

Abstracts

Roles and Reasons in Foreign Policy Decision Making

MARTIN HOLLIS AND STEVE SMITH

Two major theories are advanced in the literature to explain foreign policy behaviour, the Rational Actor and the Bureaucratic Politics theories. This article examines them, taking as a case study the decision by the United States in April 1980 to attempt the rescue of the American hostages in Iran. Both theories are found to have too mechanical a concept of action. Also their separate defects cannot be remedied by combining them, because they have incompatible ideas of power. The article therefore develops a concept of rational role playing, which relates the imperatives and powers of office to the perceptions and judgements of individuals. A moral is drawn not only for the analysis of foreign policy but also for the understanding of politics at large.

pp. 269–286

Politics and Markets: Corporate Money in American National Elections

THEODORE J. EISMEIER AND PHILIP H. POLLOCK III

The last decade has witnessed important changes in the role of business in American politics, including the remarkable growth of corporate political action committees. Far from being monolithic, corporate PACs exhibit considerable diversity in their strategic choices between Democrats and Republicans and between incumbents and non-incumbents. These differences we find, in an analysis of the behaviour of corporate PACs in the House and Senate elections of 1980 and 1982, are related to the variable nature of business–government relations in the United States. PACs of firms in industries that are beneficiaries of old-style economic regulation tend to be more incumbent-oriented and less partisan in their campaign contributions. PACs of firms in industries that are the self-proclaimed victims of new-style social regulation tend to be more inclined to adopt strategies of opposition. However, all corporate PACs – accommodationists and policy opponents alike – adjusted their behaviour in response to the different strategic environments of the 1980 and 1982 elections.

pp. 287–309

Capital Markets and Central–Local Politics in Britain

ALBERTA SBRAGIA

Local government borrowing in Britain involves a ‘game’ played by central and local government in the financial markets that provide many of the loans used by local authorities to finance capital investment. The Treasury attempts to regulate sophisticated local financial manoeuvres so as to protect the centre’s own borrowing activity; helped by members of the financial community, local officials, in turn, use the markets to circumvent the Treasury’s regulations. Local officials, however, play the central–local ‘game’ in different ways. ‘Entrepreneurs’ test the limits of the central–local relationship as conventionally understood, while ‘administrators’ bargain within that relationship.

At least where government borrowing is involved, the co-existence of the ‘mixed economy’ with differentiated levels of government leads to a process in which each level of government uses the financial community to maximize its interests relative to other levels of government. In this sense, politics within the public sector draws on the private sector for both financial resources and expertise.

pp. 311–339

A Theory of Political Socialization: Institutional Support and Deradicalization in Britain

DONALD D. SEARING

This article constructs and tests a socialization theory that synthesizes two partial theories that have previously been treated as unrelated. One is ‘pluralistic’ in origin and concerns institutional support for procedural rules of the game. The other is associated with ‘left-wing’ commentaries and addresses deradicalization in politicians’ orientations towards public policy. My synthesis builds upon the fact that these partial theories are driven by similar socialization principles which accompany movement from one role in the political system to another. British data on general publics, attentive publics, parliamentary candidates and Members of Parliament are used to put the new socialization theory to the test. They are also used to assess the force of the main exogenous variables, selection effects and ideological interventions, which meddle with the theory and muddle its consequences.

pp. 341–376

Erratum – We apologise for the printer’s error on the back cover of Volume 16:2. For October 1986 read April 1986.