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# **International Conflict and Ethnic Interest Group Formation in The United States**

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**Abstract:**

As ethnic minority populations increase within the U.S., they will have more influence on the foreign policy agenda of the United States. This thesis investigates whether conflict in a country causes the creation or restructuring of ethnic interest groups within the United States. To test this, cases were selected by using Census data to identify ethnic groups and then isolating conflicts using the Center for International Development and Conflict Management database. The case studies supported my hypothesis that conflicts in an ethnic group's homeland cause interest groups to form or to alter their purpose. As technology makes it easier for groups to follow overseas news, there will likely be an increase in foreign policy interest groups, each pressing their own agenda.

## **Introduction:**

Politicians and scholars generally agree that interest groups (also known as factions, and specialized interests) are natural phenomena in a democratic regime- that is, individuals will band together to protect their interests (Loomis and Cigler 2007). However, debate continues on whether these groups and group politics are benign or malignant forces in American politics (Loomis and Cigler 2007). Some interest groups, such as AARP or the NRA, are known to be powerful in Washington, where their spending powers in electoral politics have increased since the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 (Loomis and Cigler 2007).

Immigrant and ethnic minority populations mirror the continual population growth of the United States as a whole. As the ethnic minority population increases, scholars generally agree that individuals will band together to protect their interests (Cigler and Loomis 2007). Ethnic interest groups allow these minorities to attain those politically relevant goals that represent the member's interests or opinions (Wilson 1995). Ethnic interest groups are important to examine because the stakes of foreign policy increased since September 11, 2001 (Uslaner 2007). Certain ethnic groups possess significant power in the US, enabling them to sway the United States into policies favoring their interest, but not the country as a whole (Uslaner 2007). This has led some to believe that certain groups are more loyal to their co-ethnic countries than to the United States (Uslaner 2007).

However, not all ethnic groups in the US have interest groups representing them. This leads to the question of what explains the emergence of ethnic interest groups, especially as that emergence relates to foreign policy goals? This paper investigates

whether there is a relationship between the threats to an ethnic group internationally, and their co-ethnic country, that drives the creation or restructuring of ethnic interest groups domestically. For example, did the Armenian Genocide, during World War One, fuel the creation of Armenian interest groups in the United States? This paper will try to answer this question. My hypothesis is that the greater the threat abroad, the more likely that ethnicities will form more cohesive, better organized, and efficient interest groups within the U.S. A possible counter hypothesis is that domestic threats are the reason for group cohesiveness, and the interest groups agenda is focused on domestic issues such as anti-discrimination.

For my study, the ethnicities that are selected will be from “Table 52: Population by Selected Ancestry Group and Region (2009)” from the US Census Bureau. With the ethnicities selected, I observed how many disputes the co-ethnic countries have participated in using the Center for International Development and Conflict Management (CIDCM). The aim of the CIDCM is to accumulate and disseminate knowledge about interstate crises and protracted conflicts, the discovery of patterns in key crisis dimensions, and application of the lessons of history to the advancement of international peace and world order (CIDCM.com). To attain these ends, the CIDCM undertook an inquiry into the sources, processes, and outcomes of all military-security crises since the end of World War I (CIDCM.com). The CIDCM data is chosen because it not only takes into account the display or use of force, but also the *threat* of using force. The perception of threat is important because it could lead to groups taking action to prevent an act from occurring. For my study, only conflicts or threats that threaten an ethnic group’s homeland security will be accounted for. This is because many former colonial powers

have conflicts with their colonies, but not their homeland; these conflicts are not severe enough to force people to act to protect their homeland. For each conflict that a country has been involved in, I will mark a tally. The CIDCM data will allow me to explore if a relationship exists between the number of interest groups representing an ethnicity, the number of disputes the co-ethnic countries have been in, and if these conflicts help cause the formation of foreign-policy-based interest groups. I expect to find that as international conflict abroad increases in frequency, then the corresponding ethnicities in the US will have more interest groups representing them domestically. Once I observe the relationship, interest groups organized around the ethnicities will be sampled in order to develop case studies to examine their emergence, success, and foreign policy goals.

The concept of time plays a significant role in my investigation because the cause must occur before the effect that is external international conflicts must precede the formation or restructuring of an interest group. For my study, time is a lagged variable, thus the conflict has to occur before the emergence of the group. If conflicts do occur after the formation of an interest group, then the effects of the conflict will be analyzed to see whether the conflict played any role in causing the previous existing group to change their organizational objectives and goals. In addition, the time when the ethnic population became sufficiently large that the Census Bureau considered them worth noting will be important. This point will be the threshold used for the ethnicities for the start date at looking at the CIDCMs data. As an example, if an ethnicity is placed on the census in 1950, then the CIDCM conflict data for that ethnicity will be examined from 1950 onwards. Observing CIDCM data before this threshold would prove non-beneficial because the ethnic population is not large or influential enough to be placed on the

census. There might be an international threat or conflict, but if no co-ethnic population from that country lives in the US, no interest groups would be created. The CIDCM data and ethnic population will be analyzed for each co-ethnic country by decade in order to isolate when the ethnic group increased in size and was placed on the census, and to observe if the group formed around the international threat at that time. This insures that the cause and effect are not reversed. By first looking at ethnicities and then CIDCM data, it allows for the case studies being selected not on the dependent variable, but the independent variable. Once the ethnicities have been analyzed for their conflicts and interest groups identified, case studies will be used to test my hypothesis.

### **Literature Review:**

Theories about how organizations behave are plentiful; theories about how organizations come into being scarcely exist (Wilson 1995). Creating a new organization involves discrete and perhaps unique acts representing a break in a prior pattern of behavior. One might predict that the creation of new associations would be an almost random event. To some extent this is true. Many groups are formed almost by accident, the result of that fortuitous combination of personality, opportunity, and constituency. But the most striking fact about organizational formation is that, so far as we can tell, it is not entirely, or even largely, random. The formation of associations tends to occur in waves. The first great burst in the organization of associations, especially those of national scope, took place in the first two decades of the twentieth century. In that period were founded groups such as the NAACP, American Medical Association, the Boy Scouts, the American Jewish Committee, and the Anti-defamation league. There are multiple reasons that can be used to explain why during this period the formation of

organizations was easier than had previously been the case. Technology, such as the transcontinental railroads, the telegraph, and the rise of national magazines made communication easier, and thus truly national organizations were possible. An increase in ethnic groups was a result of urbanization and immigration which combined to bring together a heterogeneous population in ways that produced a heightened recognition of group differences and individual needs. All these factors facilitated, or even made necessary, the formation of large-scale voluntary associations, but they did not make it inevitable. Newly defined interests do not spontaneously produce organizations, however efficient the communication or large the cities. It is premature to attempt the formulation of a theory to account for the periods of rapid organizational formation. For one thing, different explanations account for different kinds of organizations – changes in economic conditions may explain the emergence of various labor and farm groups; perceived threats from labor or government may stimulate employers association. For another, dramatic but unpredictable events, such as a world war, or an economic depression, may play a central role in upsetting existing relationships, altering the allocation of resources, and arousing new kinds of popular demands (Wilson 1995).

In Andrew McFarland's article "Interest Groups and Political Time: Cycles in America", McFarland discusses Truman's *The Governmental Process*, which proposes another theory, the "wave theory" of interest mobilization. This theory states that mobilization of one type of interest group, such as business, provokes a counter-mobilization of related interests, such as labor (McFarland 1991). Thus, interest groups organize in "waves", and in some cases related events of mobilization and counter-



mobilization occur in cycles over an extended time period. McFarland introduces Truman's wave theory in this manner:

The Evolution of association does not necessarily proceed at a uniform rate. When a single association is formed... in the performance of its function it may cause disturbances in the equilibrium of other groups... They are likely to evoke associations in turn to correct the secondary disturbances. The formation of association, therefore, tends to occur in waves. (McFarland 1991)

Most of McFarland's article discusses of wave theory is devoted to the history of mobilization and counter-mobilization between labor and business in the United States. Truman generalized on the basis of system theory in which equilibrium undergo "disturbances" that result in-group mobilization to restore equilibrium. As such, he was not interested in historical generalization about eras or alignments in American politics that relates cycles of mobilization of one type to those of another type. Truman wanted the wave theory to cover the initial formation of groups and their evolution through mobilization and counter-mobilization across generations of time

The growth of labor and trade associations, and most others as well, exhibits a wavelike pattern; for the very success of one group in stabilizing its relationships creates new problems for others and makes necessary either new organizations or the extension and strengthening of existing ones. (McFarland 1991)

We might regard Truman as providing valuable insights in his wave theory, but writing in 1950, a relatively early point in the development of systematic political

science; he obviously could not encompass a number of later developments in the field (McFarland 1991).

Interest groups also form for self-help reasons such as discrimination and poverty. Rosemary Thorp states that interest groups may function to increase incomes and empowerment in a number of ways. Overcoming market failures is one important function for interest groups, and is to overcome a variety of market failures and thereby contribute to increasing efficiency in both technical and allocative senses for resources (Thorp 2003). In many cases groups emerge as substitutes for missing markets or solutions to market imperfections. Groups also arise where a major purpose of the group is to advance the claims of its members to power and/or resources. The claims may be advanced against other members of society, or against the government. Groups have *pro bono* functions that alter the distribution of benefits within society, but they are mainly directed towards individuals outside the group, in contrast to claims groups. *Pro bono* functions are performed by groups in the public sector, and are typically associated with such service provisions as health, education, etc. Groups potentially do offer an escape from chronic poverty, however, the poor may be less likely to form groups in the first place, less likely to make a success of groups, and the poorest may typically be excluded from successful groups (Thorp 2003).

According to the American sociologist Shils, ethnic groups form through primordial attachment to their region of origin (Blacksacademy 2005). However, another approach, known as the “mobilizationist” approach argues that primordial attachment is not inevitable, and that groups form because members of the group anticipate some advantage from them. The development of an ethnic identity may be a

defense mechanism against living in a hostile environment. However, neither approach contradicts the other, and according to McKay, it is possible to combine the two to form a matrix system of classification of ethnic groups. According to him, ethnic traditionalists are bonded by the emotional primordial ties to their region of origin and their motivation is to maintain ethnic culture rather than political (Blacksacademy 2005) For ethnicities, part of the power that it relies on is deep attachment to a collective identity, so much so that individual and collective identities can become infused (Paul 2009). When the community is threatened, so is the individual, while the success of a community enhances members' self-worth (Paul 2009). But the relationship among individual, and their ethnicity, and ethnic groups are complex and dynamic. Ethnic groups and ethnic leaders may have an exogenous effect on ethnic communities and these collective identities (Paul 2009). Both groups and elites can boost an ethnic community's pride, and groups and elites can draw on potential threats to the ethnic community to mobilize ethnic brethren (Paul 2009).

Truman's disturbance theory hypothesizes that interest groups are created in response to social or economic crises in order to make demands of government (Paul 2009). In addition, disturbances can help organizations gain new members, often quickly, as the success of a perceived enemy can motivate individuals to join a group and fight the enemy. Like all interest groups, ethnic groups face the same problems such as attempting to achieve their own collective goods, from securing foreign aid, to changing immigration policy, to promoting human rights. Most individuals believe their actions alone will not help the group achieve its goals, so they choose not to join the group and work to achieve the collective good. Because of this, ethnic organizations are likely to develop selective

incentives to build and maintain membership, and groups that develop such rewards are likely to have a greater and more active membership base (Paul 2009).

James Wilson, in *Political Organizations*, states there are three different causes of organizational change. The first cause is an uncertainty in the flow of resources -- an episodic, boom-and-bust-pattern of membership affiliation and resource availability (Wilson 1995). Labor unions faced with rapid decreases in membership as a result of economic recessions, the Red Cross faced with shortage of disasters, and churches faced with fluctuations in the size of congregations as a religious enthusiasm wax and wane are all examples of organizations attempting to cope with uncertainty (Wilson 1995). The second cause results from scarcity; not simply a condition of not having enough, which is to say, unlimited resources, but of having a declining resource base. This confronted the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) and Marxist organizations. The politics of scarcity tends to be a politics of conflict, generated by an inability to satisfy rival claims for declining resources, by criticism of existing leadership. Groups undergoing a drastic decline in resources have a powerful reason for change, but change is often hardest to implement in just such circumstances. Lastly, organizational change can also result from a condition of abundance. For example, secure national groups with large staffs and budgets develop new purposes and activities chiefly to satisfy staff persons with particular concerns and values. For example, the political activism of the staffs of large church organizations, such as the United Church of Christ, may result from a stable organization with surplus resources giving new scope for action to key personnel (Wilson 1995). Wilson's last reason could explain as to why some groups start as domestic

oriented groups, but eventually form foreign policy goals. The concern that the staff members could have is international events that the CIDCMs data captures.

For ethnic interest group formation, a traditional view sees interest groups as emerging in response to social or economic changes as groups of people with shared interest seeks to petition the government (Haney 2010). The argument that an increasingly porous American political system and multicultural society have facilitated the growth of ethnic interest groups can be commonly found, as is the idea that ethnicity serves as a “natural base for group formation and organized political action” (Haney 2010). This view, however, fails to explain how collective action problems that surround group formation are overcome. Research done by Mancur Olson points to the importance of group leaders using selective benefits to break the collective action problem and get members to join a group (Olson 1971). These leaders are then able to use the group’s power and resources to pursue policy preferences they share with their members. There may be merit in both views. There are a variety of types of groups that different people join for different reasons, though some groups (representing interests of the well-off and business interest) are better represented than others.

“Ethnicity” can be defined as “a voluntary organization of people with collective identity based on an intellectually formulated and emotionally felt assertion of their distinctiveness from other people”. Is such an identity meant to be taken as a given, or is it socially and politically constructed? Identity is meant to be a strategic choice that is subject to change, and that joining an organized group to pursue the interests of ones identity is also one’s choice, then the formation and maintenance of ethnic interest groups continues to be a subject worthy of scrutiny (Haney 2010).

On foreign policy, the entire country is supposed to speak with a single voice (Uslaner 2007). Policy is supposed to reflect a national interest that has its roots in moral principles. Due to the potential stakes of foreign policy- the wrong policy decision could lead to a nuclear confrontation-we expect foreign policy decisions to be less subject to the whims of group pressure. Instead, we make decision based on a common interest. Foreign policy should be made on the basis of American principles. Americans should be primarily concerned with domestic issues and put American interests first when looking beyond their borders (Uslaner 2007).

The attacks on September 11, 2001, and war in Iraq made it even more critical for foreign policy to be based on a consensus, reflecting national interests. Since the Attacks, the consensus on foreign policy has waned as the United States became immersed in a war in Iraq that strongly divided the country. Foreign policy interest groups have begun to look more like domestic interest groups, with one key difference: now it is unclear whether some groups were more loyal to their “mother country” than to the United states (Uslaner 2007). Many people worried that decision that ought to be made on the basis of moral concerns, what should the role of America be in the World?, instead are now made through group conflict and campaign contributions (Uslaner 2007).

Mohammed E. Ahrari has suggested four conditions for ethnic group success in foreign policy. First, the group must press for a policy in line with American strategic interests. Second, the group must be assimilated into American society yet retain enough identification with the mother country so that this foreign policy issue motivates people to take some political action. Third, a high level of political activity is required. Fourth, groups should be politically unified (Ahrari 155).

## **METHODOLOGY:**

For my study, I hypothesize that there are two mechanisms on how ethnic groups can make foreign policy goals, a shift or reformation of the organizations focus and objective or creating a new organization .To test my hypothesis, my research was based on three approaches: 1.) Identifying ethnicities as listed in the US Census, 2.) Isolating conflicts identified by Center for International Development and Conflict Management (CIDCM) data, and 3.) Conducting case studies based on screening of those two factors. The first two stages, identifying ethnicities and examining CIDCM data, were important to perform because it made sure that the case studies chosen were not selected based on my dependent variable, the ethnicities. It also made sure that there were no biases involved, and the case studies were ultimately selected at random.

I started by selecting the ethnicities in the United States. The ethnicities that I chose to analyze were those that were sufficiently large enough to appear in “Table 52: Population by Selected Ancestry Group and Region (2009)” from the US Census Bureau. Although there were over seventy ethnicities in Table 52, the extra effort analyzing all ethnicities allowed the ethnicities to be chosen without any selection bias. Given that some groups trace their presence in the US before the country existed, though in small numbers, a threshold of when the ethnicity grew sufficiently large that they were considered worth noting by the Census Bureau was used. The Census Bureau including the ethnicity within the census illustrates that not only were they large enough, but also seen as having influence within the U.S. To accomplish this, past census data was

analyzed to see when the ethnicities were added to the Census Bureau data. For all ethnicities under Table 52, I researched to see how many interest groups represented each ethnicity<sup>1</sup>, and whether they were domestically oriented or more focused on foreign policy with their co-ethnic country. Public and mission statements were used to determine whether the ethnic interest groups were focused on foreign policy or domestic issues.

Once I analyzed ethnicities, the CIDCM data was used to identify whether there was a relationship between the co-ethnic groups and external international conflict. The ethnicities and CIDCM data will be analyzed by decades, in order to isolate when the ethnicity was placed in the census, and when the threats and conflicts occurred. This was to make sure the cause and effects are not reversed. The CIDCM data was used because it compiles information about conflicts where one or more states threaten, display, or use force against one or more other states. There was, however, a limitation to using the CIDCM data to analyze the international conflicts and ethnicities. The CIDCM data does not factor internal conflicts in its database, only conflicts between states. Not taking into account internal conflicts, and using the CIDCM data for my study, leads to the possibility that a group forming on the basis of internal conflict will be overlooked. For each ethnicity listed under Table 52, the co-ethnic country was analyzed, using the CIDCM data, to see how many conflicts the country has been apart of. For example, if Polish were the ethnicity chosen, then the co-ethnic country, Poland, would be observed to see how many conflicts, according to the CIDCM data, they have participated in. For

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<sup>1</sup> Covers single and multiple ancestries. Ancestry refers to a person's ethnic origin or descent, "roots" or heritage; or the place or birth of the person, the person's parents, or ancestors before their arrival in the United States.



each conflict the co-ethnic country had been in, a tally was recorded to keep track of each event, and when it occurred. The CIDCM data helped see if there is a correlation between the international conflicts and the formation of ethnic interest groups. Since the CIDCM data had conflicts dating back to W.W. I, a threshold was used to narrow the time of the conflicts that occurred. The CIDCM data will be looked at by each decade, to isolate when the event happened, and to observe if the interest groups formed around the international threat at that time so the cause and effect can be visible.

Once data collection was completed, I created a typology to choose the ethnicities to be further examined in case studies. The two variables used were severity of conflict, either high or low, and size of the ethnic population, small or large. The threshold that I chose for what is considered as high and low population is anything over .05% of the US population in table 52. Population by Selected Ancestry Group and Region 2009, Populations over .05%, will be considered high, and anything under .05% will be low. I felt that using .05% as a threshold represented the ethnic population accordingly because the majority of the ethnicities population was under 1,500,000, and only a few ethnicities with substantially large population had greater. I determined the threshold for low and high severity by taking the mean number of severe conflicts per ethnicity, five. Anything below five would be considered low and anything greater would be considered high. I grouped ethnicities that fit into each typology: low severity and small population, low severity and large population, high severity and small population, and high severity and large population (See figure 1 below).

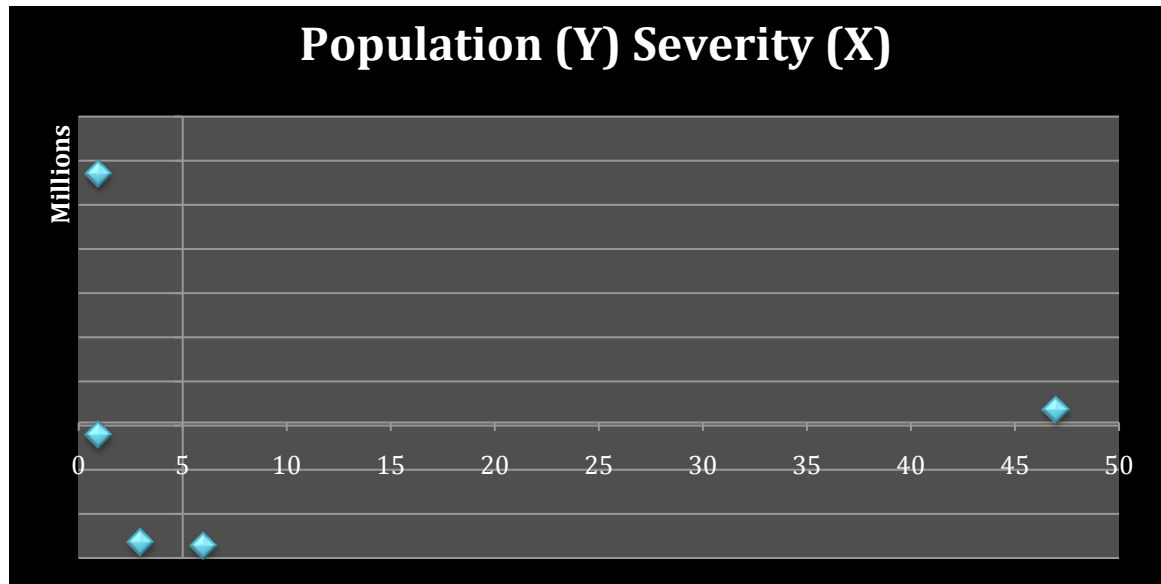


Figure 1.

Case studies were selected based on these groups. The case studies analyzed when the groups formed, and if the interest groups changed its purpose from a domestic perspective to an agenda based on foreign policy. Public mission statements and expectations before and after the conflict were analyzed.

As stated, what I expected to find is that the ethnicities with high severity and small population will have the most foreign policy oriented interest groups and that they would be formed around their conflicts. I expect to find that ethnicities with low severity and large populations to have the lowest number of foreign policy oriented interest groups.

- For the groups low severity and small population and high severity and large population, I expected to find that the latter will have more foreign policy groups representing them due to the availability of resources related to the larger population. The ethnicities that were placed under low severity and small population had a population of less than 1,535,035 and a minimum of

one to a maximum of five conflicts. The ethnicities that fell within these requirements were Armenian, Austrian, Czechoslovakian, Danish, Iranian, Romanian, Palestinian, Albanian, Belgian, Bulgarian, Finnish, Ethiopian, Somali, Swiss, and Haitian. I chose Albanian to be the ethnicity to be analyzed in a case study because they are one of the larger ethnicities amongst this group, and is a relatively peaceful country based on reports from the media for their conflicts.

- For low severity and large population, the ethnicities were required to have a minimum one conflict and maximum of five conflicts; and a population of greater than 1,535,035. The ethnicities that fell within these requirements were Italian, English, French, Norwegian, Swedish, and Swiss. The ethnicity that I chose to analyze from this group was Swedish because of their countries relative peacefulness.
- For high severity and large population, ethnicities had to have a population greater than 1,535,035 and have a minimum of six conflicts. The ethnicities that fulfilled these requirements were Greek, Arab, Hungarian, German, and Polish. The Arab ethnicity had forty-seven severe conflicts, were as the second ethnicity with the most severe conflicts was Greece, with eight. Given the Arab ethnicities substantial amounts of conflicts, compared to its counterparts, I chose them to be analyzed in a case study because it is an outlier and qualifies as an extreme case selection.
- For the group of high severity and small population, the ethnicities had a population of less than 1,535,035 and greater than five conflicts. The

ethnicities that met these requirements were Lithuanian, Turkish, Syrian, Yugoslavian, Lebanese and Israeli. From this group I chose two ethnicities- Greek and Israeli. I chose Israeli because of the alliance and friendship between Israel and US, as Israel is one of the few allies of the US in the unstable Middle East. I chose Greek for the same reason, as they are an ally to the US through NATO, but have a history of conflict with Turkey, another NATO country and ally to US. These five ethnicities were chosen based on fitting the typology I created, not because the ethnicity did or did not have foreign policy groups representing them. Albania

### **Albanian**

The US Census has the Albanian American population in 2009 at 182,000. Albanian Americans mother country, Albania, has had three severe conflicts that threatened its homeland security. The Albanian American Civic League is the only non-partisan, volunteer lobby in Washington, DC, representing the concerns of Albanian Americans. The Civic League is registered to lobby the legislative and executive branches of the federal government for the purpose of influencing U.S. foreign policy to bring lasting peace and stability to the Balkans (CivicLeague.com). Former Congressman Joe DioGuardi and a small group of Albanian Americans founded the Albanian American Civic League in 1989, shortly after he left the U.S. House of representatives. According to the Albanian American Civic League website, the organization was created “in response to the crisis triggered in the Balkans by former Serbian dictator Slobodan Milosevic’s invasion and occupation of Kosovo” (CivicLeague.com). Thus, Albanian American Civic League was created as a foreign policy interest group from the beginning

and has continues to be so today. DioGuardi has made more then forty trips to the Balkans since leaving Congress in 1989 in his capacity as the founding, volunteer president of the Albanian American Civic League. In 1990, DioGuardi and Congressman Tom Lantos visited Kosovo in order to challenge the brutal policies of Serbian dictator Slobodan Milosevic's regime there. In 1996, DioGuardi returned to Albania with the Civic League's Balkan Affairs Adviser, Shirley Cloyes, and Congressman Benjamin Gilman, then chairman of the House Committee on International Relations, to meet with President Sali Berisha to discuss Albanian national security. In the summer of 1999, DioGuardi and the Civic league traveled to Kosovo after the NATO bombing campaign ended to assess conditions and report back to the U.S. and Chairman Gilman. In 2003, the Civic League was responsible for the introduction of a Congressional Resolution (H.Res.24) and a hearing calling on the U.S. government to recognize Kosovo's independence with the active support of then House International Relations Committee Chairman Henry Hyde (CivicLeague.com).

Throughout its history, the Albanian American Civic League has fully been devoted to foreign policy and advancing the cause of Albania and Albanian Americans. The case of the Albanians is one that supports my hypothesis. However, the CIDCM does not have Milosevic's invasion of Kosovo as conflict in their database. All three conflicts recorded by the CIDCM took place well before the formation of the Civic League, during the years of 1921, 1926, and 1939. The fact that the CIDCM does not have this conflict in their database could be a flaw in my research design based on three problems: 1) the conflict was too small; 2) because it was in another state, it did not get credited to Albania; 3) it was an intrastate war not an interstate war.

**Swedish:**

The Census (2009) has the Swedish population in America at 4,348,000, making it one of the larger ethnic groups in my sample<sup>2</sup>. From my research, Sweden had only one severe conflict that occurred in 1920. With a large population and low conflict severity, Swedish fits in the high population low conflict severity typography. As far as I can tell from my research, the Swedish American population had no foreign lobby groups representing their interests. They did have, however, multiple domestic interest groups that ranged from medical to self-help groups. The Swedish American ethnic group supports my hypothesis that the ethnic groups with high population and low conflict severity would have minimal foreign interest groups representing them.

**Israeli:**

The US Census (2009) has the Israeli population in America at 139,000, making it one of the smaller ethnic groups in my sample. The Israeli ethnicity was placed on the Population by Selected Ancestry Group and Region records in 1980. Since then, according to the CIDCM, Israel has had six severe conflicts regarding homeland security. With their low population and high number of conflicts, Israeli fits in the low population/high conflict severity group. The Israeli population in America has multiple domestic interest groups that lobby to enhance U.S.-Israel relationship such as The Jewish Council for Public Affairs (JCPA) and The Conference of Presidents of Major

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<sup>2</sup> Population covers single and multiple ancestries. Ancestry refers to a person's ethnic origin or descent, "roots" or heritage; or the place of birth of the person, the person's parents, or ancestors before their arrival in the United States.

American Jewish Organizations (CoP). However, these national advocacy groups are more “educational” entities, and not solely foreign policy based. The amount of time they can devote to lobbying is strictly limited by law [501(c)(3) status in the Internal Revenue Service Code] (Licht 2002). The American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) is the leading foreign policy interest group for Israeli’s in the US as its main primary focus is enhancing ties between U.S and its ally Israel (AIPAC.com). AIPAC is described by *The New York Times* as “the most important organization affecting America’s relationship with Israel” (AIPAC.com). AIPAC is registered as a domestic lobby to work on legislation and public policy that improves U.S.-Israel relationship. Therefore, AIPAC may engage in an unlimited amount of congressional lobby and is free to exchange information with Israeli leadership in carrying out that function. However, it still retains full autonomy in deciding when and how to act (Licht 2002). Its strength and importance in Washington as an interest group led me to use AIPAC as one of my case studies.

From its very beginning, the State of Israel was created under harsh and violent conditions against the wishes of the Arab community. The United States, under Harry Truman, recognized Israel as a state in 1948. Given the tension surrounding Israeli’s statehood, there needed to be a foundation of ongoing US military, economic, and diplomatic support. The US provided a substantial Export-Import Bank loan, but Israel desired a grant from the US. Israel looked for someone to lead a lobbying campaign in Congress and chose Canadian-born actor and journalist named I.L. “Si” Kenen, who already was working closely with Israel’s ambassador to the United Nations. It was not a forgone conclusion that Kenen would act independently of the Israeli government. A senior official at the Israeli embassy argued that he, an Israeli

diplomat, should serve as overall coordinator of the lobbying campaign. However, Kenen successfully resisted Israeli government efforts to seize control of the operations and instead of serving as a foreign agent, he was able to register as a domestic lobbyist. From 1951-1953, Kenen carried out his activity as the Washington representative of the American Zionist Council, a non-profit organization subject to strict limitations on the amount of time its employees were permitted to lobby members of congress. Consequently, in 1954, in order to unshackle himself from these restrictions, Kenen registered his operations as the American Zionist Council of Public Affairs (AZCPA). AZCPA was renamed American Israeli Public Affairs Committee in 1959, in order to encourage participation in the organizations governing bodies of Jewish leaders who indentified themselves as non-Zionist (Licht 2002).

A severe conflict for Israel did occur from 1956 to 1957, before the creation of AIPAC. The Suez Nationalization War took place with France, the U.K., Egypt, the USSR, the U.S, and Israel as the six crisis actors. Egyptian President Nassar decided to nationalize the Suez Canal and limit access to the international waterway that afforded Israel access to its southern port at Eilat (Licht 2002). Israel, along with France and the U.K., responded to this threaten act by capturing the canal. President Eisenhower condemned Israeli aggression and insisted the invading forces pull back. The notion of suspending U.S. aid to Israel was used as a means of forcing them to pull back. However, aid was not suspended as pressure from the Israeli ambassador to the U.N., Abba Eban, got the help of high-ranking officials to influence Capital Hill (Licht 2002). No formal interest groups lobbied on behave of Israel, but



it was a U.N. ambassador. I believe this lack of influence and pressure from a formal interest to advocate on behalf of Israel is what led to the creation of AIPAC.

The Six Day War, fought by Israel and neighboring Arab states Egypt, Syria, and Jordan, helped to create AIPAC into the powerful interest group it is today. With Israel prevailing, the outcome of the war gave Israeli Americans tremendous pride and exultation (Licht 2002). In 1967, AIPAC had been broke and its director, Si Kenen, had to pay for letters, telephone calls, and telegrams out of his own pockets. But, the emotional wave resulting from the Six Day War led to the strengthening of AIPAC as its bank accounts swelled from donations. It would never again be in the red. After the Six Day War, Israel established itself as a credible ally to the U.S., especially against the expansion of soviet influence in the Middle East. There became a general acceptance among U.S. policymakers that close relations with Israel was an asset to the U.S., and AIPAC would be the torchbearer to push their relationship to great heights. Further conflicts would arise for Israel, (The Lebanon War, The *Intifada*, Persian Gulf Crisis) but by this time AIPAC is established as a foreign policy interest group. There were also other groups that formed from the Six Day war. The Israel Task Force of the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council also formed after the Six Day War, further showing the creation of interest groups from conflict (Licht 2002). Given the sequence of conflict events, Suez Canal Campaign and Six Day War, I believe there is a strong casual case that can be made that these conflicts helped create AIPAC and mold it into a foreign policy interest group that it is today.

**Greek:**

The US Census (2009) has the Greek population in America at 1,390,000, categorizing it in the low population group of my typology. The Greek ethnicity was one of the first ethnicities on the "Population by Selected Ancestry Groups" being first counted in 1920. Since then, according to the CIDCM, Greece has had eight severe conflicts regarding homeland security. The majority of Greece's conflicts occurred with Turkey and the island of Cyprus. The 1974 crisis over Cyprus, the third one between Turkey and Greece, commenced the formation of Greek American interest groups.

Cyprus has been an area of contention for thousands of years situated in the southeastern corner of the Mediterranean. Cyprus is within the competing spheres of interest of Turkey, the Arab nations, Greece, and Israel. The population is composed of both ethnic Greek and Turkish Cypriots. Cyprus achieved its independence from Britain in 1960 following a brutal struggle between Greek Cypriots and British forces. Fearing the Greek desire for union with Greece, ethnic Turkish Cypriots tended to side with Britain. Independent Cyprus was governed on a proportional basis between two communities with Great Britain retaining two military Sovereign Base Areas in perpetuity. A treaty of guarantee in 1960 allowed Great Britain, Greece, or Turkey to act jointly or independently to fight any threat to the constitution (Terry 2005).

On July 15, 1974, a coup devised by the military junta in Greece, and implemented by radical Greek Nationalists from the Cypriot National Guard, moved to overthrow President Makarios who narrowly escaped an assassination attempt.

Makarios fled to London, and Nikos Sampson was installed as President. Heavy fighting ensued and Makarios appealed to the UN Security Council for assistance to restore Cypriot independence. The July coup triggered a crisis for Turkey, which proceeded to mount an intervention after the military junta in Greece rejected its demand to restore Makarios as the President of Cyprus. On July 20, 1975, after rejecting pleas from the U.C., the U.K., and the UN for restraint, Turkey invaded Cyprus invoking the 1960 Treaty of Guarantee (Terry 2005). Soon 40,000 Turkish troops were in control of the territory stretching from Kyrenia on the north coast to Nicosia. Fighting was extensive, and there were thousands of casualties. The superiority of Turkish forces and the distance between Greece and Cyprus prevented a Greek counter attack creating a national security crisis for Greece (CIDCM.com). An estimated 200,000 Greek Cypriots fled the newly occupied Turkish territory. United Nations peacekeepers were stationed along the “green line” dividing the two sides. But, Turkey refused to withdraw its forces and in the ensuing years perpetuated the problem by moving in over 400,000 settlers from the Anatolian peninsula. In 1975 the Turkish Cypriot nationalist leader, Rauf Denktash, proclaimed the independence of the Turkish Federate State of Cyprus (Terry 2005).

Although the international community overwhelmingly condemned the Turkish invasion, President Gerald Ford and United States Secretary of State Henry Kissinger viewed the crisis from a Cold War perspective and were mainly concerned that Turkey should remain a close NATO ally and military stronghold against possible Soviet expansion. Although responses to the crisis from the White House were minimal, the response of the Greeks in America was one of concern and a time

to act. Greeks in America demanded that Washington condemn the invasion and for the Turks to withdraw their troops. Historically Greek American interest groups had focused on domestic issues as their main priority, not on issues regarding Greece and Cyprus. But, the Turkish aggression in Cyprus enraged and mobilized Greek Americans (Terry 2005). The American Hellenic Institute (AHI) was founded on August 1, 1974, less than one month from the outbreak of the Cyprus crisis. According to the AHI, the group was formed because of the Turkish invasion of Cyprus “with the illegal use of American-supplied arms in violation of U.S. laws and agreements” (AHI.com). When Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and the United States Congress would not act to enforce U.S. laws on illegal use of American-supplied arms following Turkey’s invasion of Cyprus, AHI was formed to force Congress to act. The AHI coordinated media and letter campaigns and personal visits to congressmen, senators, and white house officials (Terry 2005). The AHI also orchestrated kept a vote count on a daily basis and provided key information to their supporters in the House and Senate. Congress ultimately passed the embargo. This was an historic success for the AHI. According to the AHI Congress’s passage of the embargo “proved what could and can be done when we are in the right and united on policy” (AHI.com). This victory created a solid foundation for the AHI to be a legitimate interest group within America. Over the years, the AHI grew their scope on issues such as the Aegean, FYROM, and the Ecumenical Patriarchate<sup>3</sup>. But, their main key issues remained Cyprus and U.S. relations with both Greece and Turkey.

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<sup>3</sup> FYRO is the Former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia; the Ecumenical Patriarch is the Archbishop of Constantinople and ranks as *primus inter pares* (first among equals) in the Eastern Orthodox communion.

Other interest groups also formed due to the Cyprus crisis, including the American Hellenic Institute Public Affairs Committee (AHIPAC) and The American Hellenic Institute Foundation (AHIF). The AHIPAC was established in early 1975 with a charter similar to AHIs. While both are authorized to lobby, AHIPAC was formed to concentrate on lobbying. AHIPAC is the only Greek American organization registered with the U.S. Congress under the Lobbying Act. The AHIF, established in 1975, is a 501(c)(3) non-profit tax-exempt educational and research organization and is the first “think tank” devoted exclusively to the study of the issues confronting the Greek American Community. The Greek ethnicity forming interest groups around the Cyprus conflict is a case that supports my hypothesis (AHI.com).

**Arab:**

The US Census (2009) has the Arab population in America at 1,680,000, placing it in the high population group of my typology. According to the Census, most people with ancestries originating from Arabic-speaking countries or areas of the world are categorized as Arab. For example, a person is included in the Arab ancestry category if he or she reported being Arab, Egyptian, Iraqi, Jordanian, Lebanese, Middle Eastern, Moroccan, North African, Palestinian, Syrian, and so on. It is important to note, however, that some people from these countries may not consider themselves Arab may not be included in this definition. More specifically, groups such as Kurds and Berbers who are usually not considered Arab were included in the definition. In the same manner, some groups such as Mauritian, Somali, Djiboutian, Sudanese, and Comoros Islander who may consider themselves Arab were not included (De la Cruz 2003). According to the CIDCM, Arab countries

have had forty-seven conflicts regarding their homeland security. This was by far the most conflict for any ethnicity in my study, which could be because of the numerous ethnicities that are under the Arab ethnicity.

Although there is no official Arab lobby in the United States, organizations have been identified as working heavily on Arab Issues (Janbek 2008). In recent times, the National Arab American Association (NAAA), the American-Arab Anti Discrimination Committee (ADC), and the Arab American Institute are all examples of organizations that have become politically involved and play significant roles in defining the Arab interest groups and lobby in America.

The NAAA, which was founded in 1972, became heavily involved in lobbying for the Middle East and U.S. policies affecting the region, and was at its peak in the early 1980s. The NAAA eventually merged with the ADC in 2000 forming the NAAA-ADC. The ADC, founded in 1980 by former Senator Jim Abourezk, is a grassroots organization dedicated mainly to civil rights (ADC.com). In addition to the ADC, another significant part of the Arab lobby is the Arab American Institute (AAI), which is a non-profit non-partisan national organization founded in 1985 (AAI.com). The AAI promotes both domestic civil rights, within the US, and internationally on issues relating to U.S. Middle East foreign policy. Internationally, the AAI focuses on U.S. Arab relations, Iraq, Palestine, and Darfur (Janbek 2008). There were multiple international conflicts that occurred leading up to the formation of the AAI. From 1980-1984, there were twelve conflicts that threatened homeland security that involved Arab countries. Even with the numerous conflicts that preceded the formation of the AAI, their policy goals and objectives were focused more towards

domestic issues within the US rather than towards their mother countries. According to their website, the AAI was established in 1985 to promote “Arab American participation in the U.S. electoral system” and to advocate for the “domestic and policy concerns” of that demographic (AAI.com). This may have happened because the conflicts that occurred were between different Arab nations. Such as the case in 1983 where Sudan, Egypt, and Libya were enmeshed in a crisis. Libya had built up their military forces and there was a perception in Khartoum and Cairo of a Libyan plan to overthrow the Numeiri regime. Sudan and Egypt both placed their forces on high alert, and President Mubarak warned the U.S. of an impending Libyan attack (CIDCM.com). This is a scenario where three Arab nations are at conflict amongst each other, which might have not stirred Arab American unrest greatly enough for the AAI to focus on international issues.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the AAI shifted their organization from focusing solely on domestic issue to now both domestic and international issues. It is not until Arab nations have conflicts with non-Arab nations when the AAI reforms and has a foreign policy emphasis advocating a balanced U.S. Middle East foreign policy and supporting development in the Arab World (EBS). The first conflict that did not involve two Arab nations was the first *Intifada* in 1987 shortly after the creation of the AAI. The *Intifada* was a Palestinian uprising against the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories. The Intifada offered the AAI new leverage within the US because it was grabbing the attention of the American public. Hence, AAI’s 1988 campaign for political inclusion and a debate on U.S. Middle East policy was galvanized by the advent of the Palestinian *Intifada* (Marrar 2009). A 1988

publication distributed by the AAI led the increased calls for separate statehood when on the front-page it demanded "Palestine: statehood Now" (Marrar 2009). In 1992, the AAI, along with other pro-Arab organizations, held their annual Arab American Leadership Conference conferences. Since its inauguration, this conference has highlighted and focused on domestic issues facing the Arab American community. However, for this year, the focus had changed to supporting the Palestinian right to self-determination and opposing a \$10 billion in house loan guarantees to Israel (Willford 1992). Prominent political members attended the conference including Republican presidential challenger Patrick Buchanan and representatives of the presidential campaigns of Democratic Sen. Robert Kerrey (D-NE), Arkansas Gov. Bill Clinton, and former California Gov. Jerry Brown. The first Intifada was the international crisis that transformed the AAI from a solely domestic interest group to one that focuses on both domestic and foreign issues.

The next international conflict involving an Arab nation and non-Arab nation was the Gulf war between Iraq and the US in August of 1990. The AAI, heavily dependent on Gulf connections, maneuvered uneasily between supporting U.S. intervention to restore the government of Kuwait and requiring American consistency toward Israel and the Palestinians. The AAI had the following choices: do they choose to support the Kuwaiti side, tacitly supporting US action to expel Iraq through military force? Or do they accept Iraqi invasion and agree to the illegal occupation and annexation of an Arab nation? The AAI took the side of Kuwait and emphasized that US action in the Gulf demonstrated the superpowers resolve to uphold international justice. The fact is that the AAI continued to keep their policy



objective foreign policy based rather than returning back to a domestic interest group following the Intifada.

After the September 11, 2001, attacks on the U.S., pro-Arab Organizations, such as the AAI, were swamped with domestic issues that made it nearly impossible for them to focus lobbying on foreign issues (Marrar 2009). But, in 2002, the U.S., U.K. and Iraq were engaged in an international crisis that escalated to total war and the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq. This conflict once again made brought the AAI's focus on the international stage. The AAI firmly opposed the war in Iraq and advised the White House that military action against Iraq should not be an option. In an interview with the United Press International (UPI 2002), founder and head of the AAI, James Zogby, strongly opposed the Bush administrations war policy Towards Iraq. Zogby stated, " I have argued from the outset that President Bush has not made a case for this war. He and secretary of State Colin Powell have made the case that Iraqi president Saddam Hussein is evil but not why this would make a case for unilateral and pre-emptive American war. When Zogby was asked about the consequence of the war he replied, " When I look at the group currently shaping U.S. policy they are literally destroying the relationships that the United States has long enjoyed as the leader of the Free World. They are dismantling the structures of international diplomacy. They are dismembering our democratic foundations and they are doing immeasurable harm to the image and reputation of American around the world" (UPI 2002). The consequences of the Iraq war for the AAI is that it made the organization take a stronger role in foreign policy, trying to stop the war from occurring.

The first *Intifada* resulted in the reformation of the AAI into an organization that focuses on both domestic and foreign issues. Immediately after the *Intifada*, the Gulf war created a foundation for the organization based on a foreign policy emphasis. Lastly, when the AAI was starting shift back to focusing mainly on domestic issues, the Iraq war brought the organization back to its foreign policy concerns by strongly opposing the war. Although the organization started as purely a domestic self-help group, its transformation to being foreign policy oriented supports my hypothesis.

### **Findings:**

The case studies that I selected support my hypothesis that international conflicts in an ethnic group's mother country causes foreign policy interest groups in the U.S. to form or make existing ones alter their purpose to be foreign policy based.

- The Albanian case study, from the low severity/small population only had one lobby, Albanian American Civic League, representing their interests in Washington. Although there was only one, the Albanian American Civic League was created in response to the crisis triggered in the Balkans by former Serbian dictator Slobodan Milosevic's invasion and occupation of Kosovo.
- The Arab case study confirmed my hypothesis that the high conflict/high population typology would have more foreign policy groups representing them than the low conflict/small population group. The Arab ethnicity had multiple foreign policy interest groups. The Arab case study proved my hypothesis as their

main foreign policy interest group, Arab American Institute, reformed the organizations objective and purpose following the international crises of the Intifada and Gulf War.

- The Swedish case study confirms my hypothesis that the low conflict/high population would have the least amount of foreign policy interest groups. The Swedish ethnicity had zero foreign policy interest groups.
- Greek and Israeli interest groups fit in the last of my types – high conflict/low severity. I hypothesized that this typology would have the most foreign policy oriented interest groups. Indeed, the case study I selected, Greek and Israeli, confirmed this notion. For the Greek case study, I analyzed the American Hellenic Institute, as they are one of the strongest Greek organizations. The Greek case study confirmed my hypothesis because the American Hellenic Institute was created due to the Turkish invasion of Cyprus “with the illegal use of American-supplied arms in violation of U.S. laws and agreements” Lastly, for the Israeli case study, there were many interest groups to choose from, but I chose AIPAC as they are predominantly known to hold significant power and influence on Capital Hill. AIPAC was created from the American Zionist Council of Public Affairs who did not have any say on influencing American Foreign policy. The Suez Canal crisis occurred before and the Six Day War transpired after the creation of AIPAC. These sequences of conflicts can be seen as the cause for the creation and shaping AIPAC into the powerful organization it is today.

## **Conclusion:**

After completing of my study, I am confident in concluding that my hypotheses on the emergence and success of ethnic interest groups, especially as that success relates to foreign policy goals. I found that there is a causal relationship between the threats to an ethnic group internationally, and their co-ethnic country, that drives the creation, or restructuring, of ethnic interest groups domestically. This conclusion may not be sufficient alone to answer my original question, but it is major piece of the puzzle.

There were a few problems I ran into that dealt with the methodology. First, the conflict database that I used, CIDCM, did not have all conflicts that have occurred since WWI. Some of these conflicts that were not included were intrastate wars. There were some conflicts that caused the formation of interest groups, as in the case for Albanians and the Albanian American Civic League. The Civic League was formed due to a conflict, the Kosovo crisis, but the CIDCM did not have it in their database. Second, using the Census as the tool to create my threshold for when to view conflicts for each ethnicity created a problem. Some ethnicities did in fact have interest groups before they were placed on the Census data. This is the case for Israeli's, where AIPAC was created in 1959, but were placed on the Census in 1980. This could be because the Census Bureau change the way it measures its indicated population over the years, and that the importance of an ethnic group is a social construct that fluctuates and that is why one see ethnic groups on the Population by Selected Ancestry Group and Region table one year but not another. If presented with the opportunity to redo my study, I would find an alternative conflict database and another dataset to establish the threshold for my ethnicities.

If given more time to further my research there would be a few things I would look at. First, I would examine the ethnic groups that had no conflicts at all. I used a threshold of one conflict for my low conflict typology, excluding ethnicities with zero conflicts. I would determine whether these ethnicities had any domestic foreign policy interest groups, and if they did, then international conflicts abroad may not be the only variable creating the interest groups. Second, I would examine ethnic groups that fled their homeland and came to the US and formed interest groups, but had a foreign policy on non-intervention in the affairs of their homeland. An example of this is the German American population pushing the U.S. to not intervene in Germany during both WWI and WWII.

The importance of these findings are as the U.S. population continues to grow, so will the immigrant and ethnic population. With the advances in technology, news of events around the world is reported and seen by people all over the world. This allows for ethnic groups to keep informed on events in their co-ethnic countries. The implications of these technological advancements in news media could be that there is a possibility of more groups arising because they have the ability to be more aware of what is occurring in their homeland. Ethnicities will sooner or later create foreign policy based interest groups. The increase in ethnic interest groups will give minority populations more power in agenda setting and foreign policy of the United States. With immigration being already a heated topic within the country, because of economic reason, having ethnic groups with even more influence could create greater animosity.

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