking Dulles whether, like the British in the case of Buster Crabb, the US could have simply refused to acknowledge the incident.<sup>29</sup> The previous month James Bond author Ian Fleming had penned an article in *The Sunday Times* criticizing the United States government for sacrificing what he termed ‘The Big Lie’ for the sake of Gary Powers. He should be thrown ‘cold bloodedly to the dogs’, the British author concluded in characteristically sadistic fashion, ‘He was expendable. Expend him! . . . If the Big Lie had been spoken, and stuck to, it would have been in the true traditions of espionage.’<sup>30</sup> For once, Dulles disagreed with his friend Fleming, who had done so much to help Dulles promote American intelligence.<sup>31</sup> ‘I doubt’, Dulles replied, ‘one could have rested on the answer “no comment”’ in the U-2 and Cuban incidents. ‘It seems to me’, contemplated Dulles, pausing ruminatively as he struck a match to his trademark pipe, ‘It seems to me it would have raised an even more serious problem than the problem of disclosing intelligence operations, namely, the problem of responsibility in government.’ Asked to clarify his meaning, Dulles explained that it was important that the American people understood that such major foreign policy actions, with the potential to cause what he termed ‘international complications’, were authorized by the President. If it were thought otherwise, Dulles speculated, it would cause a great ‘uneasiness’ among the American people towards their government.

He was right: though such ‘unease’ was already present in American society when he gave the interview, with the publication of Wise and Ross’s *The Invisible Government* a few years later, which itself followed Kennedy’s assassination and America’s increasing entanglement in Vietnam, that unease began to drive a wedge between the US foreign policy-making establishment and the American people. In short order the CIA would become a lightning rod for the public discontent generated by that unease. The fragmentation of the Cold War consensus, a process that the Bay of Pigs had begun, spelt disaster for the CIA’s public reputation. Perhaps sensing this, Dulles ended the interview with

<sup>28</sup> Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones, *The CIA and American Democracy*, 3rd edn (New Haven, 2003), p. 127.

<sup>29</sup> For more on the British response to the Buster Crabb Affair see Christopher Moran, ‘Intelligence and the media: the press, government secrecy and the “Buster” Crabb Affair’, *Intelligence and National Security*, 26/5 (2011), pp. 676–700.

<sup>30</sup> Ian Fleming, ‘Gary Powers and the Big Lie’, *Sunday Times*, 11 March 1962.

<sup>31</sup> For more on the relationship between Allen Dulles and Ian Fleming and their combined efforts to promote the CIA, see Christopher Moran, ‘Ian Fleming and the public profile of the CIA’, *Journal of Cold War Studies*, 15/1 (2013), pp. 119–46.

a plea for the American people to preserve the consensus: 'We must all rally together in support of the action our government has taken to defend our positions where they are threatened by communism: in Berlin, Laos, Vietnam, wherever it may be.'

## II

Dulles continued to make frequent television appearances throughout the 1960s, not all of which were as amicable as his interview with Severeid. Often, he was asked to appear as a general expert on intelligence and foreign policy, rather than simply to address matters specific to the CIA. He appeared, for example, alongside the famous theologian Reinhold Niebuhr on the 'Prospects for Mankind' series, hosted by Eleanor Roosevelt, to discuss the Sino-Soviet split.<sup>32</sup> He appeared as a guest on *Issues and Answers* in the summer of 1963 and a month later was interviewed on the subject of defection for a documentary on Lowell Skinner, a voluntary non-repatriate from the Korean War.<sup>33</sup> Dulles's rising 'expert' status on all intelligence-related matters led to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* asking him to write the entry on 'intelligence'. The 41,000-word article became the basis for his book-length treatment of the subject, *The Craft of Intelligence*. It was to prove a controversial publication – not only for the increasingly vocal opponents of the Agency, but also for those within the CIA itself who were perturbed by the prospect of their former chief jeopardizing their coveted anonymity.

With *The Craft of Intelligence* Dulles sought, as he put it, to place intelligence 'in its proper perspective'.<sup>34</sup> Part memoir, part instructional guide, it aimed to facilitate public 'understanding' of the role and function of intelligence in America from an insider's perspective. In reality, however, the book was not of Dulles's making alone, but ghost-written by a team of current and former CIA officers led by Howard Roman, who took unpaid leave for an entire year to work on the book.<sup>35</sup> Rejecting the argument of Wise and Ross, among others, that the CIA and secret intelligence represented an affront to American democratic traditions of openness and accountability, Dulles sought to establish a venerable tradition for espionage. All the familiar touchstones were included, from Sun Tzu's *The Art of War* to George Washington's use of spies during the American Revolution. In a tenuous historical parallel, Dulles even linked the dangers of contemporary policy-makers ignoring their intelligence officials with the ancient Greek mythology of

<sup>32</sup> *Prospect of Mankind*, National Educational Television, 11 Feb. 1962, Television.

<sup>33</sup> *Issues and Answers*, American Broadcasting Network (ABC), 30 June 1963; *VNR: The True Story of Lowell Skinner*, WNEW-TV, 18 Aug. 1963.

<sup>34</sup> Allen Dulles, *The Craft of Intelligence* (New York, 1963), p. 258.

<sup>35</sup> 'Memorandum for the DCI', 11 July 1963, CREST, CIA-RDP70-00058R000200090034-3.

Troy. Had the prophecies (read intelligence) of Cassandra been heeded, then the fall of Troy might have been avoided.<sup>36</sup>

Dulles's appeal to tradition was a well-established CIA public relations tactic, and remains so today. William Donovan, for example, in the course of his advocacy for the establishment of the CIA in the aftermath of the dissolution of the OSS, had encouraged Dulles to 'spread the story that because George Washington employed some irregular means of warfare, the Father of the Country had been a pioneer in the use of O.S.S.-type operations'.<sup>37</sup> Dulles had evidently absorbed Donovan's advice when he came to write *The Craft of Intelligence*. Likewise William Casey, DCI under Reagan and author of a history of the American Revolution which naturally discusses George Washington's intelligence activities in some length, told a Senate committee: 'I claim that my first predecessor as Director of Central Intelligence was . . . George Washington, who appointed himself.'<sup>38</sup> Today the CIA's website contains an entire section devoted to supporting Casey's genealogy, and their recently established twitter account has likewise repeated the claim.<sup>39</sup> Such appeals to the founding fathers as justification for contemporary CIA activities is, as Jeffreys-Jones points out, both 'presentist', 'allowing contemporary concerns to overshadow the different agendas of Washington and his successors', and 'originalist', 'in that they give the Founding Fathers an iconic status and imply that Washington, slave owner, could do no wrong'.<sup>40</sup> Still, Casey's claim convinced at least one major intelligence historian. Christopher Andrew repeats Casey's statement to the Senate parrot-fashion in the opening paragraph to his seminal history of American intelligence before setting about validating his analysis with a long and continuous narrative of American intelligence, which, as Bernard Porter argues, supposes 'espionage is both necessary and "natural"' and in so doing seeks 'both to excuse and to explain' the secret state.<sup>41</sup>

In a scathing review of *The Craft of Intelligence*, Soviet journalist L. Rovinsky mocked the way in which Dulles provided 'a new interpreta-

<sup>36</sup> Dulles, *The Craft of Intelligence*, pp. 1–17.

<sup>37</sup> Bradley Smith, *The Shadow Warriors: O.S.S. and the Origins of the C.I.A.* (London, 1983), p. 411.

<sup>38</sup> William Casey, *Where and How the War Was Fought: An Armchair Tour of the American Revolution* (New York, 1976); Christopher Andrew, *For the President's Eyes Only: Secret Intelligence and the American Presidency from Washington to Bush* (New York, 1996), p. 1.

<sup>39</sup> 'Intelligence in the War of Independence', *Central Intelligence Agency* [webpage], 15 March 2007, <<https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/books-and-monographs/intelligence>> [accessed 10 Nov. 2014]; 'General George Washington: America's 1st Intelligence Chief', @CIA Twitter Account, 27 June 2014, <<https://twitter.com/CIA/status/482319919644561408>> [accessed 10 Nov. 2014].

<sup>40</sup> Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones, *Cloak and Dollar: A History of American Secret Intelligence*, 2nd edn (New Haven, 2003), p. 23.

<sup>41</sup> Andrew, *For the President's Eyes Only*, p. 1; Bernard Porter, *Plots and Paranoia: A History of Political Espionage in Britain, 1790–1988* (London 1992), p. 1.

tion of practically all the major events of history'.<sup>42</sup> A further bone of contention for Rovinsky was the book's almost complete failure to mention covert action, despite selling itself as a comprehensive guide to what intelligence agencies do. Thus it covered all functional aspects of the intelligence cycle including: collection, analysis, dissemination, counterintelligence and deception, before dwelling at length on the mendacious activities of the KGB. The failure to include covert action, particularly following his forced resignation after the Bay of Pigs, was a fundamentally misleading omission. Indeed, *The Craft of Intelligence* contains only a single reference to the failed Cuban expedition that alludes to the 'myths' put about by the media's coverage of the event.<sup>43</sup>

Yet despite Dulles's cautious and highly selective summary of American intelligence, early drafts of the book inspired consternation from some within the CIA who were still wedded to a culture of absolute secrecy. Stanley Grogan, head of CIA public affairs, summarized a pre-publication copy of Dulles's book to the new CIA chief, John McCone, with a series of acerbic annotations. His report began with a quote from Dulles's advanced uncorrected proof indicating the hypocrisy of his account: 'every employee signs an oath which binds him not to divulge anything he learns or does in the course of his employment to any unauthorized person', admitted Dulles, 'and this is binding even after he may have left government employment'. 'Contrast this', urged the clearly irritated Grogan, 'with the preface to Mr. Dulles' proposed book' that included the promise of 'a wealth of personal anecdote' and details of 'how intelligence is collected and processed . . . methods of confusing the adversary, of surveillance and the usefulness of defectors from hostile nations'. It also promised to reveal some of 'the techniques of modern espionage' and provided an official acknowledgement of the CIA's role in the Bay of Pigs that was evidently deleted in the final draft.

Grogan recommended a number of excisions, including the removal of intelligence assessments of the Suez Crisis, information on the use of double agents, discussions of the U-2 programme, details of communications intelligence and 'a method of "negative guidance" '. Some of the recommended deletions remain classified to this day, demonstrating just how far Dulles was prepared to go in sacrificing secrecy for the benefit of public relations. Grogan, however, whom Dulles had appointed, did not agree with Dulles's predilection towards positive disclosure:

Dulles mentions successes and states: 'But it is not wise to advertise these cases of the resources used,' he has told a great deal in prior pages . . . Mr Dulles well states: 'After all, what a government, or the Press, tells the people, it also automatically tells its foes.' This is also true in this book by Mr. Dulles . . . [T]his book, with its many anecdotes, will open up the

<sup>42</sup> L. Rovinsky, 'American Cassandra', *New Times*, no. 3, 1964.

<sup>43</sup> Dulles, *The Craft of Intelligence*, pp. 186–7.

flood gates to *all* CIA employees to write or speak of their experiences to the same degree and in the same manner as does Mr. Dulles, some with their eye on a Hollywood series on espionage, which will bring them a pot of gold.<sup>44</sup>

### III

Dulles next fell foul of his publicity-shy former Agency when he appeared, along with Bay of Pigs architect Richard Bissell, in an NBC television documentary entitled *The Science of Spying* in May 1965. It was produced by Ted Yates, a 'mythic figure' whose interest in the shady underbelly of American foreign relations often involved him in dangerous situations. He 'was fired at by the North Vietnamese in Laos, stoned by communists in Sumatra, chased out of Cambodia, and, in Java, he found himself caught between rioting students and a charging palace guard, who bayoneted his driver in the mouth'.<sup>45</sup> In the summer of 1967 he got involved in one perilous situation too many: he was shot in the head and killed by an Israeli soldier whilst filming a scoop editorial on the Six-Day War. The year before he made *The Science of Spying*, he produced an eerily prescient documentary for NBC entitled *Vietnam: It's a Mad War* (1964) that presaged the impending disaster in Southeast Asia. He was one of the first mainstream American journalists seriously to question some of the fundamental tenets of US Cold War foreign policy. Unsurprisingly, his decision to make a film about US covert activity deeply troubled the CIA.

The Agency first learnt about the documentary a few months before it aired when Frank Wisner, former overseer of CIA covert action as head of the Office of Policy Coordination (OPC) during the 'golden age', met Yates at a dinner party in Georgetown. Wisner became alarmed when Yates, who presumably had imbibed a few beverages by then, began provocatively revealing details of the film to Wisner and his wife. He recited to Wisner the list of charges levelled against the Agency by Wise and Ross in *The Invisible Government*, published the previous year. In particular, their thesis that the CIA created foreign policy independently of the President seemed to have inspired Yates's interest in the subject of covert action. Wisner grew increasingly anxious as Yates's wife extolled the virtues of Graham Greene's *The Quiet American* for its exposure of American wrongdoing. Wisner bit his tongue as best he could, but his wife, Polly, tried to rebut some of the more damaging accusations in *The Invisible Government*. Yates grew irritated and 'told her in no uncertain terms that he was very sure of his facts because he had talked with Messrs. Allen Dulles and Richard Bissell,

<sup>44</sup> 'Memorandum for the DCI', 11 July 1963, CREST, CIA-RDP70-00058R000200090034-3.

<sup>45</sup> Tom Mascaro, 'Overlooked: Ted Yates, Bob Rogers, and *Vietnam: It's a Mad War*', 24 July 2014, <<http://64.40.154.41/beat2002/papers/mascaro.pdf>>.

among others, and that these were people who obviously knew the inside story’.

Feeling a little betrayed by his former boss, a stunned Wisner called to investigate Yates’s claims. Dulles admitted that Yates had come to see him, but that he only agreed to be interviewed after Yates reassured him that the documentary would ‘refute and rebut many of the unfair and inaccurate charges which had been made against the Agency’. Wisner told Dulles that his ‘distinct impression’ was they ‘are intending to do the exact reverse of what they have claimed, and that for some reason not clear to me they have got the hatchet out’. An enraged Wisner got in touch with Richard Helms, the future head of the CIA who was then working in Wisner’s former position overseeing CIA covert operations as Deputy Director of Plans (DDP). Helms believed the issue serious enough to merit the attention of DCI John McCone. Wisner sent McCone a long letter explaining the encounter and warned that ‘unless checked or restrained in some manner their program will do very serious additional damage to the reputation and standing of the Agency.’ Perhaps, Wisner added, it would be possible ‘to point out to their superiors in NBC the sort of damage that could result to the national interest from a nationwide, hour-long, feature television broadcast containing inaccuracies, distortions and the perpetuation of the ugly myths, many of which are demonstrably Communist in origin’.<sup>46</sup>

If McCone did contact NBC, they obviously weren’t listening. The documentary aired on 4 May 1965 in prime time. Though the Agency failed to get it pulled, the controversial content of the programme was enough to provoke the show’s sponsors, tyre-manufacturers B. F. Goodrich, to pull their support.<sup>47</sup> One of B. F. Goodrich’s trustees was Langbourne Williams, a close friend of Allen Dulles who had urged the Agency to take action against Castro in the run-up to the Bay of Pigs invasion; Williams was head of the Freeport Sulphur company which was driven out of Cuba following the revolution.<sup>48</sup> It is unclear from the documentary record whether Williams was approached by the Agency about *The Science of Spying*, or indeed whether he was involved in B. F. Goodrich’s decision to pull their support from the show. The company’s explanation was that they feared it might harm the United States Government.<sup>49</sup> In keeping with the understanding of US Cold War ideology

<sup>46</sup> Frank G. Wisner to John McCone, 4 March 1965, Allen W. Dulles MSS, Series 1 Correspondence, Box 19 Folder 6, ‘Frank G. Wisner correspondence’, Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ.

<sup>47</sup> Val Adams, ‘Goodrich Calls N.B.C. View of Program Too Broad’, *New York Times*, 6 May 1965.

<sup>48</sup> Allen W. Dulles to Langbourne M. Williams, 16 April 1960, CREST, CIA-RDP80B01676R003700110101-0; David Hein, *Nobel Powell and the Episcopal Establishment in the Twentieth Century* (Eugene, 2001), p. 143, n. 109.

<sup>49</sup> Val Adams, ‘Goodrich Calls N.B.C. View of Program Too Broad’, *New York Times*, 6 May 1965.



as a system endorsed and perpetuated by a ‘state–private network’ of dutiful citizens who wilfully advocated a consensus vision of American foreign policy without interference or direction from the US government, it is likely that Goodrich would have taken the same decision whether or not any prompting by the CIA had occurred.<sup>50</sup>

*The Science of Spying* repeated many of the charges from Wise and Ross’s book. Details of CIA activities in Iran, Guatemala, Vietnam, and, of course, the Bay of Pigs, were included. The filmmakers intercut each segment with tacit acknowledgements from Bissell and Dulles, who politely did not deny these operations, which was as good as an official admission. In fairness to Yates, it turned out to be far more balanced than Wisner had predicted, and Dulles and Bissell both gave convincing performances in rebutting their critics. ‘Intelligence is nothing really other than information and knowledge’, instructed the ever-affable Dulles. ‘The idea that it is necessarily nefarious, that it’s always engaged in overthrowing governments, that’s false’, and with a dismissive hand-gesture he reiterated ‘that’s for the birds’. ‘Now there are times,’ he added, growing more serious, ‘there are times when the United States government feels that the developments in another government, such as the Vietnam situation, is of a nature to imperil the safety and security and the peace of the world, and asks the Central Intelligence Agency to be its agent in that particular situation.’ ‘Mr. Dulles’, NBC’s John Chancellor interjected, eliciting a response to Wise and Ross’s charges, ‘there are people who say that we, with regard to the CIA, are waging a secret war with an invisible government.’ Dulles leaned into the camera with a furrowed brow, his voice a little raspy from laryngitis, ‘May I say this, and I do it with all solemnity: At no time has the CIA engaged in any political activity or any intelligence activity that was not approved at the highest level.’<sup>51</sup> Bissell also dismissed Wise and Ross for making a convenient scapegoat out of the Agency:

Those who believe the US Government on occasion resorts to force when it shouldn’t, should in all fairness and justice, direct their views to the question of national policy, and not hide behind the criticism that whereas the President and cabinet generally are enlightened people, there is an evil and ill-controlled agency which imports this sinister element into US policy.

As in *The Hot and Cold Wars of Allen Dulles*, both Bissell and Dulles in *The Science of Spying* were on message in emphasizing presidential responsibility for covert action.

<sup>50</sup> See for example Scott Lucas, *Freedom’s War: The US Crusade Against the Soviet Union, 1945–56* (Manchester, 1999); Helen Laville and Hugh Wilford (eds), *The US Government, Citizen Groups and the Cold War: The State-Private Network* (London, 2006); Wilford, *The Mighty Wurlitzer*.

<sup>51</sup> Allen Dulles to Lawrence P. Bachman, 17 May 1965, Allen W. Dulles MSS, Series 2 – Writings, Box 72 Folder 20 – The Secret Surrender, Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ.

Chancellor also asked the pair searching questions about the morality of the CIA's covert activities. The CIA, unlike the KGB, Dulles notes, did indeed apply exacting moral standards when carrying out operations. '[A]s far as I know we don't engage in assassinations and kidnappings and things of that kind', remarked Dulles, perhaps unaware of the assassination plots on Castro's life under Mongoose, authorized by Kennedy the day after he left the CIA. As the long 1960s wore on, and further revelations of CIA nefariousness became public knowledge, this sense of moral supremacy over the Soviets that Dulles felt would be increasingly called into question, not least by spy fiction writers like John Le Carré. 'All I can say', remarked Dulles, defensively, 'is that I'm a parson's son and brought up as a Presbyterian, maybe as a Calvinist, maybe that made me a fatalist, I don't know . . . But I hope I have a reasonable moral standard.' Chancellor and Yates were not entirely convinced: 'it's a truism in our society that moral ends do not justify immoral means', Chancellor submitted to Bissell, 'and yet you and your colleagues in the CIA must on many occasions have had to abandon that principle'. 'I suppose that the way that people deal with this', replied Bissell, thoughtfully,

and the one that occurs most commonly historically, is warfare . . . in that they feel a higher loyalty, and they act in obedience to that higher loyalty . . . I think the morality of, shall we call it 'the Cold War, is so infinitely easier than almost any kind of hot war, that I never encountered this as a serious problem.

Yet for every rebuttal from Bissell and Dulles, Yates and Chancellor offered up the voice of their critics. Eugene McCarthy, for example, an outspoken congressional critic of the CIA, endorsed *The Invisible Government's* narrative by complaining of the near-total lack of oversight over the Agency's activities. Perhaps the most remarkable criticism of America's covert foreign policy in the documentary, however, came in the form of an extended and uninterrupted interview with the leader of the Guatemalan Revolutionary Movement, Marco Antonio Yon Sosa. 'One of the main reasons we went to the mountains to begin our struggle', he told the NBC journalist, 'was the presence of the United States', which was training anti-Castro Cuban mercenaries in their country for the Bay of Pigs. 'That is the one and only thing for which we are grateful to the Central Intelligence Agency. If it were not for their interference in Guatemala at that time, we might not be fighting in the mountains today.'

'Do you consider yourself a terrorist', asked the interviewer after detailing a number of attacks his insurgency had carried out against American military and aid facilities.

Well we have to study very carefully the word terrorist . . . We attack [the American military] not because they were Americans, but because of what they are doing . . . We oppose United States policy in Guatemala because

it is an interventionist policy – the Americans come here and put Presidents in office and remove them . . .

The soldiers who died in their attacks, he concluded, ‘went into the mountains’ twenty days previously, ‘and killed and tortured . . . and raped a young girl in front of her whole family . . . So we have to do something . . . It does not give us pleasure to destroy a truckload of soldiers, but we must do these things to serve a higher purpose.’ Bissell’s explanation for the morality of covert action had been given a prescient example, but it was surely not the one he would have chosen. It was a remarkable interview, in an equally remarkable programme: a landmark moment in the history of the media’s relationship with America’s secret government. Juxtaposing sharply with Eric Severaid’s sympathetic questioning of Dulles only a few years previously, *The Science of Spying* demonstrated to Dulles that neither he, nor his former Agency, could any longer rely upon the consensus journalism that had facilitated the CIA’s so-called ‘golden age’ of covert action during Dulles’s tenure as DCI.

#### IV

It was not just crusading journalists, however, who in the mid-1960s began to challenge Dulles’s portrayal of the CIA, and especially his guarded narration of the Bay of Pigs that held the President ultimately responsible for the fiasco, and indeed the outcome of all covert actions. After his death Kennedy’s aides set about constructing his politically useful posthumous legacy and grew increasingly concerned that Dulles’s account of the operation might tarnish the Camelot myth.<sup>52</sup> In the summer of 1965 Theodore Sorensen and Arthur Schlesinger Jr. published articles in *Life* and *Look* magazine that, as Dulles biographer James Srodes writes, ‘portrayed a young, trusting president being inveigled into the Zapata morass by a wily DCI and his cold warriors at the agency’.<sup>53</sup> Both of the articles were soon developed into book-length biographies of Kennedy.<sup>54</sup> As Srodes notes, Sorensen and Schlesinger’s critiques of Dulles were partly antagonized by their belief ‘that Dulles had betrayed Kennedy first’.<sup>55</sup> In September 1961, before Dulles’s retirement, his friend Charles J. V. Murphy, a *Time-Life* correspondent, published an article in *Fortune Magazine* that criticized Kennedy’s actions during the Cuban invasion. The White House, who tried to get Henry Luce to stop the article’s publication, presumed Dulles had a hand in his friend’s article. He had not – though Murphy ‘offered to

<sup>52</sup> William Manchester, *One Brief Shining Moment: Remembering Kennedy* (Boston, 1983).

<sup>53</sup> James Srodes, *Alan Dulles: Master of Spies* (Washington DC, 1999), p. 555.

<sup>54</sup> Theodore Sorensen, *Kennedy* (New York, 1965); Arthur M Schlesinger, Jr., *A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy in the White House* (New York, 1965).

<sup>55</sup> Srodes, *Allen Dulles*, p. 555.

show Dulles a copy of the manuscript before publication . . . Dulles wanted nothing to do with it.<sup>56</sup> Upset by Sorensen and Schlesinger's attacks, Dulles set about crafting his rebuttal, which he planned to publish in *Harper's* later that year. Dulles recalled his close friendship with Kennedy, noting their shared affection for the James Bond novels. He also condemned Schlesinger and Sorensen's *post factum* analyses – neither of them was privy to the pre-invasion discussions. Finally, as Srodes writes, Dulles came as close as he ever would to criticizing Kennedy himself:

Great actions require great determination. In these difficult types of operations . . . one never succeeds unless there is a determination to succeed, a willingness to risk some unpleasant political repercussions, and a willingness to provide the basic military necessities. At the decisive moment of the Bay of Pigs operation, all three of these essentials were lacking.<sup>57</sup>

Dulles never published the article. Following his wife Clover's intercession, he came to the conclusion that it would be injudicious to launch such a direct attack on America's fallen king – the prospect of a former CIA director seeking to overturn the Camelot myth was unlikely to garner much sympathy with the American public even before the assassination conspiracy theories that implicated the Agency had gone into full swing. Nevertheless, he continued with the more Fabian public relations strategy of stressing Presidential responsibility for covert operations whilst not attacking Kennedy, or any President's actions, directly.

During the mid-1960s the consensus vision of the CIA that Dulles had helped construct during the previous decade began to unravel. The media grew increasingly recalcitrant in the face of the Agency's continued requests for anonymity. In 1966, for example, *The New York Times* published a five-part series on the CIA that journalist Harrison Salisbury described as 'the first big venture by the *Times* into the journalism of the late sixties'.<sup>58</sup> Congress also grew increasingly vocal in its criticisms of the Agency and its calls for a strengthened system of intelligence accountability. In 1966, Senator Fulbright, one of the CIA's most vocal critics in Congress, and who unlike Sorensen and Schlesinger had been privy to the pre-invasion discussions in the lead-up to the Bay of Pigs, went on record to confirm Sorensen's claim that Allen Dulles had made 'the case for intervention' to Kennedy.<sup>59</sup>

Dulles continued, as before, to sell his former Agency, and coextensively promote his own legacy. In 1966 he published a book-length account of Operation Sunrise – arguably one of the OSS's greatest

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 556.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 557.

<sup>58</sup> Harrison Salisbury cited in Prados, *The Family Jewels*, p. 197.

<sup>59</sup> 'C.I.A. Role Confirmed', *New York Times*, 29 July 1966.

wartime achievements as well as a personal triumph for Dulles who led this operation that brought about the premature surrender of German troops in northern Italy.<sup>60</sup> A couple of years later he published a compendium of true spy stories entitled *Great True Spy Stories*.<sup>61</sup> The collection ranged widely across space and time including an account by Herodotus of Zopyrus' deception of the Babylonians and, of course, several accounts of George Washington's use of spies during the Revolutionary War. Dulles followed his compendium of true spy stories a year later with a spy fiction anthology: *Great Spy Stories from Fiction*.<sup>62</sup> This naturally incorporated excerpts from his friend Ian Fleming, but also, perhaps surprisingly, included some of the more tenebrous fictive visions of espionage with extracts from the likes of Maugham, Conrad, Deighton, and even Greene and Le Carré!

Dulles also continued to make frequent TV appearances, often to defend his increasingly embattled former Agency. In the wake of the *Ramparts Magazine* revelations, for example, which revealed the CIA's covert sponsorship of the National Students' Association (NSA) – an operation whose beginning Dulles had overseen – Dulles appeared on William F. Buckley's *Firing Line* to answer this new wave of public criticism of the Agency. Buckley, who had briefly served in the CIA under E. Howard Hunt in the early 1950s, was one of the few journalists in the late 1960s–early 1970s who could be consistently relied upon to defend the CIA. In the 1970s, for example, he was so angered by the public criticism of the Agency, and by the cynical portrayals of espionage by spy novelists like Le Carré and especially Greene, that he began writing a series of spy novels that centred on the espionage activities of Blackford Oakes – an unambiguously heroic CIA agent. In another act of defiant patriotism, Buckley, following the publication of the Pentagon Papers in 1971, published a series of 'highly classified documents' in his conservative magazine, *The National Review*, which reflected the Agency and the Pentagon in a positive light. When journalists questioned the authenticity of the 'documents', Buckley was forced to admit that the whole thing was a hoax, and that the documents 'had been dreamed up "ex nihilo, (from nothing) in the offices of National Review."' <sup>63</sup>

Buckley's line of questioning of Dulles in the December 1967 edition of *Firing Line* largely resembled Eric Severaid's from half a decade previously. When he finally got to the thorny issue of covert action, and in particular, the National Students' Association scandal – deplored by sections of the American media – Dulles grew increasingly obstinate: 'What, what's deplored? Deplored that you're trying to get information, say about Russian missiles. Is that widely deplored? About the Russian

<sup>60</sup> Allen Dulles, *The Secret Surrender* (New York, 1966).

<sup>61</sup> Allen Dulles (ed.), *Great True Spy Stories* (New York, 1968).

<sup>62</sup> Allen Dulles (ed.), *Great Spy Stories from Fiction* (New York, 1969).

<sup>63</sup> 'As we see it: Buckley "fake" papers an indefensible deceit', *Detroit Free Press*, 23 July 1971.

military posture, is that widely deplored? About Russia's intentions, is that deplored?'<sup>64</sup> Buckley questioned why the NSA could not have received its money from private sources like the Ford Foundation – a proposal that Dulles said would not have been possible at that time – 'they don't like to get into governmental things', he retorted. (The irony, or straight up deception in what Dulles was saying, of course, was that the CIA had indeed used the Ford Foundation as a conduit to channel funds into various groups and cultural fronts during the Cold War.)<sup>65</sup> As Buckley pushed his line of questioning on the NSA scandal further, Dulles returned to his standard response to all criticisms of CIA covert operations: they were all approved 'at the highest level' by the President and the National Security Council – 'They weren't just invented in a little shop [at] CIA.'<sup>66</sup>

Once the singular authority on matters pertaining to American espionage and the CIA, by the end of his life Dulles had become one voice among many. Indeed, by the late 1960s fewer and fewer people were prepared to listen to him, or to accept the earnestness of his commentary. As the decade wore on, his voice began to be drowned out by the cacophony of criticism of his former Agency from an increasingly combative American press. If, as Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones claims, Dulles's greatest achievement as Director of the CIA up until the Bay of Pigs was that 'he kept America on his side', then it was only because America was prepared to listen to him, and because few in the media challenged him.<sup>67</sup>

Symptomatic of Dulles's increasingly marginalized status, was his failure to get a film adaptation of *The Secret Surrender* made. In the 1950s filmmakers and television producers were falling over themselves to try and make semi-documentary features about the CIA and/or the OSS in cooperation with the Agency.<sup>68</sup> Dulles's account of Operation Sunrise was hot property during the age of consensus. Such requests for governmental assistance, however, with the exception of a series of OSS films released in 1947 that were made with the assistance of numerous former OSS officers, including Dulles, were invariably denied. But in the late 1960s, following years of failed negotiations, Dulles could not find a single major studio willing to make the *Secret Surrender* into a motion picture. Dulles even enlisted the help of Louis De Rochemont and Joy and Halas Batchelor, who had made the CIA-sponsored adaptation of George Orwell's *Animal Farm* in 1954, to try to get *Secret Surrender*

<sup>64</sup> Is there a need for central intelligence?', *Firing Line* No. 80 transcript, 14 Dec. 1967, *The Hoover Institute* [webpage], <<http://hoohila.stanford.edu/firingline/programView2.php?programID=100>> [accessed 10 Nov. 2014].

<sup>65</sup> See Frances Stonor Saunders, *Who Paid the Piper? The CIA and the Cultural Cold War* (London, 2000), p. 30.

<sup>66</sup> 'Is There a Need for Central Intelligence', *Firing Line* No. 80 transcript, 14 Dec. 1967, p. 14.

<sup>67</sup> Jeffreys-Jones, *The CIA and American Democracy*, p. 117.

<sup>68</sup> Simon Willmetts, 'Quiet Americans: the CIA and early Cold War Hollywood cinema', *Journal of American Studies*, 47/1 (2013), pp. 127–47.



made. But De Rochemont and the Batchelors had produced their anti-communist adaptation of Orwell's fable at a time when HUAC's shadow loomed large over Hollywood – when no cinematic representation of the FBI could be produced without J. Edgar Hoover's prior approval, and when, as one television executive put it, aptly summing up the media's position on US covert action, 'Officially our government has no foreign espionage system in peacetime.'<sup>69</sup> When Dulles finally did realize the value of Hollywood publicity for his beleaguered former Agency in his retirement (he had on numerous occasions declined the opportunity to work with Hollywood on films about the Agency whilst he was DCI), countercultural anti-authoritarianism in films like *Bonnie and Clyde* (1967) and *Easy Rider* (1969) was in vogue. '[T]hose movie executives who buy books, plays and other properties', a defeated De Rochemont was forced to admit in 1968, 'men who actually decide what pictures are to be made – never showed serious interest in THE SECRET SURRENDER.'<sup>70</sup>

## V

Those fissures, first apparent in the aftermath of the Bay of Pigs debacle, had, by the end of the 1960s, split open the American Cold War consensus. In the process of that socio-political fragmentation, the CIA lost control of its own narrative. Allen Dulles could no longer position himself as the final word on intelligence matters – and throughout the 1960s he found his authoritative subject position increasingly undercut by a progressively sceptical American media. The CIA preferred draconian measures, but most of their attempts at censorship, tellingly, failed. Though this 'age of fracture', as Daniel Rodgers has termed it, is traditionally dated from the end of the 1960s – specifically, in the wake of the 1968 Tet offensive that galvanized the anti-war movement – the Bay of Pigs was its crucible. That first great public disaster for American Cold War foreign policy provoked a typically compliant media to begin to question both the efficacy and morality of US foreign policy, a substantial portion of which – as the Bay of Pigs made apparent – was conducted in secret. The consensus did not immediately collapse – it would take several more major foreign policy disasters, and in particular the tragedy of Vietnam, before its edifice crumbled. But the Bay of Pigs began the process of questioning US foreign policy – of pointing out the gap between reality and the official story, and of penetrating the mythologies that had hitherto gilded American foreign policy, and in

<sup>69</sup> Michael Kackman, *Citizen Spy: Television Espionage and Cold War Culture* (Minneapolis, 2005), p. 17.

<sup>70</sup> Louis de Rochemont to John Halas and Joy Batchelor, 29 Sept. 1968, Louis De Rochemont MSS, Box 25 Folder 7, The American Heritage Center, Laramie, WY.

particular, the activities of the CIA. 'After the Bay of Pigs, nothing was the same.'<sup>71</sup>

Dulles didn't live long enough to witness the near-complete destruction of the Cold War consensus, and his beloved former Agency's reputation along with it. He died on 29 January 1969. Had he lived long enough to see the CIA's humiliation at the hands of *The New York Times* and a series of presidential and congressional committees in 1975, he would most likely have continued to appear on television and write books to defend his former Agency. He would have stridently rejected Senator Church's characterization of the CIA as a 'rogue elephant' in American government by maintaining his defence that the President was ultimately responsible for all covert operations. It is also likely that he would have found his arguments increasingly challenged by the American media, or worse still, he would have found himself ignored.

<sup>71</sup> DeLillo, *Libra*, p. 22.