



Eisenhower: The White House Years

Jim Newton

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Newly discovered and declassified documents make for a surprising and revealing portrait of the president we thought we knew.

America's thirty-fourth president was belittled by his critics as the babysitter-in-chief. This new look reveals how wrong they were. Dwight Eisenhower was bequeathed the atomic bomb and refused to use it. He ground down Joseph McCarthy and McCarthyism until both became, as he said, "McCarthywasm." He stimulated the economy to lift it from recession, built an interstate highway system, turned an \$8 billion deficit in 1953 into a \$500 million surplus in 1960. (Ike was the last President until Bill Clinton to leave his country in the black.)

The President Eisenhower of popular imagination is a benign figure, armed with a putter, a winning smile, and little else. The Eisenhower of veteran journalist Jim Newton's rendering is shrewd, sentimental, and tempestuous. He mourned the death of his first son and doted on his grandchildren but could, one aide recalled, "peel the varnish off a desk" with his temper. Mocked as shallow and inarticulate, he was in fact a meticulous manager. Admired as a general, he was a champion of peace. In Korea and Vietnam, in Quemoy and Berlin, his generals urged him to wage nuclear war. Time and again he considered the idea and rejected it. And it was Eisenhower who appointed the liberal justices Earl Warren and William Brennan and who then called in the military to enforce desegregation in the schools.

Rare interviews, newly discovered records, and fresh insights undergird this gripping and timely narrative.

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