

# Allen Dulles' "Indonesian Strategy" and the Assassination of John F. Kennedy

Review of Greg Poulgrain's book "The Incubus of Intervention: Conflicting Indonesian Strategies of John F. Kennedy and Allen Dulles"

By [Edward Curtin](#)

Global Research, June 12, 2016

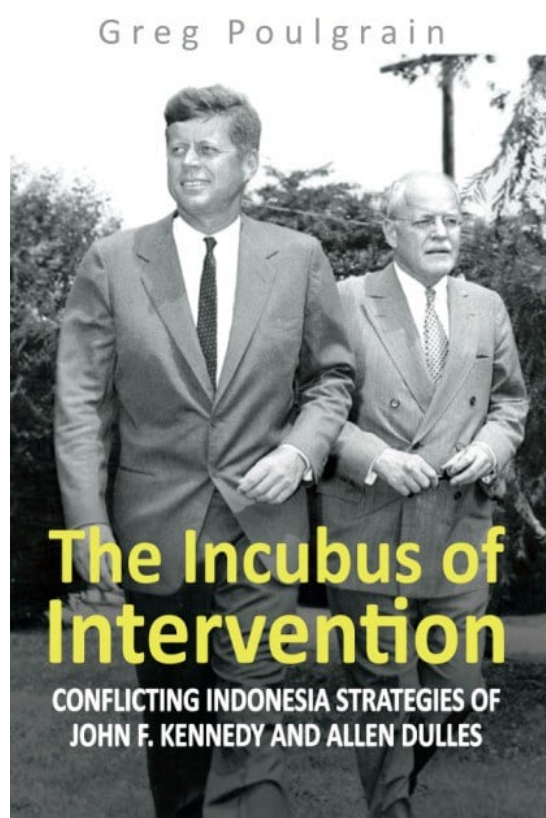
Region: [Asia](#), [USA](#)

Theme: [Crimes against Humanity](#),  
[Intelligence](#)

*Would Allen Dulles have resorted to assassinating the President of the United States to ensure the achievement of his 'Indonesian strategy'?*

*This is the central question addressed by Greg Poulgrain in his extraordinarily important book, [The Incubus of Intervention: Conflicting Indonesian Strategies of John F. Kennedy and Allen Dulles](#).*

Two days before President John Kennedy's assassination on November 22, 1963, he had accepted an invitation from Indonesian President Sukarno to visit that country the following spring. The aim of the visit was to end the conflict (*Konfrontasi*) between Indonesia and Malaysia and to continue Kennedy's efforts to support post-colonial Indonesia with economic and developmental aid, not military. It was part of his larger strategy of ending conflict throughout Southeast Asia and assisting the growth of democracy in newly liberated post-colonial countries worldwide.



He had forecast his position in a dramatic speech in

1957 when, as a Massachusetts Senator, he told the Senate that he supported the Algerian liberation movement and opposed colonial imperialism worldwide. The speech caused an international uproar and Kennedy was harshly attacked by Eisenhower, Nixon, John Foster Dulles, and even liberals such as Adlai Stevenson. But he was praised throughout the third world.

Of course JFK never went to Indonesia in 1964, and his peaceful strategy to bring Indonesia to America's side and to ease tensions in the Cold War was never realized, thanks to Allen Dulles. And Kennedy's proposed withdrawal from Vietnam, which was premised on success in Indonesia, was quickly reversed by Lyndon Johnson after JFK's murder. Soon both countries would experience mass slaughter engineered by Kennedy's opponents in the CIA and Pentagon. Millions would die. Subsequently, starting in December 1975, American installed Indonesian dictator, Suharto, would slaughter hundreds of thousands East-Timorese with American weapons after meeting with Henry Kissinger and President Ford and receiving their approval.

### Dulles's Secret

What JFK didn't know was that his plans were threatening a covert long-standing conspiracy engineered by Allen Dulles to effect regime change in Indonesia through bloody means. The primary goal behind this plan was to gain unimpeded access to the vast load of natural resources that Dulles had kept secret from Kennedy, who thought Indonesia was lacking in natural resources. But Dulles knew that if Kennedy, who was very popular in Indonesia, visited Sukarno, it would deal a death blow to his plan to oust Sukarno, install a CIA replacement (Suharto), exterminate alleged communists, and secure the archipelago for Rockefeller controlled oil and mining interests, for whom he had fronted since the 1920s.

Dr. Poulgrain, who teaches Indonesian History, Politics and Society at the University of Sunshine Coast in Australia, explores in very great detail historical issues that have critical significance for today. Based on almost three decades of interviews and research around the world, he has produced a very densely argued book that reads like a detective novel with fascinating sub-plots.

### The Importance of Indonesia

Most Americans have little awareness of the strategic and economic importance of Indonesia. It is the world's 4<sup>th</sup> most populous country, is situated in a vital shipping lane adjacent to the South China Sea, has the world's largest Muslim population, has vast mineral and oil deposits, and is home to [Grasberg](#), the world's largest copper and gold mine, owned by Freeport McMoRan of Phoenix, Arizona. Long a battleground in the Cold War, it remains vitally important in the New Cold War launched by the Obama administration against Russia and China, the same antagonists Allen Dulles strove to defeat through guile and violence. Just recently the Indonesian government, under pressure from the army that has stymied democratic reforms for 18 years, signed a defense agreement with Russia for the sharing of intelligence, the sale of Russian military equipment, including fighter jets, and the manufacturing of weapons in Indonesia. While not front page news in the U.S., these facts make Indonesia of great importance today and add to the gravity of Poulgrain's history.

### The Devil in Paradise

His use of the word "incubus" (an evil spirit that has sexual intercourse with sleeping

women) in the title is appropriate since the sinister character that snakes his way through this historical analysis is Allen Dulles, the longest serving Director of the CIA and Kennedy's arch-enemy. While contextually different from David Talbot's portrayal of Dulles in *The Devil's Chessboard*, Poulgrain's portrait of Dulles within the frame of Indonesian history is equally condemnatory and nightmarish. Both describe an evil genius ready to do anything to advance his agenda.

Reading Poulgrain's masterful analysis, one can clearly see how much of modern history is a struggle for control of the underworld where lies the fuel that runs the megamachine – oil, minerals, gold, etc. Manifest ideological conflicts, while garnering headlines, often bury the secret of this subterranean devil's game.

His story begins with a discovery that is then kept secret for many decades: "In the alpine region of Netherlands New Guinea (so named under Dutch colonial rule – today, West Papua) in 1936, three Dutchmen discovered a mountainous outcrop of ore with high copper content and very high concentrations of gold. When later analyzed in the Netherlands, the gold (in gram/ton) proved to be twice that of Witwatersrand in South Africa, then the world's richest gold mine, but this information was not made public."

The geologist among the trio, Jean Jacques Dozy, worked for the Netherlands New Guinea Petroleum Company (NNGPM), ostensibly a Dutch-controlled company based in The Hague, but whose controlling interest actually lay in the hands of the Rockefeller family, as did the mining company, Freeport Indonesia (now Freeport McMoRan, one of whose Directors from 1988-95 was Henry Kissinger, Dulles's and the Rockefeller's close associate) that began mining operations there in 1966. It was Allen Dulles, Paris-based lawyer in the employ of Rockefeller's Standard Oil, who in 1935 arranged the controlling interest in NNGPN for the Rockefellers. And it was Dulles, among a select few others, who, because of various intervening events, including WW II, that made its exploitation impossible, kept the secret of the gold mine for almost three decades, even from President Kennedy. JFK "was never informed of the 'El Dorado' he had unwittingly taken out of Dutch hands with the result that (once the remaining political hurdles in Indonesia were overcome) Freeport would have unimpeded access to its mining concession." Those "political hurdles" – i.e. regime change – would take a while to effect.

### The Indonesia-Cuba Connection

But first JFK would have to be eliminated, for he had brokered Indonesian sovereignty over West Papua/West Irian for Sukarno from the Dutch who had ties to Freeport Sulphur. Freeport was aghast at the potential loss of "El Dorado," especially since they had recently had their world's most advanced nickel refinery expropriated by Fidel Castro, who had named Che Guevara its new manager. Freeport's losses in Cuba made access to Indonesia even more important. Cuba and Indonesia thus were joined in the deadly game of chess between Dulles and Kennedy, and someone would have to lose.

While much has been written about Cuba, Kennedy, and Dulles, the Indonesian side of the story has been slighted. Poulgrain remedies this with an exhaustive and deeply researched exploration of these matters. He details the deviousness of the covert operation Dulles ran in Indonesia during the 1950s and 1960s. He makes it clear that Kennedy was shocked by Dulles' actions, yet never fully grasped the treacherous genius of it all. Dulles was always "working two or three stages ahead of the present." Having armed and promoted a

rebellion against Sukarno's central government in 1958, Dulles made sure it would fail (shades of the Bay of Pigs to come).

Yet the end result of CIA interference in Indonesian internal affairs via the 1958 Rebellion was depicted as a failure at the time, and has consistently been depicted as a failure since that time. This holds true only if the stated goal of the CIA was the same as the actual goal. Even more than five decades later, media analysis of the goal of The Outer Island rebels is still portrayed as a secession, as covert US support for 'rebels in the Outer Islands that wished to secede from the central government in Jakarta'. The actual goal of Allen Dulles had more to do with achieving a centralized army command in such a way as to appear that the CIA backing for the rebels failed.

### The Need for Assassinations

Dulles betrayed the rebels he armed and encouraged, just as he betrayed friend and foe alike during his long career. The rebellion that he instigated and planned to fail was the first stage of a larger intelligence strategy that would come to fruition in 1965-6 with the ouster of Sukarno (after multiple unsuccessful assassination attempts) and the institution of a reign of terror that followed. It was also when - 1966 - Freeport McMoRan began their massive mining in West Papua at Grasberg at an elevation of 14,000 feet in the Alpine region. Dulles was nothing if not patient; he had been at this game since WW I. Even after Kennedy fired him following the Bay of Pigs, his plans were executed, just as those who got in his way were. Poulgrain makes a powerful case that these included JFK, U.N. Secretary General Dag Hammarskjold (working with Kennedy for a peaceful solution in Indonesia and other places), and Congolese President Patrice Lumumba.

His focus is on *why* they needed to be assassinated (similar in this regard to James Douglass's *JFK and the Unspeakable*), though with the exception of Kennedy (since the how is well-known and obvious), he also presents compelling evidence as to the how. Hammarskjold, in many ways Kennedy's spiritual brother, was a particularly powerful obstacle to Dulles's plans for Indonesia and countries throughout the Third World. Like JFK, he was committed to independence for indigenous and colonial peoples everywhere, and was trying to implement "his Swedish-style 'third way' proposing a form of 'muscular pacifism'."

Had the UN Secretary General succeeded in bringing even half these countries to independence, he would have transformed the UN into a significant world power and created a body of nations so large as to be a counter-weight to those embroiled in the Cold War.

Poulgrain draws on documents from the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and Chairman Archbishop Desmond Tutu to show the connection between South Africa's "Operation Celest" and Dulles's involvement in Hammarskjold's murder in September 1961. While it was reported at the time as an accidental plane crash, he quotes former President Harry Truman saying, "Dag Hammarskjold was on the point of getting something done when they killed him. Notice that I said, 'When they killed him'."

Dulles sold his overt Indonesian strategy as being necessary to thwart a communist takeover in Indonesian. Cold War rhetoric, like "the war on terrorism" today, served as his cover. In this he had the Joint Chiefs of Staff on his side; they considered Kennedy soft on

communism, in Indonesia and Cuba and everywhere else. Dulles's covert agenda was to serve the interests of his power elite patrons.

#### Dulles and George de Mohrenschildt

Poulgrain adds significantly to our understanding of JFK's assassination and its aftermath by presenting new information about George de Mohrenschildt, Lee Harvey Oswald's handler in Dallas. Dulles had a long association with the de Mohrenschildt family, going back to 1920-21 when in Constantinople he negotiated with Baron Sergius Alexander von Mohrenschildt on behalf of Rockefeller's Standard Oil. The Baron's brother and business partner was George's father. Dulles's law firm, Sullivan & Cromwell, "was virtually the front desk for Standard Oil." These negotiations on behalf of elite capitalist interests, in the shadow of the Russian Revolution, became the template for Dulles's career: economic exploitation was inseparable from military concerns, the former concealed behind the anti-communist rhetoric of the latter. An anti-red thread ran through Dulles's career, except when the red was the blood of all those whom he considered expendable. And the numbers are legion.

"It was through Standard Oil that a link existed between Dulles [who controlled the Warren Commission] and de Mohrenschildt, and this should have been brought to the attention of the Warren Commission but was not made public when Dulles had so prominent a role." Poulgrain argues convincingly that De Mohrenschildt worked in "oil intelligence" before his CIA involvement, and that oil intelligence was not only Dulles's work when he first met George's father, Sergius, in Baku, but that that "oil intelligence" is a redundancy. The CIA, after all, is a creation of Wall Street and their interests have always been joined. The Agency was not formed to provide intelligence to US Presidents; that was a convenient myth used to cover its real purpose which was to serve the interests of investment bankers and the power elite.

While working in 1941 for Humble Oil (Prescott Bush was a major shareholder, Dulles was his lawyer, and Standard Oil had secretly bought Humble Oil sixteen years before), de Mohrenschildt was caught up in a scandal that involved Vichy (pro-Nazi) French intelligence in selling oil to Germany. This was similar to the Dulles's brothers and Standard Oil's notorious business dealings with Germany.

It was an intricate web of the high cabal with Allen Dulles at the center.

In the midst of the scandal, de Mohrenschildt, suspected of being a Vichy French intelligence agent, "disappeared" for a while. He later told the Warren Commission that he decided to take up oil drilling, without mentioning the name of Humble Oil that employed him again, this time as a roustabout.

"Just when George needed to 'disappear', Humble Oil was providing an oil exploration team to be subcontracted to NNGPM – the company Allen Dulles had set up five years earlier to work in Netherlands New Guinea." Poulgrain makes a powerful circumstantial evidence case (certain documents are still unavailable) that de Mohrenschildt, in order to avoid appearing in court, went in communicado in Netherlands New Guinea's in mid-1941 where he made a record oil discovery and received a \$10,000 bonus from Humble Oil.

"Avoiding adverse publicity about his role in selling oil to Vichy France was the main priority; for George, a brief drilling adventure in remote Netherlands New Guinea would have been a



timely and strategic exit.” And who best to help him in this escape than Allen Dulles – indirectly, of course; for Dulles’s modus operandi was to maintain his “distance” from his contacts, often over many decades.

In other words, Dulles and de Mohrenschildt were intimately involved for a long time prior to JFK’s assassination. Poulgrain rightly claims that “the entire focus of the Kennedy investigation would have shifted had the [Warren] Commission become aware of the 40-year link between Allen Dulles and de Mohrenschildt.” Their relationship involved oil, spying, Indonesia, Nazi Germany, the Rockefellers, Cuba, Haiti, etc. It was an international web of intrigue that involved a cast of characters stranger than fiction, a high cabal of the usual and unusual operatives.

Two unusual ones are worth mentioning: Michael Fomenko and Michael Rockefeller. The eccentric Fomenko – aka “Tarzan” – is the Russian-Australian nephew of de Mohrenschildt’s wife, Jean Fomenko. His arrest and deportation from Netherlands New Guinea in 1959, where he had travelled from Australia in a canoe, and his subsequent life, are fascinating and sad. It’s the stuff of a bizarre film. It seems he was one of those victims who had to be silenced because he knew a secret about George’s 1941 oil discovery that was not his to share. “In April 1964, at the same time George de Mohrenschildt was facing the Warren Commission – a time when any publicity regarding Sele 40 [George’s record oil discovery] could have changed history – it was decided that electro-convulsive therapy would be used on Michael Fomenko.” He was then imprisoned at the Ipswich Special Mental Hospital.

Equally interesting is the media myth surrounding the disappearance of Michael Rockefeller, Nelson’s son and heir to the Standard Oil fortune, who was allegedly eaten by cannibals in New Guinea in 1961. His tale became front-page news, “a media event closed off to any other explanation and the political implications of his disappearance became an ongoing tragedy for the Papuan people.” To this very day, the West Papuan people, whose land was described by Standard Oil official Richard Archbold in 1938 as “Shangri-la,” are fighting for their [independence](#).

Poulgrain offers most interesting takes on these two characters and shows how their stories are connected to the larger tale of intrigue.

This is a very important and compelling book. Difficult and dense at times, more expansive at others, it greatly adds to our understanding of why JFK was murdered. With its Indonesian focus, it shows us how Allen Dulles’s sinister purview was wide-spread and long-standing; how it included so much more than Cuba, Guatemala, Iran, etc.; specifically, how important far-distant Indonesia was in his thinking, and how that thinking clashed with President Kennedy’s on a crucial issue. It forces us to consider how different the world would be if JFK had lived.

*The Incubus of Intervention* sheds new light on Indonesian history and America’s complicity in its tragedy. It is essential reading today when Barack Obama is executing his pivot to Asia and promoting conflict with China and Russia. Although not explored in Poulgrain’s book, it’s interesting to note that Obama’s Indonesian step-father, Lolo Soetero, left Obama and his mother in Hawaii in that crucial year of 1966 when mass killings were underway to return to Indonesia to map Western New Guinea (West Papua) for the Indonesian government. After Dulles’s regime change was accomplished and Suharto had replaced Sukarno, he went to work for Unocal, the first oil company to sign a production sharing agreement with Suharto. Strange coincidences, bitter fruit.

Is Poulgrain correct? Did Allen Dulles direct the assassination of President Kennedy to ensure his, rather the Kennedy's, Indonesian strategy would succeed?

We know the CIA coordinated the assassination of President Kennedy. We know that Allen Dulles was involved. We know that Indonesia was one reason why.

Was it "the reason"?

Read this wonderful book and decide.

*Edward Curtin is a writer who has published widely. He teaches sociology at Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts.*

The original source of this article is Global Research  
Copyright © [Edward Curtin](#), Global Research, 2016

---

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Edward Curtin](#)

**Disclaimer:** The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)

[www.globalresearch.ca](http://www.globalresearch.ca) contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)