

in modern conflicts, while fighting in Korea. He tragically applied this faith when making recommendations on the conflict in Vietnam, both as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and as ambassador to South Vietnam under John F. Kennedy.

The narrative is effective but occasionally uneven. In a few cases, the narrative flow suffers from abrupt transitions from one topic to another when the author strives to keep up with Taylor's varied intellectual interests, his constant interaction with distinct constituencies to whom he made his case, and his unique positions amid the civil-military bureaucracy as both a strategist and an operator. As Trauschweizer notes, despite Taylor's considerable intelligence, influence, and long career, the problems he sought to resolve in civil military relations—namely, the influence of the military on political decisions in the nuclear age—remain a challenge for American presidents to this day. Trauschweizer's study of this man and his times is compelling because it reveals in detail the extent to which individuals, sometimes unelected and often on the periphery of the spotlight, make major contributions to our national destiny.

Brian Madison Jones  
*The Citadel*  
 Charleston, South Carolina

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*The Dictator Dilemma: The United States and Paraguay in the Cold War.* By Kirk Tyvela. (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2019. x, 261 pp. \$45.00.)

In a moment of either senility or honesty, after being removed from power in 1989, the Paraguayan authoritarian leader Gen. Alfredo Stroessner responded with confusion to an interviewer's question about communism in his country. Communists had never existed in Paraguay, he declared. That frank admission undermined the justification not only for his deadly grasp on power but also for consistent U.S. support for his long and brutal regime. As was readily apparent to anyone who cared to observe reality, homegrown radicalism responding to local conditions in Latin America

represented more of a threat to these highly exclusionary and oppressive governments than did any fictional Soviet-inspired communist movement.

Drawing primarily on State Department documents, Kirk Tyvela surveys U.S. policy changes toward the Stroessner regime from his ascension to power in a military coup in 1954 to his eventual removal in another coup in 1989. His goal is to provide in granular detail a better understanding of U.S.-Paraguayan relations, to use changes in those policies to understand the evolution of official U.S. attitudes toward Latin America, and to understand Stroessner's responses to those changes. Throughout the text, he examines how policy makers and diplomats articulated and rationalized their positions on whether Stroessner represented either an "anti-communist necessity or authoritarian excess" (p. 170).

Broadly, Tyvela divides U.S. policy makers into skeptics and reformists. The Eisenhower administration, the first to confront Stroessner, fit into the skeptic camp, as it embraced the repressive and authoritarian leader as a firm and reliable anticommunist ally. In contrast, Tyvela depicts the subsequent Kennedy administration as following a reformist line that sought to use programs such as the Alliance for Progress as political tools to press for democratization.

Chapter by chapter, Tyvela discusses these policy shifts through subsequent administrations over the next thirty years. At first blush, Jimmy Carter's emphasis on human rights might appear to be an outlier, but Tyvela notes how those policies continued under Ronald Reagan and eventually contributed to Stroessner's ouster. Unacknowledged by Tyvela is that the underlying motivation for U.S. policy is remarkably consistent. The goal was to advance national security interests—which, in reality, meant economic interests—and the debate surrounded how to achieve that.

Tyvela admits that his emphasis is a traditional, top-down, U.S.-centric approach to diplomatic history. What emerges, however, is a look at how Stroessner effectively exploited irrational anticommunist fears to present himself as the best friend of the United States. In the process, he gained both economic aid and longevity in power. As Tyvela effectively

observes, “Stroessner was a prime example of the shortsighted and ultimately self-defeating policy of supporting friendly dictators” (p. 121). That seems to be a difficult-to-learn lesson.

Marc Becker  
Truman State University  
Kirksville, Missouri

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*Nikita Khrushchev's Journey into America.* By Lawrence J. Nelson and Matthew G. Schoenbachler. (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2019. xii, 283 pp. Paper, \$34.95.)

Nikita Khrushchev's whirlwind thirteen-day visit to the United States in the autumn of 1959, a media spectacle in its day, was long considered a landmark event in the Cold War. No Soviet leader had ever set foot in the United States until Khrushchev arrived with the goal of reducing tension by articulating a commitment to peaceful coexistence. Lawrence J. Nelson and Matthew G. Schoenbachler carefully describe the day-by-day unfolding of the tour in a thoroughly researched, action-packed, and entertainingly presented narrative.

The colorful Khrushchev, with his impressive wife Nina Petrovna, is the protagonist of the story, but we learn rather little about him. Character tends to be subsumed by what Khrushchev is presumed to represent, and the Soviet side of the story is underplayed. The authors aptly describe their narrative as the “story of a people in a particular time and place—America in 1959” (p. 3). Emphasis is placed upon the *encounter* of this charismatic foreign leader with American society at a transitional moment in its postwar history. *Nikita Khrushchev's Journey into America* has at least as much to say about the United States as it does about its Soviet visitor. The exposition of the mores of Cold War America confronted with the living face of “godless Communism” is what emerges most powerfully from the text.

In his own mind and in the minds of his American interlocutors, Khrushchev embodied a cause. Polemical narratives of his unprecedented state visit generated reciprocal

self-other images with enduring consequences for public policy. The book's textured description of the tour is organized as a travelogue, but with an analytical foundation. Balanced interpretation demonstrates how deeply rooted Cold War enemy imaging had become, and has remained, in American, as well as Russian, political life.

The volume is introduced by a citation from the First Book of Kings: “thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame of which I heard” (I Kings: 4–7). Khrushchev is indeed awed by the material abundance, technical achievement, and unbounded self-confidence of 1950s America. On one level his journey may fairly be depicted as a quaint but dated confrontation between the future that worked and the one that did not. And yet in his interactions with Americans from all walks of life Khrushchev propounds a substantive critic of American capitalism that might have been taken with a grain of salt in 1959 but cannot so easily be dismissed today. There is perhaps something to be learned from both sides of the dialogue that the Soviet leader sought to promote. Nelson and Schoenbachler's account has the merit of looking beyond the colorful political theater that has dominated most accounts of his visit to present a description of the torturous contradictions that the infernal logic of Cold War has imposed on us all.

R. Craig Nation  
Dickinson College  
Carlisle, Pennsylvania

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*The Shadow of Selma.* Ed. by Joe Street and Henry Knight Lozano. (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2018. x, 299 pp. \$84.95.)

In *The Shadow of Selma* the editors Joe Street and Henry Knight Lozano, both senior lecturers at Northumbria University, use Ava DuVernay's film *Selma* (2015) as a launching point to explore the history, memory, and legacy of the 1965 Selma voting rights campaign and the Voting Rights Act. According to the editors, the collection “encourages a rethink of Selma the place as well as ‘Selma’ the event, not to mention *Selma*, the movie” (p. 5).