



Thy Will Be Done: The Conquest of the Amazon : Nelson Rockefeller and Evangelism in the Age of Oil

By Gerard Colby, Charlotte Dennett, Charlott Dennett

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Examining the motives, deeds, and tragic repercussions of their intervention in the Amazon and Central America, a study reveals the legacies of Nelson Rockefeller, who secured natural resources for American corporations, and Cameron Townsend, who saved souls at any cost.

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- Sales Rank: #1381713 in Books
- Brand: HarperCollins
- Published on: 1996-05
- Ingredients: Example Ingredients
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.00" h x 6.00" w x 2.00" l,
- Binding: Paperback
- 1008 pages



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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

This extraordinary saga moves from the Oval Office to the Amazon rain forests to show how Cold War intrigue linked a powerful American family, the U.S. government, and a missionary organization in a forty-year campaign to conquer the Amazon. At the heart of this story are two intensely ambitious men: Nelson Rockefeller, scion of the liberal and immensely wealthy Standard Oil family, and William Cameron Townsend, founder of the ultraconservative Wycliffe Bible Translators. Although leaders of opposing camps, they found common cause in the struggle against fascism and then communism, with the result that hundreds of thousands of Amazonian tribespeople died or were displaced. The systematic campaign of colonization fathered by Rockefeller and Townsend was a chilling foreshadowing of American intervention in the Third World to secure valuable natural resources in the name of democracy.

From Publishers Weekly

Nelson Rockefeller, who died in 1979, owned vast Latin American real estate and cattle ranching, mining, industrial and financial interests centered in Brazil. To protect his empire and secure Third World assets for exploitation by U.S. capitalism, Rockefeller—a top Latin American adviser to presidents from FDR to Nixon, and Ford's vice-president—played a dominant role in shaping the U.S.'s interventionist policy in Latin America, according to this blistering exposé based on 18 years of research. Rockefeller, as President Eisenhower's special assistant for Cold War strategy, oversaw the CIA's covert operations abroad and was privy to assassination plots and mind-control experiments, the authors maintain. Colby (DuPont: Behind the Nylon Curtain) and his wife, Dennett, a freelance journalist, charge that Rockefeller, his banks and their allies, working with the CIA, bolstered repressive regimes in Brazil, Ecuador, Peru and Paraguay. Forcible dislocation of native peoples, hunger, disease, genocide and the ongoing destruction of the Amazon rain forest are the legacy of these policies, in the authors' analysis. Another key player in this massive narrative is ultraconservative William Cameron Townsend (1896-1982), founder of the Protestant missionary organization Wycliffe Bible Translators, which worked in concert with Rockefeller and which the authors accuse of destroying indigenous peoples' cultural values to abet penetration by U.S. businesses. Illustrations not seen by PW.

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From Library Journal

Exploring the genocide of Natives in the Amazon in the mid-1970s, the authors discovered information about Nelson Rockefeller that they believed merited further research. The resulting work, a detailed exploration of the intertwining of two major figures—Rockefeller, politician and Eastern establishment expert on Latin America, and William Cameron Townsend, confidant of Mexican president Lazaro Cardenas and founder of the Wycliffe Bible Translators—and their life's work in the region. Colby and Dennett argue that both men colonized Latin America, the first economically, the second culturally, in collusion with certain U.S. government interests over many decades. Their actions had severe consequences detrimental to development in the region, specifically to the human rights and social evolution of indigenous groups. This damning thesis, based on substantial field research, interviews, and fresh documentation, will provoke considerable controversy. Highly recommended.

--Roderic A. Camp, Latin American Ctr., Tulane Univ., New Orleans

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Users Review

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David Dugas:

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