

Mohammed E. Ahrari, ed. *Ethnic Groups and U.S. Foreign Policy*. Contributions in Political Science, Number 186. (New York: Greenwood Press, 1987) xxi, 178 pp., \$35.00.

In recent years, the efforts of various ethnic populations to influence American policy on behalf of foreign nations or groups have become an increasingly visible element in American political life. This development is the subject of Ahrari's book.

Ahrari has assembled articles by political scientists dealing with the efforts of seven "hyphenated American" groups—Jews, Arabs, blacks, Cubans, Mexicans, Poles, and Irish—to shape American politics on behalf of external allies.

Following a short introduction, the first three chapters deal with attempts of two conflicting groups, Jewish and Arab Americans, to affect U.S. policy. In this timely, albeit somewhat repetitious discussion, the three authors set out the basic line of analysis that is followed throughout the book. They argue that U.S. foreign policy is the province of the executive branch, and as such, is little influenced by the actions of ethnic interest groups. Insofar as ethnic groups have been able to achieve success in aiding their overseas allies, it has been because the interests of these allies are compatible with the larger goals of American policy. For example, groups who push for actions that mirror prevailing American outlooks—Jews who seek to help democratic Israel against its Arab neighbors and Poles and Cubans who take a hard line against their communist homelands—have achieved more success than have Irish Americans who demand the U.S. punish its closest ally, Great Britain.

A second of the book's conclusions suggests that unified ethnic groups lobbying on behalf of single countries are likely to be more successful than segmented populations trying to help diverse entities. For instance, groups such as Poles and Jews who speak with a single voice have more influence than do Cubans whose population is marked by internal conflict. Similarly, groups that seek to shape policy towards a single nation are likely to achieve more than blacks and Arab Americans who hope to address American concerns vis-a-vis entire regions such as the Arab nations or the African continent.

This is a valuable and detailed work. However, it is marked by certain flaws. With a few exceptions, I found the chapters lacking in empirical data about the way members of ethnic groups actually feel about foreign policy issues. This lack of first-hand data makes the book's conclusions largely speculative.

Second, the book could go farther in isolating the influence ethnic groups themselves have upon American foreign policy. For example, if, as several of the authors argue, most non-Jewish American officials support Israel regardless of the efforts of Jews, then it is difficult to claim that the pro-Israel lobby has accomplished a great deal in shaping policy.

Finally, while repeatedly asserting that the structure of the American political system minimizes the influence of interest groups, ethnic or otherwise, on foreign policy, the book still has much to say on how ethnic groups do shape policy. I would like to see this inconsistency resolved with more clarity.

Given the many useful contributions of this book, these criticisms can be regarded as mandates for future research. As it stands, this is a valuable text, one that helps us connect the experience and behavior of American ethnic groups to international issues.

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Gary Clayton Anderson. *Little Crow: Spokesman for the Sioux*. (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1986) 259 pp., \$19.95; \$10.95 paper.

As Gary Anderson notes in the introduction to his recent history of the life of the Dakota Sioux leader Little Crow, writing Native American biography is a difficult undertaking. Because of the scarcity of direct source material about major portions of the life and thought of their subjects, historians have generally attempted full-scale biographies of only a few such widely-known men as Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull. Yet, the value of individual biography in humanizing history, dispelling mass cultural stereotypes, and elucidating interethnic relations is so great that Anderson's solid, well-researched, and readable life of Little Crow is indeed welcome.

Little Crow is a fascinating and controversial figure. Generally remembered as the "chief" who led the bloody Dakota War of 1862, he was active during a period when rapid advancement of white settlement in their Minnesota homeland left the members of his Mdewakanton tribe with few good options for survival. Realizing the inevitability of the loss of the majority of the tribe's land, he used his influence and political talents to negotiate government treaties exchanging it for a small reservation and funds sufficient to feed the people. His willingness to work with whites to accomplish these goals cost him the support of many fellow tribesmen, while his refusal to convert to Christianity and take up farming earned him the disfavor of missionaries and government agents assigned to the new reservation.

Tragically, Little Crow's efforts at accommodation came to nothing when the government failed to provide the promised funds and the reservation's white traders refused to extend credit to the starving Mdewakantons. This provoked a situation of tension with surrounding