Preface

This work grew out of a strong conviction that ideas matter. It examines the shared meanings that members of U.S. society have imposed on the world. It also explores how those shared meanings helped to shape three important U.S. statesmen and their policy approaches to the Cold War. As such, it is a work of interpretation, seeking to examine individual worldviews and policymaking behavior in light of the shared meanings that have helped to define for Americans their society and its role in the world. In addition to closely examining three important myths and three important representative characters, the book also suggests a process by which those symbolic structures helped to influence U.S. Cold War-era foreign policy by shaping key policymakers.

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