

## CIA believes it should run the country

By Carla Binion

October 31, 1999—Who runs the country? High level CIA officials have said the CIA, and not the president or other elected officials, should run the country and world affairs.

Robert Parry was a Newsweek correspondent from 1987 to 1990. He has also been a reporter for PBS Frontline and is the author of the recent “Lost History” and of “Fooling America,” (1992). In Parry’s 1991 book, “Trick or Treason,” he discusses book researcher, Peggy Robohm:

“(Robohm) had made a hobby of studying Yale University’s traditional role as a breeding ground for CIA recruits. Robohm also became a specialist on Yale’s secret campus organizations, such as Skull and Bones, whose most prominent member was George Herbert Walker Bush.”

Parry also interviewed old-time CIA officer Miles Copeland. Parry discovered that Copeland strongly supported George Bush, who was CIA director in 1976, but distrusted Jimmy Carter because he found Carter’s idealism contemptible. Copeland told Parry: “The way we saw Washington at that time (1980) was that the struggle was really not between the left and the right, the liberals and the conservatives, as between the Utopians and the realists, the pragmatists. Carter was a Utopian. He believed, honestly, that you must do the right thing and take your chance on the consequences. He told me that. He literally believed that.” Parry writes: “With those words, Copeland’s voice registered a mixture of amazement and disgust, as if he were talking about a hound dog that wouldn’t hunt. To Copeland and his CIA friends, Carter deserved respect for his first-rate intellect, but only contempt for his idealism.”

Copeland and his CIA friends supported George Bush in part due to Bush’s year as CIA director. Parry writes: “That, plus Bush’s schooling at Yale, a primary CIA recruiting ground, and membership in secret clubs like Skull and Bones, made the president a trusted figure to CIA veterans. I had been told that ‘Bush for President’ signs had been plastered on walls all over the CIA in 1980. Copeland was so personally impressed with Bush’s year as director that the CIA old-timer founded an informal political support group called ‘Spooks for Bush.’”

Another retired CIA man, Patrick E. Kennon, expressed the CIA’s view that CIA should run the country. Speaking about democratic elections in his 1995 “The Twilight of Democracy,” Kennon says: “Those societies that continue to allow themselves to be administered by individuals whose only qualification is that they were able to win a popularity contest will go from failure to failure and eventually pass from the scene.”

The book’s sleeve notes describe Kennon’s typical CIA-man view: “Why have the most successful governments disdained the ideals of America’s founding fathers in favor of the sometimes cruel efficiency of authoritarianism? Because, Kennon asserts, the world has become

so complicated, and the pace of change so rapid, that only highly trained, anonymous technocrats invested with enormous authority are capable of guiding a nation's affairs. To trust unskilled politicians, vulnerable to corruption and ignorant of the most basic rules of governing, with the fate of a nation is, in Kennon's view, the height of folly."

Both Kennon and Copeland repeatedly express contempt for democracy and idealism and support for a CIA-run country. Robert Parry writes that Miles Copeland shook his head from side to side in dismay as he lamented: "Carter believed in all the principles that we talk about in the West. As smart as Carter is, he did believe in Mom, apple pie, and the corner drugstore. And those things that are good in America are good everywhere else." Copeland stated, "Carter, I say, was not a stupid man," but added Carter's greater weakness was that "he was a principled man."

Copeland said that during the Iranian hostage crisis, neither the CIA nor the Iranians wanted Carter to get credit for the release of the hostages. Both the CIA and the Iranians preferred Reagan get credit. Copeland insisted there was no formal CIA deal with the Iranians but just "a mutuality of interests." When Parry asked Copeland how the CIA and Iranians came to agree to deny the hostage release to Carter, Copeland "only assured me that there were people deep inside the intelligence community who understood what had to be done for the good of the United States. He called the professionals 'the CIA within the CIA.'"

Parry hoped to interview Miles Copeland in the future to ask which individuals of the "CIA within the CIA" passed on hostage messages. He wanted to ask why Copeland's CIA friends were so sure the hostages would be released after Carter's defeat. Copeland died on January 14, 1991, before Parry had the chance to do a follow up interview.

When CIA representatives like Copeland and Kennon say the CIA is more qualified to run the country than are elected representatives, do they take into account the many CIA atrocities, including assassinations of democratically elected world leaders—atrocities that have become a matter of public record, acknowledged by CIA officials? When Copeland and Kennon speak of CIA concern for "the good of the United States" or protecting U.S. citizens, do they take into account the CIA's own admitted abuses of U.S. citizens, including the CIA's infamous MKULTRA program?

Copeland spoke to Parry about controlling public opinion in Iran, about turning the crowds around, shifting public support from one dictator to another. Copeland said because Khomeini's supporters in 1979 totaled million people, the CIA couldn't shift public opinion. Copeland said, "You don't turn a million people. You can't do it." He said the CIA might have saved the shah from the Khomeini supporters except for Carter's despised idealism. To Copeland and his CIA friends' disgust, Carter criticized the shah for using torture and murder to keep Iranian citizens down. Copeland said: "There are plenty of forces in the country we could have marshaled. We could have sabotaged [the revolution]. But we had to do it early. We had to establish what the Quakers call 'the spirit of the meeting' in the country, where everybody was thinking just one way. The Iranians were really like sheep, as they are now."

The CIA doesn't confine its contempt for average citizens to Iranians. Apparently the CIA also sees American citizens as "sheep" and American public opinion as something the CIA must

“manage” for the good of the country. Robert Parry’s “Fooling America” shows how the Reagan-Bush-era CIA pulled out all stops to control public opinion and the American press regarding Iran-Contra.

Walter Raymond, Jr., served as the CIA’s chief propaganda and disinformation specialist before moving to the National Security Council in 1982. As top CIA officer assigned to the Reagan White House, Raymond helped manipulate public opinion by portraying the Sandinistas as “black hats” and the Contras as “white hats.” Parry writes: “As for the questionable legality of a CIA director assisting in a campaign to influence the American people, Raymond explained that [CIA Director William] Casey undertook those actions ‘not so much in his CIA hat, but in his adviser to the president hat.’”

Raymond, Copeland and Kennon typify the CIA view: Democracy should be superseded by a CIA-run government (complete with torture and assassinations) and the American people are “sheep” to be manipulated toward that end.

George W. Bush would be the perfect CIA-stooge president, just as were Reagan and the elder Bush. Recently Chris Matthews crowed that the election of Bush, the son, would perfectly avenge CIA-George’s loss of the ’92 election. The friends of the father are the friends of the son, along with all the reciprocity that implies. Like his father, George W. would likely play yes man to the CIA, all the while grinning beneath his “compassionate conservative” hat.

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