



# The President and the Apprentice: Eisenhower and Nixon, 1952-1961

Irwin F. Gellman

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More than half a century after Eisenhower left office, the history of his presidency is so clouded by myth, partisanship, and outright fraud that most people have little understanding of how Ike's administration worked or what it accomplished. We know-or think we know-that Eisenhower distrusted his vice president, Richard Nixon, and kept him at arm's length; that he did little to advance civil rights; that he sat by as Joseph McCarthy's reckless anticommunist campaign threatened to wreck his administration; and that he planned the disastrous 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba. None of this is true.

The President and the Apprentice reveals a different Eisenhower, and a different Nixon. Ike trusted and relied on Nixon, sending him on many sensitive overseas missions. Eisenhower, not Truman, desegregated the military. Eisenhower and Nixon, not Lyndon Johnson, pushed the Civil Rights Act of 1957 through the Senate. Eisenhower was determined to bring down McCarthy and did so. Nixon never, contrary to recent accounts, saw a psychotherapist, but while Ike was recovering from his heart attack in 1955, Nixon was overworked, overanxious, overmedicated, and at the limits of his ability to function.



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