efforts of W.E.B. Du Bois on the outside and Ralph Bunche on the inside are perhaps the best known. Krenn enriches this history by bringing to light the efforts of such pioneers as Rayford Logan, Clifton Wharton, Sr., Terence Todman, Edward Dudley, George McGhee, Carl Rowan, Theodore Brown, and Patricia Roberts Harris to move the nation forward. Joining them in the struggle were a few white allies such as Ambassador Chester Bowles and Assistant Secretary of State for Administration John Peurifoy.

They received no help from the law. With the passage of the Rogers Act in 1924, appointment to the new Foreign Service of the United States would be by “open, competitive examination with promotion strictly on a merit basis” (p. 45). The act was meant to broaden the Foreign Service to include members from places other than Harvard and elite private schools. There were two important exceptions to the act’s democratic aspirations: African Americans and women.

The first African American appointed to a ministerial position was Ebenezer D. Bassett, who was sent to Haiti in 1869. Two years later, J. Milton Turner was named minister to Liberia. Haiti and Liberia, along with the Canary Islands, Madagascar, and the Azores, became the “black circuit” where virtually all African American diplomats were posted. Efforts to break through these segregated postings produced the response that other countries would be unwilling to accept black ambassadors. This argument held despite the lack of any empirical evidence to support it. Ironically, reports Krenn, when African nations began to achieve independence in the late fifties and early sixties, it was argued by some that African nations would resent being assigned African-American ambassadors!

Cold War politics had a profound impact on African American leadership and the foreign policy establishment. Recent works by Penny Von Eschen, Gerald Horne, and Brenda Gayle Plummer examine the efforts to separate domestic civil rights from foreign policy. Yet Krenn contends that the evidence reveals a “great deal of consistency in the African-American analysis of U.S. diplomacy during the Eisenhower period” (p. 68). Particularly after the Little Rock school desegregation conflict in 1957, the attacks in newspapers and magazines began to take on a much more cynical and combative tone. Not coincidentally, Clifton Wharton, Sr., was appointed minister to Romania in 1958.

The election of John F. Kennedy in 1960 brought new hope to civil rights advocates and led to the first White House conference with American black leaders on U.S. foreign policy. Yet while Kennedy devoted more attention to Africa than his predecessors, it was primarily as an arena of significant Cold War rivalry. Even this limited attention declined under Lyndon B. Johnson, who moved Africa to the back burner and actively resisted efforts to form an African-American lobby on Africa. Thus, says Krenn, from Frankin Delano Roosevelt through Johnson, the main line of thinking remained unchanged: “the biggest problem facing the United States in underdeveloped regions such as Africa was communism, not racism; therefore, American propaganda should focus on the East-West, not black-white struggle” (p. 132).

This book lays the foundation for further in-depth studies on black influence in international relations. One would have wished for more stories from some of the diplomatic pioneers Krenn interviewed. Still, his work helps explain why U.S. foreign policy seems adrift in a world without the “evil empire.”

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Timothy N. Thurber’s book is a fine contribution to the growing body of scholarship reevaluating, yet again, the history of American liberalism. That Hubert H. Humphrey’s commitment to civil rights provides a fitting vehicle for such a reevaluation is no surprise, but Thurber is unusually good at showing how politics and government actually work. The central thread of his argument is that while Humphrey supported equal access to public accommodations and voting rights as these became the dominant legislative issues in the 1950s and 1960s, he remained convinced that African Americans needed government help to advance economically at least as much.

As mayor in the late 1940s, Humphrey brought a fair employment practices ordinance and human rights commission to Minneapolis. He led other “crackpots” (as President Harry S. Truman called them) in pressing for a strong civil rights plank at the 1948 Democratic national convention. As a senator, he urged Democrats to make jobs and civil rights priority issues, and he served as floor manager for the Civil Rights Act of 1964. That act, along with the Voting Rights Act of 1965, provided the “ground rules by which we can wage the struggle” for a more just society, Humphrey said (p. 185). For Humphrey himself, the struggle got no easier after he became Lyndon B. Johnson’s vice president in 1965. On the one hand, many African-American activists accused him of sacrificing militancy to ambition. On the other hand, Johnson denied Humphrey real authority to combat job discrimination and school segregation. Showing how government worked—or did not work—in the world outside White House claims and exhortations, Thurber gives a poignant account of Humphrey’s efforts to prod officials and businessmen into providing jobs for black teenagers during the volatile summers of the late 1960s. Ironically supported by southern white segregationists, who now saw him as a lesser threat than Robert

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began it—as a party outsider. While Democrats in the
budget could “give every American a good job” (p.
state, Humphrey, who returned to the Senate in 1971,
integration, black nationalism, and urban violence.
late 1970s grew increasingly skeptical of the welfare
insisted that a country with a $100 billion military
Humphrey ended his career as he
Humphrey-Hawkins bill, which would have
Ironically, too, Humphrey ended his career as he
1968 presidential nomination but lost to Richard
mental, was watered down into a symbolic admonition
This book's flaws appear when Thurber strays from
the thick record he has accumulated and indulges in
 ideological or methodological asides. For instance, he
supposes that the political power wielded by conserva­
tives went unnoticed by historians until roughly five
years ago, and cannot resist swipes at identity politics
as the bane of contemporary liberalism. Indeed, his
animus to identity politics leads him to exaggerate the
differences between the “old” liberalism and the
“new.” Liberals did not write affirmative action into
law before the 1960s, but if Democratic presidents,
mayors, and ward leaders had not informally hired
men and women on the basis of religion and ethnicity,
there would have been no New Deal coalition. These
shortcomings are minor compared to Thurber’s fresh
insights and reminders of the insights historians have
misplaced. During the 1950s, for example, President
Dwight D. Eisenhower received more than one third of
the African-American vote, many Republicans sup­
ported civil rights legislation, and Humphrey, among
others, feared that the Democrats would lose out
politically if they lagged behind on the issue. Although
the Cold War probably impeded the civil rights move­
ment overall by giving segregationists the added
advantage, his resistance efforts were less successful
than those of many other southern governors.

In Houston, many residents strongly opposed racial
mixing, but the city was less united in its opposition to
school desegregation than many other southern cities.
In 1957, a mere two weeks after federal district court
judge Ben Connally ruled that the Houston schools
were unconstitutionally segregated, Houston voters
elected the more racially liberal of two mayoral can­
didates with over sixty-three percent of the vote. One
year later, at the height of the city’s struggle with the
school desegregation issue, Houston voters elected
their first African-American school board member,
Hattie Mae White, a forceful proponent of school
desegregation, and re-elected the racially liberal
Walter Kemmerer, former president of the University
of Houston, even though African Americans com­
prised less than twenty-five percent of the city’s pop­
ulation.

When Houston began its decidedly token school
integration in the fall of 1960, there was virtually no
violence, in sharp contrast to the simultaneous and far
more tumultuous desegregation of the New Orleans
schools. As Kellar notes, “Houston’s business and
political leaders acquiesced in limited school desegre­
gation, because the alternative—a city disrupted by