REVIEW OF BOOKS

The Juggler: Franklin Roosevelt as Wartime Statesman, Warren F. Kimball, (Princeton, N.J.:Princeton University Press, 1991), 304 pp.

"You know I am a juggler," Franklin Roosevelt confided to his Secretary of the Treasury in 1942, "and I never let my right hand know what my left hand does. . . . I may have one policy for Europe and one diametrically opposite for North and South America. I may be entirely inconsistent, and furthermore I am perfectly willing to mislead and tell untruths if it will help to win the war." The inaccuracy of the analogy aside (a juggler, of course, must coordinate his hand movements), Roosevelt expressed what many observers have long regarded as an axiom of his presidency: that he was the quintessential opportunist, a man without a coherent design, especially in foreign affairs. It is a premise that Warren F. Kimball, editor of the multi-volume Churchill-Roosevelt correspondence, effectively demolishes in this series of essays on FDR's World War II diplomacy. By discerning within Roosevelt's words and deeds his underlying assumptions, Kimball exposes the consistency that fashioned presidential leadership.

The locus of Roosevelt's world view, according to Kimball, was his national identity, his Americanism. His dream was of an ultimately homogeneous planet, based on American values. The United States had not entered the war to remold the world, but, once committed to hostilities, Roosevelt wished to seize the opportunity to reform the existing order. First in his calculations was the total defeat of Germany and its elimination as a major power. "The intensity of that belief on Roosevelt's part," Kimball insists, "is hard to overestimate." This demanded German dismemberment, disarmament, and de-Nazification. Domestic political pressures, as well as personal conviction, led the president to conclude that the U.S. should keep troops in Europe only for a year or two after the war. He was, however, willing to contemplate the use of American forces elsewhere to "police" the globe, in concert with Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and China. These four countries would dominate the international scene, even following the establishment of a United Nations Organization. The four large powers were to have a unique responsibility—in Kimball's phrase, "chastising, hectoring, and lecturing the world into acting sensibly."

This arrangement could work only if the four "policemen" accepted common principles, principles which Roosevelt envisioned in American liberal terms. In effect, he advocated the internationalization of the New Deal. For whatever its shortcomings as a cure for the Great Depression, his reform program assured social stability, which Roosevelt, writes Kimball, considered "a precondition to solving economic problems." The issue, as the war drew to a close, was whether the Soviet Union would cooperate with this plan. Roosevelt seems never to have lost faith that it would. Kimball disputes the notion that the president became more confrontational toward Joseph Stalin shortly before he died, "despite what has been said by historians trying to make FDR into a belated but convinced Cold Warrior."

Indeed, as Kimball shows, Roosevelt differed with a more belligerent Winston Churchill on how best to deal with Stalin. And this was not their sole difference. The American desired the post-war decolonization of all European empires, mainly the British. It was not only a matter of self-determination and morality, the familiar Wilsonian formula, but also Roosevelt's fear that continued colonialism would disrupt the future peace. Instead, he supported the creation of a system of trusteeships for the colonies under the tutelage of more experienced states, perhaps even their original European

"parents," but always with international accountability. Eventually, almost all colonial possessions would gain complete independence. Certainly, American financial advantages would accompany the decline of European imperialism. The new nations would be open, for the first time, to U.S. economic penetration. FDR, declares Kimball, "continually pushed for access . . . to the markets . . . of the world."

This assertion, as well as other disclosures in *The Juggler* about the president's thoughts and actions during the war, is not new. And although Kimball's scholarship is impeccable—his endnotes are nearly half as long as the text of the book—the essays vary in significance. Still, this volume joins diverse earlier works by Robert Dallek, Frederick W. Marks III, and Gaddis Smith, as one of the most valuable studies of Roosevelt's diplomacy to have appeared in the past fifteen years.

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