

The writing is poor. Huston needed a good editor to tighten his prose and give it direction; the press did not provide one. Phrasings are awkward, passive voice abounds, sentences do not relate to one another, and paragraph transitions are weak. Huston has trouble saying simple things simply. Instead of "combat" or "war," for example, he prefers "a war situation" (p. 230), "a war emergency" (p. 231), or, incredibly, "a war emergency situation" (p. 229). Careful proofreading would have eliminated the numerous typographical errors that litter the manuscript.

In short, while the history of NATO logistics is an important subject, Huston's treatment of it is best forgotten.

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JFK: The Presidency of John F. Kennedy. By Herbert S. Parmet. (New York: Dial Press, 1983. Pp. viii, 407. Notes, index. \$19.95.)

The second in a two-volume biography of John Fitzgerald Kennedy, this book should remain for some time as the most thoughtful and accurate of many books on the subject. Based on published accounts, memoirs, oral histories, and special studies such as the *Pentagon Papers* and the Church Committee investigation of the Central Intelligence Agency, it considers both the man and his era—the public and private together, the admirable with the commonplace. The picture that emerges is of an extraordinarily poised, graceful, witty, inspiring, and handsome but fully human individual. Kennedy had a capacity for error, a large ego, a desire to satisfy the high expectations of his father, an attraction to women, and a chronic back ailment, but he was a president who was courageous in his loyalty to nation and to constitutional democracy. Personally ambitious and master of electoral politics, unfortunately Kennedy learned the nature and limits of presidential power only after entering the Oval Office. The Kennedy administration, rhetoric to the contrary, was actually a continuation of the Dwight D. Eisenhower policies, with some of the same officials. The youthful Irishman from Massachusetts, who was the pride of the liberal intellectual establishment, was, it turned out, a budget-balancer by instinct, who worried about deficit spending by the government just as he fretted about the free spending of his wife for dresses. A practical politician who was aware of the narrowness of his victory in 1960, he was unwilling to confront the dominant conservative block of Republicans and Southern Democrats in Congress, advocating civil rights legislation only when forced by disturbances in the

South. In Cuba, Berlin, and Laos he accepted Eisenhower's premises about monolithic Communist encroachment, and his actions were in large measure an extension of the general's strategy both military and covert—using the CIA. He kept the former president informed about foreign affairs and from time to time sought his support, though not his advice. Unfortunately he lacked the Republican president's ability. His handling of the Bay-of-Pigs incident and the situation in Vietnam were inept.

The few weaknesses of the book include instances of carelessness, such as calling Eugene Zukert the secretary of war instead of the secretary of the air force (p. 140) and the Skyhawk fighter airplane the Skylark (p. 171). There are also periodic excursions into side issues or wordy nonsense, such as "Kennedy's only real recourse on Laos was to maneuver between what he was actually doing and what he appeared to be doing" (p. 136). The author clarifies some important issues but obscures others. He is persuasive in showing the coolness between JFK and Jacqueline because of her lack of interest in politics and his affairs with other women, the strength of the president's commitment to an independent South Vietnam (he probably would have kept American troops there), and the lack of evidence that Lee Harvey Oswald was part of a conspiracy. He is less convincing when he fails to discuss the possibility that Soviet offensive weapons in Cuba were a response both to Kennedy's continuing buildup of strategic weapons after finding out that the "missile gap" was a myth and to his apparent lack of resolve at the Bay-of-Pigs and at the summit meeting in Vienna, Austria. Parmet emphasizes instead that the president had no choice after discovering Soviet missiles in Cuba but to act militarily and publicly. Khrushchev had lied. Kennedy had vowed not to allow offensive weapons into the hemisphere, and there were pressures on the White House with Republican Senators Kenneth B. Keating of New York and Homer E. Capehart of Indiana calling for an invasion of the island with a communist dictator just ninety miles from Florida.

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Scholars and the Indian Experience: Critical Reviews of Recent Writing in the Social Sciences. Edited by W. R. Swagerty. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, for the D'Arcy McNickle Center for the History of the American Indian, Newberry Library, 1984. Pp. x, 268. Notes, index. Cloth-bound, \$22.50; paperbound, \$9.95.)

Since the 1960s the study of Native American history has undergone major changes. Once envisioned as part of a more