

influence on American (foreign) policy of minority groups of foreign origin. The author's basic thesis is that Poland, partitioned "forever" in the eighteenth century, could be revived only by a historical miracle: a war resulting in the simultaneous elimination of all three partitioning Powers. In spite of the "miracle," in the form of the war which broke out in 1914, Poland's independence would not have been fully assured, were it not for the support given the Poles by Woodrow Wilson.

Mr. Gerson examines, on the basis of an impressive amount of material in English and Polish, the factors which made an advocate of Poland's independence of a President of the United States who, in his *History of the American People* (1902), admittedly a hastily written work, had referred to immigrants from Poland and other parts of Eastern Europe as "men of the meaner sort." Against the background of Wilson's professed abomination of European power politics, of which the partition of Poland seemed a classic example, the influence of the magic personality of the pianist, Paderewski, could easily assert itself. Incomparably more important, however, appears to the author to have been the organized pressure of Polish Americans in connection with the elections of 1916. At the Paris Peace Conference the President found himself in the rôle of "patron saint of Poland" in spite of the realization that he had become involved in the support of demands which violated as many "Wilsonian" principles as they upheld.

There are some over-simplifications in the volume. The historical introduction is of necessity sketchy, but there is no excuse for the insertion in a scholarly study of the statement that Kosciuszko was "an aide on Washington's staff" and even a "personal friend" of the first President. As a matter of fact, the two hardly ever met during Kosciuszko's first visit to this country, and, on the occasion of his return, Kosciuszko declined an invitation to visit Mount Vernon.

SAMUEL L. SHARP

The Struggle for Poland. By H. Peter Stern. Washington, D. C.: Public Affairs Press, 1953. pp. 79. \$2.00.

This short book offers a concise, readable, and carefully documented account of the struggle from 1939 to 1947 between the East and the West for the control of Poland. In this struggle the Polish Communist groups and the Soviet Union were arrayed against the Polish Government-in-Exile, Great Britain and the United States, and the future of the country was determined as much by "Big Three" agreements and by interventions as by the action of the Poles themselves.

The author's purposes are twofold: first, to present a succinct factual summary of the important events of the period; and, secondly, to appraise critically the rôle of the United States in this diplomatic war. Such factual study is needed, the author suggests, because most accounts are

incomplete and commonly fail to separate facts from evaluation, and new appraisal is needed because most appraisals have tended to be either justifications of past actions (in memoirs) or accusations against past or present political opponents. Such appraisals have tended to fall into one of two extreme schools of thought: the first, a "betrayal" school which condemns as appeasement all the attempts to bargain with the Soviet Union, apparently assuming that the United States could unilaterally have imposed whatever solution it desired; and the second, a "nothing-would-have-made-any-difference" school which contends that once the Red Army entered Poland all hope for a settlement vanished.

Mr. Stern rejects both of these simplified appraisals, as largely motivated by political biases. The errors that were made, he maintains, resided less in mistaken overall policy than in failure to plan in detail the methods and tactics for putting such policy into effect. In this struggle, as on other occasions, the American public and American diplomats overestimated the effectiveness of "formal" or "verbal" solutions, insufficiently supported by sanctions. The lesson to be learned from the defeat, the author intimates, is the need for more careful planning, not only of overall policy, but of its timing and application in the specific situation. He makes his case with clarity and persuasion. He does not deal with the constitutionality of the much controverted Presidential agreements.

MYRES S. McDUGAL

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* Mention here neither assures nor precludes later review.