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Adlai Stevenson and the World

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Warriors at Work is a very useful book, providing an excellent overview of military manpower issues and policies plus a comprehensive introduction to the literature on the subject. It is useful even to the specialist. Professional military officers will be familiar with much that Levitan and Alderman present, and will find opinions to disagree with, but few will fail to learn something from the volume. It is recommended reading.

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Martin, John Bartlow. *Adlai Stevenson and the World: The Life of Adlai E. Stevenson*, Vol. II. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1977, 863pp.

In the second volume of this mammoth biography, John Bartlow Martin, noted journalist, editor, and former U.S. Ambassador to the Dominican Republic, chronicles Stevenson's activities and utterances from the Presidential campaign of 1952 to mid-1965, when Stevenson died. As a two-time Presidential contender, and then Ambassador to the United Nations for Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, Stevenson enunciated ideas of enduring significance to national politics and international affairs. Although he was somewhat less than successful in his attempts to exert great influence on U.S. policy, several of his largest concerns, perhaps ironically, have steadily gained prominence in U.S. foreign affairs since his death.

Throughout his years as a national political figure Stevenson worried and spoke about the problem of controlling nuclear weapons. He was among the early advocates of test bans, arms control, and even disarmament. Indeed, according to several of his close friends, Stevenson suffered in his last years from nightmares, dreams of the world blowing up, of the extinction of humanity, the end of life on earth.

Stevenson's concern about nuclear weapons led him to a parallel interest in

negotiation with the Soviet leadership. In the middle 1950s he established personal relationships with Khrushchev and other top leaders and he believed, partly on the basis of his brief contacts with these individuals, that the Soviet leadership shared both a concern over the consequences of nuclear armaments and a willingness to deal constructively, through negotiation, with the United States. "The real question," Stevenson said in a 1960 campaign speech,

is not who can stand up or talk back to the Russians. That's too easy. The real question is who can sit down with them at the bargaining table and negotiate with them from a position of strength and confidence. The real question is not who is tough and who is soft. The real question is who is wise and who is foolish, who likes to play with words and who likes to get things done.

On China policy, one of the most sensitive issues of the 1950s, Stevenson took a position remarkably similar to that on which the United States finally "normalized" relations with mainland China in 1978-1979. He argued that the U.S. policy of isolating mainland China forced China to rely on the Soviet Union in international affairs. The United States, he believed, ought to seek independence for Formosa and a pledge from the mainland not to use force to determine Formosa's future. And he anticipated, though he did not actually advocate, the admission of mainland China to the United Nations.

In the United Nations from 1961 to 1965 Stevenson stressed what he considered the two transcendent world problems: nuclear proliferation and the disparity in the living standards of rich and poor nations. He did his utmost to make the United Nations significant in U.S. foreign policy, though he largely failed to impress the circle of advisors and operators closer to the Kennedy and Johnson White Houses. Late in his

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life he foresaw the need to shift conceptually from a foreign policy based on containment and limited war to a policy reflecting the developing diversity of world affairs amid the dissolution of the early cold war's strict polarization--limited peace, as he liked to describe it.

Several points emerge from this lengthy narrative to form a basis for assessing Stevenson's influence on his times. As a candidate in the 1950s, albeit a losing one, Stevenson kept alive a healthy Democratic Party organization. His personal leadership, so Martin suggests, brought large numbers of capable young people into party political activity, which made possible the successful campaigns of Kennedy and Johnson in the next decade. Further, in 1956 Stevenson set out ideas basic to the New Frontier and Great Society programs and it is easy to see still today, in Carter administration programs and policies, a rather large debt to the body of thought produced in the course of the 1956 Stevenson campaign. Finally, Martin argues that as Ambassador to the United Nations Stevenson gave that organization a standing with the American people that it did not enjoy before his tenure and has not since.

In all, Martin's two-volume study of Stevenson meets the severest test of biography: to illuminate the times, the character, and the concerns of the chosen subject. It is difficult to tell in this case whether Martin's success comes in spite of the masses of quotation and detail encumbering the narrative or because of them. Yet the book is unquestionably valuable. It contributes substantially to the history of the 1952, 1956, and 1960 Presidential campaigns. It augments in several important respects the accounts now available of foreign policy in the Kennedy Presidency. And, despite the need for a brief, more analytic treatment of Stevenson's public life, Martin's biography constitutes an essential source for people interested in the intellectual and

political antecedents of contemporary American party politics and foreign affairs.

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Novik, Nimrod. *On the Shores of Bab Al-Mandab: Soviet Diplomacy and Regional Dynamics* (FPRI Monograph No. 26). Philadelphia: Foreign Policy Research Institute, 1979. 83pp.

Until recent years, the Strait of Bab al-Mandab received little international attention except for cursory recognition as a strategic chokepoint along the Mediterranean-Indian Ocean sealanes. Since 1968, when Great Britain terminated its traditional "protecting power" status east of Suez, the U.S.S.R. has sought to extend its influence in the Strait area. In this comprehensive monograph, Professor Novik traces the Soviet ascendancy with attention to its effect on regional interactions and, conversely, the effects of the area's complex relationships on Soviet patterns of behavior towards Third World countries.

Holding that the U.S.S.R. has maintained longstanding interests in the Strait within its overall ambition to secure dominance in the Middle East, Novik's introductory chapter provides solid background for more recent events in the African Horn and Southwestern Arabia. He contends that while Soviet activities in Somalia, Ethiopia and the two Yemen republics might serve its strategic defensive aims by denying U.S. Navy SLBM presence in northern Indian Ocean waters, this factor is more than offset by its aggressive quest for power and influence among these Third World states. He particularly asserts that the rapid switch in Soviet allegiances during the 1976-1977 Somali-Ethiopian conflict is typical of the intensive, but deliberate, "no holds barred" brand of Third World power politics in which the U.S.S.R. is currently engaged.