

Chicago Daily Tribune

THE WORLD'S GREATEST NEWSPAPER

FOUNDED JUNE 19, 1847

ON THE UNIMPORTANCE OF PAGEANTRY

Andrew Berding, former assistant secretary of state for public affairs, has written a book, "Foreign Affairs and You," just published by Doubleday. Mr. Berding thinks that President Eisenhower blundered calamitously when he took responsibility for the U-2 flights over Russia but that President Kennedy wisely assumed blame for the Cuban fiasco.

The difference, we are told, is that Eisenhower gave Khrushchev a plausible excuse for canceling his invitation to the President to visit Moscow. Otherwise the visit, in all probability, would have been a huge success, the Russian people would have turned out in vast numbers to demonstrate their affection for America and to hear the President plead for peace. Mr. Eisenhower would have gone on to Japan as a messenger of peace to mankind, and even the Paris conference might have been a success.

In Mr. Berding's judgment, no such train of regrettable consequences followed Mr. Kennedy's essay in realpolitik altho Russian propagandists and Latin-American politicians continue to harp on the Bay of Pigs.

It seems to us that a much more valid distinction can be drawn between the U-2 incident and the Cuban incident. When Mr. Eisenhower said he knew all the time that the U-2 was going to fly over Russia, he was admitting responsibility for something that didn't do a single Russian a scintilla of harm. The U-2 flights didn't kill or maim anyone or deprive anyone of his freedom or his rights. Even the Russians have never claimed that the

photographs we took did their country, its government, or its people, any specific injury.

As much cannot be said of Mr. Kennedy's foray in Cuba. A good many men were killed, a good many others were permanently maimed, and still more have been imprisoned under severe sentences. Nearly all the victims were our friends. Our failure enhanced Castro's reputation thruout Latin America and lowered President Kennedy's. We cannot prove that the greatly increased appropriations for Latin America aid reflect the administration's effort to cleanse our blackened reputation but that seems plausible and it is hardly necessary to add that American taxpayers are footing the bill.

For our part we do not believe that ticker tape parades, 21-gun salutes, and all the rest of the pageantry and press-agentry of summit conferences and good will tours are of much consequence. We believe that, with or without these shows, tensions would exist where tensions now exist and to about the same degree. We believe, also, that in the long run deeds which do real harm to our friends will count more heavily against us than deeds which do harm to nobody.