

Göran Rystad

Ethnicity and American Foreign Policy

In a recent issue of the journal *Foreign Policy* there are no less than three articles exploring the foreign policy agenda of ethnic groups in the United States. In the introduction to the section, which has the title “New Ethnic Voices”, the editors note, that throughout American history and especially during the post-World War II era various ethnic groups in the United States have made efforts to influence U.S. foreign policy across the board as well as toward their own countries or regions of origin. Some have been so successful that they are assiduously courted by office seekers. That is true for example of interest groups representing East European, Greek, Irish and Jewish descent. Some of course argue, that no ethnic group has been more successful than the White Anglo-Saxon Protestants when it comes to impose its preferences on American Foreign Policy.¹

The new ethnic voices dealt with in the three articles in this issue of *Foreign Policy* are the Black Americans, the Arab Americans and the Hispanic Americans. Even if the authors by and large concede that the activities of these groups in the foreign policy process so far are limited and the impact on the formulation of American foreign policy is almost marginal compared to other established ethnic interest groups, the articles are nevertheless an indication of the increased awareness of the ethnic factor in American politics.

The term “ethnicity” as commonly defined and used is imprecise. According to Nathan Glazer and Daniel P. Moynihan, it did not appear in Webster’s *New International Dictionary* until 1961, and it originated in 1953 with David Riesman.² The word is used in various ways, and ethnic groups are defined differently. Michael Novak has called ethnicity “a baffling reality – morally ambivalent, paradoxical in experience, elusive in concept.”³

The U.S. Census Bureau uses a rather narrow definition of ethnic Americans: those either foreign born or who have at least one foreign born parent. Among ethnic groups Jews are sometimes excluded, sometimes also Blacks or Japanese. Thus for example Irving Louis Horowitz discusses the relationships between “Blacks, Jews, and ethnics.”⁴ It is also of interest to note, that when during the 1956 campaign the Republican National Committee split its Nationalities Division into separate organizational units, these became the Nationalities, the

Ethnic, and the Minority section, respectively. The Nationalities section concerned itself with groups such as Armenian, Hungarian, Lithuanian, Polish- and Czech-Americans, the Minority section with Blacks, and the Ethnic section with Jews.⁵ Sometimes Jews and Blacks are treated as ethnic groups alongside Hispanics, Italian-American, and others.

To Harold Isaacs ethnicity means basic group identity, acquired by a person at birth. Daniel Bell and Daniel Moynihan, on the other hand, emphasize ethnicity as a strategic choice, not intrinsic but consciously chosen by an individual.⁶ It is a chosen group membership, a choice that is subject to change under some circumstances. This is the "New Ethnicity," a social category, significant in the same manner as social class.⁷ Also Novak emphasizes "ethnic belonging" as a conscious choice that may change over time and is subject to multiple influences and multiple transformations.⁸

Irwing Louis Horowitz has used the term in a similar way. To him ethnicity is exclusively a working class phenomenon, but its precise meaning is illusive. "Any attempt to define ethnicity raises at least three sociological questions," he maintains, "who is an ethnic; how can ethnicity be distinguished from other social variables and character traits; and what can ethnicity predict – what are its behavioral consequences?" Horowitz also observes, that "the current literature presents highly selective idiosyncratic definitions of ethnicity." Jews and Japanese are sometimes excluded from the ethnic category simply with a reference to their middle class or upper middle class position and on the basis of their upward mobility through education. However, Horowitz agrees with the notion of ethnicity as a predominantly working class phenomenon. It is also a reflexion of what is "a crosscutting culture," which reduces the sense of common identity among the members of the working class. Ethnicity "refers to a cluster of cultural factors that define the sociogram of the person beyond or apart from the racial or class connections of that person."⁹

In 1972 Michael Novak wrote in his acclaimed study the *Rise of the Unmeltable Ethnics*, that the millions of the derided white ethnics were the swing votes of the future. He implied that behind the New Ethnicity was the deep resentment of white workingclass Americans, who felt that their legitimate aspirations as well as their sense of value and self-respect had suffered during the years of society's preoccupation with minorities.¹⁰

It is common to explain the rise of the New Ethnicity as a symptom of disaffection with the nationstate, and thus, with the traditionally weak class identification in the United States, as a problem of selfdefinition.

To understand the nature of ethnic groups it is important to realize that membership in such a group is a matter of social definition, "an interplay of the self-definition of members and the definition of other groups."¹¹

The difference between the new ethnicity and the old minority structure is that the old minority problem was closely connected with drives toward integration in the American mainstream. Now there has been an erosion of that mainstream, and the ethnic problem – according to this interpretation – is not an

attendant drive toward integration but toward self-determination apart from the American mainstream.

Also, the notion of majority status for white, protestant America has been seriously questioned with the existence of maybe 25 million first- and second generation Italians, 13 million Irish-Americans, 23 million blacks, 19 million or more Spanish-speaking Americans and 6 million Jews. The proliferating number of new states in the world – and thus the trend toward diversified power bases – also has been interpreted as having domestic repercussions on minority standing in the United States, reinforcing minorities' claim of rights to their own customs, habits, language.¹²

Talcott Parsons has suggested that the new ethnicity differs from older forms of ethnic awareness in as much as it is a kind of “symbol”, not “a lived-in reality”.¹³ It has also been argued, that ethnicity in the United States functions as “a conservative manifestation against the break-up of community.”¹⁴ And to John Higham the reassertion of ethnic identities in recent years signifies a general distrust of elites.¹⁵ In these cases “ethnic groups” and “ethnicity” is narrowly conceived, part of a sociological and social-psychological approach to the phenomenon labelled the New Ethnicity.

Ethnicity is apparently a most elusive concept, and adding to the complexity is the obvious fact that in the present situation with the “new world ethnic diversity,” ethnic groups in the United States are fundamentally different from ethnic groups such as Quebecois, Scotsmen, Flemings, Basque, and others. In a discussion of “federalism and ethnicity” Nathan Glazer points out some of the basic dissimilarities: Ethnic groups in the United States have no “homeland” within the borders of the United States, nor homelands outside the country to which they are closely attached to the point of “irridentism,” and they are fairly rapidly assimilated into the national culture, including the political culture.¹⁶ Glazer concludes that to characterize ethnic groups in the United States becomes “a permanent dilemma of and challenge to social scientists.” He points to criteria which he himself finds important: Ethnic groups are maintained by ideology but also by “distinctive characteristics of social structure (such as occupation), . . . supported by distinctive religions or variants of religion, . . . /have/ developed particular political interests, sometimes around the rallying cries of the nation from which they stemmed . . .” However, the bottom line for Glazer is that ethnicity in the United States has become “a symbolic matter.”

Glazer's reasoning concerns only ethnic groups of European and latterly Asian origin and he emphasizes that it does not apply to the “native American Indians, blacks, Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans who possess much more in the way of national characteristics.”¹⁷ And, as noted, in many other studies of ethnicity in the United States, the focus is predominantly on white working-class Americans, where Blacks and sometimes also Jews and Japanese are excluded from the ethnic category. For a discussion of group influences in the American foreign policy process these narrow definitions are obviously not useful. There is in this context no reason to make a distinction between “minority” groups such

as Blacks, Jews, Hispanics etc., that would not be defined as “national” minorities, and Japanese or “ethnics” such as American Irish, Italian-Americans, Slavic-Americans etc.

I use the term “ethnic” and “ethnicity” in a general sense: An ethnic group is made up of individuals characterized by significant, common, cultural traits, sharing a notion of collective group-interest and consciously identifying with the group and its symbols. This definition agrees also with Milton Gordon’s simple and not unsatisfactory definition of ethnicity as “a sense of peoplehood.”¹⁸ There is also a similarity to a definition suggested by Andrew M. Greeley and William C. McCready: “An ethnic group is a large collectivity, based on presumed common origin, which is, at least on occasions, part of a self-definition of a person, and which also acts as a bearer of cultural traits.”¹⁹

Many of the studies published during recent years dealing with ethnic groups in the United States and the New Ethnicity have a sociological, social-psychological or socio-economic approach and are not much concerned with the politics of ethnicity.²⁰ But also authors focussing on ethnicity in its political context disregard the foreign policy dimension.

It is domestic politics – local, state or national – not foreign policy that is the concern of these studies.²¹

The literature on ethnicity and foreign policy is thus surprisingly meagre. There is in recent years nothing comparable to Louis L. Gerson’s comprehensive study published in 1964, *The Hyphenate in Recent American Politics and Diplomacy*.²² No systematic treatment of the subject has emerged during the two decades since then. That does not, of course, mean that nothing has been written on the subject. However, it is mostly brief articles, dealing with the general topic, such as Charles McC Mathias, Jr., “Ethnic Groups and Foreign Policy”²³ or Mona Harrington’s article “Loyalties – Dual and Divided,” in *The politics of Ethnicity* (1982).²⁴ Of considerable interest are also for example the contributions by Abdul Aziz Said, Louis Gerson, Stephen Hallmark and Irving Louis Horowitz to a volume edited by Said²⁵ and, not least, L. H. Fuchs’s chapter “Minority Groups and Foreign Policy” in a volume, which he edited and published in 1967.²⁶ Interesting case studies are for example Marvin Feuerwerker, *Congress and Israel*, and Paula Stern, *Water’s Edge*, and special incidents have also been treated in a number of articles.²⁶ The ethnic factor is also discussed along with other determinants in the treatment of American foreign policy issues, in textbooks and monographs.

In *Ethnic Leadership in America* (1978), John Higham mentioned the relations between the ethnic group and the homeland first among the four basic concerns he identifies for American ethnic groups.²⁸ The chapters on the Jews, the Japanese and the Germans by Nathan Glazer, Roger Daniels and Frederich Luebke respectively, also focus briefly on one aspect of this problem, namely the effect on the ethnic group, its status and internal coherence, of the development of the relations between the homeland and the United States. However, not much is said about conscious efforts to influence American foreign policy,

even if especially Glazer in his chapter has a discussion of the problems involved in the dual loyalties.²⁹

In 1967 Lawrence H. Fuchs rightly made the point that for many years the interrelationship of ethnicity and politics had been neglected. He suggested that the reasons were partly that most political scientists were Anglo-Saxon Protestants who were not so sensitive to the ethnic factor as scholars from more recent immigrant stock, and partly because there were also a reluctance to make any identification between ethnicity and politics, since “many Americans thought it un-American to put group loyalties – particularly these which were associated with the old country – between the individual and a nation founded on an ideology of individualism as opposed to ties of religion, ethnicity or race.”

However, Fuchs goes on to contend, that in recent years – that is during the mid-60s – historians, political scientists and sociologists had vied with each other in attempting to probe the intricacies of ethnicity and politics. The long neglected field was now wide open, and Fuchs noted that it was by many judged to be of critical importance not only in understanding the past but in helping to guide the future.

Of the twelve contributions included in Fuchs anthology only his own dealt with minority groups and foreign policy.³⁰ Even so, this is more than was devoted to the topic in most of the books published in the 1960s and 1970s dealing with ethnic groups, even those which explicitly were concerned with ethnicity in a political context.

When it comes to explaining the meaning and importance of ethnicity Fuchs maintains, that “ethnicity lies closer to the essence of men’s lives: their fears, hates, loves and other passions”. The power of cultural forces should not be underestimated, and he emphasizes strongly a point that is insufficiently taken into account by most recent scholarship on ethnic groups, namely, the interrelationship of its foreign policy dimension, the dual loyalties, the identification emotionally with the country or region of origin, and the self-image and self-definition of the group.

In his short article Fuchs endeavors to extract what in his opinion is the most important effects of ethnic pressures on American foreign policy, or rather, of the mutual impact of foreign policy and minority group claims. His conclusion is, that the major overall result has been to thwart Anglo-American friendship, which he ascribes to the efforts by the anti-English sentiments prevailing among two major ethnic groups, the Irish and the Germans. Other consequences have been the mitigation of economic class conflict, the elevation of congressional participation in foreign affairs and the lessening of party discipline.

The short article by Fuchs is interesting and important as he posed fundamental questions and also made efforts to suggest tentative answers to them. However, Fuchs had done no research of his own, and the empirical material is entirely from Gerson’s study of the hyphenates in politics and diplomacy. The claim of Fuchs and some other scholars that the Irish and the Germans have decisively influenced American foreign policy is doubtful.³¹ Both groups were very

active in the anti-imperialist movement at the turn of the century and made strenuous efforts to prevent the annexation of the Philippine Islands after the Spanish-American war – to no avail.³² Woodrow Wilson was frustrated by what he termed “the miserable mischiefmaking” of the Irish during the Paris Peace Conference, and notwithstanding their importance for the Democratic Party, the Irish could not move Wilson to demand that the British grant immediate independence to Ireland. Franklin Roosevelt was equally fed up with “the wild Irish” and their isolationism in 1940.³³

The tolerance of dual loyalties has been severely limited, as the German-Americans experienced during World War I and the Japanese-Americans during World War II. The latter case was of course the most repressive anti-ethnic reaction in the history of the United States. In 1942 120.000 Japanese, 64 per cent of whom were U.S. citizens, were placed in concentration camps for the duration of the war. But also the anti-ethnic reaction against the German-Americans during World War I was disastrous. Together with the reaction following the *Machtübernahme* in Germany in 1933 it virtually wiped out organized German ethnic presence in the United States.

The Irish-Americans have a unique position among minority groups as the first large non-protestant one to arrive. They were English-speaking but experienced intense animosity and discrimination from native Americans. This notwithstanding, or, maybe, partly for this reason, they became unusually active and successful in politics at the city and state level. With the election of John F. Kennedy to the presidency, it was a common belief that the Irish had lost their ethnic distinctiveness. However, among others William V. Shannon has argued that this is erroneous, that, in fact, the tragedies of Ireland’s past still shape “the American Irish community’s sense of identity.” But it is not, in his opinion, any emotional involvement in the struggle in Northern Ireland that still makes the Irish a definable group, but the “intangibles of national character and moral outlook.”³⁴ The fact is, that according to a common estimate maybe 85 % of modern weapons reaching the terrorists in Northern Ireland are of American origin, and Irish organizations in the United States such as Nordaid (The Irish Northern Aid Committee) have been raising millions of dollars in the United States for the I.R.A. However, only a very small fraction of the American Irish contribute or concern themselves in other ways with the struggle in Ulster. And according to William Shannon, those concerned belong almost exclusively to the first generation immigrants who arrived during the first two decades after World War II. With the immigration reform law of 1965 the immigration from Ireland has to a large extent dried up, which contributes to the diminished involvement in the Ulster problem among American Irish.

However, the Irish vote is important, and politicians still appeal to them in traditional ways. Thus, in 1979 a joint appeal by the “Four Horsemen”, Senators Kennedy and Moynihan, Speaker O’Neill and New York Governor Carey, received a lot of attention being less than enthusiastically received by London. A certain success could be registered by the Irish through the organization of the

Ad Hoc Committee for Irish Affairs, which during the 96th Congress, 1978–80, counted more than 130 members of Congress.³⁵

If Fuchs in 1967 found that the foreign policy dimension of ethnic politics had been neglected, this has not changed dramatically. As late as in 1981 Irving Louis Horowitz remarked, that considering the amount of work that has been done concerning ethnicity in recent years, “one must wonder why so little has been done thus far on the impact of ethnic and national minority groups in the formation of U.S. foreign policy.”³⁶

It goes without saying that the issue of the influence of ethnic groups on American foreign policy is not unproblematic. Nobody questions the right of American citizens to seek redress of grievances through lobbying. Lobbying is considered to be the exercise of the right of petition, a principle mentioned in the Resolutions of the Stamp Act passed by Congress in 1765, reaffirmed by the First Continental Congress and in the Declaration of Independence and finally codified in the First Amendment to the Constitution.³⁷ However, there are obviously problems. “The growing awareness of individuals and groups of their personal fulfillment and cultural identity compromises the integrity of the concept of national interest,” Abdul Aziz Said has maintained, thereby referring to the problem of dual loyalties inherent in the complex interrelationship of ethnicity and foreign policy.³⁸ Charles Mathias tried to define the problem by making a distinction between ethnicity, which enriches American life and culture, and organized ethnic interest groups, which sometimes press causes that derogate from national interest.³⁹

Many of the immigrants who came to the United States around the turn of the century, from 1880 to 1914, were seeking relief from the depressed state of agriculture in the countries in Eastern and Southern Europe. As emphasized by Mona Harrington and others, many came as sojourners with no intention to stay on permanently. During the first quarter of the 20th century about 20 per cent of the Lithuanians, 40 per cent of the Poles, 66 per cent of the Hungarians and Romanians and no less than 86 per cent of the Turks returned to their homelands.⁴⁰

Those who stayed on often retained – or, as some studies indicate, developed – emotional bonds with their homelands. As emphasized for example by Thomas N. Brown, the sense of connection to the homeland often was a result of the need of the group in the United States.⁴¹ The achievements of the homeland bolstered the self-image of the immigrants, was seen as improving their status in the American society. Thus German-American organizations grew rapidly after 1870, Mussolini's achievements evoked enthusiastic response among Italian-Americans, and the establishment of the state of Israel met with tremendous enthusiasm and support among Jews in the United States even from non-Zionist groups.⁴²

In this bond between ethnic groups in the United States and their homeland of origin lies a potential conflict of loyalties, complicated by the traditional American exceptionalism. As formulated by Mona Harrington: “In the excep-

tionalist tradition, loyalty to the nation means loyalty to the principle of liberty, and this kind of liberty is a bond between people and nation, that, in the ideal, places no barriers between people of different countries.”⁴³ However, a tension is unavoidable between such a principle of loyalty to the ideal of liberty and the need of the United States to protect itself against detrimental effects of loyalties to other countries.

Whereas World War I meant disaster for the German-Americans, Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, Ukrainians, Lithuanians, Croats, Albanians and Armenians organized campaigns, encouraged by president Wilson’s proclamation of the principle of self-determination. Some were successful, others not.

And if we take a look at the situation after World War II the bottom line is that the strenuous efforts of ethnic groups to accomplish American guarantees for the independence of their homelands in Eastern Europe only has resulted in gestures of rhetoric. Even after the uprising in Hungary in 1956 and the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia in 1968, the only support that materialized beside routine protests was admitting refugees from these countries into the United States.

For obvious reasons, the best sphere for ethnic pressure is Congress, and the various Slavic-American groups and organizations have developed and fostered close relations with members of Congress. They have also often met with success in their requests, for example for a proclamation for the observance of an ethnic week. Senators and Congressmen have willingly inserted this kind of material in the Congressional Record, and numerous joint resolutions have been passed. On July 17, 1959, Congress unanimously passed joint resolution 111. The resolution asked the President to proclaim the third week in July 1959 as Captive Nations Week. It was all more or less automatically done. Hardly any discussion preceded the resolution, and it was not sent to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for approval.⁴⁴

The resolution had been promoted by the Assembly of Captive European Nations, formed in 1954, and the resolution was by the members of Congress seen as a gesture of routine anti-communist nature, also mollyfying criticism from ethnic groups whose homeland were East of the Iron Curtain. The theme of liberation was by now rhetoric, not to be taken seriously. The emptiness of many gestures toward ethnic groups was this time demonstrated with painful clarity. The resolution included a long list of ”subjugated nations”, not only Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria etc, but also Ukraina, Lithuania, Georgia, Cossackia etc, that is integral units of the Soviet Union. Eisenhower issued the proclamation requested, deleting the list of subjugated nations and also omitting any promise to take action to secure the liberation of the captive nations. What caused deep embarrassment was, however, that at the time when the Captive Nations Week was observed, Vice-President Nixon was on visit to the Soviet Union. Premier Khrushchev used the resolution to taunt Nixon, accusing the American government of blatant interference in the internal affairs of the Soviet Union. Nixon’s reply was in fact an apology for the action of Congress. Said

Nixon: "Actions of this type cannot, as far as their timing is concerned, be controlled even by the President, because when Congress moves, that is its prerogative. Neither the Present nor I would have deliberately chosen to have a resolution of this type passed just before we were to visit the U.S.S.R."⁴⁵ The incidence demonstrated the vacuity and emptiness of the gestures made in response to pressure from ethnic groups. Slavic-American groups have been successful during the 1960s in organizing boycotts of some East European products, of achieving the cancellation of manufacturing contracts etc. But their main goal, to initiate actions that would change the situation for the "captive" countries were totally fruitless.

The Captive Nations Week is still celebrated (in September). Every year Congress approves a resolution to this effect. It is a symbolic gesture and it gives members of Congress an opportunity to speak on the subject, more or less eloquently. In 1975 conservative Republican Congressman Daniel Flood of Pennsylvania listed no less than thirty unfortunate countries, among them a great number of Soviet republics.⁴⁶

From the same year, 1975, we have another example of how ethnic pressure unthinkingly applied can threaten the U.S. government with serious embarrassment. Despite intensive efforts by Henry Kissinger and President Ford Congress had voted an arms embargo on Turkey to be effective from February 5, 1975. During January Kissinger was working hard trying to appease the angry Turks and if possible save the American bases in Turkey. Exactly at this time, nine days before the arms embargo were to go into effect, Henry Helstoski, Democratic Congressman from New Jersey, together with House Majority Leader Tip O'Neill choose to introduce a joint resolution commemorating the massacre of the Armenians by the Turks sixty years before. The resolution would have made April 25, 1975 a "National Day of Remembrance of Man's Inhumanity to Man". The Massacre of the Armenians by the Turks in 1915 was specifically mentioned.

State Department was deeply worried. In addition to the ban on arms to its NATO ally, the United States would thus condemn the Turks for something that happened 60 years ago. When the House resolution reached the floor on April 8 it had 53 sponsors. Most Armenians lived in California, and among those speaking in support of the resolution were Congressmen John Krebs and Roussetot. In his speech the latter compared the Turks to Hitler and the Nazis. The resolution, slightly watered down, passed, 332 to 55.

In the Senate the conservative Republican Senator Hruska from Nebraska carried the ball. Kissinger worked with the two California Senators Tunney and Cranston to avoid the disaster to their delicate negotiations with Ankara, that the passing of the resolution would mean. Especially Tunney tried diligently to find a compromise, and after five failed attempts he managed to draft a text that was acceptable to Hruska as well as to Kissinger. Tunney wanted a simple resolution, and that would have passed without any difficulty. However, Senator Hruska insisted on a vote, just to show who were the friends of the Armenians.

The end result was that nothing happened – with the exception of thousands of telegrams to Senator Tunney from angry Armenians.⁴⁷

There is obviously a limit to the influence of ethnic groups on U.S. Foreign Policy. Where this limit goes is, however, not clear. And it is still considered necessary at election times for politicians, seeking votes and power among strategically concentrated immigrant groups to pay attention to ethnic homeland issues. Thus candidates and political organizations play to and encourage the ethnic consciousness.

Is the influence of ethnic groups on U.S. foreign policy important? The answers to this vital question vary widely. However, nobody denies the obvious and considerable success of the Jewish lobby, even if even that is being downplayed in some studies. The importance of the Greek-Americans in this context is, on the other hand, a matter of contention. It is worth while to review, briefly, the struggle over the arms embargo on Turkey in 1974 in order to illuminate the difficulties and complexities involved in any attempt at evaluating the impact of an ethnic group on the making of American foreign policy.

On July 15, 1974, a coup encouraged by the junta took place in Nicosia. President Makarios escaped, and a new government was formed under the leadership of a former EOKA terrorist, Nikos Giorgides Sampson. On July 20 the Turks invaded Cyprus, citing the 1960 agreement guaranteeing the independence of the island. On July 26 talks began at Geneva. They collapsed on August 14, when Turkey began a second offensive on Cyprus, eventually occupying almost 40% of the island, the area they had demanded for the Turkish population during the negotiations. 180,000–200,000 Greek-cypriots fled before the advancing Turkish army.⁴⁸

In Athens the junta had resigned in July and Caramanlis was returned to power. In Nicosia Sampson was replaced by a moderate politician.

The Cyprus crisis erupted at a time when the United States was preoccupied with the Watergate scandal and the demise of the Nixon Presidency. President Nixon resigned and Gerald Ford became President. It is hardly surprising that a certain paralysis and inactivity affected American foreign policy during these traumatic events.

August 14, John Brademas, U.S. Representative from Indiana, introduced a resolution in the House calling for suspension of “. . . all military, economic, or other assistance, all sales of defense articles and services, all sales of agricultural commodities,” to the Turkish government until “the President reports to Congress that the government of Turkey has withdrawn all of its armed forces from Cyprus”.⁴⁹ At a news conference five days later Henry Kissinger, the Secretary of State, stated the position of the American government. To threaten to cut off aid would be both ineffective and counterproductive, the Secretary concluded.⁵⁰

After hearings before the Foreign Affairs Committee, Subcommittee on Europe on August 19–20, the resolution was reported out and offered by Benjamin Rosenthal, Chairman of the Committee, as an amendment to House Joint

Resolution 1131, making continuing appropriations, fiscal year 1975.⁵¹ It passed comfortably by a vote of 307 to 90. Already on September 19 the Senate had passed by a vote of 64 to 37 an amendment to the export-import authorization bill, calling for suspension of all military aid to countries using it for purposes other than those agreed upon.

H.J.R. 1131 was passed and sent to the President for his signature on October 11. It was immediately vetoed by President Ford, and the House failed in an effort to override the veto.⁵²

A substitute, H.J.R. 1163, was passed by the House by a vote of 287 to 30 and by the Senate 54 to 23. It was vetoed by President Ford on October 17. The necessity to pass a continuing appropriations resolution made the President reluctantly sign a substitute, H.J.R. 1167. It did not differ very much from H.J.R. 1163, requiring a cut-off of aid as of December 10.⁵³ Later that month Congress passed legislation postponing the imposition of the embargo until February 5.

Ankara announced that the decision would force Turkey to review its ties with NATO and the Turkish government closed down all NATO airbases in Turkey but one, and halted all activities on American military installations in the country. Not until September 26, 1978 was the embargo finally lifted.

An important role in the fight to pass the arms embargo resolution was played by a group of congressmen of Greek descent, led by John Brademas. One was Gus Yatron, a moderate Democrat from Pennsylvania. Another Peter Kyros of Maine, also Democrat. Republican. L.A. (Skip) Bafalis, a rather conservative Republican from Florida also belonged to the group as did Paul Sarbanes, a Democrat from Baltimore, pro-labor, influential member of the House Judiciary Committee and one of the stars of the Committee's impeachment hearings during the summer.⁵⁴ And John Brademas himself was a Democrat from Indiana, future Majority Whip. Brademas and Sarbanes worked closely with Benjamin Rosenthal, Representative from New York's 8th district with a heavily Jewish population. Rosenthal was a liberal Democrat, as most of his constituents, and had taken an outspoken anti-war position during the Vietnam war. As Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee's Committee on Europe and the Middle East Rosenthal played an important role during the arms embargo fight.

Together with Brademas and Sarbanes Rosenthal joined Senator Thomas Eagleton in an informal group, "the Gang of Four", to further the embargo legislation.⁵⁵ Eagleton, a liberal Democrat from Missouri, was one of the leading anti-administration activists during the early 1970s, playing a major role in the resurgence of Congress and the efforts to dismantle the "Imperial Presidency." Of other Senators who actively worked for the embargo legislation Edward Kennedy and Claiborn Pell had sizable Greek-American constituencies.⁵⁶ They were also both liberal Democrats.

Generally speaking, prominent in the fight for the arms embargo were congressmen of Greek descent, members of Congress with a large Greek-American

constituencies, liberal Democrats from industrial districts or states – often with considerable ethnic populations – and activists in the struggle for the reassertion of Congress. Obviously these categories were to a large extent overlapping.

There was a partisan factor at play. However, the party differences were less than might be expected. A very substantial majority also of the Republicans voted for the arms embargo even after pressure from the administration and from the party leadership, and after the President's veto of an almost identical resolution.

How much did the ethnic factor mean in the arms embargo struggle? Executive branch actors have stated, that their resistance increased because they perceived the role of the Greek-Americans as an “unpalatable interconnection between domestic and foreign policies.” The “influence of an agitated group of politically active ethnic Americans was distorting congressional consideration of an important issue.”⁵⁷

It has been said that the importance of highly visible ethnic interest groups in foreign policy decisions can easily be exaggerated by outside observers.⁵⁸ However, even if the ultimate legislation achievement of the Turkish arms embargo reflected multiple motives, there is ample cause to emphasize the importance of the ethnic factor, defined not narrowly but in all its implications.

Greek-American organizations in the United States are numerous and they have a long tradition.⁵⁹ The largest one is the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA) with more than 400 local chapters. Important is also the United Hellenic American Congress (UHAC), and in this context especially the American Hellenic Institute (AHI), formed in August 1974 immediately after the second Turkish offensive on Cyprus. Its membership consisted mainly of influential Greek-American businessmen and civic leaders, and the purpose was to appeal to members of Congress for support for the arms embargo on Turkey. In spring 1975 AHIPAC, the American Hellenic Institute Public Affairs Committee, was formed, modelled after the most effective of all existing ethnic lobby organizations in the United States, AIPAC, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee. AHI became the main instrument for lobbying, while AHEPA was the most important organization for mobilizing grass root support.⁶⁰ On the 19th August, the same day Kissinger held his news conference, AHEPA held its 52th annual conference in Boston. Members of AHEPA were U.S. Representatives such as Louis Bafalis, John Brademas, Peter Kyros and Paul Sarbanes, and among them were the key note speakers of the convention. The debates focused on the Cyprus crisis, and fierce condemnation of U.S. policies was a recurring theme.⁶¹

After the convention the AHEPA and the AHI became very active in their efforts to mobilize support and organize lobbying. Especially AHI turned out from the very beginning to be very effective. As early as on August 30 Democratic Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield complained publicly of the torrent of letters and telegrams from Greek-American organizations urging an arms embargo on Turkey.⁶²

In absolute numbers the Greek-Americans are not so many, and the effectiveness of the pro-embargo lobbying cannot be explained in terms of direct voter influence on any great number of members of Congress. An exception, and an important one, was Congressman Ray J. Madden of Indiana, the powerful Chairman of the Rules Committee, who played an especially important role blocking efforts to repeal the arms embargo in spring 1975. In his district Madden had a considerable Greek-American constituency, and, more important, among them Father Evagorus Constantinides, born on Cyprus and active as coordinator of the efforts to persuade Congress to cut off aid to Turkey.⁶³

The success of the Greek-American lobby was due not least to the skill of their allies in Congress and their ability to form ethnic coalitions. For example Representative Lester Wolff of New York did not have many Greek-Americans in his district, whereas he had a substantial Armenian-American population. The Armenian-Americans were "prodded" to urge Wolff to take a hard line against Turkey on the embargo issue.⁶⁴

Far more important was the Greek-Jewish coalition led by Congressman Benjamin Rosenthal of New York, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee's Subcommittee on Europe, and Morris Amitay of the AIPAC. No doubt this alliance with the powerful Jewish lobby with its superior experience, resources and techniques, was a great asset to the Greek-American campaign.

A certain anti-Turkish bias existed in Congress already before the events of July and August 1974, stemming from the failed efforts to stop the growing of poppy in Turkey. The poppy was used to produce opium which was shipped the United States for illegal sales.⁶⁵ John Brademas exploited the argument to the hilt in his speech at the AHEPA convention in Boston in August.

Interviews conducted a few years after the arms embargo struggle reveal a broad spectrum of executive branch views on the effectiveness of the Greek-American lobby. Some characterized it as "dedicated", "organized", "intellectually able."⁶⁶ Not surprisingly, congressional sources tended to downplay the role of the lobby. However, it no doubt succeeded in activating members of congress, who did not generally take active positions on foreign policy issues, but who for other reasons were inclined to vote against the administration.

There is no consensus concerning the importance of the Greek-American lobby for the outcome of the struggle over the arms embargo on Turkey. John Lewis Gaddis, for example, has maintained without reservations that "a vociferous Greek-American lobby managed to impose an arms embargo on the Turks, over Kissinger's opposition."⁶⁷ In his dissertation John Peter Paul reaches a similar conclusion: "... the cut-off of military aid to Turkey was the result of sustained congressional lobbying by Greek-American constituents, organized by politically involved members of the community in concert with sympathetic congressional leaders, in face of unmitigated opposition of the administration."⁶⁸ Many agree, but for example Clifford Hackett considers the influence of the Greek-Americans "exaggerated," and the pressure brought on Congress "minimal."⁶⁹ Some observers have cited the fact that there was "relatively little corre-

lation between voting patterns on the arms embargo and the ethnic constituencies of the senators and representatives,” and Lloyd Ambrosius concludes, that other factors were far more important than ethnic politics.⁷⁰ Theodore A. Coulombis and Sallie M. Hicks contend that the Greek-American lobbying was a failure.⁷¹

I believe this evaluation is wrong. It goes without saying that the passing of the Turkish arms embargo legislation cannot be explained solely in terms of ethnic politics. Nor can, for example, the passing of the Jackson-Vanick amendment in 1975 be seen exclusively as the result of Jewish influence over American foreign policy.⁷² In the case of the Turkish arms embargo, groups moved by pro-Greek sentiment came together with groups and individuals whose motivating factor was primarily congressional assertiveness, or with liberals who disliked the American foreign policy in the Near East because it had, in their opinion, meant first excessively warm relations with the Greek military junta, and after that failure to oppose and condemn Turkey's armed intervention.⁷³ The goals could very well coincide while the motives differed.

However, the point is that it was the vigorous, uncessant, forceful pressure from the ethnic groups that set the other groups in motion, focused attention on the issue and gave it high priority. The arms embargo legislation of October, 1974, must be seen in the context of the ongoing struggle between the Executive and Congress. However, even if the ethnic factor did not determine the outcome, it was a necessary catalyst in the process that led to a resounding defeat for the administration.

Recently there has been studies indicating the increasing audability of new ethnic voices in the foreign policy field, Black Americans, Arab Americans and Hispanic Americans. Mathias speaks of “Jews and Greeks exercising wellproven clout, blacks bringing increasing influence to bear on American policy toward Africa, and Hispanics . . . looming as the next prospective major ethnic political force.”⁷⁴

And if we consult Nathan Glazer and Daniel Moynihan in their Introduction to *Ethnicity: Theory and Experience*, they not only field the hypothesis that “the ethnic group could become a focus of mobilization for the pursuit of group and individual interests,” that “ethnic conflicts have become one form in which interest conflicts between and within states are pursued,” but also state without reservations that foreign policy responds “probably first of all to the primal facts of ethnicity. In a multiethnic society there are often conflicting ethnic loyalties, and our history records sufficient instances of just that, . . . our future will record even more such conflicts as Koreans, Filipinos, Indians, Pakistanis, Singaporeans, and dozens more make their interests known. Foreign policy will be affected in diverse and profound ways.”⁷⁵ Similar views have been expressed by, among others, Abdul Aziz Said, who in his introduction to *Ethnicity and U.S. Foreign Policy* declares, that “Ethnicity will increasingly play a dominant role in U.S. political behavior.”⁷⁶

John Higham seems to be more doubtful. In his opinion a prevalent significant

tendency has been an erosion and disintegration of traditional national ethnic leadership, a consequence of modernization, which has “greatly weakened the group as locus of individuals’ associations and interests.” Instead, there has been a transition to a professional, bureaucratic type of leadership.⁷⁷ How this would effect the efficacy of ethnic groups in the political process is not quite clear. However, there seems also to be a tendency in recent research to downplay the role of minority groups in the foreign policy process. Typical is a statement by Louis Gerson, author of the only comprehensive study of the influence of hyphenates on the formulation of American foreign policy. In a contribution to Abdul Aziz Said’s volume *Ethnicity and U.S. Foreign Policy*, Gerson contends that “the ethnic influence in foreign policy is overrated.”⁷⁸ In the same volume, Irving Louis Horowitz, after surveying the field, arrived at the same conclusion.⁷⁹ And Stephen Garret,⁸⁰ Robert Trice,⁸¹ Herschelle Sullivan Challenor⁸² and Armando Rendón,⁸³ writing about the Slavic-Americans, the Arab Americans, the Black Americans and the Hispanics respectively, all point to weakness and constraints that make the impact of ethnic attempts to influence American foreign policy of rather marginal importance.

There is no consensus concerning the overall influence of ethnic groups on American foreign policy. The same is true if we look at individual cases. More research has to be done, and one approach is a closer look at those foreign policy decisions where ethnic group pressures evidently have been applied.

NOTER

1. *Foreign Pollicy*, 60, Fall 1985. Kenneth Longmeyer, "Black American Demands;" David J. Sadd and G. Neal Lendenmann, "Arab American Grievances;" Bill Richardson, "Hispanic American Concerns."
2. Nathan Glazer and Daniel P. Moynihan (eds), *Ethnicity: Theory and Experience*, Cambridge, Mass, 1975. "Introduction," p 1.
3. Michael Novak, "Pluralism in Humanistic Perspective," in William Peterson, Michael Novak and Philip Gleason (eds), *Concepts of Ethnicity*, Cambridge, 1982, p 29. Concepts of Ethnicity is a selection from the *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups* (1980).
4. Irving Louis Horowitz, "Ethnic Politics and U.S. Foreign Policy," in Abdul Aziz Said (ed), *Ethnicity and U.S. Foreign Policy*, New York 1981, p 225.
5. Louis L. Gerson, *The Hyphenate in Recent Politics and Diplomacy*, Lawrence, Kansas, 1964, p 35.
6. Harold R. Isaacs, "Basic Group Identity: The Idols of the Tribe," In Glazer/Moynihan (1975), p 29 ff; Daniel Bell, "Ethnicity and Social Change," *ibid.*, p 141 ff.
7. Cf Stephen Hallmark, "Ethnic Consciousness and American Foreign Policy," in Said (1981), p 203 f.
8. Novak, *Concepts of Ethnicity* (1982), p 42.
9. I.L. Horowitz, in Said (1981), p 220.
10. Michael Novak, *The Unmeltable Ethnics*, New York 1972. Cf also Robert Alter, "A Fever of Ethnicity," in David R. Colburn and George E. Pozzetta, *America and the New Ethnicity*, Port Washington, New York, 1979, p 185 ff.
11. Immanuel Wallerstein. "Ethnicity and National Integration." In *Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines*, 1.3, July 1960, p 131. Cf Donald L. Horowitz, "Ethnic Identity," in Glazer/Moynihan (1975), p 113.
12. I.L. Horowitz, in Said (1981), p 220 f.
13. Talcott Parsons, "Some Theoretical Considerations on the Nature and Trends of Change of Ethnicity," in Glazer/Moynihan (1975), p 53.
14. I.L. Horowitz, in Said (1981), p 231.
15. John Higham (ed), *Ethnic Leadership in America*, Baltimore, 1978, p 1, Cf also Higham, "Leadership," in Michael Walzer, Edward Kantovicz, John Higham and Mona Harrington, *The Politics of Ethnicity*, Cambridge, Mass., 1982, p 69 ff. This volume contains selections from the *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups* (1980).
16. Nathan Glazer, *Ethnic Dilemmas 1964-1982*, Cambridge, Mass., 1983, p. 281 f.
17. Glazer (1983), p 283 f.
18. Milton Gordon, *Assimilation in American Life*, New York, 1964. Cf Philip Gleason, "American Identity and Americanization," in Petersen e.a. (eds), *Concepts of Ethnicity* (1982), p 130 ff.
19. Andrew M. Greeley and William C. McCready, "The Transmission of Cultural Heritages: The Case of the Irish and the Italians," in Glazer/Moynihan (1975), p 210.

20. That is true for example of S.J. Makielski, *Beleaguered Minorities* (1973) Salvatore LaGumina and Frank Cavaiolo, *The Ethnic Dimension in American Society* (1974), Howard F. Stein and Robert F. Hill, *The Ethnic Imperative: Examining the New White Ethnic Movement* (1977), David Colburn and George E. Pozzetta (eds), *America and the New Ethnicity* (1979), Donald Gelfand and Russell D Lee (eds.), *Ethnic Conflicts and Power: A Cross National Perspective* (1973), Richard T. Schaefer, *Racial and Ethnic Groups* (1979), Marjorie Weiser, *Ethnic America* (1978), William Petersen et al., *Concepts of Ethnicity* (1982) Lance Liebman (ed), *Ethnic Relations in America* (1982) and others.
21. See for example Perry L. Weed, *The White Ethnic Movement and Ethnic Politics*, New York, 1973, and Mark R. Legy and Michael S. Kramer, *The Ethnic Factor: How America's Minorities Decide Elections*, New York, 1972.
22. Louis L. Gerson, *The Hyphenate in Recent American Politics and Diplomacy*, 1964.
23. *Foreign Affairs*, 59:5, Summer 1981.
24. Mona Harrington, "Loyalties – Dual and Divided," in Walzer e.a. (eds.) *The Politics of Ethnicity*, Cambridge, Mass., 1982.
25. Abdul Aziz Said, *Ethnicity and U.S. Foreign Policy*, New York, 1977, 2d rev. ed. 1981.
26. L.H. Fuchs (ed), *American Ethnic Politics*, New York 1967.
27. Marvin C. Feuerwerker, *Congress and Israel: Foreign Aid Decision-Making in the House of Representatives, 1969–1976*, Westport, Conn., 1979; Paula Stern, *Water's Edge. Domestic Politics and the Making of American Foreign Policy*. Westport, Conn. 1979.
28. Higham (1978), p 4.
29. Nathan Glazer, "The Jews," in Higham (1978), p 32f.
30. L.H. Fuchs, "Minority Groups and Foreign Policy," in Fuchs (ed), *American Ethnic Politics*, New York, 1967.
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32. Cf Göran Rystad, *Ambiguous Imperialism: American Foreign Policy and Domestic Politics at the Turn of the Century*, Lund 1975.
33. Mathias (1981), p 982.
34. Shannon, Colburn/Pozzetta (1979), p 180 f.
35. Mathias (1981), p 983.
36. I.L. Horowitz, in Said (1977), p 175.
37. Mathias (1981), p 975 f.
38. Said (1981), p VII.
39. Mathias (1981), p 979. For a discussion of the problems of group politics generally, cf S.J. Makielski, Jr., *Pressure Politics in America* (1980), Part III, "Pressure and Democracy".
40. Mona Harrington, "Loyalties – Dual and Divided," in Walzer e.a., *The Politics of Ethnicity* (1982), p 122 f.
41. Thomas N. Brown, *Irish-American Nationalism, 1870–1890*, Philadelphia, 1966.
42. Harrington, p 99 f.

43. *Ibid.*, p 103.
44. Louis L. Gerson, *The Hyphenate in Recent American Politics and Diplomacy*, Lawrence, Kansas, 1964, p 25 ff.
45. *Ibid.*
46. According to the columnist Jack Anderson the lobby of the Baltic States allegedly were close to a remarkable success in July 1975. On his way to Helsinki to sign the famous agreement President Ford was to give a speech at the airport before departing. According to Jack Anderson the Baltic lobby had succeeded in getting included in the advance text of the President's speech the words: "The United States has never recognized the Soviet incorporation of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, and is not going to do so in Helsinki." However, the section was omitted in the speech Ford actually delivered. Russell Warren Howe and Sarah Hays Trott, *The Power Peddlers: How Lobbyists Mold America's Foreign Policy*, New York, 1977, p 475.
47. *Ibid.*, p 469 ff. The prime mover behind the abortive resolution attempt was an Armenian lobbyist, Dr. Arra Avakian, director of an organization called the Armenian Assembly, an umbrella organization with the Armenian National Committee as its most active part. The number of Armenians in United States is supposed to be around 500,000.
48. Clifford Hackett, "Ethnic Politics in Congress: The Turkish Embargo Experience," in Said, (1977), p 16 ff.
49. *Congressional Record*, House, August 14, 1974, p 29297. On the struggle in Congress over the embargo legislation, see Göran Rystad, "Congress and the Ethnic Lobbies: The Case of the Arms Embargo on Turkey, 1974," in *Hyphenated Diplomacy*, ed. by Serge Ricard, 1984.
50. *American Foreign Relations 1974*, p 308; Cf also Hackett, p 26 ff.
51. *Cyprus 1974. Hearings before the Committee on Foreign Affairs and its Subcommittee on Europe*, House of Representatives. Ninety-third Congress, Second Session. August 19–20, 1974. Washington 1974. "Representative Benjamin S. Rosenthal's (D-N.Y.) Comments on His Amendment," *Congressional Record*, September 24, 1974. *Executive-Congressional Relations And the Turkish Arms Embargo. Congress and Foreign Policy Series*, No. 3. June 1981, Washington 1981, p 54 f.
52. Message from the President of the United States, Vetoing House Joint Resolution 1131. October 15, 1974. Washington 1974. *Congressional Record*, House, October 7, 1974, p 9989; Senate. Oct 1, 1974, p 33273. House, Oct 15, 1974, p 35608. *Congressional Quarterly*, XXXXII, p 2904.
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54. Michael Barone, Grant Ujifusa, Douglas Matthews, *The Almanac of American Politics: The Senators, the Representatives – their records, states and districts*. 1974.
55. Thomas M. Franck and Edward Weisband, *Foreign Policy by Congress*, New York 1979, p 191 f.
56. Franck-Weisband, p 192; Cf Hicks-Coulombis, who have made a detailed analysis of Greek-Americans and Congressional voting patterns with rather negative results, p 101 ff.
57. *Executive-Congressional Relations and the Turkish Arms Embargo. Congress and Foreign Policy Series*, No 3. June 1981 p 4 f.
58. *Ibid.* p 5.
59. On the Greek-Americans, see Theodore Saloutos, *The Greeks in the United States*, Cambridge, Mass., 1964; Phyllis P. Chock, *Greek-American Ethnicity*. Ph.D. dissertation, Chicago 1969.

60. Franck-Weisband, p 191; Hicks-Couloumbis, p 87 ff.
61. *Executive-Congressional Relations*, p 17 f.
62. Cf Franck-Weisband, p 191.
63. *Ibid.*, p 192 f.
64. *Ibid.*, p 193.
65. *Turkish Opium Ban Negotiations, Hearing before the Committee on Foreign Affairs*, House of Representatives, on H. Con. Res. 507. July 16, 1974. Washington 1974; Fiscal Year 1975. *Foreign Assistance Request. Hearings before the Committee on Foreign Affairs*, House of Representatives. June-July, 1974, p 120, "Aid to Turkey and Opium Poppies".
66. Rystad (1984), p 105 f. *Executive-Congressional Relations*, p 18.
67. John Lewis Gaddis.
68. John Peter Paul, *A Study in Ethnic Group Behavior: The Greek-Americans and Cyprus*. Doctoral dissertation, University of Denver, 1979, University Microfilms International, Ann Arbor, p 333.
69. Clifford Hackett, "Ethnic Politics in Congress: The Turkish Embargo Experience," Said (1977), p 16 ff.
70. Lloyd E. Ambrosius, "The President, the Congress and American Foreign Policy: The Ethnic Factor," in Göran Rystad (ed), *Congress and American Foreign Policy*, Lund 1981, p 75.
71. Theodore A. Couloumbis and Sallie M. Hicks, "The 'Greek Lobby': Illusion or Reality?," Said (1977), p 83 ff.
72. On the Jackson-Vanick amendment, see Paula Stern, *The Water's Edge*, Westport, Conn., 1979.
73. Cf *Executive-Congressional Relations*, p 377; "For seven years, two American Administrations passively watched the choking of Greek democracy by U.S. trained officers who imprisoned political leaders and editors, debased and degraded the armed forces, tortured resisters and attacked students". *Europe, South and East: Redefining the American Interest. Report of a Study Mission* . . . January 1-12, 1975. House, Committee on Foreign Affairs. Washington 1975.
74. Mathias (1980), p 980 f.
75. Glazer/Moynihan, p 22 ff.
76. Said (1977), s 5.
77. John Higham, *Ethnic Leadership in America* (1978), p 11 f.
78. Louis L. Gerson, "The Influence of Hyphenated Americans on U.S. Diplomacy," Said (1977), p 55 f.
79. Irving Louis Horowitz, Said (1977), s 175 ff.
80. Stephen Garret, "The Ties That Bind: Immigrant Influence on U.S. Policy Eastern Europe," Said (1977), p 59 ff.
81. Robert Trice, "Domestic Interest Groups and the Arab-Israeli Conflict: A Behavioral Analysis," Said (1977), p 117.
82. Herschelle Sullivan Challenor, "The Influence of Black Americans on U.S. Foreign Policy Toward Africa," Said (1977), p 139 ff.
83. Armando Rendón, "Latinos: Breaking the Cycle of Survival to Tackle Global Affairs," Said (1981). Especially important is what Irving Louis Horowitz has called "inter-ethnic group rivalries" (Said 1977, p 176).