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*The Post-Presidency from Washington to Clinton* by Burton I. Kaufman (review)

Bruce E. Altschuler

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orthodoxy with opportunities for innovation. According to Busch, the most enduring of Truman's innovations was in the realm of foreign policy by confronting Stalin and the Soviet empire, so that "the 1948 election . . . assured that containment would be on a stable footing for the foreseeable future" (p. 215). Furthermore, Truman's victory "confirmed that FDR had not been a fluke and that Democrats had constructed a coalition that gave them a residual advantage going into national elections even when public opinion on crucial issues was not favorable" (p. 217). Thus, Truman's victory had not been a fluke and his presidential legacy would have a lasting impact on the development of the executive office and American politics.

Perhaps where Busch's analysis reaches its analytic pinnacle is in its ability to help us understand our current political environment. One cannot help but be drawn to the similarities between 1948 and 2012. Like Truman, traditional political-science measures were against President Obama's reelection as many predicted an incumbent president presiding over a struggling economy with 8 percent unemployment had no chance of reelection. Moreover, in 2010, many viewed the Republican capture of the House of Representatives and nearly capturing the Senate, as a repudiation of the Democrats and as evidence that the Republicans would carry this momentum into the presidential race, much like what happened in 1946. However, like Truman, President Obama reminded us that candidates, campaigns, and coalitions matter. Overall, *Truman's Triumphs* reminds us of what makes election cycles so compelling. And in this regard, *Truman's Triumphs* is really Busch's.

ROBERT E. ROSS is a doctoral candidate at the University of Houston in Houston, Texas. He is currently researching the constitutional legitimacy of political opposition in American politics.

*The Post-Presidency from Washington to Clinton.* By Burton I. Kaufman. (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2012. Pp. 646. \$45.00 cloth)

After leaving what has become the most important position in the world, what possible encore is there for a former president? Although the postpresidency has become financially rewarding, it lacks formal powers or even a job description. Burton Kaufman examines its development through a series of biographical sketches of the thirty-one chief executives who lived at least two years after leaving office.

For the first three presidents, the republican ideal meant returning to private life. Lacking the perquisites available today, each had to earn a living. Their political activity was confined to writing and behind-the-scenes attempts to influence policy. Madison and Monroe sought to follow this path but were drawn into public controversies; the former by the nullification crisis of the 1830s and the latter to pursue claims against the government. Largely because of the rise of political parties, by the time John Quincy Adams lost his reelection bid, a more politically active postpresidency had been established which allowed him to serve with distinction in the House of Representatives for seventeen years.

Although many early presidents faced financial difficulties after leaving office, starting with Benjamin Harrison they were able to utilize their status to earn large sums of money. While establishing a lucrative law practice that included representing Venezuela in a border dispute, he was also paid twenty-five thousand dollars for six lectures and five thousand dollars each for five magazine articles. Kaufman notes the potential for conflicts of interest in such arrangements, but he never sets out standards for judging what would be acceptable.

According to Kaufman, it was Herbert Hoover who established a new norm of continued public service in place of the republican ideal of retiring to private life. Later in the twentieth century, Congress provided financial and personal security for former presidents through pensions and, after John Kennedy's assassination, Secret Service protection for them and their immediate families. Although Kaufman argues that Jimmy Carter "redefined the role and expectations of former presidents" by using his prestige not as an American but as a citizen of the world dedicated to human welfare, of his successors,

only Bill Clinton has followed a similar path (p. 446). Ronald Reagan and both Presidents Bush, despite some philanthropic activities, concentrated on private and financially rewarding activities. Comparing the activist role chosen by Clinton with the more limited one of his predecessor, the book ends with the overstated claim that the latter's pursuit of a modest humanitarian agenda "is testimony to the evolution of the post-presidency" over the past two centuries (p. 523).

Kaufman opts for a biographical approach, primarily because so many of his subjects led eventful postpresidential lives. His mini-biographies include summaries of prepresidential backgrounds and the main controversies of each administration. As a result, the book is more descriptive than analytical. Many little-known historical facts prove interesting while others, such as the specific acreages of Washington's land acquisitions or the one hundred sixty species of trees, one hundred seventy varieties of fruits, and three hundred thirty types of vegetables at Jefferson's Monticello are little more than trivia. The best parts of the biographies are the analyses of postpresidential writing, such as the Jefferson–Adams correspondence or Madison's arguments against nullification.

Because few will want to read this book from cover to cover, it is most useful as a reference work. The limited number of cases coupled with the uniqueness of each as times change make generalizations difficult. Kaufman makes little attempt to provide such analysis, ending without a concluding chapter detailing specifics of the current role of the emeritus president or recommendations about what it should be. Gerald Ford's 1990 statement that, "You will be hard put to find a common pattern. What we do as former presidents is very much a matter of personal choice" remains hard to argue with (p. 447).

BRUCE E. ALTSCHULER is professor of political science at State University of New York, Oswego, New York, and the author or coauthor of five books, most recently *Acting Presidents: 100 Years of Plays about the Presidency* (2010).