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# **Interaction: Foreign Policy and Public Policy**

**Frank B. Feigert  
Norman A. Graebner  
Gerard J. Mangone  
Demetrios G. Papademetriou  
Harry Howe Ransom  
Larman C. Wilson  
James H. Wolfe**

**Edited by Don C. Piper and  
Ronald J. Terchek**

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**Interaction:  
Foreign Policy  
and Public Policy**

# In Appreciation

## Elmer Plischke

The authors of this volume are very pleased to dedicate it to Professor Elmer Plischke, who served for more than thirty years in the Department of Government and Politics at the University of Maryland. During that time he was a productive scholar and dedicated teacher in the field of American diplomacy and foreign policy. For some of us he is a congenial professional colleague and a valued friend. Others of us are also privileged to recognize him as a mentor and adviser for our own academic careers. In dedicating this book and our contributions to him we acknowledge his contributions to the study of American foreign policy and we express to him individually our thanks and appreciation.

Frank Feigert  
Norman Graebner  
Gerard Mangone  
Demetrios Papademetriou  
Don Piper  
Harry Howe Ransom  
Ronald Terchek  
Larman Wilson  
James Wolfe

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Howard J. Wiarda is a resident scholar at AEI, director of the AEI Center for Hemispheric Studies, and professor of political science at the University of Massachusetts.

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# Introduction: Foreign Policy as Public Policy

RONALD J. TERCHEK AND DON C. PIPER

Public policy can conveniently be divided into a domestic component and a foreign component. Accordingly, each component should be expected to possess characteristics common to public policy and each to possess its own distinctive properties as well. Domestic policies are those that are implemented primarily within the territorial and jurisdictional boundaries of the state. In contrast, foreign policy is implemented primarily outside the country and is directed toward the governing authorities or nationals of other states and international organizations. The basic constituencies of foreign and domestic policy have also traditionally been different, although for some issues, domestic groups may be quite active on behalf of foreign policy issues that affect the domestic well-being of their members or foreign groups with which they have a strong affiliation. In the same manner and for the same reasons foreign constituencies may be quite active in domestic issues. The policy processes also show some marked differences between the making of domestic policy and the making of foreign policy. Domestic policy has generally been more involved in public debate, political controversy, and group conflict than foreign policy, which frequently has been the province of a specialized elite operating against a background of public indifference or deference.

It is, however, inappropriate to conclude from these differences that foreign policy is distinct from or not a part of public policy in the United States. Foreign policy is public policy in the same way that domestic policy is public policy. Both constitute public policy because they involve the authoritative allocation of resources and the promotion or protection of values through governmental institutions and processes.

Foreign and domestic policy frequently present different aspects of the same issue, whether political, economic, or social. Although

## INTRODUCTION

there may be some issues of public policy, such as public housing, that have only a domestic dimension, it is difficult to conceive of any that have only a foreign dimension—although some, such as national intelligence gathering, clearly impinge on domestic politics in only a peripheral way at best. In many issues of public policy there are trade-offs between competing foreign and domestic goals; of some issues, the foreign policy dimension will be dominant and of others the domestic dimension will be dominant. The weight achieved by each dimension can never be regarded as absolute or unchangeable. Fluid situations, both foreign and domestic, and the adoption of new policy priorities will require adjustments in the public policy balance. Not surprisingly, there is likely to be a continuing tension among the various policy makers, constituency groups, and interested parties as they compete to establish a balance between the two dimensions.

Public policy today means more than authoritative allocations of values. It also refers to a way of studying both policies and their alternatives. Analysts of public policy attempt to generate standards for evaluating policies and their alternatives, study alternative ways of solving a problem, and assess the feasibility and costs of various policies and their alternatives.<sup>1</sup> In addition, those engaged in policy analysis have attempted to anticipate some of the unintended consequences of policy and determine whether those unintended consequences are beneficial or harmful to desired goals.<sup>2</sup>

In an important way, policy analysis is not a new component of the study of foreign policy. Government officials and scholars have long considered foreign policy to be a rational enterprise, one that was free from the pulls and pressures of domestic policy. National goals could be identified, strategies for implementation constructed, and resources collected to further foreign policy in ways that were not characteristic of the making of domestic policy, which had to deal with local constituencies, local pressures, and local trade-offs. To undertake a sound study of foreign policy meant that policy makers should be free of the constraints of narrow dogma, unreflective impulse, or group influence.<sup>3</sup>

The characteristics of the foreign policy process are generally identified as the effort to define national goals, to enumerate foreign and domestic obstacles to attainment of those goals, and to attempt to diminish the obstacles and increase the likelihood of policy success. The wild card in the foreign policy process is the potential volatility of the international arena in which isolated events may frequently change the opportunities or constraints facing policy makers. Even though they can generally count on some predictable patterns in the international environment, something akin to Machiavelli's *fortuna*

threatens the best-laid plans of policy makers.

Domestic policy making is traditionally more apt to be characterized by a group-conflict model wherein predictions are more difficult, goals more diversified, unintended consequences more likely to arise, and the environment, if not more complex, is usually more crowded with competing interests.

The growth of public policy analysis has focused new attention on various aspects of decision making and option analysis that were previously left as separate concerns. Sometimes, however, we are excessively impressed with the novel and forget continuities in structures, processes, and goals of foreign policy in the United States. Policy analysis has served to emphasize the importance of reliable information in making sound decisions, in recognizing domestic political and cost constraints in evaluating alternative proposals, in searching for alternative policies to strengthen or replace existing policies, and in seeing the increasing connection between foreign and domestic trade-offs. In each of the essays presented in this volume, one or another of these public policy concerns is considered.

The role of the executive in the formulation of public policy that has a dominant foreign policy dimension will remain more substantial than that of Congress. This is in part because the president enjoys the functions of representation and communication, has access to critical information, and serves as commander in chief. These functions combine to give the executive the larger role in the initiation of the foreign-policy-making process and the implementation of established policy. Although the Congress has a lesser part in initiation of policy, its control of the appropriations process, the exercise of the legislative and oversight functions, and the responsibility of the Senate in the approval of treaties and appointments all combine to enable the Congress to contribute significantly to the public and governmental debate over appropriate foreign policy and the allocation of resources to foreign policy activities.

As the domestic dimension of public policy increases in relation to the foreign dimension, the role of the Congress correspondingly increases, and the policy-making process assumes more of the characteristics usually associated with the formulation of domestic policy. It is consequently instructive to observe those issues, such as foreign direct investment in the United States, wherein the domestic dimension appears to be assuming greater importance and the policy-making process to be evolving into more of a domestic policy process.

The contributors to this volume examine one or another aspect of foreign policy as public policy. The essays in part 1 are focused on the processes of the foreign policy decision-making system and



## INTRODUCTION

identify opportunities and restraints that await foreign policy decision makers. In the essays in part 2 some important substantive issues in public policy that contain both foreign and domestic policy components are considered. In some of the issues, such as disarmament and human rights, the foreign policy dimension is clearly dominant. In others, such as illegal immigration, the domestic policy dimension is dominant. And in a third group of issues the delicate balance between foreign and domestic policy goals is in a state of flux, and the public policy is consequently in a process of evolution—the law of the sea and foreign direct investment in the United States, for example.

Norman Graebner finds that the president has had virtually a free hand in constructing major foreign policies. The great issues of war and peace and strategic commitments have emerged out of a consensus formed by a small elite in the executive branch, and the public has largely been deferential to the president's foreign policy. Because of the dominant executive role, foreign policy decision makers are able to generate their own views and cling to them without direct reference to the public much more successfully than can the makers of domestic policy.

In addition, there does not appear to be any systematic process for inserting public ideas into the foreign policy process. Consequently those in public office are on the whole free to accept or ignore the public discussion, depending upon whether it is in support of their own views.

The constitutional function of the Senate in the treaty-making process still remains important, as the delay of the SALT II treaty and the heated controversy over the Panama Canal treaties indicate. The powers of the purse, amendment, and hearings, moreover, give both houses of Congress the ability to influence administration policy proposals, and each of these legislative initiatives has been extensively studied. One area of legislative-executive conflict over control of foreign policy has not received attention, however, and that is the presidential veto and the congressional override of the veto. The veto becomes important when Congress initiates and passes legislation opposed by the administration—that is, when the negotiating processes between the two branches break down and the legislative branch votes its will contrary to the president's preference. Frank Feigert analyzes the historical and contemporary importance of the veto and examines the way the veto and the veto-override process actually influence policy outcomes in defense and foreign policy.

Taken together, Graebner's and Feigert's contributions indicate continuation of presidential predominance in foreign policy. While