

Strategic Responses to Conflict in the 1980s

William J. Taylor, Jr.
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Gerrit W. Gong

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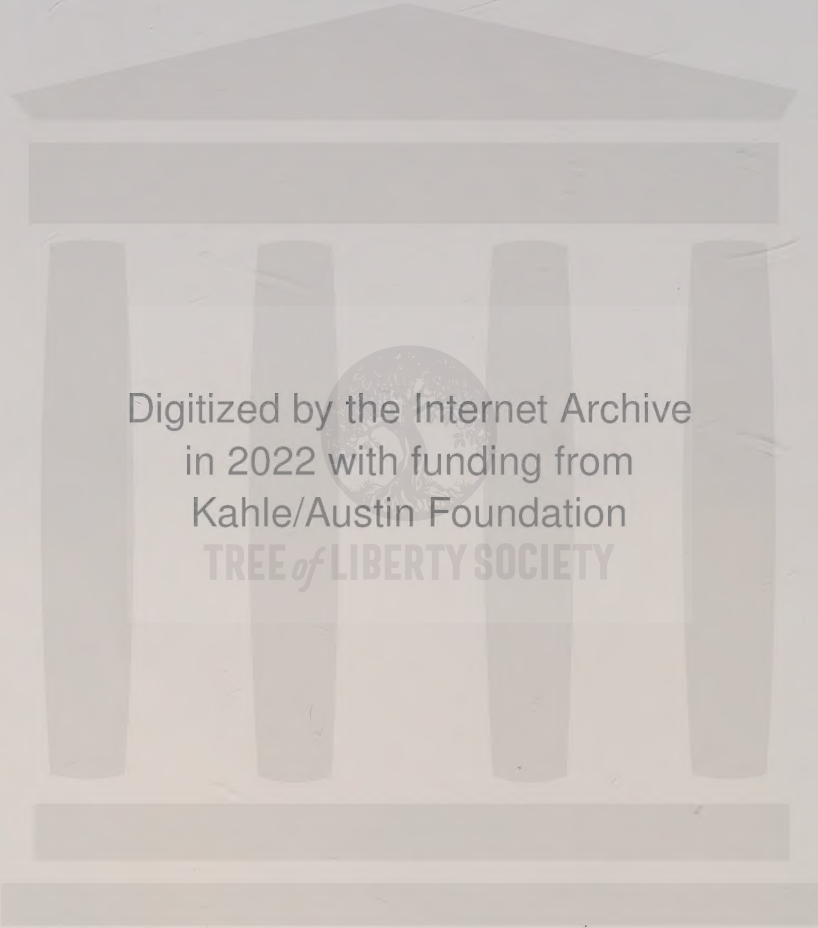
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**Strategic
Responses
to Conflict
in the 1980s**



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Strategic Responses to Conflict in the 1980s



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Foreword

The Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) hosted a conference of distinguished functional and area specialists in the politico-military field and of statesmen concerned with national security strategy to ponder the outlook for world conflict in the 1980s. We examined the major contemporary causes of conflict and the likely nature and intensity of violence through the decade. We looked at the propensity of conflict within and between specific states and on the oceans and in outer space, and we developed a panorama of possible conflict scenarios. The papers, proceedings, and conclusions of that conference were assembled into a book, *The Future of Conflict in the 1980s*.

The main conclusions of that book are that the balance of strategic deterrence between East and West will survive the decade on a sufficiently high plateau of credibility to preclude high-intensity warfare between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Warsaw Pact. Despite vulnerabilities in the Western deterrence array, both nuclear and conventional, there was an uncontested consensus that the Kremlin oligarchy will not become confident enough of success to risk Armageddon. Indeed it was felt that the Soviets will seek to avoid direct military confrontation with the West, and particularly with the United States, in any theater during the coming decade. There is, of course, no reason for complacency in this conclusion, for its validity will depend on the quality of Western forces and on Soviet perceptions of Western unity and resolve.

There can be no complacency, either, about the broad spectrum of conflict that was foreseen for the 1980s at the 1981 conference. Soviet proxies on the prowl in Southeast Asia and the Caribbean, squabbles over offshore oil, irredentism on three continents, arms races among unstable and impoverished governments, succession crises, palace coups, subversion, and terrorism—all these and more are on the crowded agenda of violence for the rest of the decade. It does not much help that most of this conflict will be of relatively low intensity and geographically distant—indeed south of the Tropic of Cancer—for vital U.S. interests, and ultimately the security of the nation, are no less at stake in the Third World than in Central Europe. The United States could slowly strangle if its access to essential raw materials and valuable markets were gradually interdicted and its lines of communications cut.

Direct U.S. military intervention in Third World conflicts should, and probably will, be a rarity. But as a nation with an inescapable world leadership role and in the defense of its own national survival, the United States will always have an interest, sometimes a profound one, in the containment

and eventual outcome of conflict anywhere. It will, in short, need a conscious policy to deal with virtually every type of conflict scenario and enough power of the right kind, in the right places, to give those policies a chance to work. It will also need to anticipate conflict and be prepared with an array of political, economic, and military programs to avert or minimize it.

The United States is ill prepared today to address this challenge. In the military dimension, its strategic nuclear deterrence system is essentially irrelevant to Third World conflict. It is barely credible for its main mission, and it does not, and cannot, deter aggression in the Third World. By and large, U.S. conventional forces are configured, equipped, and trained for the high-intensity European battlefield. The conventional inferiority of NATO to the Warsaw Pact is perhaps the most vexing national security problem in this decade, but its solution would not help in confronting Third World contingencies. There the United States needs smaller, lighter, more specialized forces with greater strategic mobility and more imaginative forms of tactical mobility. Its conventional forces for Third World roles will also need to master the art of unconventional warfare to help root out covert insurgents, to harden strategic installations against terrorist attack, and to conduct psychological operations against an enemy whose mental processes and motivation are often ill understood. The U.S. Army, ten years after Vietnam, has largely lost whatever touch it may have had in this art.

In the politico-economic dimension, the United States is also poorly positioned today to do what must be done. Foreign aid is the first casualty of budgetary stringency. U.S. foreign investors and traders are far less venture-some than they were in the 1950s and 1960s. The public at large is less internationally focused, and continues to be baffled and disenchanted by a complex world where traditional values no longer seem to apply. There is little money, and less political will, for the kind of economic and security assistance programs that the United States will need to conduct in the Third World if it hopes to contribute measurably to a solution of its conflict-generating problems and to insulate allies there from Soviet or proxy blandishment, pressure, and subversion.

In a word, the United States is vulnerable to the challenges of the 1980s. It and its allies are in danger of being outpaced in strategic nuclear weapons; its conventional force posture is inferior and unbalanced; it lacks sophistication in unconventional warfare; it is dangerously dependent on unreliable foreign sources for energy and minerals; it is losing ground in world markets; its banking community is perilously overextended in its overseas lending; and its alliance system suffers from deep and recurrent divisions.

The United States can glean some comfort from the fact that its Soviet adversaries also have vulnerabilities. The Soviet economy is pervasively inefficient; its agriculture falls far short of meeting needs; its hard currency

indebtedness is substantial and growing; its proxies and clients are impoverished. Moreover, the USSR has powerful foes on two fronts; its allies are restive or downright rebellious; and its ideology is eroding under the pressure of internal contradictions.

Thus we have today a rough and precarious balance between East and West in terms of both power and vulnerability. Balance, in the abstract, is a healthy state. It makes the big war unappealing. But a balance in power and vulnerability in a dynamic world and at the present high levels of both is about as unstable as two elephants in a canoe. To stay afloat we must cut weight with exquisite care to maintain the essential balance.

The U.S.-Soviet strategic balance and the offsetting vulnerabilities that shape it have bulked large on the CSIS agenda since its inception. We have watched the waterline rise on the canoe. We now believe that Soviet vulnerabilities, to say nothing of our own, have reached sufficiently high levels to impel both sides to the negotiating table. Yet, the table in Geneva was vacant at the time of this writing. A modest display of political will on both sides could serve to reinvigorate negotiations.

But before we get too far down the road of give and take, the United States urgently needs an overarching grand strategy to set its priorities and take account of rapidly changing world conditions. Such a strategy must encompass not only the U.S. military posture but also, and more broadly, the whole array of economic, political, and diplomatic policies and programs by which the nation interfaces with the world community. To pursue such a strategy effectively, it also needs to organize its policymaking institutions to be mutually supportive rather than self-protective and to ensure that all agencies apply their assets and capacities efficiently and synergistically to the common goal in a bipartisan approach.

We hope that this book will contribute to the process of developing wise strategies and policies. That is its intent, and that has been the overarching goal of the two-year project from which it emerged.

Amos A. Jordan
President
The Center for Strategic
and International Studies,
Georgetown University

Preface

This book is the second phase of a project initiated in 1981 by Donald Kerr, the director of Los Alamos National Laboratory, and David M. Abshire and Amos A. Jordan, at that time president and chief operating officer, respectively, of the Georgetown University Center for Strategic and International Studies. The first product of this study, *The Future of Conflict in the 1980s*, compiled the current wisdom of experts concerning challenges the United States will face in the 1980s. The overwhelming consensus of that volume was that the United States will be confronted in the future primarily by threats in the form of low-intensity conflict—special intelligence operations, psychological warfare, insurgencies, terrorism, and proxy wars—for which it is ill prepared.

This book suggests strategic alternatives to deal with those and other projected conflicts. Its genesis in the fall of 1982 was a conference hosted by CSIS, "Strategic Responses to Conflict in the 1980s." More than one hundred analysts were distributed among fifteen panels where conference papers were presented, discussed, and critiqued. The topics for the panel discussions were outlined by the CSIS conference director, William J. Taylor, with the advice and assistance of Steven A. Maaranen from Los Alamos and a CSIS steering committee chaired by Walter Laqueur. The panel discussions gave the authors valuable insights for preparing their final manuscripts.

Although it is impossible to list all the valuable contributions by the staffs of the Los Alamos National Laboratory and CSIS who put this book together, we would like to acknowledge especially the efforts of those who were the mainstays of the total effort. Paul Ingholt was responsible for administration of the entire effort: collecting the manuscripts, editorial assistance, proofreading, and helping to coordinate the editors' work. Paul Cole and Shiela Brammer provided invaluable assistance in various management functions for significant phases of the project. Mary Park skillfully managed the conference functions. We owe many thanks to Ron Blais and Lynda Husband for their typing and word processing assistance and management. The rapporteurs' reports were most useful in writing the conclusion; special thanks to Jamie Bell, Paul Cole, Martha Gordon, James Hayes, Mary Losty, Wati Mamoer, Mary Jean Marken, Michael Mermelstein, Jeffrey Sands, Gerard Sears, and David Wallace.

During publication of this book, a very dear friend and esteemed colleague, Dr. Alvin J. Cottrell, passed away in February 1984. It is with heartfelt pride that we offer his chapter on "U.S. Maritime Responses" as one of his last published works.

Our goal in this effort has been to provide a better understanding of U.S. strategic alternatives concerning conflict situations involving U.S. national interests in the 1980s. We hope that this book will be useful to students and practitioners of the art of national security strategy.



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Introduction: Conference on Strategic Response to Conflict

The November 1981 CSIS conference, “The Future of Conflict in the 1980s” examined the potential tripwires of violent and nonviolent conflict around the globe in the 1980s and attempted to pinpoint the likely locale, nature, and intensity of interstate and intrastate warfare that might be triggered by these tripwires. The focus was broad. The participants looked not only at conventional, chemical, and nuclear air-land wars but also at the lower levels of conflict—psychological warfare, civil unrest, terrorism, and insurgency—and at the oceans and space, both as causes and as arenas of conflict. We developed a plethora of possible conflict scenarios on this wide-ranging stage, most of them in the Third World. A summary of the 1981 conference is included in this book.

CSIS then moved to phase II of the project, to study *The Strategic Responses to Conflict in the 1980s*. Our purpose was to devise alternative U.S. and Western strategies to deter or contain incipient conflicts or to shape their outcomes to the best advantage. Studies were produced, critiqued, and refined on possible strategies in such fields as resource competition, nuclear nonproliferation, nuclear deterrence and warfare, the U.S. interface with China and the Soviet Union, chemical and biological warfare, security assistance, ocean and space warfare, and responses to low-intensity warfare in five world regions.

Phase II culminated in a conference at CSIS on September 22–23, 1982, which brought together 100 people from government, the military, academia, and the diplomatic community. Featured were a keynote address by James R. Schlesinger and speeches by Zbigniew Brzezinski and Congressman Newt L. Gingrich. This book is a compilation of those speeches and of the principal study papers. A final chapter attempts to synthesize and correlate the various threads of strategy emerging from the functional and regional papers into something approaching a national strategic perspective.

CSIS recently has completed phase III of this project under the theme “Modern Weapons: Third World Motivations and Acquisition and Absorption Capabilities.” Phase III seeks to project the nature and quantities of weapons that will be acquired and/or can be effectively absorbed by the Third World in the generation ahead. Its conclusions are based on forward-looking and penetrating studies of eleven major Third World countries that are dominant powers in their regions and whose military capabilities and behavior are germane to a U.S. global security strategy.

The focus of phase II was on strategic responses to threats to world peace in the 1980s. The overarching conclusion was that the United States is ill prepared to address the ubiquitous scenarios of Third World violence impending for the 1980s. As Dr. Schlesinger put it in his keynote address, "The fundamentals reflect a substantial decline in American power" since Vietnam. The decline goes beyond a mere deterioration in the superpower military balance. The United States also lost its predominant economic position, and perceptions of U.S. vacillation, ineptitude, and bellicosity have eroded the nation's status as unquestioned leader of the noncommunist world.

The ground current of popular support in the United States for a stronger defense, which had much to do with Republican success in 1980, seems now to be slipping away and is being replaced by an equally strong ground current in favor of a nuclear freeze and negotiated arms reduction. The U.S. strategic response to the threat in El Salvador, for example, though hardly a costly or aggressive response, has been viewed with skepticism on Capitol Hill and has been criticized at home and abroad as failing to resolve the underlying social and economic problems of Central America. In brief, the United States is no longer regarded as either omniscient or omnipotent.

Thus there are formidable constraints on the implementation of the U.S. national peacekeeping strategy, if indeed there is such a strategy. The United States lacks the right kind of power in the right places. It lacks a national consensus as to how that power should be used. And it lacks the global leadership stature to enjoin the unquestioning support of its allies to its peacekeeping initiatives.

All of these constraints arguably could be overcome if the United States had a long-term national security strategy, clearly articulated and generally endorsed by both its people and its allies. Such a strategy would tell leaders what hardware and manpower it needs (and does not need); it would give allies the U.S. vision of tomorrow's world, which they could share if they chose; and it would make it clear to adversaries that although U.S. security goals are essentially defensive, the nation will still fight for them if they are threatened.

Is a democratic society capable of devising a long-term security strategy and sticking to it? Congressman Gingrich thinks not. In his address to the conference, he stated that plans will not work in Washington. This is a city, he said, where consistency will always be frustrated by expediency and where the planning process is distorted by the lamentable U.S. predilection for self-delusion. He was especially critical of the so-called camel's nose technique employed by the services in budget hearings, by which an expensive new weapons system of dubious relevance to security needs is pulled piece-

meal through the Congress with misleading representations about its capabilities and out-year cost until, billions of dollars later, it must be shot down halfway through the door when the true enormity of its price tag and the embarrassing deficiencies of its performance become manifest. Mr. Gingrich argues persuasively for a system that would impose intellectual honesty on the services by having each proposed new weapon challenged by a rival service. If it is an air-delivered antisubmarine device, for example, let the navy show how it can be evaded.

Self-delusion is certainly part of the problem, and Congressman Gingrich's proposal should be part of the answer, but it does not gainsay the need for a consistent and realistic national security policy to provide the skeleton on which U.S. military procurement and mobilization plans can be fleshed out. This will not be easy because the U.S. government is inherently episodic. As Dr. Brzezinski put it in his remarks to the conference, "It has become almost unfashionable to talk about American foreign policy—one talks about Carter's foreign policy, or Reagan's foreign policy or Nixon's foreign policy." The United States must, he went on to say, create a wider international system, deemphasizing its preoccupation with Europe and addressing Soviet challenges and other potentially dangerous situations elsewhere in the world. It must strive for the "progressive disengagement of American and Soviet power from Central Europe." This will require some far-reaching changes, not only in geographic focus, but also in the decision-making process. The nation needs more organized planning, centralized under the president but with the active participation of the opposition. There is no other way to achieve the continuity that is so essential but is now absent.

A key element in any U.S. security strategy for the 1980s will be the management of its relationship with the Soviet Union and China. This strategic triangle epitomizes the major conflicting forces in today's world: the East, the West, and the Third World. The synergistic interplay within this triangle will profoundly influence the course of human conflict over the rest of this century, although some conflict will doubtless occur without the participation of any of the three protagonists.

There appeared to be a consensus that the balance of power and deterrence inherent in the strategic triangle plays a valuable stabilizing role in Asia and, to a lesser extent, elsewhere in the Eastern Hemisphere. The role of the People's Republic of China (PRC) as hypotenuse between the superpowers is the real key and endows the PRC with a power to influence events far beyond that conferred by its relatively modest military capabilities and its primitive and vulnerable national economy. If the PRC were to develop too close a relationship with the United States and the West, the Soviets might be impelled into preemptive military adventures in Asia while

they still had a relative power advantage. And a Sino-Soviet rapprochement could encourage the Soviets, with their Asian frontiers secure, to strike westward—in Africa, the Americas, or even Europe.

These possible dilemmas impose on Washington the need to pursue a balanced diplomatic strategy with Beijing, one that leaves wide open the possibility for China to achieve its “four modernizations” internally without prejudicing its independent political position externally. In this context, a measure of aloofness, and even occasional friction, in the Sino-U.S. relationship is not necessarily a bad thing. Above all the United States should eschew the temptation to outbid its Western friends for Chinese favor. It may be that U.S. objectives for China in the next century can be best served by an open door to the West as a whole.

Another implication of the strategic triangle equation is that it is uncomfortably vulnerable to political change in Beijing. It is a plausible premise that a China that is meeting its developmental goals will be less vulnerable to a radical change of leadership than one that is not. Thus the United States has a strategic, as well as an economic, interest in China’s prosperity and growth.

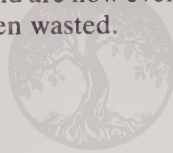
A major purpose of this conference, and of the broader project of which it was a part, has been to look broadly at world conflict and strategy. If we can generalize about anything in the field of man’s inhumanity to man, it is that we will find increasingly exotic ways of doing each other in, and our arenas will not be confined to the earth’s surface. The ocean depths and space have values that are now attainable. It is predictable that people will fight for, and in, these new dimensions and, perhaps more imminently, use them as platforms for attack against surface targets. Thus the conference examined closely what the Heritage Foundation has called “high frontier,” the concept of substituting (or supplementing) nuclear deterrence with a space-based antiballistic missile defense. The pros and cons were ably championed on both sides, and predictably there was no consensus. That the debate was timely has since been amply demonstrated by President Reagan’s announcement in late March 1983 of his administration’s plans to explore more deeply the high frontier concept.

The overriding thrust of the conference, however, was on conflict in the 1980s, and that translates rather clearly into low-intensity violence in the Third World. This is the kind of conflict the United States is now trying to cope with in El Salvador and the Lebanon. This is the kind of conflict for which the U.S. strategic response is still tentative and ill formed and for which its military doctrine, systems, and force structures are still ill adapted. It is politics turned nasty, and it avails little to contain the nastiness if the underlying political compulsions are left unaddressed. In such conflict, political science must play at least as important a role in strategy and even in

tactics as military science. And in all too many cases, Third World violence is superpower conflict by remote control. Thus a strong U.S. move in El Salvador might be countered by a strong Soviet move in Berlin or Thailand.

Above all, we must deal with the fact that the U.S. strategic response to a Third World conflict invariably will evoke a political conflict in the United States. The distinctions between friend and foe and right and wrong in the Third World are always blurred, and even when there is a consensus as to which side is the ally, there will be profound disagreement about the appropriate response.

The only simple truth about world conflict in the 1980s is that it will not be simple. It will be complex in the issues that underlie it, in the motivations of the actors directly and indirectly engaged, in the range of hardware and tactics that might be employed, and in the nature of alternative solutions. No conference and no book can convert complexity into simplicity. We have tried to illuminate the complexity from a few new angles and thereby to facilitate more sophisticated analysis. We have sought to illuminate as well the array of strategic options available in the constraint of world conflict and in the defense of national interest. If both the dangers and opportunities facing us in this decade and beyond are now even fractionally more discernible, this effort will not have been wasted.



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Part I
U.S. National
Security
Perspectives for
the 1980s



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1

The Historic Lessons of Self-Deception

Newton L. Gingrich

A salient lesson of Vietnam, and indeed of all history, is that societies that lie to themselves die and that free societies have a reasonable propensity to lie to themselves. Soldiers must fight where and when they are told. The responsibility of politicians is the higher and more central one of judging which wars must be fought. And the first principle for politicians in exercising this judgment is that they should avoid, if at all possible, exposing soldiers and the citizenry to wars that cannot be won.

In the sixteenth century, Spain's King Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor and the most powerful ruler in the Western world between Charlemagne and Napoleon, had all the resources he needed to crush either the Protestants, or the French, or the Turks, but he could not cope with all three. The result was a half-century of decaying military power from which neither the Holy Roman Empire nor Spain ever fully recovered. No nation has unlimited power. History will punish overextension with vicious and abrupt collapse.

A second lesson of history is that addressing the wrong problem can be fatal. The British were right to build a colonial army in the 1920s; their problem then was in the colonies. But by 1935 the problem had shifted to Europe, and the British were perilously slow in addressing the new threat. They deluded themselves with outmoded notions that battleships were more needed than aircraft carriers and that foot soldiers were more potent than tanks. In 1940 they were not ready for the German air attack, and they were not ready for the U-boat.

A third lesson is to avoid solving only part of the problem. The French in 1940 could handle a frontal attack but not an envelopment. In 1941 Hitler had the firepower and mobility for a breakthrough on the Soviet front but lacked the logistics to sustain it.

A fourth and final lesson is that strategy is supreme over tactics. The Wehrmacht was a great fighting machine, but it lost in two world wars because the political leaders were pursuing a faulty strategy.

The United States has no cause to be defensive about its performance in the first three decades after World War II. By and large it preserved world peace, helped save Western Europe, the Republic of Korea, and Japan from communism, fostered the decolonization of most of the Third World, contained the Soviet bloc, and earned wide respect from its economic, cultural,

and political concepts. It invested in survival and growth, a strategy that paid off.

But today we face a new world with new challenges. Today's world is cut three ways. There is a developed Western world, which shares common democratic values, a relatively high living standard, and a determination to preserve both in the best way it can. There is an Eastern world (with Asian and American surrogates), professedly communist, which considers prosperous democracy to be an ideological aberration threatening to the discipline and self-denial on which the communist system depends—and an aberration that must thus be aggressively challenged and discredited. Finally there is the Third World, much of it recently decolonized, which crosses the political and economic spectra from dictatorship to democracy and from wealth to poverty. Basically the countries of this Third World seek to pursue their national destinies aloof from the East-West competition but with help, as appropriate, from either or both of the adversaries and from each other. In the simplest possible terms, the new world we now face is one of stalemated confrontation between East and West, combined with a struggle between them for resources, markets, ideological commitment, and geo-strategic position in the Third World. The stalemate is fragile, and the struggle in the Third World could be bloody, even if conducted through surrogates. This kind of world may well be with us for generations to come.

How does a free society like the United States organize itself to confront these new challenges? First, it must acculturate and educate the body politic, the governmental structure, and the uniformed services to the new realities of a dangerous world. This education process should be pushed simultaneously on six levels. First, we must disabuse ourselves of the liberal myth that the world is essentially benign and that if we leave others alone, they will respond in kind. The Iran hostage crisis illustrates the fact that some people are not reasonable by our standards. They can be barbarous at the street gang level and rapacious at the governmental level. Second, historians must accept and develop the proposition that state violence did not begin with World War I and end with World War II. State violence not only punctuates history; it changes it. Third, the news media are even more amateurish than politicians when it comes to military affairs. They are long on prejudice and short on fact, let alone understanding. This is a national crisis because the media are the nervous system of a free society. We need a more professional and sober media approach in dealing with issues of national survival. Fourth, we need a systematic procedure for the education of legislators (over half of whom are typically freshmen) in the area of national security affairs. Pentagon efforts in that direction, directly and through industry lobbyists, are so blatantly self-serving as to be ludicrous. Fifth, we must stop wasting time on trivia in the congressional oversight process and focus on the real strategic issues. The marginal advantage of one tank model over an-

other is far less worthy of study than the question of whether we really need more tanks and how they would serve national strategy. Finally, there is a cultural insensitivity in the military officer corps that borders on stupidity. They talk about “war-widening options” and the readiness to fight a “long nuclear war” as essential to the U.S. deterrent posture. Well, maybe they are, once you understand that “war-widening options” means the deterrent threat of horizontal escalation and a “long nuclear war” means a second-strike capability. But semantics like that frighten taxpayers and deny the cultural roots we are trying to defend.

The second question is how we can come up with an affordable defense. The military troop up to Capitol Hill year after year to play the camel’s nose game. They try to introduce a new weapon system by nudging its nose into the door with a modest first-year commitment for research. The next year they try to pull the head in with a larger commitment for a prototype. They systematically create a smoke screen to hide the actual size of the camel. When the crunch comes, we finally have to shoot the critter dead. “Irresponsible” moans the Pentagon, “to shoot a camel halfway through the door.” “A waste of money,” we have to agree but we must respond, “You led us to believe the camel was only a large gopher.” Societies that lie to themselves die.

We need a lot more honesty and a lot more systematic management in the budgetary process if we hope to come up with a defense establishment that will do half the things we want it to. The Pentagon must stop deluding itself that things will get better next year or the year after. They will not. They may get worse. If the economic situation forces the United States to try to balance the budget, it will come out of the military hide, and that will mean a drastic retrenchment in the U.S. global role. We will not be talking then about force projection; we will be talking about national survival.

This does not mean that we cannot do the job with the resources at hand—if we are prepared to look for pragmatic alternatives to a large, sophisticated, and professional standing force. This means, among other things, a greater reliance on a better trained and integrated selected reserve and National Guard to meet crisis contingencies.

The third big question is how to get continuity in defense planning out of our chaotic and centrifugal political system. In our society, long-range plans never work. It is in the nature of our society for politicians to abandon plans in favor of expediency. We always operate in the short-term. And we cannot develop even a short-term plan without a national consensus on political strategy: on how we want the world to look over the coming generation and how far we are willing to commit ourselves to that vision.

The main roadblock to national defense planning is bureaucratic inertia in the Pentagon. That will not be overcome by management by the Office of Management and Budget or the Congress or by deluging the military with

new ideas. The Pentagon will have the rebuttals ready before the suggestions cross the Potomac. That is not necessarily bad. A big and reasonably intelligent bureaucracy will have sifted through most of the conceivable alternatives over the years and will know what works and what does not.

A better approach is to devise a system to enforce intellectual honesty in the service staffs. If the navy asserts that a carrier force is impervious to air attack, let the air force challenge that assertion in an exercise devised and monitored by the army. We should force the navy to prove that its carrier forces can win the antisubmarine warfare battle in the entire Atlantic from Tierra del Fuego to Murmansk; then we should order the submariners to prove they cannot. We should ask the navy to disprove the assertion from some quarters that the submarine menace could be better contained by installing sonar-equipped Vertical/Short Take-Off and Landing (V-STOL) helicopters on every suitable U.S. merchant ship. We should ask the air force to demonstrate how 6,000 NATO aircraft of different nationalities can simultaneously perform their disparate missions over Central Europe in a world war without chaos and inadvertent fratricide.

The underlying message of the AirLand Battle 2000 concept is that warfare is no longer wrapped up in neat land, sea, and air packages. By the turn of the century, army corps commanders may be attacking opposing tanks or railheads with submarine-launched cruise or ballistic missiles, a carrier task force commander may call for a land-based cruise missile strike on a surface-to-air-missile-equipped enemy flotilla, and a bomber wing commander may need ground-launched cruise missile support to soften up enemy surface-to-air missile in a target area. This will require a revolution in bureaucratic attitudes toward interservice interdependency. Even more, it will require a decentralization of command, communications, control, and intelligence (C³I) capabilities. Theater and battlefield commanders of all three services must be freer to call on the full range of friendly resources in their vicinity without using a Pentagon switchboard.

Night fighting, as an esoteric military art form, can soon be consigned to the military museum. New technology has turned night into day, and we must prepare for a three-shift battlefield. We must also confront the issue (more a cultural than a military one) of chemical and biological warfare.

Finally, we must learn how best to deal with low-intensity warfare in the Third World. This is, in effect, a superpower conflict through surrogates. It must be conducted with political subtlety, and we may not always win. If the Soviets have the power in the right place and are willing to commit it, there will be situations in which they will gain the drop on us.

Both extreme liberals and extreme conservatives are deluding themselves in their approach to the new national security challenge. The liberals are dangerous because they are unwilling to devote resources to a conven-

tional defense. They would leave the president with no option between Armageddon and surrender. The conservatives are dangerous because they want to buy security with expensive but essentially trivial and irrelevant hardware and they see no need for structural reform.

The United States is in danger. We need new security solutions. Those solutions must meet exacting military, economic and political criteria. Nothing less will allow us to survive.



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The Future of Conflict in the 1980s

John Q. Blodgett

As one feature of a year-long study, on November 23 and 24, 1981, CSIS hosted a conference, "The Future of Conflict in the 1980s," which brought together 175 people from government, the military, and academia. The conference was organized in simultaneous panels with leading experts who identified likely sources of conflict for the 1980s and projected scenarios depicting the ways in which conflict could erupt in various regions of the world, the oceans, and in space. A subsequent conference in September 1982 focused on U.S. strategic responses to these conflict situations. This chapter summarizes the addresses and papers presented at the initial conference as a backdrop for the presentations at the second. It concludes with scenarios of three potential conflicts in the 1980s.

The United States will be confronted in the 1980s with an increasing number and diversity of threats to its vital or important national interests worldwide. Yet there has been a relative decline in both actual and perceived U.S. power. This change in the U.S. power-interests equation combined with a rise in Soviet military strength has eroded confidence in U.S. capabilities both abroad and at home and will impose selectivity in dealing with the military challenges of the 1980s.

There was wide agreement that the most frequent forms of conflict in the 1980s will be in the low-intensity spectrum (coercive diplomacy, terrorism, subversion, revolutionary war, and limited military actions). These will occur predominantly in the Third World, and some will threaten vital U.S. interests. An actual or perceived decline in the capability or will of the United States to act in such cases can invite hostile risk taking and lead to further, perhaps irreversible, damage to U.S. power and prestige.

Clearly the United States must reevaluate in a fundamental way its military capabilities to respond in key areas to this kind of contingency. U.S. national security planners continue to model U.S. general-purpose forces for what is considered the most critical scenario: large-scale combat with the Soviet bloc in Central Europe. But for the future low-intensity, Third World conflicts characterized by unconventional, guerrilla, and counterinsurgency warfare, the United States is noticeably unprepared.

Improving U.S. ability to respond to low-intensity conflicts will require more than improved force design. According to Senator John Glenn, the nation must direct the national security bureaucracy away from what it

knows how to do best toward new ways of looking at national security policy. In a decade of predictable budgetary and political constraint, we must be astute in developing and deploying those defense resources that are available. U.S. forces must be able to respond quickly and creatively to unforeseen contingencies that affect U.S. national interests.

Causes of Conflict

Not all of the wide spectrum of geographically dispersed conflict, most of it of low intensity and most in the Third World, will threaten vital U.S. political, economic, or strategic interests. Even where vital interests are at risk, it is not axiomatic that a U.S. military response would be necessary or desirable. Normally there will be a broad range of policy options open short of direct armed intervention, but as a superpower with pretensions to world leadership, the United States has imposed on itself the requirement to develop a national policy—whether active or passive, whether tacit or declared—to guide its response to each significant conflict anywhere in the world. Such a policy must start from a sophisticated understanding of the underlying causes of the conflict and the motivation of the contesting parties.

Over the balance of the 1980s, the most likely causes of conflict can be delineated under six headings: Soviet efforts to force political change under a global grand strategy, cultural differences, energy, the competition for minerals, conventional arms transfers, and nuclear proliferation.

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Soviet Strategy

It would be delusive to assume that all conflict will be generated by the Soviet Union and/or its allies as part of a global strategic design against the West, even where the Soviets may exploit the dispute for their own ends. Yet it is realistic to work on the assumption that the Soviet Union does indeed have a global strategy and that one of its instruments is the deliberate fomentation of conflict in situations where the status quo, if left undisturbed, would work to the advantage of the West or where instability could bring change beneficial to the East. Instability in the noncommunist world, whether in the developed or developing part of it, is a helpful end in itself from the Kremlin's perspective.

The broader purposes of the Soviet strategy presumably start from the fundamental and historic Soviet goal of preserving the communist system in the Soviet Union itself. This implies firm resistance to systemic change in the Warsaw Pact countries, the neutralization or fragmentation of hostile alliances, especially those near the USSR perimeter, and reliable (ideally

exclusive) access to needed foodstuffs and strategic raw materials from the Third World.

During the 1980s the Soviets will seek to avoid direct military confrontation with the United States and its allies and with the PRC. This suggests an emphasis on lower cost, lower risk power projection in the Third World in support of Soviet proxies and clients. Moscow's presumed purposes in the Third World during the balance of this decade will be to ensure access to needed raw materials and/or to deny them to the West, to secure access (preferably exclusive) to strategic waterways and air routes essential to Moscow's global outreach, and to add to the credibility of Soviet claims to Third World leadership. Psywar, terrorism, insurgency, coups, and conventional interstate warfare are the likely instruments.

Cultural Differences

Cultural disparities can generate both intrastate and interstate violence. Religion, a major component of culture, is rarely a root cause of conflict in modern times, but it can be used to justify and whip up popular enthusiasm for military adventures. It is a factor in Northern Ireland and particularly in South and Southwest Asia. The Shiite version of Islam, a religion that purports to answer all questions and guide all action, renders itself well to this kind of exploitation, if only because it regards all secular government as inherently illegitimate.

For the 1980s one can visualize several potential conflict scenarios to which cultural disparities would be a contributory cause. The list would include renewed war between the Koreas, insurgency in the Philippines and Central America, interstate conflicts involving India-Pakistan, Iran-Saudi Arabia, Israel-Syria, and South Africa and its neighbors. Although few of these conflicts may reach a violent stage in this decade, the seeds are there, and because they are rooted in cross-cultural tension, they are uniquely resistant to externally sponsored solutions.

Energy

Energy is conflict prone. It is a vital resource, unevenly distributed in nature. Some forms of it can be used to kill. The conflict potential of energy traverses a broad spectrum.

It is generally conceded that the most likely locale of low- to medium-intensity violence in the 1980s will be Southwest Asia. Islamic fundamentalism may be the rallying cry, but oil will be the prize.

Those who have energy will use it as a diplomatic weapon against those

who need it. The Soviet gas pipeline will fuel European détente at the expense of NATO solidarity. U.S. relations with Canada, Mexico, Venezuela, Nigeria, and the Arab world and Western attitudes on the Arab-Israeli dispute inevitably will be warped by oil.

Oil installations offer high-yield, low-cost targets for insurgents and terrorists.

Energy shortages can generate civil disturbance within states and jealousy and suspicion among states, even among military allies.

Interstate disputes over access to offshore oil are rampant in East Asia, South Asia, the Mediterranean, and the Caribbean.

The need to protect petroleum LOCs (Lines of Communication) impel superpower force projection that could, of itself, trigger conflict.

Competition for Minerals

This competition will find expression in the 1980s at both the conference table and on the battlefield. The negotiations will center around Law of the Sea issues, such as the exploitation of seabed minerals and the distribution of the profits there from.

Conflict over onshore minerals could be more bellicose. The world's largest phosphate mines are at stake in the Polisario insurgency in Morocco. Katangese rebels, operating from Angola with Soviet-Cuban support, pose a constant threat to shaky Zaire and a lesser threat to Zambia and Zimbabwe, countries that produce 50 percent of the world's supply of over a dozen strategic minerals, particularly cobalt. A Soviet-inspired communist takeover of all three is not inconceivable. Bolivia, dependent on mineral exports for survival, is encountering increasing difficulty in getting access to Chilean seaports. Peru, and possibly Brazil, could side with Bolivia against Chile in a shooting war.

Conventional Arms Transfers

The present diffusion of military capabilities is unprecedented. More countries have more and deadlier weapons than ever before. A major share (25 percent in the 1970s) of new arms deliveries are going to the Third World rather than to traditional allies. Third World procurement (except in black Africa) has focused increasingly on the most sophisticated weaponry available—from fighter aircraft, tanks, and missiles to highly advanced electronic defense systems. An increasing number of Third World countries (now more than thirty) are able to produce some of their own military hardware, and Israel and Brazil have become major exporters.

The proliferation of conventional arms can cause conflict. Countries like Libya, Argentina, Iraq, and Vietnam have clearly been tempted by their perceived relative strength into adventures that they might not otherwise have undertaken. Arms races also divert resources from development and thus have a destabilizing effect.

With more arms and with more new sellers in the field, the pursuit of a rational arms transfer policy by the United States has been rendered increasingly difficult. The Reagan administration has signaled its intent to proceed on a case-by-case basis. That is surely prudent, but it does not constitute a policy. A major challenge for the 1980s will be to exercise restraint and get others to do the same.

Nuclear Proliferation

Nuclear proliferation may be defined for our purposes as an increase in the number of countries with the technology and will to construct a nuclear weapon and that have actually detonated one. That excludes countries with the technology but not the will (such as West Germany and Japan) and those with the will but not (yet) the technology (such as Libya and Iraq). It also excludes countries presumed to have both the will and the capability (such as Israel, India, and South Africa) but that have not actually detonated a weapon.

By this admittedly narrow definition, there has been no verifiable proliferation in the past decade, though some suspect that South Africa crossed the detonation threshold in December 1979. On paper, there are still only five nuclear powers (the United States, the USSR, the United Kingdom, France, and the PRC). There is no solace in this fact. The reality is that movement toward nuclear proliferation has proceeded apace in some of the most militarily volatile regions of the world. In the Middle East, Israel may already have the bomb, and Iraq, Egypt, and Libya may have it by 1990. In South Asia, Both India and Pakistan probably could cross the threshold in the 1980s if they so choose. There is also the constant threat that an ambitious country like Libya or even an underground terrorist organization could contrive to build, buy, or steal a nuclear device.

Nature of Conflict

At the November 1981 CSIS conference, discussion of the likely nature of conflict in the 1980s centered around the papers on conventional arms transfers, psychological operations, terrorism, proxy warfare, and military rescue missions.

Implications of Conventional Arms Transfers

Three trends depict the evolution of conventional warfare: the mechanization of armies, which emphasizes increasing firepower through capital rather than manpower inputs; increasing force mobility designed to concentrate firepower; and growing rates of material consumption by the military. These trends characterize the evolution of Third World conflict as much as they do warfare in Europe.

The combination of simple and sophisticated arms can be devastating and will make future conflict between nations of the Third World unusual in character. At times it will resemble the high-technology wars of the future envisioned for Central Europe. At other times it will parallel warfare as it was conceived in the first fifteen years of the twentieth century, with conscript armies engaging in decisive battles.

A premium will be placed on the element of surprise, with the aim of forcing a decision quickly. Few Third World nations have the indigenous industrial power to sustain an intensive conflict over an extended period. Conflicts will usually be fought with forces in being, and the objectives will be limited. With improved long-range capabilities, the conflict arena may be enlarged to include second-echelon forces and rear areas.

Once weapons are used in combat, the demands on the support services increase geometrically. The need for fuel, ammunition, and stores skyrockets for forces on the move. Simple maintenance gives way to the need for major repairs (often in the field), a need that intensifies as conflict continues. Since developing countries import the vast majority of their military equipment, they will require foreign back-end support. Thus the successful exercise of military power in the Third World may be dependent on the ability and willingness of foreign powers to underwrite it.

Psychological Warfare

The psychological warfare program (PSYWAR) could be the Soviet Union's most powerful weapon in the current East-West environment of balanced deterrence. Soviet PSYWAR operations (PSYOPS) have already succeeded in preventing the deployment of the neutron bomb in Europe and have made significant progress in arousing West European public opinion against INF deployment. Yet the United States is almost totally lacking in PSYOPS capability at either the tactical or strategic level.

Tactical PSYOPS—those directed against opposing forces on the battlefield—are likely to be used by the Soviet-supported side in any 1980s conflict. They will be aimed at reducing a soldier's will to fight and at inducing him either to surrender or revolt. Tactical PSYOPS will necessarily

be somewhat primitive in a Third World conflict, where literacy levels will be low and few will have access to radio receivers, but ill-prepared and ill-motivated Third World soldiers may prove vulnerable to this form of attack.

Strategic PSYOPS—those directed at opposing publics at large—are already being intensively implemented by the Soviets and their proxies. In the event of a war, they would merely be intensified and more focused.

The only weapon against PSYOPS is the exposure of its true purpose. That requires education at the strategic level and training at the tactical level. In an actual war it may also be possible to interdict and destroy enemy PSYOPS assets, such as transmission stations and satellites, to the extent that they are fixed and identified.

In the meantime the United States should develop its own PSYOPS capabilities and design special forces for forward operations. Cooperation between civilian and military agencies with an actual or potential PSYWAR capability should be instituted without delay.

Terrorism

Terrorism is not new, but over the last two decades it has become better organized, better financed, more sophisticated in its use of weapons, tactics, and the media, and more widespread in terms of both geography and target groups. It has also become a conscious military tool not only of dissident extremists but also of overt political organizations and a number of established governments, including the Soviet Union, its allies and proxies, and several Third World governments. Efforts to provide more security to key target leaders or installations are either fruitless or cause the terrorists to shift to other targets. The precise damage inflicted is far less important to the terrorists and their sponsors than the publicity, fear, and destabilization generated. Terrorism is thus an extension of PSYWAR.

Proxy Warfare

Proxy warfare has moved to center stage since World War II primarily because of the deep reluctance of the two superpowers to share the same battlefield. After expensive direct engagement in the Korean and Vietnam conflicts, which were, from the Soviet standpoint, proxy wars, the United States has shifted to a less interventionist posture and seeks now more to bolster its friends and multilateralize the Western response to Soviet proxy provocations. This approach should remain tenable through 1990 at least. Nevertheless, it is urgent that the United States design, train, and equip forces capable of swift introduction into the kind of low-intensity, Third

World conflict envisaged for the balance of this decade. That is because contingencies may arise in which vital U.S. interests, such as the Panama Canal or its Philippine bases, are threatened by forces too powerful for its friends to contain.

Rescue Operations

In a global atmosphere of widespread, low-intensity conflict in the Third World, it is close to certain that any U.S. joint task force elements created to operate in that environment will be called on at some point to mount a rescue mission. The United States has diplomatic personnel in all but a few sovereign countries. U.S. businessmen and missionaries may venture into countries where the United States has no diplomatic presence. They, and the installations they tend, are symbolic targets for terrorists and insurgents. If they are overrun or threatened, U.S. prestige and credibility may come into question. If they cannot be extricated by friendly forces or negotiation, a rescue attempt may be considered politically imperative. The United States clearly needs an elite professional force especially trained and equipped for missions of this nature.

Arenas of Conflict

For purposes of discussion, the November 1981 conference divided the world into eight geographic zones and analyzed the potential of each for conflict in the 1980s. Here they are telescoped to six. In either case, such a compartmentalization tends to elide the global scope of East-West confrontation and interregional interaction. I will seek to bring out this synergy in the following brief regional summaries.

Middle East and Southwest Asia

The U.S. interest in this vital and volatile region can be summarized in three words: oil, logistics, and Israel. The United States is only marginally dependent on Persian Gulf oil, but European NATO countries and Japan are heavily dependent. The West in general needs free access to the region's airlines and waterways not only to move the oil but also to exploit and defend its broader interests in East Africa, the Indian Ocean, and beyond. The survival of Israel, although important to the West as a whole, has become increasingly a U.S. preoccupation. Yet the intransigency of the Arab-Israeli conflict is destabilizing to the entire region and threatening

Western influence in, and access to, the area and its oil. It thus also serves Soviet strategy for the region.

The Soviet goals in the region have both defensive and expansionist aspects. Their initial objective presumably is the defensive one of securing their southwestern flank by bringing about friendly regimes in the Southwest Asian states on or near their perimeter. The main focus now is on Iran, a menace to the USSR when under Western influence and an opportunity today under an unstable and unpredictable Shiite theocracy. Domination of the Persian Gulf and direct overland access to the Indian Ocean would improve the Soviet geostrategic position immeasurably and directly threaten Western supply lines and military communications.

The deployment of a U.S. expeditionary force in Iran to resist a Soviet takeover would be a gigantic operation and would present a grave risk of direct Soviet-U.S. military confrontation. Thus the United States should explore alternative strategies to discourage Soviet incursion and engage in those strategies in the countries most directly threatened, including Europe and the moderate Arab states.

East Asia

The peace, stability, and nonhostile orientation of East Asia are crucial to the national security and economic well-being of the United States. The United States has important economic interests there, and unimpeded access to the region's airlines and strategic waterways is vital to its global outreach, particularly into the Indian Ocean. U.S. alliances with South Korea, Japan, the Philippines, Australia, and New Zealand and its substantial military presence in the first three serve to balance growing Soviet naval power in the region and to restrain North Korean and Vietnamese aggression. A neutral China, free of Soviet military encirclement, is important to both U.S. long-term commercial interests and East Asian political stability.

The overriding Soviet objective in East Asia would appear to be nullification of the PRC ideological and military threat to the Soviet system. If recent diplomatic initiatives to that end should fail (and that seems highly probable), the Soviets are likely to pursue their strategy of encirclement. Over the next ten years, while North Korea still enjoys a distinct military advantage, a renewed invasion of South Korea is a possibility. The Soviets may seek to woo Taiwan and take advantage of succession crises and cultural tension in the Philippines and Indonesia. If Vietnam can cement its hold on Kampuchea and Laos, a thrust into Thailand may be undertaken to weaken the fragile anticommunist unity of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

The existing U.S. 29,000-man deterrent force in South Korea, bolstered

by standby divisions on Okinawa and the U.S. West Coast, must stay in place into the 1990s to maintain the stand-off in Korea. If low-intensity conflict increases farther south—for example, in the Philippines, Indonesia, or Thailand—the United States may need to deploy a small, quick reaction force somewhere in the ASEAN region to supplement host government capabilities and protect U.S. lives and property.

Central America and the Caribbean Basin

The United States has mutual security commitments to virtually every country in the hemisphere except Cuba, but its vital security interests are concentrated in the Caribbean basin. It is highly unlikely that a conflict will occur during the 1980s in lower South America that will require a U.S. military response. The primary U.S. geostrategic objective in the basin is to keep its resources and lines of communication accessible and safe from Soviet-Cuban interdiction or subversion.

The Soviet objective in the Americas appears to be to promote instability and divert U.S. resources from areas more central to Soviet concerns. Their strategy to this end appears to be to develop closer Central American economic dependence on the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON), spread a revolutionary ideology through the promotion of terrorism and insurgency, and expand Soviet and Cuban military power in the Caribbean.

The most likely conflict arena for the 1980s will be in Central America, where Nicaragua's neighbors, overtly and covertly abetted by the United States, will be trying to bring down the Sandinista regime, while Nicaragua, with Soviet-Cuban backing, will be trying to spread revolution into Honduras, Costa Rica, El Salvador, and Guatemala. Colombia, Haiti, and Puerto Rico are also potential trouble spots but will probably not reach a flarepoint before the 1990s.

The United States has the capability of projecting ample force into this adjacent region at any time. The challenge will be to contain the Soviet-Cuban revolutionary strategy without the direct application of U.S. military power, which could have counterproductive effect. A measure of social justice in the target countries, plus some well-conceived foreign aid, could, over time, defuse left-wing insurgency. If, in the meantime, a reasonably responsible government needs military assistance against Cuban-inspired insurrection, the United States should look first to its partners in the Organization of American States (OAS). The United States cannot expect much help from the European metropolises, such as the United Kingdom, France, and the Netherlands. If a U.S. military intervention becomes inescapable, (Southern Command) SOUTHCOM has a trained joint force in Panama, which could probably handle most contingencies.

Africa

Africa tends to be viewed by U.S. strategists more as an avenue to other battlefields than as a conflict arena in its own right. Yet sub-Saharan Africa is a major source to the United States of vital minerals such as cobalt and oil. There is a destabilizing Soviet-Cuban presence in Angola and Ethiopia and thus a likelihood of further conflict in Southwest Africa and the Horn. In North Africa, Qaddafi is doing Moscow's work, whether deliberately or incidentally, threatening such U.S. friends as Morocco and Tunisia whose air and naval bases will be important if war breaks out in Southeast Asia.

The Soviet strategy in Africa is similar to their Caribbean strategy: to develop economic dependence on COMECON, foment left-wing insurgency, and maintain a communist military presence, all with the presumed purposes of interdicting Western raw material supplies and strategic LOCs, threatening NATO's southern approaches, and influencing African positions in the United Nations (UN).

If there is any Western force projection in Africa, it will probably come from the French or Belgians, as in the two Shaba incidents in the 1970s and more recently in Chad. The United States must consider carefully, however, whether the possible overthrow of Morocco's King Hassan under Libyan-Polisario pressure or of Somali's President Siad Barre under Soviet-Ethiopian pressure would call for some kind of U.S. intervention. Both of these countries are of geostrategic importance.

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Europe

Europe is not expected to be an arena of interalliance conflict in the 1980s. The strategic and conventional balance between NATO and Warsaw Pact forces, though far from ideal in NATO eyes, is still too close to tempt either side to launch a world war. This condition, it is hoped, will persist into the next century.

There will assuredly be some low-intensity conflict in Europe, ranging from nonviolent pacifist demonstrations and constant PSYWAR exchanges to terrorism in the West and possible insurgencies in the East. None of this conflict is likely to revise the map of Europe in the 1980s.

Of greater concern is the growing resistance of many, if not most, West Europeans to the notion, perceived to be American, that a limited nuclear war can be fought and won on European soil. The NATO deployment of intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF) weapons in 1983–1984 will be a test of European public resolve to match growing Soviet capabilities in the European theater. In the absence of substantial progress in the disarmament talks, a European rejection of the INF, even if not universal, could strength-

en Moscow's negotiating position and start a process of creeping neutralism in Europe and disillusionment in the United States that would further divide NATO.

Space and Oceans

It seems probable that space war technology will record major breakthroughs in the 1980s. Conventional antisatellite systems and nuclear-weaponed satellite killers (space mines) may be nearing the testing stage by 1985, and beam weaponry may not be far behind. The preemptive destruction of a superpower's satellites could throw it back to World War II in war-fighting capability and profoundly disrupt its civilian communications infrastructure. The West cannot afford to fall behind in this field.

The oceans of this world are not only an arena of conflict but also a source. Disputes over continental shelf drilling and fishing rights, maritime boundaries, the navigation of straits, seabed mining, ocean pollution, and a variety of other maritime issues will doubtless arise in the 1980s and could lead to violence. A Law of the Sea Treaty is needed to resolve some of these issues soon, even if it fails to meet all U.S. desiderata.

Likely Conflict Scenarios in the 1980s

The array of conflict scenarios facing the world in this decade is long, geographically dispersed, and varied in intensity. Papers presented at the 1981 conference came up with close to three dozen, and these were merely illustrative. I have selected three of the more likely contingencies, seeking at the same time to cover a wide gamut of intensity. The scenarios will be developed only to the point where the United States is faced with a decision on military intervention.

Scenario I: A Soviet Incursion into Iran

In the mid-1980s the Ayatollah Khomeini dies, but not before designating as his successor a like-minded *imam*, equally dedicated to the aggressive propagation of Shiite Islamic fundamentalism and theocratic government. This choice is resisted by elements of the clergy, the lay leadership, the military, and the public at large. Three distinct factions emerge: a Tudeh faction under Soviet influence, an Islamic fundamentalist faction loyal to the new Ayatollah, and a middle-class faction favoring closer relations with the West and the United States. Street fighting ensues in the major urban centers. The

army, some of whose leaders support the pro-West faction, puts the Ayatollah under arrest and seizes power.

In the meantime the Soviets take advantage of the army's preoccupation with urban rioting to infiltrate arms and Tudeh and Mujahidin émigrés into Iran. The pro-Soviet faction begins to assert power in the countryside, challenging the army, particularly in Azerbaijan and Khurasan. Government troops concentrate around Tabriz and Meshed, permitting the Iraqis, with Soviet approval, to launch a major force across the Azerbaijan panhandle toward the Caspian Sea. A Soviet force assembles in the Seistan area, poised for a strike to the Gulf of Oman, barely 350 miles away. The Soviet navy moves a fleet into the Gulf.

At this point the Irani military regime asks the UN Security Council for a peacekeeping force. This is vetoed by the Soviets, who cite the illegitimacy of the Tehran regime. Tehran then turns to the United States, Europe, and the moderate Arab states.

Scenario II: A Nicaraguan Raid into Honduras

Late in the decade, the Sandinista government of Nicaragua, now well entrenched in power thanks to Soviet aid and Cuban advisers, tires of intermittent Samocista raids from Honduras and launches two regimental-sized raids of its own, one reaching the Chaluteca River in the west and the other closing on the Patuco to the east. The two regiments, under strong tactical air cover, move toward each other and meet fifty miles southeast of Tegucigalpa. Nearly one hundred U.S. military and aid advisers are captured in this swoop, along with Samocistas and Honduran troops. The prisoners are marched through the streets of Managua. The Nicaraguan force resists all efforts to dislodge it. In fact a third Nicaraguan regiment pushes a corridor through to the El Salvador border. A Soviet cruiser takes up station in the Gulf of Fonseca. Tegucigalpa requests an OAS expeditionary force and U.S. Air Force tactical air support and bombers to help force a Nicaraguan withdrawal.

Scenario III: Terrorist Attack in California

By the mid-1980s economic recovery has reached a point where radical activism is reviving among the nation's youth and among the communist-infiltrated Hispanic community aroused by growing Anglo antagonism. On the eve of a visit to San Francisco by the president, there is widespread sabotage throughout the Bay Area of Pacific Gas and Electric Company power lines and substations, causing serious power outages. A 1974-

founded group called the New World Liberation Front (NWLF) claims credit and issues a communiqué threatening a complete blackout of the area that night by attacks of such sophistication that they could not be stopped. The NWLF demands that the president appear on national television at noon that day and pledge permanent free power for all Hispanic refugees, senior citizens, the unemployed, and the poor. The president rejects the NWLF demands. The governor immediately announces martial law and requests that regular army units deployed in California assist the state police and National Guard in protecting PG & E's far-flung power stations, substations, and transmission lines.

Summary

At its November 1981 conference, CSIS and its panels of invited experts and statesmen took a hard look at the future of conflict in this decade. We examined its probable causes, projected the wide spectrum of forms it might assume, and attempted to anticipate its most likely locations. We concluded that despite worrisome Western vulnerabilities in a number of important respects, the Soviet Union and its allies will, in the 1980s, eschew provocations that could trigger a world war. We foresaw instead a plethora of low-intensity conflicts south of the Tropic of Cancer, some of which will be instigated by Soviet proxies and Soviet-supported subversive groups in implementation of a Moscow strategy to weaken the noncommunist world's security system and exploit its inherent centrifugal tendencies. Thus the West is faced with the need to reorient and remodel its defensive power and supplementary foreign policy tools to address two simultaneous and divergent challenges: deterrence in Europe and Korea and peacekeeping in the Third World. Vital Western interests are at stake in both arenas. On the Third World front, the most compelling scenarios are in Southwest Asia and Central America, but the potential for violence is ubiquitous and our attention must be global. The United States cannot hope to bear the onus of world peacekeeping alone. This is a decade for alliance building and for helping allies in the Third World to identify and eliminate conflict before it spreads out of control. If the U.S. deterrence array can be kept credible enough to make superpower conflict indefinitely unthinkable, then the Third World will remain the locus for superpower competition not only in the 1980s but for many decades to come. If, as many believe, the United States is poorly positioned at this time to compete effectively in that arena, now is the time to refocus strategy and develop appropriate reaction forces.

Part II
Strategic Responses to
Low-Intensity Conflict



TREE *of* LIBERTY SOCIETY

3

Domestic Constraints on U.S. Responsiveness to Low-Intensity Conflict

Stephen J. Cimbala

It is commonplace to contend that democracies cannot respond to international challenges unless the threats are clear and unavoidable. To some extent this is true of U.S. capability and willingness to respond to the challenges of low intensity. But no simple balance sheet emerges from a review of the features of U.S. domestic politics and society as they impinge on the nation's international capacity and will. Americans are far from a consensus on the nature of international threats or the appropriate responses.

If the constraints on responsiveness to indirect conflict or low-intensity war are products of U.S. domestic society, they are not entirely negative. The reluctance to support the administration in power no matter what its intentions, to question its decisions in cases of possible military intervention abroad, is an enduring feature of the post-Vietnam era. Decision makers cannot operate in a vacuum created by a reserve trust fund of public support or acquiescence, as had been the case until the mid-1960s.

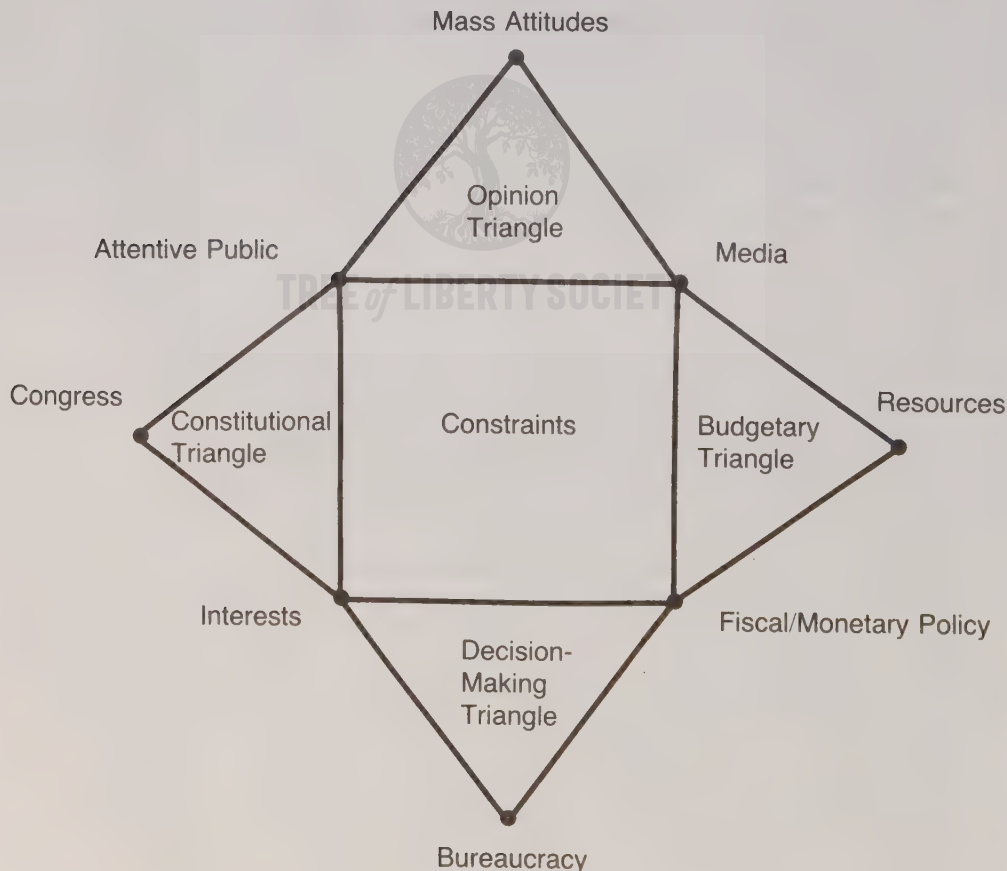
This situation of precarious intervention will set the limits of public tolerance for ambiguous wars in which U.S. interests may be involved in the 1980s or 1990s. Interventions in the Third World to support friendly governments against insurgencies or coups, or commitments to support allies in wars against revolutionary forces such as the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), will begin with a presumption on the part of Congress and the public that these activities are wrong or dangerous or both.

The burden of leadership will fall on the president and his administration to pick carefully those targets or opportunities worth saving. This implies a willingness to write off those that are not. The U.S. public is prepared to cut losses rather than to support open-ended escalations of ambiguous wars. U.S. Third World interventions will have to rely on flexible forces that are prepared for conflicts of high intensity and low duration. Thus the reference to low-intensity conflicts may be a misnomer. The United States may need to rely on high-technology, material-intensive, and low-manpower forces for military interventions in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East or see revolutionary wars topple governments that it supports.

The public and Congress will accept wars of high intensity and low duration provided they are successful. The criteria for success need not be

spelled out too vigorously in the abstract, for they are scenario dependent. Moreover, the definition of success will be as much a matter of domestic political outcomes as it will of battlefield events. Students of the Tet offensive know that military realities can be the ultimate victims of domestic political misperceptions. In a democratic society, what the armed forces can do is limited by those misperceptions.

Any U.S. response to low-intensity conflicts is also mediated by resource limits. In the most general sense these are economic; in the most immediate and specific sense, they refer to manpower. The immediate future of economic and manpower resources available for defense generally and for responding to low-intensity conflict specifically is uncertain. The Reagan economic program has yet to bring higher levels of employment and price stability. The proposed defense budget for fiscal years 1983–1987 makes optimistic assumptions about economic performance that may not be justified. To the extent these assumptions are in error, the resources to



counter low-intensity conflict may be squeezed. Congressmen eager to reduce expenditures in a given year are likely to focus on factors critical to combat readiness and maintenance: ammunition, fuel, spare parts, training, and other unglamorous components of a rapid response capability. If low-intensity conflicts are very likely to use high-intensity technology and material, the demand for spares and well-trained technicians may run well ahead of what can be supported from reduced outlays. Higher proportions of outlays will be determined by previously committed authority in the latter out years of the Reagan program.

Four clusters of variables may constrain policymaking: constitutional, decision making, budgetary, and opinion clusters. Each cluster is represented pictorially as a triangle. The points of the triangles represent eight discrete factors, each important for national security policy decisions. These factors by no means exhaust the possibilities; the classification is provided for the convenience of discussion and does not imply pretheoretical ambitions.

Congress

The U.S. Constitution provides a framework for a government based on divided power. Pluralism is preferred to efficiency. The founding fathers distrusted a standing military establishment based on a professional army. Thus, they provided that Congress alone has the power to raise and support armies and to provide and maintain a navy. Congress must declare war, ratify treaties, and approve ambassadors. Congress has the power to appropriate and to authorize funds for all activities of the federal government. Hearings and investigations by Congress can support or impede important policies called for by the executive branch.

During most of the 1950s and 1960s, Congress acquiesced to executive leadership. This pattern continued from the Truman administration, including NATO, the Marshall Plan, and Truman Doctrine, through the Eisenhower and Kennedy presidencies and into the first part of the Johnson administration. The containment consensus among the policymaking elite dissipated during the Vietnam escalation.¹ Policymakers in the executive and legislative branches who were enthusiastic about escalation in 1963 and 1964 were calling for disengagement and a cap on U.S. forces by 1967 and 1968. Among the congressional leaders opposed to further escalation of the war in the later 1960s and early 1970s was J.W. Fulbright, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

The high-water mark of congressional opposition to interventionary U.S. foreign policy, and to the growth of executive power that interventionary policies seemed to accompany, was the War Powers Act of 1973.² The

act's symbolism is as important as its complicated legalisms. It signals the executive branch that any sustained intervention abroad involving U.S. forces will be limited in duration unless the intervention is broadly popular in Congress and the public at large. The automatic self-destruct mechanism for continuing the intervention beyond sixty days places the initiative in the hands of the legislative branch. The War Powers Act has brought Congress into war fighting to an extent unprecedented in the post-World War II period. Congress may live to regret the investment if it endorses a war that begins in popularity and ends in public opposition, as did Korea.

Recent trends in congressional organization and candidate selection argue against a cohesive legislature, either for or against military intervention. Congress will likely find itself unable to follow any policies consistently. These trends include a fragmentation of authority and leadership, the decline of political parties, the larger numbers of congressmen and senators with no military experience, and the individualistic behavior of congressmen and senators who, because of weaker party organizations, are obligated to run personal campaigns based on media advertising and communications appeal. A more assertive Congress that is also a more disorganized Congress is unlikely to support military involvements in low-intensity conflicts.

Congress also operates in the 1980s with budgetary procedures inherited from the reforms of the 1970s. The 1974 Budget Act created the Congressional Budget Office and Budget Committees, which now set overall spending targets. The congressional budgetary process surrounding the passage of the 1981 Economic Recovery Act suggested the increasing influence of budget committees and the decreasing influence of authorizing and appropriations committees.³ Whether this change in the balance of congressional power endures remains to be seen, but the immediate future seems unfavorable to armed services and appropriations. Structures and procedural parameters may now decide strategic matters based on the composition of forces and their use.⁴

Recent events do not promise that congressional oversight of national security policymaking will be more constructive or less disjointed. The Reagan administration was required in 1981 to certify every six months that the regime in El Salvador was making progress toward improving human rights and implementing land reform. Both matters are difficult to prove and, in the case of human rights, subject to cultural differences in interpretation. Congressional scrutiny has imposed criteria largely irrelevant to the principal military and political issues, which focus on the survival of the regime against an armed insurgency and the maintenance of majority support among its citizens. Despite the voter turnout in the 1982 elections and their overwhelming rejection of the extreme Left, the insurrection has not abated, and congressional suspicion of the government in El Salvador has not diminished. The replacement of the Duarte regime with a constituent

assembly tilted toward the extreme right will not improve the perceived legitimacy of that regime in the view of Congress and the U.S. news media. Congressional restrictions on El Salvador and, eventually, other targets of low-intensity conflict in Latin America, may lead to repetitions of the Clark amendment, which prevented effective and timely U.S. intervention against the avowedly Marxist regime in Angola.⁵

The nuclear freeze movement demonstrates the potential of Congress to take the initiative in response to public opinion and to deny flexibility to the executive after having done so. The Reagan administration was propelled in the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START) talks by many forces. Certainly the desire not to lose the initiative to the grass-roots and antinuclear campaign was among them. Activists planned additional demonstrations, including efforts to intercept the docking of the first Trident submarine at Puget Sound. The nuclear freeze movement is a textbook example of how not to let public opinion get in front of the administration on an issue important to national security. A repetition of that clumsiness in the case of low-intensity conflict would be a disaster.

Congressional patterns suggest a more inquisitive and less acquiescent body that is unlikely to be persuaded that low-intensity conflict is either necessary or desirable. The lack of apparent direct connection between insurgencies in developing societies and U.S. vital interests, whatever they are, compounds the problem. Only the Persian Gulf provides a possible theater of operation where U.S. citizens (for obvious reasons as gas lines accumulate) could be mobilized to support a direct military intervention involving significant numbers of casualties to U.S. forces. A possible alternative to the use of force in a combatant role is the use of U.S. forces as part of multinational peacekeeping forces. As our experience in Lebanon has indicated, Congressional attitudes about the presence of U.S. forces in such quasi-combatant roles are ambivalent. At best, Congressional acquiescence rather than enthusiasm should be anticipated.

Attentive Public

The attentive public is that public that follows foreign policy events and formulates some opinion about them within some intellectual or ideological structure. Members of attentive publics are capable of seeing things in liberal or conservative terms as packages of related policy issues rather than isolated fragments. Another kind of attentive public focuses on a particular interest or need and is more appropriately discussed under the heading of interests.

Until the late 1960s the U.S. attentive public or publics were character-

ized by a strong consensus in favor of the cold war, containment policies, military preparedness, and the draft. After the 1960s this attentive public consensus dissipated. Attentive publics in the plural are now the more appropriate characterization. Attentive publics arise with various episodic issues, but less of a public follows events consistently and methodically. The electronic media coverage of national security issues has contributed to this trend.

Persons whose opinions have a high degree of structure and coherence across single issues are ideologues. There is some evidence that the amount of issue voting in the U.S. electorate has increased, and the Vietnam war created ideological polarization (related to U.S. counterinsurgency efforts) that is still latent in the attentive publics and among policymaking elites. The debates surrounding the Reagan candidacy in 1980 provide evidence of this ideological awareness and persistence on national security issues.

Interests

Interests assume a fundamental role in a pluralistic society. They are the initiators of demands on the system and the focus of pressure for dividing the spoils. As political parties have declined, the importance of interests has increased. This has meant less coherence in policymaking, a less responsible role for Congress, and less accountability for performance on the part of the executive branch.⁶ The influence of interest groups and lobbies on national security policy was made clear in congressional actions over the war between Greece and Turkey over Cyprus and in the sustained successes that pro-Israeli lobbies have had in the postwar period. Public headlines have resulted from the efforts of South Korean businessmen to influence U.S. foreign policy. Multinational corporations conducting business in Japan and the Middle East have been accused of paying bribery money for access to important markets. Japanese firms have been charged with efforts to steal U.S. technology related to computers and information processing.

Some theorists see the entire government as the captive of interests; the public sector has been parceled out to private needs. This has happened, according to these critics, because of benign intentions combined with poor management. Congress has delegated to the executive, which in turn has delegated to, or has been co-opted by, interest groups in the appropriate areas. Theodore Lowi has referred to this pattern as the "state in receiver-ship" or "interest group liberalism."⁷ The idea is that the groups that are affected by a decision should have the power to decide the allocation of values for that decision.

The pattern of interest group liberalism is the pattern of displacement of public by private power in the name of the public good. The reverse trend, of

the capturing of formerly private markets by a public agency, has also been charged to the Department of Defense. Seymour Melman speaks of a "Pentagon capitalism" that has resulted in a "state management," including Defense and all of its dependent contractors.⁸ Firms largely dependent on defense contracts are part of a two-way monopolistic system in which management (the Department of Defense) and labor are two faces of the same coin. Another image of cooperation to the point of collusion in national security policy is provided in the concept of the iron triangle among a contractor, one of the military services, and a member of the House of Senate, all in support of a contract for weapons development. Whether two sides of the same coin or three sides of a triangle, the charge is that the Department of Defense and its principal congressional allies and contractors create political goal displacement. Decisions that ought to be made in a wider forum are effectively (but unintentionally) delegated to a coterie of like-minded bureaucrats, bombardiers, and beltway bandits.

Interest group liberalism implies the abdication of public authority to private power, but it does not imply that this private power is used in a monolithic way. The summer of 1982 competition between the Lockheed C-5 and the Boeing 747 for a role in the rapid deployment force illustrates the pluralism that may escape theorists of the military-industrial complex school. The competition for contracts and for roles and missions is more than ceremonial and frequently involves high stakes. The competition for roles and missions among the services has resulted in at least three versions of tactical airpower in the present force and three sets of concepts about the use of tactical air in support of ground combatants. Service self-images and perceptions of institutional esprit and autonomy are on the line in these competitions, to say nothing of dollars. The rapid deployment force and the threat it imposes to the U.S. Marines and their traditional role perceptions is a most obvious case related to low-intensity conflict.

Bureaucracy and Bureaucrats

It is now almost traditional to speak of bureaucratic politics as an explanation for the results of national security and other policies. As originally elaborated by Graham T. Allison, bureaucratic politics was an alternative to "rational actor" and "organizational process" models.⁹ Rational actor models took the nation-state as a unitary actor and explained behavior by inferring a logical reconstruction of its means-to-ends linkages. Organizational process explained foreign policy decisions by emphasizing the continuity of policy through organizational routines and standard operating procedures. Bureaucratic politics focused on players in positions, their role perceptions, and their relative power and influence in relation to outcomes.

Allison and Halperin reformulated the bureaucratic politics model to absorb the organizational process model.

Rational and bureaucratic action are not opposite or antithetical ways of making policy, as their school has implied. Bureaucracies are designed to substitute rational decision making (by written criteria that are consistently applied) for idiosyncrasy. Thus, the term *bureaucratic politics* is something of a misnomer. What the writers are describing is the activity that results when bureaucracies assume the roles of interest groups and compete with other interests for relative shares of desired values. This is interest group activity, whether the activated interests are governmental agencies or private groups.

Bureaucratic politics may have been oversold. It tells us something about the importance of the perspectives of players in positions: where you stand depends on where you sit. It does not always determine the outcome. Bureaucratic politics did not dictate success in the Dominican Republic or failure in Vietnam; by itself it is not adequate to explain policymaking. A version of the bureaucratic politics approach that uses other terminology is the "system-worked" argument by Leslie Gelb and Richard Betts: that policy changes only in small doses, that this is unavoidable and/or necessary, and that decision makers do the best that they can in full awareness of the limits of the process.¹⁰

The system-worked argument is a variant of the incrementalist model and an important caution against excessive expectations for policy innovation. It also calls attention to the importance of the distinction between policy outputs and policy outcomes, the latter sometimes unintended. Whether Vietnam is the case that illustrates the superiority of the incrementalist model is another question. It can be argued that a nonincremental approach would have worked better: a sudden escalation to the point at which overwhelming force was used against North Vietnam itself and a rallying of the U.S. public in 1964 and 1965 to support that effort.

Another analytical model of national security decisions is offered by Irving Janis in his groupthink hypothesis.¹¹ The argument is that policymakers strive for consensus at the expense of clear and sharp policy options, suppressing serious consideration of alternatives that are unpalatable to the majority. This view has some merit, but it does not seem to apply any more systematically to foreign policy than to other issue areas. Bureaucratic problems are related to the inability of the Department of Defense to control cost escalation in weapons procurement. This connects us to the consideration of budgetary issues.

Budgets and Budgetary Issues

Budgetary constraints on national security decisions have been considered in a number of studies. Samuel P. Huntington wrote of the great equation

among tax reduction, balanced budgets, social needs, and military preparedness and applied that concept to the analysis of policymaking in the 1950s.¹² The great equation has returned to haunt Ronald Reagan's program for a U.S. defense buildup.

In total obligational authority (TOA), the Reagan-proposed defense budget in constant (1983) dollars would rise from \$182.4 billion in 1980 to \$325.9 billion in 1987, a growth rate of 8.6 percent per year above inflation. Planned force levels for general-purpose forces are constrained "only by how fast they can be built up within the limits set on budgetary outlay (not TOA) for the next several years," according to defense budget analyst Herschel Kanter.¹³ This buildup in conventional forces is designed to support revised strategic expectations for nonnuclear conflict with the Soviets. Fred C. Iklé, undersecretary of defense for policy, notes that the administration will not commit itself to mechanistic assumptions about whether it should be prepared for two and one-half or one and one-half wars.¹⁴ Iklé holds out the threat of horizontal escalation against Soviet aggression instead of confining U.S. objectives to resisting aggression in the immediate point of conflict. He notes that the United States might "decide to stretch our capabilities, to engage the enemy in many places, or to concentrate U.S. forces and military assets in several of the most critical arenas."¹⁵ Strategic planning for such counteroffensives will improve deterrence, in the Reagan view. Soviet expectations of a short war, in Southwest Asia in particular, should be disabused.¹⁶ The Reagan program would provide 29 percent more M-1 tanks, 34 percent more fighting vehicles, 25 percent more attack helicopters, and 11 percent more utility helicopters compared to the last Carter-proposed five-year plan.¹⁷ Navy-marine and air force tactical air will be expanded and modernized at more rapid rates than previously, and the Reagan shipbuilding program would exceed the Carter administration program by about 15 percent.¹⁸

The Reagan program shows the limits imposed on defense preparedness by fiscal and monetary policy. In this instance the divergence between fiscal and monetary policies has contributed to high interest rates and lower economic expansion. Thus the fruits of supply-side tax reductions seem remote. A congressional proposal of \$99 billion in tax increases was forced on the president to reduce the deficit, which in fiscal 1983 would otherwise have approached \$175 billion by some estimates. Even with the Tax Equity and Fiscal Responsibility Act of 1982, the administration recovered less than \$100 billion of the \$350 billion in tax cuts over the same three-year period. Moreover, the components of the act were more controversial for conservatives and supply-siders than for liberals. The provisions repealing 1981 business tax breaks and withholding taxes on dividends and interests were galling to traditional business elements, which nevertheless had wanted to see deficit reductions. The supply-side advocates in Congress were mortified at the president's apparent repudiation of their faith in tax cuts and

temporary deficits as stimulants to long-run growth. In their views Reagan had turned from the long-run necessities for the economy to short-run electoral expediencies. Their lament was that Reagan was continuing the trend set by earlier postwar presidents of gathering taxes to support the social programs and social change abhorrent to conservatives.

The loss of the conservative-supply consensus on the Reagan economic program could have devastating political consequences for the Reagan defense buildup. There are both technical and political spillovers from the Reagan game plan for the economy to the resources for national defense. The efforts to reduce deficits may lead to reductions in defense outlays. But outlay reductions are unlikely to occur in a consistent way or according to any set of strategic priorities. Congressionally approved grants of large amounts of budget authority for weapons procurement in the early years of the Reagan program will return to haunt a Congress seeking to reduce outlays in the later years. A study by the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) shows that the proportion of defense outlays accounted for by authority from previous years will grow from 30 percent in fiscal 1982 to 41 percent in fiscal 1987.¹⁹

The Reagan defense budget forecasts are dependent on the performance of the economy as a whole. Inflation estimates for the 1983–1987 period may be too low and have been questioned by the CBO.²⁰ Cost increases in weapons procurement may lead to stretching out of programs or buys in smaller quantities, or both.²¹ Estimates by the CBO for inflation differ from those of the administration, which are obviously more optimistic. The correctness of the administration's inflation estimates may be a small consolation. They may be correct only if the economic recovery is even smaller than the administration hopes.

The political spillovers of these more technical forecasting uncertainties are considerable. A slower economic recovery will fuel the congressional reductions demanded by the administration in social programs. Further cuts in defense programs will undoubtedly come at the expense of operations and maintenance, and at risk will be the essentials, such as ammunition, fuel, spare parts, and training. William W. Kaufman has questioned some of the administration's professed needs for war reserves, but the temptation to stock ahead is understandable when defense advocates have seen these items vanish from the budget in the past.²² The strategic weapons systems that are so expensive in the long run do not provide much in the way of outlay savings in a given fiscal year; thus the pressure is placed on Congress to find savings elsewhere.

Congressional malaise may also be directed at the pay increases or proposed increases for the all-volunteer force. Proposals to reduce pay and compensation, including retirement pay, in constant dollars are likely to appear more frequently as the economic recovery lags and social spending

diminishes. Restricted pay and compensation will be devastating when the economic recovery does take place; the effects of restrictions on pay in times of inflation are apparent from the constant-dollar pay freezes of the 1970s and their effect on recruitment and retention.

The fiscal aspects of personnel issues will compound the debate over the strategic and sociological aspects of manpower. Much of this debate is important for its symbolism; the United States will have about the same size active force whether it is raised primarily by selective service or the all-volunteer force. Combat effectiveness of the reserves may be increased by return to a draft, although Lawrence J. Korb argues that the reserves suffer from poor training and lack of equipment, not manpower shortages.²³ The strategic issues are more controversial. What is needed, according to some theorists, is a quick-reaction flexible force to deal with Third World coups, insurgencies, terrorism, and related low-intensity (or, as I have termed them, high-intensity but low duration) conflicts. The rapid deployment force began as such a concept, but the original concept of a small, flexible, quick-reaction force got caught in bureaucratic politics (in its early stages) and then fell victim to conventional doctrine and classical employment concepts.²⁴

Critics of the rapid deployment force may have misjudged its potential prematurely. Nevertheless the administration needs to clarify its strategic assumptions about the use of the force or the issue will get entangled in manpower and resource debates. A clearer specification of the low-intensity conflicts, which are too much for a marine amphibious force to handle but something short of general war, is required. Can a force that is to confront the Soviets in northern Iran with five divisions and ten air wings be considered a force for low-intensity conflict?

Media and Public Opinion

Mass public opinion is filtered through the media to leaders in the executive and legislative branches. The same filtration occurs when policymakers explain their decisions and actions to the public. The media filtration is selective and whimsical. Events are depicted in hues of black and white rather than natural grey.

Permissive ambiguity characterizes the attitudes of the public at large toward foreign policy in general and military intervention in particular. The experiences of Korea and Vietnam seem to show that the public is in favor of quick, decisive wars of limited duration.²⁵ It is clear that the public is unlikely to support, and the Congress perceives the public as unlikely to support, a sustained intervention in a Third World conflict unless vital interests are affected. Electoral punishment for perceived failure of military

stalemate is highly probable, as presidents from Truman to Carter have discovered.

The permissive uncertainty and punishment aspects of public opinion on foreign policy create risks for an administration that has predicated U.S. nonnuclear strategy on the expectation of horizontal escalation. The expectations of the administration that the public will support such a strategy, once war begins, are optimistic. The evidence from Korea and Vietnam suggests that the longer war continues and the higher the casualty rates, the more opposition develops. Such a strategy of horizontal escalation invites confusion in the minds of allies and neutrals and possible violations of international law, which will reverberate in public opinion. If, for example, the United States were to respond to a Soviet incursion in northern Iran by attacking Cuba, world opinion and U.S. domestic public opinion might be immobilized by Soviet disinformation and other means. Horizontal escalation will remind media critics of the domino theory, regarding the Soviet commitments throughout the world as a single network that can be subverted at any point in the chain.

The risk inherent in public misunderstanding of horizontal escalation does not imply that the public is opposed to increases in defence spending or military preparedness. Evidence from polls suggests that quite the opposite is the case if the public is asked about its support for defense spending and/or military preparedness.²⁶ But it is also clear that the majority of voters do not want to see reductions in the principal New Deal and Great Society entitlement programs such as social security. As the problem of deficit reduction and possible ratification of a balanced budget amendment is debated in Congress and state legislatures, public perception of a zero-sum competition between defense and other values will be intensified. Moreover, public support for defense spending is not necessarily transferable to increased public support for resumption of the draft. The issue of registration and the possible prosecution of those who refuse to register for induction is already controversial.

Constraints on the use of U.S. forces in low-intensity conflict may be exacerbated by public opinion abroad as well as at home. The nuclear freeze movement in the United States received additional impetus from the peace groups in West Germany, the Netherlands, and other NATO allies. Reinforcement of U.S. hesitancy to respond to threats in the Persian Gulf might come from sources in Europe as well. A conflict in Southwest Asia that involved the possible embargo of oil supplies to Western Europe and/or Soviet horizontal escalation in that theater might provoke demands for NATO noncooperation with U.S. politicians and military strategies. Although European political leaders appear to recognize the possible threats to Gulf oil supplies, they are also aware of public skepticism toward direct involvement in wars outside Europe. The unwillingness of most NATO

allies to support the U.S. effort to resupply Israeli forces during the 1973 Yom Kippur war is a case in point. Any conflict that raised the possibility of escalation to war in Europe, and the Soviets would certainly raise that threat to divide NATO, would encounter public opposition in Western Europe, which could reinforce negative public opinion in the United States. This division within NATO over possible Gulf conflict scenarios could be most intense over low-intensity conflicts in which the immediate threat to the West as a whole would be least obvious. Intra-NATO disagreements over the use of force would be likely in situations of internal threat to the governments of conservative Arab states, such as Saudi Arabia or Jordan. If the Saudi government were to fall to a noncommunist coup, would NATO European and public opinion support unilateral U.S. intervention to preserve the monarchy? No one can say that such support is obvious or certain. The completion of the pipelines for Siberian natural gas to Western Europe will create opportunities for the Soviets to divide NATO on two economic fronts simultaneously: through proxy war in the Middle East, which might threaten oil supplies from moderate Arab states, and through withholding of natural gas supplies from the Soviet Union itself. Public ambivalence toward a U.S. and/or European response to low-intensity conflict in Southwest Asia would be intensified by a credible Soviet threat to reduce vital natural gas supplies to West Germany, France, and the Netherlands.

The two-way dependence of East European economies and Western banks offers another check on public opinion strongly supportive of military intervention in Southwest Asia or the Middle East. Part of the appeal of the Yamal pipeline is that West Europeans expect the Soviet Union to assist East Europeans in paying off their large debts by using the hard currency earned from gas sales. If this strategy does not work, and its prognosis is unclear, the economic predicament of the creditors will be no better than that of the debtors, and the willingness to wage war in the Gulf, which could expand the war to Europe, would be that much more uncertain.

Conclusion

The domestic constraints against U.S. use of force in low-intensity conflict are numerous and powerful. Such interventions would have to be undertaken very selectively. The appropriate amount of force would have to be used early and decisively. Prolonged low-intensity conflicts are almost certain to become high-intensity issues in the U.S. policy debate, and a sustained high profile for such conflicts is a near impossibility. The degree of public and congressional opposition to involvement in low-intensity conflicts varies directly with the number of casualties and the duration of the conflict, as well as the public visibility of disagreements among the policy-

making elites in the executive and legislative branches. Few of these kinds of wars can be fought in the 1980s and 1990s, and none of them for long.

Notes

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1. Ibid. p. 118.

3. Joseph A. Pechman, ed., *Setting National Priorities: The 1983 Budget* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1982), esp. p. 231.

4. On the distinction between strategy and structure, see Samuel P. Huntington, *The Common Defense: Strategic Programs in National Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961).

5. See "Repeal of Clark Amendment Faces Fight," *Congressional Quarterly*, April 4, 1981, p. 588.

6. See E. Carl Ladd, *Where Have All the Voters Gone?* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1982).

7. Theodore J. Lowi, *The End of Liberalism*, 2d ed. (New York: W.W. Norton, 1979).

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9. See Graham T. Allison, *Essence of Decision* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1971), and Morton H. Halperin, "The Decision to Deploy the ABM: Bureaucratic and Domestic Politics in the Johnson Administration," *World Politics* 25, no. 1 (October 1972): 62–95.

10. Leslie H. Gelb with Richard K. Betts, *The Irony of Vietnam: The System Worked* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1979).

11. Irving Janis, *Victims of Groupthink* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1972).

12. Huntington, *Common Defense*, pp. 183–197.

13. Herschel Kanter, "The Reagan Defense Program: Can It Hold Up?" *Strategic Review* (Spring 1982): 19.

14. Fred C. Iklé, "The Reagan Defense Program: A Focus on the Strategic Imperatives," *Strategic Review* (Spring 1982): 15.

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid., p. 16.

17. Ibid. See also Caspar W. Weinberger, *Annual Report to Congress: Fiscal Year 1983* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1982).

18. Iklé, "Reagan Defense Program," p. 16.

19. Congressional Budget Office, *An Analysis of the President's Budgetary proposals for Fiscal Year 1983* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Congress, February 1982), pp. 174–175.

20. Ibid., p. 170.

21. Ibid., p. 171. Real cost growth in major weapons systems since 1975 has averaged 3.5 percent per year. If current trends continue, the CBO estimates that the administration's estimates for major weapons systems procurement for 1983 to 1987 would have to be increased by a total of about \$48 billion. See also *Defense Acquisition Procedures*, statement of Alice M. Rivlin, director, CBO, before U.S. Senate, Committee on Governmental Affairs, October 21, 1981, and her statement to the same committee April 22, 1982. In the latter statement, pp. 2–4, Rivlin contends that the typical weapons system beginning development today can be expected to have real cost growth of about 50 percent before it is introduced into service and that the December 1981 Selected Acquisition Report contains the largest quarterly increase in total SAR costs ever reported.

22. William W. Kaufmann, "The Defense Budget," in Pechman, *Setting National Priorities*, p. 90.

23. Atlantic Council of the United States, *Toward A Consensus on Military Service* (Washington, D.C.: Atlantic Council of the United States, 1982), p. 30.

24. See Richard H. Shultz, Jr., and Alan Ned Sabrosky, "Policy and Strategy for the 1980s: Preparing for Low Intensity Conflicts," in Richard A. Hunt and Richard H. Schultz, Jr. ed., *Lessons from an Unconventional War* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1982), p. 200.

25. Ibid. p. 215.

26. Kanter, "Reagan Defense Program," p. 32.

4

Low-Intensity Conflict: U.S. Policy and Strategic Perspectives

Sam C. Sarkesian

Since the end of the Vietnam war, U.S. civilian policymakers and military planners have been trying to develop a strategy responsive to an international security environment that has undergone fundamental changes. These changes result from the multiplication of nation-states following the break-up of the European colonial system, the collapse of the European-centered world order, and the onset of the nuclear age.¹ The conflicts inherent in North-South and East-West orientations, exacerbated by international terrorism and the internal instability of many Third World systems, have also contributed to the highly fragile international peace-war balance.

A number of developments demand that U.S. political-military policy be reassessed. These include the fall of the shah of Iran and the inability of the United States to respond effectively to a number of Soviet initiatives in Africa, Latin America, and, particularly, in Afghanistan. Although the lingering malaise over Vietnam can be blamed for much of the timidity of U.S. policy, more recent events have revealed deeper dimensions: misinterpretations of Western European attitudes, lack of clear guidelines within U.S. policymaking circles, and the inflexibility of U.S. political-military policy in various Third World areas.

The fact that planners and policymakers have belatedly come to grips with these issues has created a national objective and policy mismatch with strategy and capability. U.S. national objectives and policy lack sufficient substance to provide effective guidelines for strategic planners. In such situations, strategy tends to develop its own certain interpretations of objectives and policy, generally based on the presumption that objectives and policy associated with U.S.-USSR conflicts apply. As a result, national objectives, policy, and strategy tend to be isolated from reality except in the few cases where the issues are clear, the dimensions of the problem recognized, and the positions of political actors delineated.

This has two results. First, the U.S. military instrument has become wedded to a conventionally oriented doctrine with a system structured according to conventional wisdom. Second, a civilian and military mind-set has evolved, fixing itself on European-type scenarios.² As Michael Howard observes:

Most strategic scenarios today are based on the least probable of political circumstances—a totally unprovoked military assault by the Soviet Union,

with no shadow of political justification, on Western Europe. . . . It need hardly be said that hostilities breaking out elsewhere in the world are likely, as they did in Vietnam, to arise out of political situations involving an even greater degree of political ambiguity, in which our readiness to initiate nuclear war would appear even less credible.³

The use of proxy forces and surrogates has revealed the dimensions of the strategy developed by the Soviet state to deal with non-European areas. Reinforced by their willingness to use military force in contiguous areas and the large number of Spetsnaz forces, Soviet strategy is geared to exploit situations in Third World areas.⁴

Although confrontations and conflicts in Third World areas may not generate the same serious impact on vital interests as would a high-intensity conflict in Europe, the Soviet state clearly recognizes the linkage between Third World confrontations (low-intensity conflicts) and superpower interests. In this respect, the Soviet state has formulated a strategy with multiple options and a capability to engage in low-intensity conflicts to an extent unmatched by the United States.

Those involved in the planning, policy formulation, and implementation of contingencies in the low-intensity conflict category must understand and be sensitive to the problems of Third World systems in terms of modernization, political change, and internal instability. It is from these political-social roots that low-intensity wars develop.

Definitions of *strategy* vary. The U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff state that the strategy is, "the art and science of employing the armed forces of a nation to secure the objectives of national policy by the application of force, or the threat of force."⁵ General Bruce Palmer writes that "national strategy [means] the coordinated employment of the total resources of a nation to achieve its national objectives."⁶ In simpler terms, strategy covers "what we should do, how we should do it, and what we should do it with. Military strategy encompasses the tasks for the military, the operational doctrine we should pursue and the force posture we should develop and maintain."⁷

As used in this chapter, concept of strategy rests in a broad interpretation of the Clausewitzian notion that strategy is "the employment of the battle as the means towards the attainment of the total object of war. . . . Strategy is the employment of the battle to gain the end of war; it must therefore give an aim to the whole military action, which must be in accordance with the object of War."⁸

Strategy is not only the plan of battle; it must fit into the general plan of war, and war itself must be aimed at achieving political goals. There is a direct linkage among battles, wars, and political goals. Battles are fought only if they fit in with the general plan of war, and wars are fought only if they fit in with political goals.

In this context strategy means more than engaging in successful battle to

win a war. Indeed those who view strategy as simply the employment of forces in battle to defeat the enemy in war need to be reminded of the writing of Sun Tzu: "Those skilled in war subdue the enemy's army without battle. They capture his cities without assaulting them and overthrow his state without protracted operations."⁹

Strategy owes its inception to national objectives and national policy. National objectives define the goals of the nation-state. National policy identifies broad guidelines that give direction to the ways to reach these goals; policy is designed to bring together political, economic, and military resources to accomplish national objectives. Strategy provides the plan of action and identifies the instruments by which policy is implemented. Strategy therefore can include a variety of options composed of a number of different political, economic, and military mixes. In this respect, involvement in war is a policy option. It is supposed to be a rational choice, according to strategic considerations, and engaged in only if it can achieve the political-military goals. In some cases, war is considered the only remaining option.

Strategy consists of a number of substantive dimensions. Michael Howard had suggested four: the logistical, operational, technological, and social.¹⁰ Lack of attention to any of these dimensions can lead to ineffective strategy. In the U.S. Civil War, for example, he concludes that although the South was more effective in operational terms, the North had the technological and logistical advantage. Similarly he points out that in the Prussian victories in the nineteenth century, the technological element was dominant.

Many authorities have concluded that in the post-Vietnam era, the social element weighs heavily in U.S. strategic considerations. National will, political resolve, and domestic consensus are viewed as primary determinants in U.S. strategy, overshadowing the combined effect of the other three elements. What this means is that regardless of U.S. logistical, technological, and operational effectiveness, strategic options are determined primarily by the social element.

Low-Intensity Conflict and the Conflict Spectrum

Low-intensity conflict generally describes conflicts short of limited, conventional war. Low-intensity conflict does not describe actual combat. It is a policy option referring to an armed action, implemented or threatened, ranging from political assassination to revolution to counterrevolution for the purpose of achieving political goals. From a U.S. perspective, low-intensity conflict can be further defined as armed action in a third country usually characterized by unconventional tactics, such as ambushes and hit-and-run raids.

Low- and high-intensity conflict can be characterized as a broad spectrum representing the extremes in the intensity of conflict, with the low end encompassing military assistance and the high end, nuclear war. The large area between these extremes includes middle-range contingencies associated with low-intensity conflict, which range from armed actions of a few individuals to conflicts short of Korean-type limited conventional wars. Most conflicts in this middle range are revolutionary and/or counterrevolutionary, of varying degrees of intensity. The higher level of low intensity follows a Vietnam pattern; the lower level identifies revolutions and counterrevolutions similar to the pattern in El Salvador in the middle of 1982.

Some conflicts are difficult to categorize clearly as low or high intensity. During several periods of the Vietnam war, there were a number of conventional-type battles, some bordering on battles patterned after those of the Korean war. In the Middle East, the Israeli invasion of Lebanon and its actions in Beirut are linked closely to the revolutionary nature of the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians. Most of the wars in the Middle East and the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) war are placed in the limited conventional war category.



Characteristics of Low-Intensity Conflict

From the perspective of U.S. strategy, low-intensity conflicts are characterized by four important elements. First, such conflicts tend to be asymmetrical. For the revolutionaries, the struggle, a struggle for survival, is total. There is therefore an enduring psychological commitment directly linked to the political-social goals of the revolution and, in many instances, to the existence of the people. For the United States, however, such conflicts are limited, not only in terms of resource commitment, but in terms of political goals.

Second, low-intensity conflicts are often ambiguous; it is difficult to distinguish between friends and enemies. Moreover, the highly political-social complexity of the conflict shifts the center of gravity from the actual battlefield to the political-social system. The revolutionary appeal is frequently more closely related to the moral and ethical principles of democracy than to those of the existing indigenous counterrevolutionary system. This leads to psychological and moral ambiguity in U.S. policy and a lack of clear political goals.

Third, such conflicts are most likely to be unconventional, with political-psychological patterns underlying the purposes of combat. The center of gravity of such conflicts is normally in the political-social system, not on the actual battlefield. In low-intensity conflicts traditional criteria for measuring

military operations may not be meaningful. In other words, low-intensity conflicts are beyond the traditional battlefield.

Fourth, low-intensity conflicts tend to be protracted. They tend to develop into wars of attrition. History shows that particularly democracies find it difficult to maintain a consensus within the body politic to continue a war with no clear political goals, that is characterized by warfare that defies conventional response, and promises to be long and drawn out. Lack of political consensus can be quickly transferred into resistance against the conflict with a negative impact on the morale and effectiveness of U.S. forces engaged in third country operations.

There are many questions regarding U.S. policy in dealing with low-intensity conflicts. The lack of linkage between strategy (as obscure as this may be) and low-intensity conflict makes the problem particularly acute. One result is that U.S. involvement in low-intensity conflict tends to be based on the responses made with little regard to the context of overall strategy.

U.S. national policy establishes the broad courses of action and/or guidelines designed to achieve national objectives. Policy identifies the limits of political and resource commitment, determines the relationship between the United States and other international actors, establishes the philosophical basis for the substantive dimensions of policy, and provides for an ends-means relationship (that is, policy must be in accord with democratic notions of ethics and morality). Policy provides the guidelines for determining the proper political, economic, and military mix for achieving national objectives.

Applying the four elements of strategy (logistical, technological, operational, and social) to low-intensity conflict and the linkage between such conflict and U.S. strategy enables a number of conclusions to be drawn.

First, the U.S. capability to support indigenous regimes engaged in counterrevolutionary wars is significant. This includes providing military assistance and material to counterrevolutionary systems and also includes providing continuing support to large contingents of third country forces engaged in the revolutionary-counterrevolutionary area. The experience in Vietnam is a case in point. The United States provided the logistical support for over 500,000 U.S. servicemen in Vietnam forces, and not without cost to other parts of the U.S. military posture. Without engaging in domestic military mobilization, U.S. and allied forces were supplied for over five years in a war that was very costly in men and material.

Second, the technological superiority of the United States, although increasingly challenged by both friends and potential enemies, remains high. Sophisticated weaponry, communications systems, and logistical instruments have been developed at a rapid pace. But one can reasonably

question the general applicability of high-technology capability to low-intensity conflicts. It is more likely that highly trained professional soldiers sensitive to and understanding of the political-social dimensions of low-intensity conflict are more important than technology in the conduct of such conflicts.

Third, operational dimensions of strategy are usually associated with the capability of commanders to conduct successful military operations. This usually presumes an operational capacity as well as war-fighting organizational posture capable of success in battle. The U.S. capability to conduct successful low-intensity operations is suspect. This is due to the nature of the U.S. military professional, the conventional posturing of U.S. forces, and the nature of U.S. cultural traditions.

U.S. military formations are organized on conventional configurations designed to defeat a similarly postured enemy. Although the conventional mind-set spurs conventional-type organizations and a traditional operational doctrine, a promising development is the U.S. Army's experimentation with a new light infantry concept for the Ninth Infantry Division involving new weapons and doctrine. The formation of the First Special Operations Command may presage greater attention to low-intensity warfare. But the fact remains that the thrust of organizational innovation and training remains closely wedded to conventional operations or those on the extremely low end of the low-intensity scale such as surgical operations or rapid deployment force type operations. Organized and trained to fight in conventional operations with defined battles, U.S. military forces are likely to find themselves fighting the wrong enemy in the wrong type of wars.

The U.S. cultural experience can hamper U.S. conduct in low-intensity war. Soldiers socialized in a culture that stresses the importance of human life, the rights of individuals, and moral and ethical behavior patterns will find it extremely difficult to adapt to a foreign cultural environment and the necessities of military operations responsive to counterrevolutionary requirements. The unconventional nature of low-intensity conflicts usually means that revolutionaries adopt any means to achieve political goals: political assassination, ambushes, hit-and-run raids, political and psychological intimidation, and the penetration of the existing political and social systems. Such an environment, reminiscent of Vietnam, can easily lead to disillusionment, frustration, combat stress without combat, and ultimately to decreasing combat effectiveness and moral disintegration.

Fourth, the most serious problem in the strategy of low-intensity conflict is the social element. For the success of U.S. strategy in such conflicts, the U.S. public must be convinced of its necessity, understand the goals and purposes, and provide a continuing consensus on political-military operations. There must exist a national will and political resolve to engage and persist in involvement in low-intensity conflicts. Yet the trauma of Vietnam

still remains. The disagreements and debates over the Vietnam memorial in Washington, D.C., are rooted in the passions and violent disagreements over the Vietnam war. Indeed, the generation that matured during the Vietnam era is now an influential segment of our society. To presume that the U.S. public has now put Vietnam in the past is wishful thinking.¹¹

Although a number of conclusions could be drawn from this strategic overview, one thing seems clear: U.S. capability to conduct low-intensity conflicts in the middle range of contingencies is inadequate. Although the potential is there, the operational and social elements of strategy preclude successful involvement in low-intensity conflict except at the low end of the conflict spectrum and in those rare cases where the U.S. military presence is considerably limited, of short duration, and aimed at a specific and clear purpose.

This conclusion leads to a number of policy determinants or factors determining the direction and substance of policy. Four are of particular importance. First, an existing system confronted with revolution must have the potential to develop into a reasonably representative system and must be sensitive to the causes of revolution if it is to have any chance of counterrevolutionary success. For the United States, it means that counterrevolutionary policy must be sophisticated enough to withhold support from repressive systems and yet support those systems that may be authoritarian in the short run but have the potential to develop into representative ones in the long run.

To withhold support from systems unless they are democratic is simply to assume away all of the problems of revolution and counterrevolution and withdraw from Third World issues. Few systems in developing areas have established themselves as democratic. On the one hand, to allow externally supported revolutionary systems to exploit the problems of modernization and political change may not be to the best interests of U.S. security.

Second, counterrevolutionary policy does not necessarily mean that there must be a commitment of U.S. troops or active confrontation with revolutionaries. Economic and military assistance and low-visibility operations may suffice to reinforce the existing government. The existing system may already have demonstrated a capability to govern and may also have shown the potential to develop into an effective and reasonably representative form of government. With some assistance, it may develop the necessary wherewithal to develop into an effective system.

Third, active and visible involvement of U.S. military personnel in counterrevolutionary campaigns will require the support of the American people, particularly if such involvement is protracted. History shows that, regardless of the attitude of the American people at the initiation of involvement, the public at some point will seriously question the effectiveness of policy. To expect the military establishment to become seriously engaged in

such policy without continuing public support is to expose it to internal criticism, domestic criticism, and a decline in its combat effectiveness.

Fourth, U.S. cultural traditions and the premises of U.S. democracy create the kind of military that does not deal with revolutionaries in an alien culture. Revolution and counterrevolution do not adhere to accepted laws of land warfare. To be effective, counterrevolutionaries may need some freedom to operate against the unconventional tactics of the revolutionaries. Yet the very nature of revolutionary and counterrevolutionary war creates combat conditions that may impel counterrevolutionary forces to go well beyond democratic proprieties. A protracted and unconventional war can lead to My Lai types of incidents, without extremely effective civilian and military leadership.¹² This leadership must ensure a high level of moral and ethical behavior by the U.S. military in counterrevolutionary wars if the military is not to lose the support of the people. This may have a considerable impact on U.S. forces. The reconciliation of proper behavior and effectiveness in counterrevolutionary conflict for democratic military systems remains unresolved except in very general terms, lacking application in specific guidelines to low-intensity conflicts.

Strategic Planning

Political and military planners find no consensus on the meaning of low-intensity conflict. Dealing with revolutionary and counterrevolutionary wars, the most difficult and most likely conflicts in the 1980s, also poses conceptual problems. The published literature and the terminology employed within U.S. planning circles use a confusing variety of terms: war of national liberation, protracted war, unconventional war, guerrilla war, insurgency, counterinsurgency, revolution, counterrevolution, internal war, and even civil war. Nonetheless, three concepts emerge as primary reference points: guerrilla war, insurgency, and revolution.

Many times these terms are used synonymously. There is, however, a degree of confusion in defining or conceptualizing them. Bernard Fall's observations serve as a useful starting point in clarifying this matter:

Just about anybody can start a "little war" (which is what the Spanish word guerrilla literally means), even a New York street gang. Almost anybody can raid somebody else's territory, even American territory, as Pancho Villa did in 1916 or the Nazi saboteurs did in 1942 But all this has rarely produced the kind of revolutionary ground swell which simply swept away the existing government.¹³

In developing the political-social dimension of revolution and distinguishing it from guerrilla war, Fall states:

It is . . . important to understand that guerrilla warfare is nothing but a tactical appendage of a far vaster political contest and that, no matter how expertly it is fought by competent and dedicated professionals, it cannot possibly make up for the absence of a political rationale. A dead Special Forces sergeant is not spontaneously replaced by his own social environment. A dead revolutionary usually is.¹⁴

Using Fall's analysis, several observations are in order. First, revolutions are fundamental challenges to the existing political order and to those who hold power in the system.¹⁵ Second, armed conflict is an essential characteristic of revolution but is not necessarily the most important for revolutionary success. The center of gravity of any revolution is the political system and its psychological coherency. In this respect, armed conflict is usually tangential to the revolutionary purpose. Third, insurgency refers primarily to an armed group whose use of guerrilla war may be the first phase of a revolution, but it does not necessarily follow that insurgencies and revolutions are synonymous. Although insurgency may denote an attempt to correct an immediate policy issue or problem, revolution focuses on long-term political-social change. Nonetheless all three terms are closely linked and are often used to describe the same phenomena.

The preponderance of the literature on revolutions and counterrevolutions published in the past two decades and aimed at a U.S. audience evolves from U.S. involvement in Vietnam. Such revolutions focus on the Asian-peasant type and its Maoist antecedent. Some scholars tend to dismiss such antecedents as irrelevant to Latin America, for example, because of the time period of the protracted war and the lengthy mobilization and conflict phases.

As the literature and the major themes evolving from the literature indicate, the Maoist and Marxist-Leninist revolutionary philosophy and the strategies associated with these views remain guiding principles for most revolutions in the Third and Fourth Worlds. Moreover, revolutionary cycles do not adhere to specific time periods. Rarely does one find a cause-and-effect revolutionary relationship based on certain events occurring within a given time span. Some revolutions pass through the revolutionary cycle within a very short time span; others follow a Maoist protracted war period; still others develop unevenly with a long period of revolutionary incubation and a very short phase of armed struggle.

In broad conceptual terms, revolution is best viewed as the development of an alternative political system while using any means available,

especially guerrilla war, to overthrow the existing system and establish a political order whose values, beliefs, and socioeconomic basis differ fundamentally from those in power in the existing system. Revolution encompasses both the political and armed conflict dimensions. The purpose of guerrilla warfare is to maintain constant pressure on the armed forces and political structure of the existing system, not only to erode its credibility and legitimacy but also to provide the necessary protection for the revolutionary political organization, allowing it to establish itself as a ruling system. Therefore, without an even more aggressive response to the political dimension, counterrevolutionary response to guerrilla warfare is inadequate.

Unless this kind of conceptual orientation is developed, civilian and military planners alike will remain wedded to a military concept that will determine military means and ends based on conventional mind-sets. Focusing primarily on military-oriented concepts relieves planners and implementers of dealing with the essence and most difficult aspects of revolution and counterrevolution: the political-social system and psychological dimensions.

Once a degree of conceptual clarity emerges among civilian and military policymakers, U.S. strategic inadequacies can be addressed more intelligently. If the basis for U.S. global strategy is not preventing destabilization and strengthening systems not inimical to its own interests, then a counterrevolutionary strategy must be developed that is based on multiple options. Additionally serious consideration should be given to the support of certain types of revolutions, such as in Afghanistan that not only challenge repressive systems but are likely to raise the stakes for those systems intent on intervening on behalf of the existing system either directly (as the Soviet Union is doing in Afghanistan) or through proxy forces and surrogates.¹⁶

Furthermore, organization and training for low-intensity conflicts must be included in some segments of general-purpose forces. Given the character of low-intensity conflicts, it is conceivable that U.S. ground force involvement may be necessary. At the present time, little in the U.S. posture is capable of effectively responding to low-intensity contingencies beyond the present capacity of Special Forces types of units. An alternative is to expand the First Special Operations Command in order to add to the capability of Special Forces and Ranger units and to include an effective civilian component, as well as air force and navy counterparts. Complemented by civilian and police specialists and directed by a civilian-military national command structure aimed specifically at low-intensity contingencies, the United States would be in a better position to respond effectively.

Still, it is dangerous to presume that military forces organized and trained in conventional war can be easily adapted to the special conditions of low-intensity conflict. Conventional war patterns provide relatively clear

military purposes and distinguishable enemies. The characteristics of low-intensity conflict make it extremely difficult for conventionally organized, trained, and postured troops to understand the nature of the conflict, much less engage in successful operations.

Although the social element of strategy dominates the U.S. capability, there are a number of ways in which the public understanding and sensitivity to the complexities of low-intensity conflicts can be broadened. The first step is for civilian policymakers, military professionals, and major political actors within the political system to develop a sophistication and maturity about revolution and counterrevolution. Simply to label these as unconventional and to presume that revolution is communist or that all existing counterrevolutionary systems are either good or evil is to adopt a simplistic and distorted ideological posture. It is true, however, that a number of revolutions that are sparked and motivated by nationalistic sentiments and elites are later co-opted by communist organizations. Moreover, an understanding of the problems of modernization and political change includes the acceptance of the fact that these are inherently destabilizing and produce the conditions for revolution—revolutions, it might be added, that can be manipulated relatively easily by external forces.

This understanding, sophistication, and maturity must be translated into a coherent statement of U.S. policy goals and interests in the parts of the world most susceptible to revolution and counterrevolution. Although this may not reconcile the social element to the other strategic considerations, it is a starting point linking all elements of strategy. The fact remains that U.S. civilian and military leaders must place U.S. interests in the proper political-military and strategic context and articulate these in a manner consistent with general democratic norms and in a manner understandable to the U.S. public.

As a former U.S. under secretary of state has written, Reagan's challenge is to pursue a policy of selective engagement, one based on priorities and interests the American people will understand and support. To achieve this difficult task, the United States will have to avoid the role of world policeman it played in the 1960s and the posture of noninvolvement it preferred in the 1970s. And in any selective engagement of U.S. power, whether by choice or by necessity, the United States must achieve its objectives, in fact and in perception.¹⁷

Low-intensity conflict, particularly counterrevolutionary war, is perhaps the most difficult and frustrating conflict for any democratic system. Involvement in such conflicts cannot be undertaken lightly. It requires a military posture unbound by traditional attitudes toward conventional organization and operations. Equally important, political resolve and national will in support of political-military policy must be persistent and enduring.

Notes

1. See, for example, Thierry de Montbrial, "The New Global Order: Changing Imperatives in the International Arena," *World Press Review* (June 1982):25–28.

2. See, for example, McGeorge Bundy, George F. Keenan, Robert S. McNamara, and Gerard Smith, "Nuclear Weapons and the Atlantic Alliance," *Foreign Affairs* 60 (Spring 1982):753–768; Stansfield Turner and George Thibault, "Preparing for the Unexpected: A New Military Strategy," *Foreign Affairs* 61 (Fall 1982):122–135; and Hans-Dietrich Genscher, "Towards an Overall Western Strategy for Peace, Freedom, and Progress," *Foreign Affairs* 61(Fall 1982):42–66.

3. Michael Howard, "The Forgotten Dimensions of Strategy," *Foreign Affairs* 57 (Summer 1979):984. Excerpted by permission of *Foreign Affairs* (Summer 1979). Copyright 1979 by the Council on Foreign Relations, Inc.

4. *Spetsnaz forces* refers to Soviet special-purpose forces under the KGB. It has been estimated that such forces number about 200,000, with some of them deployed in Afghanistan, Cuba, Nicaragua, and Angola.

5. As quoted in U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Military Strategy: Theory and Application, A Reference Text* (Carlisle Barracks, Penn.: U.S. Army War College, May 11, 1982), p. A-7.

6. Bruce Palmer, Jr., "Strategic Guidelines for the United States in the 1980s," in Bruce Palmer, Jr., ed. *Grand Strategy for the 1980s* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprises Institute, 1978), p. 73.

7. Andrew J. Goodpaster, "Military Strategy for the Eighties," *National Security Forum* (Spring–Summer 1976):9.

8. Anatol Rapoport, ed., *Clausewitz on War* (Baltimore, Md.: Pelican Books, 1968), p. 241.

9. Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, trans. Samuel B. Griffith (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 79.

10. Howard, "Forgotten Dimensions," p. 978.

11. A number of books have been published recently providing added dimensions to the debate over the Vietnam war. See, for example, Michael Maclear, *The Ten Thousand Day War—Vietnam:1945–1975* (New York: Avon Books, 1981), and Richard A. Hunt and Richard H. Schultz, Jr., *Lessons from an Unconventional War: Reassessing U.S. Strategies for Future Conflicts* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1982).

12. See William R. Peers, *The My Lai Inquiry* (New York: Norton, 1978) and Joseph Goldstein, Burke Marshall, and Jack Schwartz, *The My Lai Massacre and Its Cover-Up: Beyond the Reach of Law? The Peers Commission Report* (New York: Free Press, 1976).

13. Bernard Fall, *Street without Joy: Insurgency in Indochina, 1946–63*, 3d rev. ed. (Harrisburg, Penn.: Stackpole Company, 1963), p. 356.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 357.

15. See, for example, John Dunn, *Modern Revolutions: An Introduction to the Analysis of a Political Phenomenon* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1972), pp. 1–23.

16. There are a number of regions in the world that are of vital interest to the United States where low-intensity conflicts are likely to occur. See, for example, Frank N. Trager and William L. Scully, “Low Intensity Conflict: The U.S. Response,” *U.S. Policy in Low Intensity Conflict: Potentials for Military Struggles in the 1980s*, Sam C. Sarkesian and William L. Scully, eds. (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, 1981) pp. 175–198. See also *Annual Report to Congress, Caspar W. Weinberger, Secretary of Defense, Fiscal Year 1983* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, February 8, 1982), pp. II-17–II-26.

17. Joseph J. Sisco, “Selective Engagement,” *Foreign Policy* 42 (Spring 1981):27.



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5

Low-Intensity Conflict: Causes, Consequences, and Questionable Cures

Adam Yarmolinsky

Certain words and phrases draw blood out of even the bloodiest occasions. *Low-intensity conflict* is such a phrase, covering a wide range of bloody situations, from the bomb explosion in the marketplace, the hit-and-run raid on the military detachment's local headquarters, to the disruption of the urban power grid.

Those who initiate low-intensity conflict are bands of guerrillas or individual terrorists, supported perhaps by a transnational network, but who act alone or in small groups. The superpowers do not wage this kind of war directly against each other because the risks of escalation are too great; however, they do supply equipment, training, and on-the-spot advisers.

The smaller, less powerful, less-developed countries are usually the initiators and targets of low-intensity conflict. Significant disaffected minorities within such countries sometimes engage the dominant powers at this level, particularly if there is a source of outside support. For many years the Soviet bloc suppressed resistance to their regime before it gathered strength, but with the continuing insurgencies in Poland and Afghanistan, the Soviets seem to have lost their immunity.

The Western industrial nations have been under sporadic attack by embattled geographic or political minorities—the Irish Republican Army in the United Kingdom, the Basques in Spain, the Baader-Meinhof gang in West Germany—but it is not clear whether this activity amounts to low-intensity conflict. Even less clear are the sporadic assassinations and bombings carried out by the PLO throughout Western Europe. Yet there is a continuum from isolated assassinations to regular hit-and-run raids. Somewhere along an extension of the same line, one crosses the ill-defined threshold of conventional war.

The United States has been particularly successful in its involvement in low-intensity conflict thus far. The federal government conducted low-intensity warfare against native Americans throughout the nineteenth century; General MacArthur drove the unarmed bonus marchers out of Washington during the Great Depression, and southern states conducted a one-sided war against the nonviolent civil rights movement in the early 1960s. But of the assassinations and attempted assassinations of presidents during this century, only one, the Puerto Rican Nationalists' attempt on the life of President Truman, was politically motivated.

The United States has actively helped other governments contain low-level violence, even when they may have provoked it. In this century the United States acted directly in the Philippines, Central America, and South-east Asia and presumably in other places yet undisclosed. Regularly before Vietnam and sporadically after, the United States intervened indirectly, providing supplies, equipment, training, and, on occasion, military advisers. Whatever the merits of the U.S. Military Assistance Program to its current beneficiaries, it is in a way surprising that some of those groups whose objectives the United States supports have not carried their war into U.S. territory, at least in isolated instances. Such good fortune may not continue indefinitely.

The long chain of consequences of U.S. involvement in low-level violence abroad is exemplified by the Orlando Letelier case. The United States became involved in destabilizing the administration of Chilean President Allende, a minority left-wing candidate who nevertheless had captured a plurality of votes in the national election. A military coup unseated the Allende government, and Letelier, a member of the government, fled the country, eventually arriving in the United States, where he wrote and spoke in opposition to the junta. A team dispatched to assassinate him attached a bomb to his car, killing Letelier and a U.S. citizen riding with him. Clearly in this instance, low-intensity conflict drew blood.

Low-intensity conflict has three principal characteristics. It is almost certain to be pervasive, is likely to be prolonged, and is often sufficiently unconventional as to defy being labeled as conflict in any traditional sense. It may be indistinguishable from police work; it can always be labeled police action.

Low-intensity conflict is pervasive for essentially the same reason that a nuclear exchange would be pervasive. Nuclear weapons make it possible for the first time for one nation to destroy the society and economy of the other nation without first engaging its armed forces in battle. Nuclear-equipped missiles can reach and destroy most targets. Somewhat similarly, the shock troops of low-intensity conflict can sneak across borders and disappear in the population until ready to blow up a power station or poison water supplies. Relatively few people can do considerable damage. But it is the accumulation of incidents that produces the impact, so that at least as much of the danger in this kind of warfare derives from injury to the social fabric as from physical violence and damage to property.¹

The centrality of the social fabric of a nation as a target of low-intensity conflict highlights the critical importance of the media. As the media pervade daily life, so their subject matter is brought into every living room. The facts of an incident cannot be concealed from the media. A sharp distinction must be drawn here between safeguarding intelligence about prospective terrorist moves and trying to conceal the effects of a terrorist attack. Prompt

and full disclosure after the fact is probably the best way to avoid having a story inflated by suspicion and speculation. The worst way is for the facts to come out—and they will come out—a bit at a time.

Low-intensity conflict is likely to be prolonged because it is indecisive—not because the forces are evenly matched but because neither side is willing or able to force a decision. The conflict may come to an end eventually because the stronger force decides, for a variety of reasons, to grant some of the weaker forces' demands—as in the creation of the state of Israel—because the stronger force collapses of its own weight as in French-ruled Algeria—but low-intensity conflict is seldom the primary cause. A major power may encourage and support the low-intensity force—as the Soviet Union has done in Lebanon and the United States with Cuba—but the supporting power is not looking for a decisive showdown, or it would employ more direct methods.

The great advantage of low-intensity conflict for those who initiate and persist in it is that it costs relatively little, therefore permitting almost continuous attack. Ancient armies had to stop fighting at least once a year to raise a new crop unless they were successful enough to find new and untapped sources. But the division of labor now permits the fighters to carry on while their supporters raise money or send supplies. Thomas Hobbes aptly described the prolonged character of low-intensity conflict in the *Leviathan*: "For war consisteth not in battle only, or in the act of fighting, but in a tract of time wherein the will to contend by battle is sufficiently known: and therefore the notion of time is to be considered in the nature of war, as it is in the nature of weather."

Low-intensity conflict is unclear, tending to become confused with the day-to-day activity of the police in controlling or containing sporadic violence. A snapshot of any single event in this kind of conflict would probably be indistinguishable from events encountered by the police, although it might be at the outer limit of the scale of destruction with which they are accustomed to deal. In fact, the same event—the bombing of a bank building, for example—may be taken as an episode in a prolonged low-intensity conflict or as an episode in a criminal career, depending on whether the actors are members of a political group or bank robbers. If the political group is carrying out the bombing because it is temporarily short of funds, how does one classify that event? This fuzziness makes the role of the military particularly difficult to define except in countries where the police power is already in the hands of the military.

This characterization of low-intensity conflict has identified its causes. The actors are unable or unwilling to risk a higher level of violence. The attackers may lack the resources or may fear that full-scale nonnuclear war will escalate to a nuclear exchange. The defenders may be unable to locate and capture the attackers or may be unwilling to employ the drastic means

necessary in order to do so. At the same time, the targets in modern industrialized, urbanized society are increasingly vulnerable; central water systems, central power systems, central heating supplies, and mass transit make tempting targets.

The vulnerability of contemporary society tends to obscure the important distinction between individual acts of violence, separately motivated, and conflicts in which organized groups pursue long-term goals, which they hope to achieve by wearing down their opposition. It may be useful to divide this second class into situations where the aggressors venture into third countries (the IRA bombers in London, the PLO gunmen at the Munich Olympics) and where they operate in their own country (the Basques in their own corner of Spain, the indigenous Vietcong in South Vietnam). Both the alien and the indigenous forces may be supported by a third country, but support is of no value unless there is a persistent group to be supported. Thus another characteristic of low-intensity conflict is the extraordinary persistence and dedication, if not fanaticism, required of the attackers. That is only one factor that makes coping with the problem of low-intensity conflict particularly difficult.

One way to deal with the problem is by hardening the targets. Introducing a degree of redundancy into essential systems would reduce the effectiveness of an attack on any part of the system and therefore reduce the motivation to stage such an attack. Of course, some targets cannot be hardened, or only at unreasonable expense. Violence in this kind of conflict may involve selecting targets quite at random; a bomb in an airport or department store may be designed simply to create a general climate of fear and suspicion. Such prospective targets can be identified only as places where people congregate, and there are too many targets to harden.

Citizen patrols have been reasonably successful in reducing crime in residential neighborhoods because they can recognize unfamiliar cars or people. But what can citizen patrols do in areas where many different kinds of people congregate? The constitutional provision against unreasonable searches and seizures is strictly enforced by the courts, even where it may rule out a stop-and-search of a person who fits the profile of, for example, a drug smuggler. Are there other measures that can be taken consistent with the constitutional prohibition? Should the metal detectors at airport gates be moved out to the waiting room entrance? Apparently these devices are not effective where they are now positioned, and a heavier burden on them might make them even less effective. Public places in London no longer have lockers where luggage can be stored. The inconvenience seems relatively minor when measured against the risk of a locker's being used to place a time bomb.²

If target sites cannot be hardened in advance, a good deal can be done in

advance to mitigate the consequences of attacks, at least on the physical infrastructure of society. These preparations are not significantly different from preparations for natural disasters, for which we are probably not adequately prepared. They require professional training and organization down to the local level. The first line of defense is clearly local and state police. To the extent that specialized training is needed or useful, the Federal Emergency Management Agency should be able to provide support and guidance. The military must remain secondary, as it has throughout the history of the United States. Despite the use of the word *conflict*, low-intensity conflict is not best confronted by soldiers. Their best use is rather in situations where massive manpower is needed to provide emergency services. Some citizen involvement may be part of this preparation, but the dangers of inciting people to temporary hysteria, followed by deep-seated indifference, cannot be overlooked.

Since not all targets can be hardened, the next question is what can be done about potential attackers. The simplest solution would be to keep them out of one's country altogether, but this assumes that there are no indigenous forces prepared to engage in low-level civil war and that entrance through national boundaries can be scrutinized more than it now is. The difficulties the United States is experiencing in controlling the influx of peaceably inclined, illegal aliens and the reluctance of the Congress to adopt control measures like the harder-to-forge social security card suggest how much more difficult it is to control the flow of individuals trained and prepared to avoid detection.

Most police work concentrates on tracking down criminals after they have committed the crime or catching them at the scene. Whatever punishment is ordered by the courts is thought to act as a deterrent against future crimes by the individual and by others tempted to follow his or her example. Deterrence does not operate in the same way on these soldiers in this kind of war. They have only one purpose and will persevere unless physically prevented from doing so; their potential damage to society is certainly greater than that of the average criminal. It is not the threat of punishment but the likelihood of failure in their mission that serves as the principal deterrent.

These considerations make the collection of intelligence about the plans, procedures, and potential antagonists critically important. The collection network must cover both domestic and worldwide sources.

The collection process for foreign intelligence contains more problems of process than of policy. The United States has been unsuccessful in collecting foreign intelligence in the past, lacking the patience to create resources in place long before they are needed and partly because the glamour and excitement of secret intervention into other countries' affairs is

more attractive than the generally boring detail work of collecting information. A complete separation of these two functions might improve the quality of both kinds of operations.

The collection of domestic intelligence raises serious policy problems in a free society. One need look back no further than the 1960s to observe the excesses into which even well-intentioned officials can fall, as in the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) COINTELPRO operation, which collected masses of information on political dissenters and harassed individuals and groups. The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) violated its charter by engaging in domestic espionage activities, and even the U.S. Army established a political dossier. These excesses led to the development of a set of specific guidelines (called the Levi guidelines after Attorney General Edward H. Levi) for the conduct of internal security investigations by the FBI.

The Levi guidelines define precisely the kinds of activities that justify the conduct of domestic security investigations and establish three levels of investigations: preliminary, limited, and full. Each level requires a greater showing of need and authorization and permits more intrusive forms of investigation than the next lower level, although in all cases constitutional limitations are observed. The guidelines also provide standards for terminating investigations and for reporting, dissemination, and retention of investigatory materials, any of which can create as many problems as the collection process itself.

There is no reason to suppose that the Levi guidelines impair the effectiveness of domestic intelligence collection. Quite the contrary; the problem in analyzing intelligence is more often too much information rather than too little. One cannot distinguish the signal from the noise. Thus the requirement of clearly demonstrating the need for a particular investigatory effort may make the intelligence process more effective.

Any set of guidelines is only as good as the people who enforce it, and the level of enforcement will be at least somewhat responsive to the popular mood. If the popular mood is one of hysteria, induced by terrorist incidents, the effectiveness of investigations will not be improved, but the guidelines may be breached.

A further complication arises because intelligence work does not divide itself neatly into foreign and domestic categories. If the CIA is to be confined to its statutory charter and cannot operate inside the United States, close cooperation with the FBI is necessary. The CIA charter could be modified, but the wisdom of allowing an organization designed to operate under a quite different set of constraints to work within the country as well might result in serious invasions of individual liberty, and it seems unwise to go beyond cooperation between the two services.

What emerges from this analysis is a set of tentative principles that might be invoked in working out a U.S. strategy of response to low-intensity conflict. The United States first needs to accept that deterrence has become vastly more important than defense, primarily because adequate defense is almost impossible to achieve. Effective political deterrence depends on workable political relations with prospective aggressors in this kind of conflict and on internal political stability so that shocks can be absorbed without reverberations. Second, while physical deterrence—hardening of the target, policing the border, operating foreign and domestic intelligence networks—is a set of professional tasks, the extent of these activities, and the extent to which they are allowed to impinge on normal political processes, is very much a political decision and cannot be left to the professionals. The delineation of precise boundaries for domestic intelligence work is essential to preserve the society we are seeking to defend. Similarly, if the United States is responding to low-intensity attacks against another government, it cannot be effective unless that government has a stable base and is prepared to deal fairly and realistically with the domestic causes of the conflict.

Notes

1. I exclude the case of nuclear or biological weapons being employed in low-intensity conflict on the ground that such a case is beyond any definition of low intensity.

2. A report from the Bureau of the Census has found a reverse population shift back to smaller towns and rural areas after several decades of movement in the opposite direction. By spreading the population, the new trend may reduce the number of particularly attractive targets. See *Current Population Estimate for States*, January 1982, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1982).

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Low-Intensity Conflict in the 1980s: The Soviet Role

Richard Shultz

Few, if any, informed observers of regional developments in the Third World would disagree that in the 1980s these areas will continue to be the scene of turbulence and instability. One specialist has recently described the complexity of those situations in the following terms: "For a variety of reasons the Third World states are undergoing, and will continue to undergo, a series of pressures and challenges that will test their capabilities . . . to survive as nation-states. . . . Crises of legitimacy, the redistribution of wealth, sectarian disputes, secessionist movements and regional conflicts will all test fragile state structures and regional stability."¹ These conflicts, which result from a myriad of internal and regional cleavages, are often exacerbated by outside forces and will take a variety of forms, including urban and rural guerrilla warfare, civil war, coup d'état, insurrection, and terrorism.

Although the United States has paid little attention to burgeoning low-intensity conflicts in the Third World, the same cannot be said of the Soviet Union. Since the early 1970s, Soviet activities have expanded significantly in form and focus. The Soviets added new targets in southern Africa, the Horn of Africa, the southern part of the Arabian Peninsula, and Central America. Within these regions, either directly or through their surrogates, the Soviets have stimulated various forms of violence and instability, including insurgency and terrorism.

In marked contrast to the 1950s and 1960s, various U.S. officials and scholars have blamed these conflicts on indigenous regional factors instead of on accelerated Soviet activism. In the light of this misunderstanding of the role of outside forces, specifically, the Soviets and their surrogates, in promoting regional internal conflicts, this study addresses the following questions. First, how do the Soviets view low-intensity conflict in the Third World, and what role do they specify for themselves? Second, over the last decade, how important have Soviet and surrogate forces been in promoting and assisting different groups involved in regional low-intensity conflicts?

Evolution of Soviet Thinking about Low-Intensity Conflict

Although Lenin argued that the national liberation struggled in the Third World created natural allies for the Soviet Union, it has only been during the

Brezhnev era that party-civilian and military thought about these conflicts began to develop. During the Stalin era, Soviet involvement in the Third World was minimal.² This policy was reversed following Stalin's death, and in the aftermath of Khrushchev's removal, a Soviet policy marked by caution and restraint concentrated on those countries that fell within what they referred to as the "national liberation zone."³ This zone extended from North Africa, bordering on the strategically important Mediterranean, through the Horn of Africa and the Middle East, into South Asia, to those countries contiguous with the USSR like India which constituted a counterweight to China. Within these areas, the Soviets followed a dual policy of diplomatic relations with the newly independent governments and promotion of revolutionary violence. In the case of the latter, the primary concern of this study, Soviet involvement was clandestine and cautious. Soviet goals within this zone included ideological, political, strategic, and economic dimensions.⁴

During the early 1970s, Soviet involvement in Third World conflicts was expanded markedly in form and focus. The national liberation zone was extended into southern Africa, the southern part of the Arabian Peninsula, and Central and South America. Within this extended zone, the Soviets expanded their efforts to stimulate violence and instability. These actions may well have caught many Western observers by surprise since Moscow and Washington had embarked on a policy of *détente*. An examination of party-civilian and military thinking on low-intensity conflict (local war) and Soviet strategy for conducting international relations can illuminate this seeming contradiction of events.

Soviet Strategy

Support for the promotion of low-intensity conflicts in the Third World appears to evolve from the history of Soviet politico-military strategy. Lenin developed a doctrine of politics based on constant struggle in which traditional military and nonmilitary (conspiratorial, subversive, psychological, cultural, political, and economic) techniques were to be used.⁵ Thus, Lenin's view of war as struggle was broadly cast to include a range of nonmilitary tactics: "the party does not restrict its activities . . . it recognizes all methods of struggle."⁶ In 1973 Brezhnev stated that although the United States and USSR might reach a degree of accommodation, the revolutionary struggle would intensify: "let me remind you . . . the revolution, the class struggle, and Marxism-Leninism are fighting to ensure favorable international conditions for advancing the cause of social progress."⁷ The Soviets have made it clear that they will "continue support for the worldwide revolutionary process," which they consider part of the "worldwide transition from capitalism to socialism."⁸

Increasing Soviet support for national liberation wars reflects what the Soviet term the "correlation of forces." This measurement of world power trends is used to set priorities, allocate resources, and determine actions. During the mid-1960s and then in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the Soviets concluded that the correlation of forces had shifted significantly. This conclusion affected their approach to low-intensity conflict in the Third World.

Changing Relationship of Correlation of Forces to Low-Intensity Conflict

Soviet party-civilian and military thinking about low-intensity conflict underwent a dramatic reversal in the mid-1960s. According to Mark Katz, up to that point, Soviet analysts emphasized the risk that local wars in the Third World could escalate into world war. But then Soviet attitudes toward these conflicts began to change as Soviet "nuclear capabilities came to equal America. . . . The USSR could now keep local wars localized due to its increased strength."⁹ This change in attitude opened opportunities to the Soviets.

A second and more important change in the correlation of forces was proclaimed officially in Brezhnev's report to the Twenty-fourth Party Congress in March 1971.¹⁰ The basis for this assessment, according to Stephen Kaplan, includes both "increased Soviet strategic and conventional military capabilities" and a rapidly declining U.S. political-military commitment, including defense spending for strategic, conventional, and mobility forces, the withdrawal from Vietnam, and cleavages in the NATO alliance.¹¹ These assertions can be seen in official reports from the Twenty-fourth Party Congress and in the propagation of the new line following the congress.¹² In addition, the broad outline of this new policy as it relates to the Third World can be deduced from statements by leading party officials, as well as from Soviet political and military literature.

The Soviets' conclusion was that these shifts presented them opportunities to pursue a much more active role in the less developed world. Beginning in the early 1970s, this position appeared in a number of Soviet military sources. Katz notes, "During the Khrushchev era and the early years of the Brezhnev era, the Soviet military began to discuss this question, but not to the same extent that it discussed nuclear war or war in Europe. During the late 1960s and early 1970s, though, the Soviet military discussed conflict in the Third World in much greater depth. . . . During the late 1970s and early 1980s, Soviet military concern about this subject has continued."¹³ A recently published compilation of Soviet military writings contains authoritative statements on this new external function for the Soviet Union.¹⁴ In May 1974, the Soviet minister of defense, Marshal A.A. Grechko, openly

outlined the relationship between Soviet military power and political change in the Third World.¹⁵

Leading political officials made similar statements. For example, the growing linkage between the Soviet Union and Third World national liberation movements was spelled out in a 1980 article by Boris Ponomarev, head of the International Department of the Communist party of the Soviet Union (CPSU): "Whenever such forces exist and fight, they can rightfully count on our solidarity and support. Those who raise the banner of struggle . . . are considered by us to be representatives of a just cause."¹⁶ Brezhnev stated the party would pursue "a line in international affairs which would help further to invigorate anti-imperialist struggle."¹⁷ In *Foreign Affairs*, Henry Trofimenko, a key Soviet official from the Institute for U.S.A. and Canadian Studies, makes clear the USSR intent to proceed with its escalating role in and active support of liberation wars.¹⁸

Soviet Union and Low-Intensity Conflict

Over the last decade, the Soviets have developed a range of instruments for promoting and facilitating low-intensity conflict in the Third World, among them intelligence and special political activities, political propaganda, arms and military assistance, training and advisory support, and internal security training and development. The Soviets have also used surrogates, with the extent and specialized nature of surrogate assistance becoming increasingly evident.

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Intelligence-Special Political Activities

The roots of low-intensity conflict are "most likely to originate in an environment of harsh economic and social injustice, political repression, and pervasive corruption."¹⁹ As political unrest begins to unfold, the Soviets may conclude, according to Theodore Shackley, "that the potential gains of clandestine intervention in a particular country exceed the risk."²⁰ In such cases, the Soviets may employ their intelligence services to spot, assess, and recruit a potential insurgent leadership cadre. The most obvious targets include disgruntled elites, intellectuals, students, and union members.

The organizational structure of a KGB residence provides insight into the process by which the Soviets attempt to establish bases for internal war. According to Cord Meyer's recent autobiography, within Third World countries, section 3 of Operational Section 1 of the KGB is tasked, in conjunction with the International Department of the CPSU (which is responsible for directing local communist parties and international commu-

nist front groups) and Soviet Military Intelligence (the GRU), to spot, assess, and recruit potential guerrilla leaders who can be sent to the USSR (or a surrogate base) for political-military training. Once trained, the cadre is brought back and, with KGB guidance and assistance, begins to practice newly acquired techniques.²¹

The Soviets can call on other sources to assist in this process, such as the intelligence services of the East European bloc, Cuba, and other surrogates. According to Meyer, a "major responsibility of the KGB Residence is the monitoring and coordination of the operations of the East European and Cuban intelligence services within the host country." This provides the KGB "with a much larger number of case officers" and "very considerably extends their reach."²² Surrogate services can play important operational roles in areas where the Soviets are suspect. For instance, in Central and South America, the Cuban Directorate of Intelligence (DGI) and the Americas Department play an important role in the cadre stage.²³ Additionally, the Soviets can call on the local communist party and international front groups, all of which maintain liaison with the International Department-CPSU. These can provide valuable channels of recruitment to intellectuals, labor leaders, students, and academics, and, as Meyer notes, the International Department directly assists the KGB in this function.²⁴ Through the World Peace Council (WPC), the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization (AAPSO), and the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), the Soviets gain access to a wide range of individuals who identify with such causes as anticolonialism, opposition to U.S. foreign policy, and assistance for liberation movements. From a cadre recruitment viewpoint, such individuals are potentially valuable. Recruitment also occurs through the myriad of binational cultural programs and friendship societies maintained by the Soviet Union.²⁵

The Soviets maintain an extensive machinery for external media operations, including support for national liberation movements. Recently the Soviet leadership reorganized its various overt propaganda assets under a new Central Committee department, the International Information Department (IID), to coordinate more effectively their worldwide efforts.²⁶ While Soviet propaganda activities since World War II have been characterized increasingly by centralized control, intensity, and duration,²⁷ according to a recent evaluation, since the IID was established, Soviet worldwide propaganda campaigns have become much better coordinated, and the reactions of the Soviet media to world events have been much faster.²⁸ The Soviets can also draw on the propaganda assets of the Warsaw Pact countries and Cuba, as well as those of the international front groups directed by the International Department. Finally, the KGB provides a nonattributable complement to the overt propaganda effort.

Overt endorsements may be carried through international broadcast-

ing, as well as through numerous publications and two international news services (Tass and Novosti). With respect to external broadcasting, the Soviets during 1980 transmitted over 2,000 hours a week in 80 languages, focusing on a number of regional targets in the Third World.²⁹ For instance, in Africa during 1980, Radio Moscow broadcast 270 hours a week in 11 national and tribal languages. In East Asia and the Pacific and South Asia, the weekly figures were 544 and 370 hours, respectively.³⁰ In other regions, in addition to Soviet broadcast hours, surrogate propaganda is employed. In Central America, for instance, Radio Havana and other Cuban media assets have increasingly promoted the insurgent movements in El Salvador, Guatemala, Colombia, and elsewhere.

While Radio Moscow plays an important role in this process, of increasing importance over the years is Radio Peace and Progress (RPP), which targets primarily Third World audiences. Since RPP is purportedly independent of the Soviet government, its broadcasts are more outspoken, less sophisticated, and harsher than those of Radio Moscow. Recent RPP Spanish-language broadcasts to Latin America have been highly inflammatory and designed to tie various governments facing insurgent threats to U.S. imperialism:

Salvadoran children are kidnapped for terrorist training at "CIA centers" and to be used as guinea pigs.

U.S. military advisers torture Salvadoran rebels and train Latin Americans in torture techniques.

The United States is conducting chemical and biological warfare in a program of mass extermination.

U.S. multinational companies employ "hoodlums" to repress and murder those who oppose those governments tied to these companies.³¹

Similar broadcasts are directed to other Third World regions.

In the case of the international front groups, perhaps the key organization is the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization (AAPSO). According to a recent report on AAPSO activities, it was created to "coordinate the efforts of African and Asian peoples against colonialism and promoting their political, economic, and cultural development."³² Among the AAPSO membership are various national liberation movements currently conducting guerrilla war. For instance, at their Thirteenth International Conference in 1975, AAPSO council members from a number of these movements were represented.³³ At this and similar activities, AAPSO supports those movements the Soviets back.

Finally, Service A of the KGB's First Chief Directorate "plans, coordinates, and supports operations which are designed to backstop overt Soviet propaganda using such devices of covert action as forgeries, planted press articles, planted rumors, and controlled information media. . . . Service A maintains liaison with its counterparts in the Cuban and East European services and coordinates its overall program with theirs."³⁴ One example of covert Soviet support for insurgent groups occurred during the Iranian crisis, although the tactics themselves predate the crisis by many years. During this period, the Soviets utilized their clandestine radio station, the National Voice of Iran (operating since 1959 from Baku), to promote violence first against the shah and then toward the United States.³⁵ According to various Western intelligence sources, KGB played a role in the publication of *Navid*, the official organ of the Tudeh party (purportedly produced in the Soviet embassy in Iran).³⁶ One theme that appeared in *Navid* was the concept of the convergence between Islam and communism, the apparent goal being to promote a united front against the shah. According to one source, this theme was also broadcast by the National Voice of Iran.³⁷

Arms and Military Assistance

Weaponry and military assistance become vital during those stages of insurgency when the opposition is able to "surface to confront security forces in open combat. Their tactics are now more hit than run."³⁸ During earlier phases of development, insurgent violence is confined generally to sabotage and terrorism. Although the level of violence may escalate, tactics remain almost exclusively unconventional and of short duration.

While the data do not include weapons support to guerrilla movements, available evidence does show in some cases that arms shipped to Third World countries find their way to these groups. Sub-Saharan Africa is a case in point. According to one recent study,

Soviet support to SWAPO, ZANU, and ZAPU has . . . grown since 1975, although dollar figures are not available. Western news sources have regularly carried reports of Soviet military equipment being shipped to the frontline states for transmittal to particularly ZAPU, and to lesser degrees ZANU and SWAPO. This aid included T-34 and T-54 tanks, 122 millimeter rocket launchers, personnel carriers and large quantities of small arms. Much of the equipment was landed in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and Maputo and Beira, Mozambique.³⁹

A recent first-hand account from Namibia notes that Soviet covert support to SWAPO, through these and similar channels, continues to keep the

insurgents supplied.⁴⁰ In the case of Central America, arms from Bulgaria, East Germany, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia are being shipped through Cuba and Nicaragua to El Salvador.⁴¹ Recent evidence that the Soviets have been building naval facilities in Nicaragua (confirmed by the Nicaraguan government) may indicate increased Soviet covert weapons assistance to insurgent movements in the region.⁴² According to former CIA director Stansfield Turner, Libya also channels Soviet weapons to Central American revolutionaries.⁴³

On the one hand, the Soviets appear to rely frequently on indirect channels, whether Third World nations or Soviet surrogates (this seems to be specialty of East Germany and Czechoslovakia).⁴⁴ On the other hand, the Soviet arms support role is much more apparent in cases such as the PLO. While the Soviets want to maintain a policy of "non-attribution by channeling arms to the PLO by way of Syria, Libya, South Yemen and Algeria," the "veil is quite transparent." The Palestinian buildup in Lebanon over the last few years bears this out. This includes such heavy conventional weaponry as tanks, armored vehicles, artillery, and rocket launchers.⁴⁵ Zehdi Labib Terzi, the PLO representative to the United Nations, dispelled any doubt about the Soviet role in this buildup during a televised interview in New York.⁴⁶

The case of the Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (MPLA) in Angola is particularly interesting because it shows how the Soviet role transforms itself from covert to overt. During the latter half the 1960s, the MPLA began "to received limited amounts of Soviet arms." In the aftermath of the "Young Captains' Coup" in Portugal in April 1974, "Communist cadres at all levels in the Portuguese units stationed in Angola facilitated the shipment of Soviet and Cuban arms deliveries to the MPLA guerrillas through Luanda and other ports on the African coast."⁴⁷ By the fall of 1974, the Soviets increased their arms supply to the MPLA through an agreement with the radical regime in the Congo Republic, providing the Soviets with a staging area. Then in 1977, in an impressive show of strategic reach, the Soviets transported major amounts of arms and military materials, along with 19,000 Cuban troops, 6,000 Cuban civilian technicians, and 400 to 500 Soviet advisers.⁴⁸ The result is well known.

Training and Advisory Support

Soviet and surrogate training and advising includes preparation in both military and political warfare techniques (the latter focusing on procedures for establishing an insurgent infrastructure). These activities can be divided into four categories: training and advising within the USSR or a surrogate nation-state, training and advising in base areas contiguous to the area of

internal conflict, advisory assistance within the actual area of conflict, and deployment of military forces within the actual area of conflict.

Within the first three categories, training and advising ranges from elementary to advanced, depending on the stage of the conflict. Shackley's framework suggests that while Soviet advising and training may be undertaken during the initial phases, depending on their risk assessment, larger-scale efforts are likely to begin during the operational stage and continue through the covert war and conventional war phases of the conflict. In the covert war phase, the insurgents begin to coordinate their attacks in larger formations (up to a battalion) in various locations, while continuing those tactics initiated during the earlier phases.⁴⁹ Finally, in the conventional war period, insurgent strength is sufficient to confront the government forces in decisive battles.⁵⁰ During these final stages of conflict, training and advising are conducted at more advanced levels. With victory a possibility, an outside power may risk introducing advisers directly into the conflict or actually deploy regular military forces.

Soviet advising and training of insurgent groups dates to the early 1960s. According to General Jan Sejna, former Czech military counselor, the Soviets began to establish camps for insurgent training in 1964. Although Czech officials were formally in charge, the KGB and GRU operated the camps.⁵¹ Similar facilities were established in the USSR and now constitute a network of facilities for elementary and advanced training. The best known are the Lenin Institute and the Patrice Lumumba University. Both provide basic training in irregular military tactics and political warfare techniques. The Soviets also maintain more specialized training centers, some of which appear to service specific clientele. For instance, facilities located at Simferopol in the Crimea and near Odessa, Tashkent, and Baku reportedly receive large numbers of Palestinians.⁵²

Staffs for the more specialized centers appear to be drawn from various Soviet special or Spetsnaz forces (trained in the paramilitary dimensions of active measures) maintained by the KGB, GRU, MVD, and Soviet army. While these units are tasked with a number of highly sensitive missions, KGB and GRU Spetsnaz elements "maintain links with and training facilities for Third World liberation groups and foreign terrorists."⁵³ These advisers may also be deployed in training locations outside the USSR.

Within the Middle East, the Soviets and their surrogates (primarily the East Germans) assist in maintaining training facilities, the most important of which appear to be in Libya and South Yemen. South Yemen (PDY) plays an interesting role in the Soviet effort. Probably the closest nation to an orthodox Marxist-Leninist regime in the Arab world, South Yemen is bound to the USSR by defense and friendship treaties. Soviet, East German, and Cuban advisers and military personnel are estimated to have expanded from 1,550 in 1978 to over 5,000 currently.⁵⁴ These forces perform a number of

functions for the PDRY and also engage in training PLO guerrillas at Hanf, Mukalla, and al-Gheidha on the Gulf of Aden.⁵⁵ The Palestinian guerrillas, in turn, with the assistance of the Soviets, Cubans, and East Germans, train and advise other insurgent and terrorist movements. The principal location of these training facilities is in Libya. According to one recent account, as many as twenty training camps are maintained to provide training and assistance to such diverse groups as the IRA and a Basque separatist group, the Euzkabi Ta Askatasuna ("Basque Country and Liberty"), as well as to insurgents from other Middle Eastern and African areas.⁵⁶

Within sub-Saharan Africa, Soviet, East German, and Cuban personnel are involved in training and advising at base areas contiguous to and, occasionally, directly within the area of conflict. Of these three contingents, the Cubans, as a result of their role in securing power for the MPLA in Angola, have received the most notoriety.⁵⁷ This case exemplifies the most extensive use of a surrogate: the deployment of a large contingent of military forces, estimated at between 15,000 and 20,000, directly into the conflict. In addition to Angola, Cuban personnel have been actively advising and training guerrilla and security forces in the Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Ethiopia, and elsewhere.⁵⁸

The East Germans have played an increasingly active surrogate role in Africa, both in guerrilla training and advising and in internal security system development. The East Germans are involved in many of the same places as the Cubans. According to one recent assessment,

the strategic location of East Germany's African clients is a major consideration in shaping the Soviet Union's larger strategy in the area. Frelimo has been a militant supporter of SWAPO's insurrection inside Namibia and was an earlier backer of the Patriotic Front. In both cases, East German military advisors are said to have assisted these movements from Mozambique's territory. East German officials make significant note of the fact that Mozambique's confrontation of South Africa and its location on the Indian Ocean . . . are of major importance to the Soviet bloc as a whole.⁵⁹

In addition to Mozambique, GDR advisers appear to have played an active role in preparing the National Liberation Front of the Congo, in Angola, for its 1978 invasion of Shaba province in Zaire.⁶⁰

Finally, the role of Cuba in Latin America deserves special note. During the last three years, the Cubans have renewed and escalated their 1960s campaign to promote internal violence. In particular the Cubans have focused on Central America. This involvement has been characterized by a readiness to train, equip, and advise radical movements in the region. To assist in this process, Castro can draw on the expertise of Cuban military and the Cuban Intelligence Service (DGI) to conduct training camps in Cuba, networks for covertly moving personnel and supplies between Cuba and

Central and South America, and propaganda support.⁶¹ According to one source,

Witnesses and former trainees have described several camps in Cuba dedicated specifically to military training. . . . The camps can accommodate several hundred trainees. Groups from El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Honduras, Columbia, Grenada, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Haiti, Chile, and Uruguay have been trained in these facilities during the past 2 years. . . . Training normally lasts 3 to 6 months and consists of instruction by Cuban cadres in sabotage, explosives, military tactics and weapons use. . . . Many Cuban instructors are . . . veterans of . . . Africa. Soviet personnel have been reported at these camps, but they apparently do not participate directly in guerrilla training.⁶²

This training and advising appears to be part of a more complex Cuban strategy.

Prior to 1979, Cuban training and assistance to El Salvador was quite modest; however, during the latter half of 1979, Soviet-Cuban policy changed dramatically.⁶³ This began with a successful Cuban effort in December 1979 to forge a unity agreement among the various leftist factions in El Salvador.⁶⁴ With this new Unified Revolutionary Directorate (DRU), Cuban training of insurgent forces escalated sharply in 1980, concentrating on building an army capable of initiating major offensives.⁶⁵ Cuba also coordinates the training of a select number of Salvadoran insurgents in PLO training camps in the Middle East.⁶⁶ Beyond training and advising, the Cubans have coordinated Soviet and Soviet bloc arms shipments to El Salvador,⁶⁷ as well as orchestrated a major propaganda campaign, with Soviet assistance, supporting the guerrillas and denegrating government policy and U.S. support.⁶⁸ In sum, in the Salvadoran case, the place of training and advising within overall Soviet-Cuban strategy for Central America can be observed. Outside of Central America but still within the region, examples of Cuban training assistance have been revealed in Jamaica and Colombia.⁶⁹

Internal Security Training and Development

In addition to assisting and promoting low-intensity conflict, the Soviets appear to be increasingly involved in assisting insurgents during the post-revolutionary period of power consolidation. According to Katz, Soviet military and civilian-party writing in the late 1970s began to stress that "to maintain those socialist gains that have already been made . . . long-term military commitments . . . are required."⁷⁰ One way the Soviets have attempted to do this is through their own and the East German security services. The East Germans maintain military and security assets skilled in

these procedures. The German Democratic Republic's (GDR) State Security Service has been actively developing internal security infrastructures to assist various African regimes secure their power. According to John Starrels, the State Security Service "has trained Mozambique's National Service for Popular Security, while also providing for the personal protection of Machel himself. Furthermore, the East Germans train that country's border troops and assist them in carrying out antiguerrilla operations against the domestic insurgency movements."⁷¹ In Angola, it has been reported that the East Germans are "closely involved in developing a policy system, aimed mainly against political opponents."⁷² Known as the Section for Information and Security, it is "run by G.D.R. specialists," according to Holden Roberts, leader of the Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola (FNLA), and "administers the Campos de Recuperação or convalescent camps."⁷³ The GDR apparently has provided similar assistance to the Mengistu regime in Ethiopia⁷⁴ and South Yemen's Marxist-Leninist ruling party.⁷⁵ According to one specialist, the Cubans and East Germans have assisted in building the internal security infrastructure in Nicaragua.⁷⁶

Finally, while the East Germans have been involved in counter guerrilla training and operations in Mozambique, the Soviets are developing much more formidable counterinsurgency doctrine and capabilities in Afghanistan. According to a recent assessment, the Soviet military "is drawing lessons from the continuing conflict and modifying previous operational concepts in a manner that suggests a long-term approach to counterinsurgency warfare."⁷⁷ Whether the Soviets will employ these assets elsewhere to help friendly regimes stay in power remains to be seen.

Conclusions

Over the last decade, the most active outside force in promoting and facilitating low-intensity conflict in the Third World has been the Soviet Union and its surrogates. During the late 1960s and early 1970s, as a result of a perceived shift in the correlation of forces, the Soviets apparently decided to escalate the form and focus of their involvement in these situations. This policy shift was set forth in both theoretical and broad policy terms by top Soviet political and military officials. The new policy appears to espouse both taking advantage of targets of opportunity and creating such opportunities through the use of various indirect or active measures. The Soviets have employed an impressive array of assets in pursuit of these goals and, in addition to their own capabilities, over the last decade have used various surrogates.

In a number of situations, Soviet involvement has served as a very active promoter and facilitator of internal conflict in the Third World. While the

initial causes of these conflicts are due to indigenous factors, in many cases their growth and exacerbation may be attributed in part to the involvement of the Soviets and their surrogates. Their record over the last decade is an impressive one and, one might assume, from the perspective of U.S. foreign and national security policy in the 1980s, a cause for serious concern among U.S. policymakers.

Notes

1. Shahram Chubin, "The United States and the Third World," *Adelphi Papers*, no. 167 (Summer 1981):25.

2. Roger Kant, ed., *The Soviet Union and the Developing Nations* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974).

3. U.S. Congress, House Committee on International Relations, *The Soviet Union and the Third World: A Watershed in Great Power Policy?* 95th Cong., 1st sess., 1977, pp. 54–56.

4. For a useful discussion of these dimensions, see U.S. Congress, House Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Soviet Policy and United States Response in the Third World*, 97th Cong., 1st sess., 1981, pp. 21–25.

5. Lenin wrote in 1921 that "until the final issue between capitalism and communism is decided, the state of partial war will continue. We say: à la guerre comme à la guerre." V.I. Lenin, *Selected Works* (New York: International Publishers, 1971), p. 242. These nonmilitary tactics are especially important when a nation is weak and the opposition is wrong, for they allow the nation to keep on the offensive by maintaining the struggle.

6. V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works* (New York: International Publishers, 1971), 9:476.

7. *Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, November 21, 1973, p. 6.

8. A.V. Nikiforov, "American Concept of Interdependence," *U.S.A.: Economics, Politics, and Ideology* (July 1979).

9. Mark Katz, *The Third World in Soviet Military Thought* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), pp. 124–125.

10. Stephen S. Kaplan, *Diplomacy of Power* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1981), p. 172.

11. *Ibid.*

12. *24th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union: March 30–April 9, 1971, Documents* (Moscow: Novosti Press Agency, 1971).

13. Katz, *Third World*, p. 123.

14. Harriet Fast Scott and William Scott, eds., *The Soviet Art of War* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1982), pp. 241–295, esp. selections by Volkogonov, Vorobyev, and Ogarkov. Scott and Scott note that those selections emphasizing this new external function of the Soviet military tended to

appear primarily in publications dealing with the political side of doctrine rather than in military journals.

15. According to Grechko, "At the present stage the historic function of the Soviet Armed Forces is not restricted merely to their function in defending our motherland and the other socialist countries. In its foreign policy activity the Soviet state actively and purposefully opposes the export of counterrevolution and the policy of oppression, supports the national liberation struggle, and resolutely resists imperialists' aggression in whatever distant region . . . it may appear." *Ibid.*, p. 243.

16. Boris Ponomarev, "Invincibility of the Liberation Movement," *Kommunist* (January 1980), translated in Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), *Daily Report: Soviet Union*, February 4, 1980, p. 14. This is significant particularly because Ponomarev, as head of the CPSU International Department, oversees the front groups and foreign standards to be critical tools for political warfare. Consequently Ponomarev's statements take on special meaning and authoritativeness.

17. *24th Congress*, p. 29.

18. Henry Trofimenko, "America, Russia, and the Third World," *Foreign Affairs* (Summer 1981): 1021–1040.

19. Theodore Shackley, "The Use of Paramilitary Covert Action in the 1980s," in Roy Godson, *Intelligence Requirements for the 1980s: Covert Action* (Sussex: Holt Saunders Ltd., 1982), p.140.

20. Theodore Shackley, *The Third Option* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1981), p. 29.

21. Cord Meyer, *Facing Reality* (New York: Harper & Row, 1980), pp. 321–323.

22. For a good discussion of KGB–Soviet bloc intelligence services cooperation, see Ladislav Bittman, *The Deception Game* (New York: Ballantine, 1981).

23. See James Theberge, *The Soviet Presence in Latin America* (New York: Crane, Russak, 1974); John Baron, *KGB* (New York: Bantam, 1974).

24. See James David Atkinson, *The Politics of Struggle* (Chicago: Regnery, 1966), on the role of front groups. Also see U.S. Congress, House, Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, *The CIA and the Media*, 95th Cong., 1st and 2d sess., 1977–1978. This contains an extensive examination of the background, structure, and activities of international communist front organizations. On the use of local communist parties by the Soviets, see Robert Chapmen, "Collection in More Regions," in *Intelligence Requirements for the 1980s: Clandestine Collection*, ed. Roy Godson (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, 1982).

25. U.S. Information Agency, *External Information and Cultural Rela-*

tions Program—Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (Washington, D.C.: Office of Research and Assessment, 1973), p.59.

26. For an interesting discussion of these attributes, see U.S. Congress, House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, "The CIA and the Media," 95th Congress, 1st and 2nd Sessions (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1978).

27. U.S. Congress, House, Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, *Soviet Covert Action (The Foreign Offensive)*, 96th Cong., 2d sess., 1980.

28. U.S. International Communication Agency (USICA), "Soviet Broadcasting Increases in 1980 Are Largest in More Than 10 Years" (Washington, D.C.: USICA Office of Research, 1981), pp. 1–2.

29. USICA, "Communist International Radio Broadcasting in 1980" (Washington, D.C.: USICA, Office of Research, 1981), p.4.

30. Radio Havana transmitted more than 350 program hours a week in eight languages during 1980. In the Caribbean alone, Radio Havana's weekly broadcasts include 14 hours in Creole to Haiti, 60 hours in English, 3 hours in French, and 125 hours in Spanish. U.S. Department of State, "Cuba's Renewed Support for Violence in Latin America," Special Report No. 90, 14 December 1981, p. 5.

31. "CIA and the Media," p. 581.

32. Ibid, p. 583.

33. In the early 1970s, this section of the KGB was upgraded from a department to a service, an indication, according to one source, "of its increased importance." "Soviet Covert Action (The Forgery Offensive)," pp. 61–62.

34. The following is an example of a National Voice of Iran broadcast during the hostage crisis in Iran: "In conditions where the United States conspires against the Iranian revolution, against Iran's independence and freedom, against the leaders of the revolution . . . we believe the only decisive and necessary response to U.S. imperialism is the united struggle for the eradication of Imperialism . . . from our dear Iran." Ibid., p. 79.

35. Robert Moss, "The Campaign to Destabilize Iran," *Conflict Studies* (November 1978):7.

36. Ibid., pp. 7–8.

37. Michael Ledeen and William Lewis, *Debacle: The American Failure in Iran* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1981), pp. 115–116.

38. Shackley, *Third Option*, p. 87.

39. Daniel Papp, "The Soviet Union and Southern Africa," in *The Soviet Union and the Developing Nations*, ed. Roger Kanet (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), p. 79.

40. See Jack Anderson, "Soviet Influence in Namibia Stirs Hill's Con-

cern," *Washington Post*, March 29, 1982. For an extensive examination of these developments, see the report on the subject from the Subcommittee on Security and Terrorism of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary, "Soviet, East German and Cuban Involvement in Fomenting Terrorism in Southern Africa," 2 volume report, No. J-97-101, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1982).

41. See U.S. Department of State, *White Paper—Communist Interference in El Salvador* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1980).

42. *Baltimore Sun*, February 26, 1981. Also see FBIS, *Daily Report (Latin America)*, March 30, April 29, 1981.

43. Constantine Menges, "Central American Revolutions: A New Dimension in Political Warfare," in *The 1980s: Decade of Confrontation* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1981).

44. See Michael Randu, ed., *Eastern Europe and the Third World* (New York: Praeger, 1981).

45. See Jack Anderson, "Soviets Working against Peace in Lebanon," *Washington Post*, September 8, 1981; David Ignatius, "Guerrilla Politics," *Wall Street Journal*, November 20, 1981.

46. Cited by Herbert Roberstein, *Soviet Support for International Terrorism* (New York: Foundation for Democratic Education, 1981), pp. 10–11. According to Terzi, the Soviets provide military equipment directly to the PLO.

47. Meyer, *Facing Reality*, p. 249.

48. Keith Payne, "Are They Interested in Stability? The Soviet View of Intervention," *Comparative Strategy* (1981):11. The ability to deliver such large assets rapidly is an important development in Soviet power projection capability over the last decade. See W. Scott Thompson, *Power Projection* (New York: National Strategy Information Center, 1978).

49. Shackley, *Third Option*, chap. 8.

50. *Ibid.*, chap. 10.

51. Claire Sterling, *The Terror Network* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1981), p.34.

52. Neil Livingstone, "Terrorism: The International Connection," *Army* (December 1980):16.

53. John Dziak, "Soviet Intelligence and Security Services in the 1980s: The Para-military Dimensions." in Godson, *Intelligence Requirements*, pp. 104–105.

54. U.S. Senate, Subcommittee on Security and Terrorism of the Committee on the Judiciary, *Terrorism: The Role of Moscow and Its Subcontractors*, 97th Cong., 1st sess., 1981, p. 17.

55. Richard Sim, "Soviet Moves in South Yemen Alarm Oman," *Soviet Analyst*, June 28, 1979, p. 4.

56. Egyptian press accounts cited by Roberstein, *Soviet Support*, p. 26–27.
57. See Meyer, *Facing Reality*, chap. 12.
58. See Papp, "Soviet Union and Southern Africa," pp. 66–67; Lawrence E. Grinter, "Checkmate in the Third World? Soviet Intervention and American Response," *International Security Review* (Spring 1981):13–14.
59. John Starrels, *East Germany: Marxist Mission in Africa* (Washington, D.C.: Heritage Foundation, 1980), p. 25–26.
60. Jiri Valenta and Shannon Butler, "East German Security Policies in Africa," in Randu, *Eastern Europe and the Third World*, pp. 153–154.
61. On the development of DGI-KGB connections, see Theberge, *Soviet Presence in Latin America*.
62. U.S. Department of State, "Cuba's Renewed Support for Violence in Latin America," Special Report No. 90, December 14, 1981.
63. Jiri Valenta, "The U.S.S.R., Cuba, and the Crises in Central America," *Orbis* (Fall 1981): 738–742.
64. Discussed in Menges, "Central American Revolutions." For a thorough discussion of the different factions, see R. Bruce McColm, *El Salvador: Peaceful Revolution or Armed Struggle* (New York: Freedom House, 1982).
65. Valenta, "U.S.S.R., Cuba," pp. 741–742; Department of State, "Cuba's Renewed Support," pp. 4–5.
66. "Cuba's Renewed Support," p. 6.
67. Valenta, "U.S.S.R., Cuba," p. 741.
68. Department of State, "Cuba's Renewed Support," p. 7.
69. *Ibid.*, pp. 9–10; "Cuba: Yesterday and Today," *Grand Strategy*, January 1, 1982, pp. 2–3.
70. For a fuller discussion, see Katz, *Third World*, chapter 4, p. 145.
71. Starrels, *East Germany*, p. 25.
72. Martin McCauley, "GDR Involvement in Africa," *Soviet Analyst*, December 8, 1977, p. 6.
73. *Ibid.*, p. 6; William Robinson, "Eastern Europe's Presence in Black Africa," *Radio Free Europe Report*, June 21, 1979, p. 7; Starrels, *East Germany*, p. 24.
74. Valenta and Butler, "East German Security," p. 155.
75. Fukuyama, "New Soviet Strategy," pp. 55–56; Sim, "Soviet Moves in South Yemen," pp. 4–5.
76. Menges, "Central American Revolutions," p. 96, 103.
77. Douglas Hart, "Low Intensity Conflict in Afghanistan: The Soviet View," *Survival* (March–April 1982).

7

Strategic Responses to Terrorism: The Turkish Experience

Yonah Alexander

The concept of low-level conflict includes both domestic and international components of unconventional operations during conditions of both war and peace. Internally violent conflict, such as sabotage, insurrection, coup d'état, and civil war, is common. Internationally, terrorism, guerrilla warfare, insurgency, and revolutionary war are characteristic. Often these terms are used interchangeably, resulting in an artificial distinction between domestic and foreign implications, particularly when the stability and welfare of nations are involved.¹

Expanding expressions of ideological and political violence must be placed within a strategic framework. More specifically the use of terrorism without the outbreak of conventional military hostilities² has opened four major geographic targets:

1. Civil war areas: The national government no longer controls large portions of the country that are in the hands of urban- or rural-based insurgent forces.
2. High-intensity areas: Active terrorist groups pose an imminent threat to a nation's political or economic vitality.
3. Middle-intensity areas: Urban or rural terrorist groups are active but have not yet become strong enough to threaten governmental stability.
4. Low-risk areas: Development of terrorist activity is possible. Normally, if terrorist groups are active in such areas, their operations are just beginning or are in a formative stage.³

There are no simple solutions for dealing with such vulnerabilities. Both terrorism and counterterrorism can result in runaway destruction coupled with public alienation. The short-term political effects of a terrorist act are difficult to assess, despite the amount of media attention devoted to such events. Whether or not terrorism is seen as an efficient policy tool by established governments, its increasing use by disenfranchised elements of society is glaringly apparent. The statistics are staggering. According to one source, 18,727 domestic and international terrorist incidents have occurred from 1970 to June 1983. A total of 28,110 individuals have been killed and another 18,925 wounded, with property damage totaling \$937,946,544 as a direct result of terrorist action.⁴ The level of international terrorism (those

attacks conducted with the support of a foreign government or organization and/or directed against foreign nationals, institutions, or governments) is also rising.

Terrorism is a mode of irregular warfare that "is cheap to activate and costly to counter."⁵ As a form of low-intensity political conflict, below the threshold of clearly recognized military operations falling within the framework of the laws of war, terrorism is one of the most menacing techniques of disrupting order in open societies.⁶ Ideological and political groups—ranging from left-wing theorists who see an apparent indestructible postimperial system of oppression to conservative reactionaries who oppose secularism and communism—are able, with direct and indirect state support, to conduct political warfare on the national level and ultimately may even succeed in altering the balance of power on an international scale.

Terrorism against the shah's regime in Iran dramatically demonstrated that low-level conflict can bring about major changes in the environment by destabilizing or destroying governments aligned with the United States.

While hindsight has brought the lessons of Iran into clear view, serious misunderstanding persists as to the nature of ideological and political violence that confronts a host of countries. This chapter focuses on how terrorism has shaped the political process in the Republic of Turkey. The responses of the government in Ankara and the relative success of their methods is an important lesson for the nations of the West, many of whom have not yet had to deal with high levels of terrorist activity.

Pre-Coup Period

In 1959 a student was killed in the first of a succession of antigovernment demonstrations that marked the first phase of terrorism in Turkey. During the period between 1959 and 1965, sporadic student extremist groups and militant labor strikes frequently brought urban Turkey to a standstill and without prompting any serious reforms in Turkish politics. The next phase in the development of Turkish terrorism lasted from 1965 to 1970. The Marxist Turkish Labor Party, which obtained only 2.9 percent of the vote in the 1965 elections, resorted to ideological and political violence for the purpose of achieving its revolutionary goals. University students, in the aftermath of the 1966 Tricontinental Havana Convention, resorted to extremism in their attempt to radically reform the educational system. Large-scale, well-organized terrorist attacks were undertaken during the third phase of terrorism from 1971 to 1979. Bombings, kidnappings, and assassinations intensified in the early 1970s as the government control of the domestic situation was seriously challenged by the breadth and intensity of terrorist activities.

An initial imposition of martial law in Istanbul proved to be ineffective.

Following an armed forces memorandum in March 1971, the weak government resigned. Martial law was established, and the new military government formed by parliament was able to cope more successfully with the problem of domestic terrorism.

When Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit of the left-of-center People's Republican party resumed civilian leadership in 1973, he proclaimed an amnesty, releasing many convicted terrorists. This liberal policy, coupled with successive weak coalition governments, once again precipitated a cycle of violence by extremist segments of the Turkish political spectrum.

The most active groups on the political left were the radical Marxist-Leninist Armed Propaganda Unit of the Turkish People's Liberation Front (MLPU), the Turkish People's Liberation Army (TPLA), the Turkish Workers and Peasants Army of Liberation, and the Turkish Labor party's Association of Youth Vanguard.⁷

An offshoot of Dev Genc (Turkish Revolutionary Youth Federation), the TPLA has been active since the late 1960s. With several members trained in Syria and Lebanon during the early 1970s, the TPLA has long been strongly allied with various Palestinian terrorist groups. Since its founding by former student leader Mahir Cayan, it has pursued a campaign of urban terrorism, emphasizing kidnapping, assassination, bank robberies, and bombing operations. It was responsible for the abduction of four U.S. Air Force personnel outside Ankara in 1971. Primary targets for the group have been U.S. military facilities, right-wing political groups, and U.S. diplomatic installations. Inactive for a time following the death of Cayan in a shootout with the police on March 30, 1972, the TPLA resumed terrorist operations in Istanbul, Izmir, and Ankara during early 1977.

Although the TPLA was the oldest radical left group operation in Turkey, the most active had been the MLPU. Operating primarily in Istanbul, Izmir, and Ankara, the organization appeared to be composed primarily of radical student elements (both male and female) organized in a cell-type structure similar to that found among European terrorist organizations. Well supplied with submachine guns, explosives, and ammunition, the group had focused on U.S. military personnel and members of the conservative National Movement party. According to information released by the Turkish police, other proposed actions by the MLPU included the kidnapping and assassination of police officials, the abduction of right-wing Turkish businessmen, and the kidnapping of the Israeli consul in Istanbul.

Actual operations carried out by the group included the assassination in Izmir of a U.S. Air Force enlisted man and the wounding of an associate, the murder of a U.S. Army corporal in Istanbul, and the wounding of another soldier. Other acts allegedly carried out by the MLPU included the assassination of National Movement party personnel in Manrisa, the bombing of the Confederation of National Trade Unions in Ankara, and the assassin-

ation in Istanbul of a police inspector. At the time of his death, the inspector had just completed a security operation directed against the MLPU.

On the political right, the National Action party (NAP) and its paramilitary commando units under the leadership of retired colonel and former Deputy Premier Alparslan Türkeş were the primary threat. Somewhat neofascist in political outlook, the NAP was also strongly militaristic. Türkeş, as a member of the military junta that seized power in Turkey during 1960 and subsequently hanged then Premier Adnan Menderes, was a strong advocate of counterterrorist operations. Trained in paramilitary operations and street-fighting tactics, his commandos had been quick to retaliate against leftist violence and terrorist actions. Active in the universities as well as in central and eastern Anatolia, NAP units reportedly were involved in the assassination of several left-wing political leaders in Istanbul, Gaziantep, Ankara, and Manisa, operations carried out in retaliation for the deaths of five right-wing politicians in June 1979. Other right-wing elements that had been involved in violent activities included the National Movement party and the Idealist Association.

Faced with a serious internal security problem that was worsening almost daily, the government imposed (or continued) martial law in nineteen of the nation's sixty-seven provinces. Enacted initially on December 26, 1978, the martial law decrees were extended on April 1, 1979. In addition, special mobile intelligence groups were established by the police to react rapidly to developing violence. Despite these and other legal measures, violence continued to grow.

In the prevailing climate of hatred and political violence, the traditional sense of grievance of the Alevi-Shiites against the Sunnis, who form 80 percent of the population, was exploited and exacerbated. The most brutal sectarian massacre occurred at Kahramanmaraş in December 1978; 109 died, 176 were seriously wounded, and 500 houses and shops were destroyed. Another bitter clash between the two communities took place in Çorum in May 1980, resulting in the death and injury of 90 people and property damage to some 100 shops.

In sum, political violence and terrorist activity accelerated rapidly in Turkey during the martial law period. Over some twenty-two months, the number of incidents in the country reached 32,689; 3,080 lost their lives (excluding terrorists killed in clashes with security forces); and the total number of people wounded reached 10,417.⁸

Post-Coup Period

This deteriorating situation, which had brought Turkey to the brink of civil war, resulted in ouster of the civilian government of Prime Minister Ecevit

on September 12, 1980. General Kenan Evren, chief of general staff and chairman of the National Security Council, speaking for the Turkish armed forces that morning, explained the reason for the coup and informed the nation of the specific steps the military had taken:

As you have been noticing in the past few years the State of the Turkish Republic, an integral whole with its nation and land and entrusted to us by Great Ataturk, has been facing dastardly physical and ideological aggressions prompted by the provocations of its independence. The State, with its main bodies, has been rendered unable to function, the Constitutional institutions have assumed a contradictory and muted silence and the political parties have failed to bring about the unity and togetherness and to take the necessary measures which could have saved the State because of their sterile bickerings and unconciliatory attitudes. Accordingly, the subversive and secessionist forces have increased their activities to the utmost, endangering the security of life and property of the citizens. Instead of Kemalism, reactionary and other warped ideologies have been produced and promoted in a systematic manner and all the educational institutions from elementary schools to universities, the administrative system, judiciary organs, internal security organization, labour institutions, political parties and the citizens even in the most remote corners of the country have become the targets of attacks and suppression and pushed into the threshold of a civil war and division. In short, the State has been incapacitated.

In such an atmosphere, the Turkish Armed Forces in the name of the august Turkish Nation, took the decision to fulfill its duty of protecting and safeguarding the Turkish Republic as laid down under its Internal Service Code in an orderly manner within the chain of command and has taken over the complete administration of the country. The purpose of this operation is to preserve the integrity of the country, to restore national unity and togetherness, to avert a possible civil war and fratricide, to reestablish the authority and existence of the State and to eliminate all the factors that prevent the normal functioning of the democratic order.

The Parliament and the government have been dissolved. The immunity of the members of Parliament has been lifted. Martial Law has been declared throughout the country. All exits out of the country have been forbidden. A curfew has been declared all over the country as of 05.00 hours until further notice in order to provide speedy protection for the security of life and property of the citizens.⁹

Subsequent to this statement and the imposition of martial law in all sixty-seven Turkish provinces, the effectiveness of the armed forces became evident. During the following seventeen months, Turkey achieved major successes in combatting domestic terrorism. As a result of direct attacks on members of extremist groups, arrests of suspected terrorists, arms confiscation, and various legal and administrative measures (such as amendments in penal and procedural laws and strengthening of martial law tribunals with civilian judges and prosecutors), the number of incidents decreased 93 percent and casualties fell 99 percent.¹⁰

Nevertheless, Turkey's troubles persisted; 6,492 incidents occurred during this period. They were carried out by left-wing extremists (57 percent), members of unknown political persuasion (38 percent), separatists (3 percent), and right-wing radicals (2 percent). The incidents consisted of hanging posters and placards and distributing illegal leaflets (48 percent), robberies and unlawful acquisitions (21.2 percent), intimidation and beating (12 percent), clashes with security forces (11 percent), arson (6 percent), illegal demonstrations (0.9 percent), and student unrest (0.9 percent).¹¹

The government's efforts to reduce these expressions of ideological and political violence have continued. On the second anniversary of the military coup, the martial law command reported that 25,446 people were being held in military prisons on charges of terrorism, 111 people had been sentenced to death by martial law courts, and 21 had been executed.¹²

This response to domestic terrorism was approved by the Turkish population in a referendum on November 7, 1982. According to the new constitution, the country's military rulers were assured seven more years in power. Had the charter been rejected, the alternative, according to General Evren, would have been a return to the "national agony" and collapse of law and order, "this time, probably, with no hope of salvation."¹³

A continuing threat of ideological and political violence continues to be Armenian extremism.¹⁴ Over the last ten years some 170 incidents have been linked to Armenian terrorists. Most attacks were directed against Turkish diplomats, diplomatic missions, and Turkish establishments, including the January 1973 assassination of the Turkish consul and vice-consul in Los Angeles; the October 1973 bombing of the Turkish Information Office in New York; April 1973 assaults on the Turkish consulate and Turkish airline offices in Paris; the 3 January 1978 bombing of a Turkish bank in London and the financial section of the Turkish embassy in Brussels; the December 1978 bombings of the Turkish consulate in Geneva and Turkish airlines offices in the same city; the December 1979 murder of the head of the Turkish Tourist and Information Office in Paris; the October 1980 bombing of the Turkish Airlines office in Milan; the April 1981 shooting of the first secretary of the Turkish embassy in Copenhagen; and the August 1982 murder of a Turkish consulate official in the Bulgarian Black Sea port of Burgas.

Although these and similar acts of violence have been more a harassment than a real threat to national stability in Turkey, the problem becomes more complicated as third countries are affected. Belgium, France, Germany, Great Britain, Israel, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and the United States, to name a few, have been targeted because they are accused of being hostile to the Armenian cause. In attacking both people and property in these countries, Armenian extremists hope to achieve four tactical and strategic goals: to secure the release of jailed Armenian terrorists or at least

to guarantee them political prisoner status, to weaken antiterrorist cooperation between Turkey and the targeted states, to discourage the emigration of Armenians from the Soviet Union and the Middle East to the West, and to disrupt the ties between Turkey and its NATO allies.

Bombing has been the most popular tactic used by Armenian terrorists against other countries. Over sixty attacks have occurred since 1970, including the bombings of KLM and Lufthansa in Paris; Alitalia, British Airways, Sabena, and TWA in Madrid; El-Al and Pan Am in Rome; Air France in Brussels; and Swiss Air in Milan. Other attacks have damaged official property and diplomatic establishments such as the central post office in Geneva and the French embassy in Tehran.¹⁵

Although these operations have been carried out under nineteen different operational names, the major arm of Armenian terrorism is the Armenian Secret Army for Liberation of Armenia (ASALA). It is a Marxist-oriented political organization that works for the liberation of Armenian territories from what it calls Turkish imperialism. ASALA is part of an international revolutionary movement seeking the overthrow of the capitalist system.

The location of ASALA's headquarters is unknown. There is a close alliance between it and the PLO, particularly the Marxist-oriented Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PDFLP). Other connections are with such groups as the Red Brigades, the Japanese Red Army, and African liberation groups. The Turkish government alleges an ASALA linkage with the Soviet Union and the Greek-Cypriots.

ASALA does not deny its Marxist orientation and admits contacts with other revolutionary movements. Apparently it has patterned the structure of its organization after the PLO. Under such a structure, ASALA would be headed by the central committee, which in turn would be supported by regional cells located in the major world capitals. Because France has the largest Armenian community in Western Europe, Paris is most likely the base of ASALA's support network in Europe. Members of the central committee would be responsible for the various functions of the organization, such as operations, administration, fund raising, and propaganda (the spokesman of which may be Hagop Hagopian). The organization is probably headed by a secretary-general who, besides presiding over the central committee, also deals directly with the Palestinians. Operationally it appears that this group does not have organized hit teams but rather draws on people from various cells according to their area of expertise (for example, explosives, languages, weapons).¹⁶ On August 7, 1982, an incident at Ankara airport left nine people dead and seventy-eight wounded. The attack was the first major ASALA activity on Turkish soil. It also underscored international links between Armenian terrorists and extremists abroad. Leon

Ekmekjian, the surviving militant of the attack, joined ASALA in Lebanon and received paramilitary training there before traveling to Turkey where he teamed up with his accomplice. They were given weapons by a Turkish pro-Moscow terrorist group to carry out the airport attack.

Other reports indicate that since the withdrawal of the PLO from Beirut, some 300 Armenian terrorists have been transferred to southern Cyprus.¹⁷ ASALA counts on the extremist Greek elements on the island, such as the Enosis movement, for support. Apparently, ASALA plans to train over 1,000 members in Cyprus in order to intensify operations in Turkey, as well as against Turkish targets in Europe and elsewhere. It is conceivable that the PFLP, which has maintained operational relationships with ASALA, will provide financial support, weapons, and false documents.

Anticipating such developments, General Evren warned that "the Turkish Government is determined to take any countermeasures necessary" against terrorism. Some reports suggest that special Turkish undercover antiterrorist teams are being organized to initiate preemptive operations against ASALA abroad.¹⁸ While such action may accomplish tactical successes, it is doubtful whether such a response can be strategically effective as long as the countries surrounding Turkey are actively assisting Armenian terrorists and other extremist organizations.

A case in point is the Soviet Union. It has long been assumed that Moscow has short- and long-term goals regarding Turkey. Moscow has vested interests in destabilizing Turkey to undermine NATO's southern flank. By providing terrorists such as ASALA with funds and weapons, the USSR hopes that political violence will highlight Turkish alleged atrocities against Armenians and, consequently, turn liberal opinion in Western countries against Ankara. A long-term objective is to regain portions of eastern Turkey, such as Kars and Ardahan, because of their strategic significance. Clearly if these areas were incorporated in a newly formed Armenian republic united in some form with Soviet Armenia, Turkey and NATO would be weakened considerably.

The Kremlin does not openly support extremist movements lest it jeopardize its relations with Turkey. The policy of *détente*, which has brought the Soviet Union considerable benefits, also dictates clandestine activities. For example, General Evrin pointed out in a February 1981 press conference that the total amount of money obtained by Turkish terrorists from extortions and bank robberies constitutes only 2 percent of the hundreds of millions of dollars of weapons and ammunition available to terrorists. Although General Evren was reluctant to name the Soviet Union directly, he alluded to the improbability of any nation but a superpower having the ability to finance terrorism on such a grand scale.¹⁹

There exists a carefully developed terrorist infrastructure that serves Moscow's foreign policy objectives. The International Department of the

General Committee of the CPSU, the KGB, and the GRU have all played major roles in the process.²⁰

Thus, the Soviet connection, as well as the important gun-running services that Bulgaria provides, help left-wing terrorists operate within and outside Turkey. By using other surrogates such as the PLO and Syria, Moscow is implicated in the training, supply of weapons, and provision of staging facilities for the activities of the various groups.²¹

In sum, terrorism is escalating into a form of proxy warfare, whereby Turkish, Kurdish, and Armenian terrorists with direct and indirect state and nonstate support are waging an unconventional war against Turkey and thereby against NATO itself. Clearly the strategic thinking of the Soviet Union calls for manipulation of terrorism as a suitable substitute to traditional warfare, which becomes too expensive and too risky to be waged on the battlefield. Since the lip-service paid to détente and peaceful coexistence has not been accompanied by a manifest weakening of the Soviet ambition to achieve regional and global hegemony, the exploitation of terrorism as a tactical tool to disturb the *status quo* calls for a realistic Western strategy to deal effectively with this challenge.

Notes

1. For a detailed analysis of the subject, see, for instance, Brian Crozier, *A Theory of Conflict* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1974); Walter Laqueur, *Guerrilla: A Historical and Critical Study* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1977); and Sam C. Sarkesian, ed., *Revolutionary Guerrilla Warfare* (Chicago: President Publishing, 1975).

2. For recent studies on terrorism, see for example, Yonah Alexander and Charles Ebinger, eds., *Political Terrorism and Energy: The Threat and Response* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1982); David C. Rapoport and Yonah Alexander, eds., *The Morality of Terrorism: Religious and Secular Justifications* (Elmsford, N.Y.: Pergamon Press, 1982); David Rapoport and Yonah Alexander, eds., *The Rationalization of Terrorism* (Washington, D.C.: University Publications of America, 1982); Yonah Alexander and Kenneth A. Myers, eds., *Terrorism in Europe* (London and Canberra: Croom Helm, 1982, and New York: St. Martins Press, 1982); Robert H. Kupperman and Darrell Trent, *Terrorism: Threat, Reality, Response* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1979); Stefan T. Possony and Francis Bouchey, *International Terrorism—The Communist Connection* (Washington, D.C.: American Council for Freedom, 1978); *Terrorism: An International Journal* 1–4 (1977–1982); Lawrence Zelic Freedman and Yonah Alexander, eds., *Perspectives on Terrorism* (Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources, 1983); and Yonah Alexander and Alan O'Day, eds., *Terrorism*

in *Ireland* (London and Canberra: Croom Helm, 1984 and New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984).

3. This classification of major vulnerable geographic areas has been adopted by Risks International, a private consulting firm in Alexandria, Va. See, for example, its *Quarterly Risk Assessment* (January–March, 1984).

4. Ibid. (April–June 1983).

5. John Collins, "Definitional Aspects" in Alexander and Ebinger, *Political Terrorism*, p. 11.

6. Ray S. Cline, Foreword to Alexander and Gleason, eds., *Behavioral and Quantitative Perspectives on Terrorism* (Elmsford, N.Y.: Pergamon Press, 1981).

7. The information for his section is drawn from material written by Yonah Alexander and incorporated into Regional Risk Assessment, *Middle East–North Africa* (July 1979), and from personal interviews during a trip to Turkey in August 1982.

8. *Anarchy and Terrorism in Turkey* (Ankara, n.d.), pp. 3–6. The question arises how young Turkish citizens, raised in the Atatürk tradition of patriotism, respect for law and order, and peace could resort to the most violent actions. According to a pilot study conducted by a group of social scientists, a terrorist can be identified by several traits. The results of this pilot study were presented at a workshop organized by the Foreign Policy Institute held in Istanbul, October 10–11, 1983. Terrorists are usually male, 18–26 years of age, of the lower economic deciles, have illiterate parents, and are isolated from the family and community. The terrorist is dissatisfied with his future prospects, as well as his current circumstance, and has a depressive mood with neurotic tendencies. He considers personal ambition secondary and exhibits impaired judgement and ability. Terrorists of the Right or Left do not markedly differ in character structure, psychological conditions, family relations, or economic pattern.

Terrorists resort to violence because of perceived feelings of economic injustice, discriminatory media, disorganized government, impaired authority in schools, and external influences.

The same pilot study performed a series of medical, neurological, psychiatric, and psychological examinations of Turkish terrorists. It was noted that Leftist terrorists were differentiated from Rightist terrorists in a number of areas: a more disturbed brain function, less psychiatric symptomatology, better mental performance, and higher I.Q.

In sum, being a terrorist and being involved in criminal acts as a terrorist does not seem to be a random incident. Terrorists, in general, have a characteristic personality profile, with an impaired mental performance and a low I.Q. The profile of a terrorist who is involved in murder is very similar to that of a nonpolitically motivated murderer.

9. Cited in *12 September in Turkey: Before and After* (Ankara: General Secretariat, National Security Council, July 1982), pp. 221–222.
10. *Anarchy and Terrorism in Turkey*, pp. 7–17.
11. Ibid.
12. *New York Times*, September 9, 1982.
13. *Washington Post*, November 6, 1982. In February 1984 the new government of Prime Minister Turgut Ozal lifted martial law in 13 of Turkey's 67 provinces. Martial law will remain in effect for four months in the other provinces to protect public order. Local military commanders will relinquish administrative control, but the military will continue to hold extraordinary powers.
14. See, for example, Andrew Corsun, "Armenian Terrorism: 1975–1980" (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of State, December 1981).
15. Cited in "Chronology of Armenian Terrorism, 1973–1982," Andrew Corsun (unpublished 1983).
16. Corsun, "Armenian Terrorism."
17. See, for example, Risk International, "Executive Report" (July 1982), pp. 1–2.
18. Ibid.
19. Cited by Aydin Yalcin, "Terrorism in Turkey" (unpublished, June 25, 1981), p. 11.
20. For details, see Yonah Alexander, "Some Perspectives on Terrorism and the Soviet Union," *International Security Review* 7 (Spring 1982): 35–45.
21. See, for example, *Foreign Report*, July 22, August 19, 1982.

8

Reagan Administration Policy on International Terrorism

Darrell M. Trent

When the administration came into office in January 1981, President Reagan committed the United States to a campaign against international terrorism. He made antiterrorism a high priority because the world can no longer afford to consider it an intermittent annoyance that affects only a handful of people or a phenomenon confined to certain regional trouble spots.

Terrorism has become a problem of global proportions, with U.S. citizens and property primary targets. Since 1968 there have been over 7,000 recorded terrorist incidents in which over 8,000 people were held hostage and over 12,000 killed or injured. About 40 percent of these incidents were directed against the United States.

The number of incidents is not the only cause for concern. Terrorists have at their disposal the means for national disruption. Modern technology has made the world dependent on highly vulnerable choke points that can easily be assaulted by well-organized groups. Consider, for example, the massive disruptions that would occur if terrorists executed a successful attack against the electric power grid, creating a blackout in a major urban area.

In executing an assault of this sort, terrorists may not need to kill anybody directly in power to inflict chaos and casualties of major proportions and establish themselves as powerful actors. But should terrorists decide to launch an assault designed to kill large numbers of people, their success is plausible because of the concentration of populations in urban centers.

Terrorists can be more dangerous than powerful hostile countries despite the fact that they may have fewer military resources than the weakest armies. States have resources that they invariably seek to protect regardless of how politically irresponsible they may be. (Indeed even Qaddafi cannot afford to be totally indiscriminate in his state-sponsored terrorist campaign.) But many terrorist organizations have no stake whatever in the present world order and hence do not fear retaliation. Some may even welcome retribution in order to help publicize their cause. Nihilist-oriented groups pose the greatest dangers because they do not seek to influence public opinion on behalf of their cause; their principal objective is global anarchy.

Groups such as these have no stake in moderating their behavior and cannot be co-opted through negotiation.

The dangers posed by groups who have no interest in preserving the present world order are bound to escalate as they seek new and more effective ways to destabilize an international system they despise. Skyjackings, school bus bombings, and other more conventional assaults may no longer be sufficiently novel or have as wide-ranging effects as radicals may desire. We must consider the possibility that terrorist assaults may become increasingly diverse and broader in scope in the years ahead.

Terrorists can gain access to highly sophisticated weapons. They can, of course, fabricate homemade explosives from materials for sale on the open market. But they also have access to many of the sophisticated conventional weapons available to modern armies including antitank rocket launchers and precision-guided missiles whose trajectory can be corrected in flight.

In addition to conventional weapons, terrorist groups can develop mass destruction capabilities. Much has been written about the potential for nuclear blackmail by subnational or criminal organizations, a prospect that cannot be lightly dismissed. Even a crude, low-yield nuclear device would cause national panic, especially if it were detonated in a densely populated area.

Another possibility is terrorist use of chemical and biological agents, which can be developed in a university laboratory by a competent graduate student. Although the theatrical impact of a well-planned chemical or biological act would not be as dramatic as a nuclear incident, the long-term physical damage could be more pervasive.

Clearly the global security landscape has been unalterably transformed. National security and emergency management planning in the United States since World War II has focused primarily on deterring the Soviet Union and its proxies. Although substantial resources must be devoted to countering the massive Soviet military buildup, crisis preparedness can no longer be limited solely to threats posed by hostile countries. Antiterrorism must be considered a central and integral part of overall security planning.

In the past, the federal government did not consider antiterrorism a major concern, and it did not receive the attention it deserved by senior policymakers. This is no longer the case. The Reagan administration considers the war against terrorism a top priority and is taking steps to improve emergency preparedness and incident management capabilities.

It is imperative to have complete and accurate information regarding individual terrorists, terrorist groups, and violent subnational organizations. We not only need to know who and where these people are, but we must also learn of their ideological objectives, technical capabilities, preferred targets, and modes of operation. Obtaining this kind of information requires im-

proved intelligence-gathering capabilities.

In order to accomplish these and other objectives, President Reagan signed an executive order easing the restrictions on intelligence gathering on December 4, 1981. Democratic societies cannot retreat from the liberties on which they are founded, but they also cannot allow those who seek to destroy freedoms to do so with relative impunity. There is no inherent conflict between the intelligence community and the rights of our citizens. Indeed, the purpose of the intelligence community is the protection of our people. An approach that emphasizes suspicion and mistrust of our own intelligence efforts can undermine this nation's ability to confront the increasing challenge of espionage and terrorism.

In addition to improving domestic intelligence capabilities, the United States must develop even closer cooperative relationships with other nations that are threatened by terrorist assaults while taking a hard line against countries that directly aid or indirectly support terrorist groups or individuals. Building on previous international agreements, President Reagan met with the other leaders of the Western world at the Ottawa Summit in July 1981. Among the other business they transacted, the attending countries reached agreement on a number of key issues related to international terrorism. Specifically they reaffirmed the principles of the 1978 Bonn Declaration, which stated that the parties would discontinue flights to and from any country refusing extradition or prosecution of aircraft hijackers or refusing to return the hijacked aircraft, and they implemented the terms of the Bonn Declaration with regard to Afghanistan due to the Karmal regime's conduct during the hijacking of a Pakistani aircraft in March 1981. The Ottawa statement on terrorism also reaffirmed the countries' commitment to cooperate in the event of terrorist attacks on any of their diplomatic posts.

With regard to embassies and missions overseas, the United States plans to upgrade security in order to reduce the likelihood of another Iranian debacle. Specifically the State Department is improving building access controls at its more vulnerable posts. It is installing better nonlethal means of thwarting assaults against missions, as well as other measures designed to prevent successful attacks.

In an effort to improve governmental organization for combatting terrorism, the administration has established a special interdepartmental group with crisis management responsibilities. This body is composed of representatives of the CIA, FBI, and the departments of Defense, Justice, Energy, State, and Transportation. As appropriate, this group draws on the experience and advice of other federal agencies in managing responses to terrorists threats and incidents. The FBI chairs the task force during domestic terrorist incidents, and the State Department has lead responsibilities during foreign terrorist crises.

**Part III
Strategic
Responses to
Nuclear,
Biological, and
Chemical Issues**



TREE *of* LIBERTY SOCIETY

9

Biological and Chemical Warfare: Reassessing the Risk

Carolyn K. Stettner

Although there are enough indicators prompting concern to cause the U.S. government to focus its attention on reevaluating the threat that chemical, biological, or toxin weapons may pose during the 1980s, its data are not yet adequate to allow formulation of strategic responses. Its priorities must be to quantify and qualify the chemical-biological warfare (CBW) threat from several perspectives.

Two international agreements are directly applicable to discussions of chemical and biological warfare activities. The 1925 Geneva Protocol prohibits use in war of asphyxiating, poisonous, or other gases and of bacteriological methods of warfare. Most major powers have signed the protocol with the reservations that it applies only between parties and only to first use. The 1972 Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, to which most major powers are also signatories, prohibits development, production, stockpiling, acquisition, retention, or transfer of biological agents and toxins and associated weapons equipment and means of delivery designed for hostile purposes. In addition to these two specific agreements, most countries, including the Soviet Union, consider that customary international law that constrains this type of warfare is binding on the conscience and practice of all nations.

Since 1970 discussions have been held in the Committee on Disarmament and its precedent bodies toward reaching agreement on a treaty banning production, development, stockpiling, acquisition, retention, or transfer of supertoxic lethal, other lethal, and harmful chemical warfare agents. Although some progress has been made in elaborating provisions of such a ban, many issues remain to be resolved before a treaty can be concluded. Therefore it is prudent to reevaluate the military risk that chemical, biological, and toxin weapons pose and then begin to consider appropriate responses.

The driving forces behind this need to reevaluate the risk are several: the evidence of a prohibited Soviet biological weapons program, confirmed evidence of use of prohibited chemical and toxin agents in local conflicts, and the extreme vulnerability of U.S. and allied forces to enemy use of these weapons.

Although many point to the restraint in the use of CBW in recent conflicts, one cannot expect that these situations, technologies, and values

will prevail throughout the 1980s. Major arguments promulgated by those who reject a valid CBW threat have historically been based on the assumption that their military utility is low; their use hampers offensive operations by one's own troops by imposing significant psychological and physiological burdens.

The problems of developing an accurate and credible chemical threat assessment are numerous. While historical review is useful, it is more instructive to focus on the present and recent past. In most areas of military weapons analysis, there is fair knowledge of the design parameters, capabilities, and limitations of the weapons systems of both friends and adversaries. Many of the weapons systems have been tested on the battlefields, providing data from which reasonable assessments of the state of the art can be made and by modeling and war gaming threat assessments in which a high to moderate degree of confidence exists, can be developed. By applying information gathered from experience, professional military literature, and intelligence resources, projections and estimates of new systems and their strategic or tactical threat can be made.

In the area of chemical and biological weapons, however, a vastly different situation exists. The United States has not manufactured such weapons since 1969. Moreover, it has no biological or toxin weapons; they were destroyed after unilateral renunciation of a weapons program by President Richard Nixon in 1969. The chemical weapons in the U.S. inventory are pre-1969 vintage. Most U.S. allies are in the same situation. Consequently for the past decade, assessment of the CBW threat has been colored by lack of an indigenous standard against which to judge adversaries' state of the art.

Many other nations restrict information on military expenditures and on weapons systems, particularly chemical and biological programs or weapons. These factors make it extraordinarily difficult to develop accurate and reliable assessments of foreign CBW capabilities and threats. Lacking highly definitive data on doctrine for employment, assessments of intent tend to be speculative. Several events during the 1970s, however, provided additional insights that enabled the West to reevaluate past judgments, in some cases to modify them, and in many cases to ascribe a higher degree of confidence to them.

Evaluation of material captured during the 1973 Arab-Israeli war produced an increased awareness of Soviet defensive measures and doctrine for operations in CB-contaminated environments. More recently conclusive evidence of use of lethal chemical and toxin weapons in Southeast Asia and Afghanistan has opened a whole new panorama of the CBW threat. The outbreak of anthrax in Sverdlovsk in the spring of 1979 and previous evidence on biological warfare production reported in 1978 in *Science* can be cited as another event that caused reappraisal of the threat.

What options exist for dealing with chemical, biological, or toxin weapons use during the 1980s? In 1983, a Gallup poll asked interviewees which option the United States should choose if it accepted the premise that the Soviets had violated international agreements regarding use of these weapons. Thirty-six percent of those polled agreed that the United States should suspend nuclear arms reductions talks with the USSR until it abides by its treaty obligations, and 49 percent responded that it should not let this issue interfere with nuclear arms reduction talks because of their importance. On options for deterrence, 42 percent believed the United States should rely on diplomatic efforts to persuade the Soviets to destroy their weapons, 17 percent believed the United States should develop a retaliatory capability, and 9 percent believe the United States should rely on nuclear weapons deterrence and 8 percent on conventional weapons.

Because the United States has no biological or toxin weapons, it must factor out an in-kind deterrence or response capability for those weapons. Additionally, neither the Congress, the military, nor the U.S. public appears inclined to support resumption of an R&D program toward developing an offensive weapons capability.

Regarding chemical weapons, the most obvious option would be to move forward aggressively to consummate a treaty banning such weapons. But arms-control treaties without effective verification and compliance provisions cannot impose sufficient restraints on those intent on ignoring their obligations. Therefore it would be most imprudent to allow any pressures to show forward movement in arms-control negotiations to force the conclusion of such a treaty and weaken the steadfastness of the United States in insisting on effective verification provisions.

In times of relative peace, the United States must devote more resources to the collection of data needed to refine its threat assessments, to obtain further insights on Soviet and Warsaw Pact doctrine for employment of these weapons, and to take necessary measures to increase its defensive or deterrence posture. This includes not only hardening facilities and acquisition of personal protective materiel, decontamination equipment and facilities, antidotes and prophylactics but, equally important, developing realistic doctrine for chemical operations and seriously training personnel in its implementation.

The United States must also look seriously at the trend toward proliferation of chemical capabilities in developing countries and use all available appropriate diplomatic and economic measures to halt this trend. The Soviet role in supporting these activities needs to be clarified and recognized. Chemical, and perhaps biological and toxin, weapons may become a cheaper alternative to the acquisition of nuclear weapons capabilities as a force breaker in developing and Third World nations. The United States can use such tools as security assurances, assistance in acquisition of appropriate

conventional defensive weapons capabilities, and, if necessary, restriction of technology transfer mechanisms and use of political pressure to slow CBW proliferation.

The United States has inadequate knowledge about the potential for terrorist use of these weapons, either on a large scale or on a selected target basis. Not only must it continue the difficult task of collecting information on such threats and share it through cooperative international programs, but it must develop likely threat scenarios and plan contingency responses.

In an effort to decrease vulnerability and increase deterrence, can—or should—the United States attempt to provide minimal protective gear and civil-defense-type training to the entire U.S. population? Probably not. Given existing and probable future resource constraints, priorities must be to quantify the nature and scope of the threat and then develop medical and other defensive measures. Currently the nation lacks effective or sufficient CB prophylactics and antidotes for its military forces.

At present, response options to enemy use of chemical, biological, or toxin weapons against U.S. or allied forces are to retaliate with chemicals, with conventional weapons, or with nuclear weapons. We might weigh the merits of considering a declaratory policy on one of these options and consider the effect of such a decision.

Some have suggested adopting a policy of nonuse, of unilateral chemical disarmament. The effect, however, would be to narrow response options to two and would not bring any negotiating leverage (although it would likely receive wide acclaim from Third World, nonaligned, and many NATO allies alike, not to mention the Warsaw Pact countries). But there is no evidence that U.S. restraint in not producing chemical weapons over the past thirteen years has induced reciprocal restraint by the Soviet Union.

Another suggested alternative is to adopt a policy of nonuse of lethal agents. Morally such a policy would likely have wider appeal, but it would require military doctrinal changes and probably a major R&D program for conversion of weapons. Its effect on negotiations is uncertain, and ambiguities on the lethality of various agents would almost certainly prompt compliance questions.

The ability of the United States to deploy rapidly and use existing chemical weapons has been challenged. Many question whether chemical doctrine and tactics have been adequately integrated into strategic planning. There is uncertainty whether the United States possesses a credible chemical deterrent against enemy use in a major conflict. Current efforts to modernize weapons and upgrade defensive capabilities must continue to correct these inadequacies.

I believe the most important problem for analysis is U.S. responses to chemical, biological, or toxin use in Third World conflicts. Reviewing U.S. efforts to respond to revelations of the use of lethal chemical and toxin

agents in Laos, Kampuchea, and Afghanistan has highlighted the difficulties in utilization of traditional political and diplomatic tools for causing a change in undesirable behavior on the part of other nations.

Initially the United States had difficulties collecting and presenting evidence of use to the world at large. It has not been particularly successful in efforts to induce other nations to join in putting political or other pressures on the perpetrators to cease such activities. It is appropriate that the United States should seriously analyze its actions from the time when first reports of chemical use come to its attention, study the responses, if any, that they evoked, and attempt to develop algorithms for dealing with future situations.

The United States needs to develop better mechanisms for assuring rapid investigation of allegations of use, preferably by unbiased, unaffected parties, to ensure international cooperation in efforts to halt chemical, biological, or toxin use. Actions such as economic sanctions in trade, technology transfer, and exchange programs might be considered useful. Political decisions regarding provision of defensive material such as protective clothing and masks, decontamination equipment, or antidotes and prophylactics ought to be considered. The problems will become even more complex as Third World countries with which the United States seems to have little influence develop indigenous CBW capabilities. International bodies and their affiliated organizations may have a larger role to play in exerting political or economic pressures on such parties.

In sum, much work remains to be done on defining the risks and potential for use of chemical, biological, and toxin weapons in the 1980s, in developing likely scenarios for their use, in refining the nature and scope of the threats, and in understanding the doctrine and tactics for CBW employment held by those nations that possess or appear inclined to acquire these weapons. Until there is a better focus and understanding of these issues, it may be premature to attempt to formulate strategic responses. Responses based on inaccurate perceptions of the problem are likely to be inappropriate.

The United States is at a crossroads for deciding how much evidence and of what quality is needed. There is clearly ample evidence to justify concern about CBW threats at the highest levels of government and sufficient to warrant mounting aggressive intelligence efforts to reevaluate those threats. The country lacks, however, enough definitive data to guide it in determining appropriate responses to various situations. These uncertainties surely have affected the decision to follow the militarily most prudent path of improving the defensive and deterrence postures of the United States.

10 Chemical and Biological Weapons: Threat and Response

Brad Roberts

Too often overlooked, the problem posed by CBW is likely to become much more severe in the years ahead. Historically U.S. policymakers have adopted a dual-track approach, combining efforts to contain or eliminate the CBW threat through arms control with efforts to deter their use. The Reagan administration has embraced this general approach as well. In the biological arena, the efficacy of this approach has been high, though confidence has eroded a bit in recent years. In the chemical arena, the dual-track approach has achieved less, though it continues to offer some promise. But unless current policies soon reach fruition in the form of an effective international legal regime to control such weapons, those policies may require major revision.



The Threat

The threat of chemical and biological weapons has a number of dimensions, and the two pose similar but not identical problems for U.S. policymakers.

Soviet chemical warfare capabilities today constitute a major threat to U.S. and NATO forces. That capability is extensive, impressive, and increasingly threatening; it also amplifies advantages the Soviets enjoy in the conventional arena. The Soviets have made comprehensive preparations to fight in a chemically contaminated environment, and they continue to improve that capability. In addition, they evidently possess a formidable offensive capability in the form of a very large and flexible chemical weapons stockpile and a capacity to produce large amounts of chemical weapons very quickly.

Perceptions in the United States of the chemical weapons threat have undergone major revision in the last ten years; what was once understood to be a fading threat is now thought of as growing more severe. There has also been a waning faith in the ability of the arms-control process to provide for the quick and effective control of chemical weapons.

Evidence from Southeast Asia, Afghanistan, Ethiopia, and elsewhere suggests that the Soviet chemical warfare threat may have biological dimensions. It appears likely that the Soviets have expended considerable effort to overcome characteristics of biological weapons that historically have dimin-

ished their military utility (such as their relative uncontrollability on the battlefield). This has major implications for the European military balance, where much of the chemical defensive equipment has little utility against biological agents. The apparent willingness of the USSR to transfer these weapons to their Third World clients must certainly cause concern among those states neighboring Soviet clients.

The CBW threat will become more severe as and if the arms-control component of the U.S. policy response fails to provide effective control. Failing that, proliferation is likely to occur. It will be of two types. First, weapons will proliferate vertically, meaning those already possessing such weapons will build more and diversify their war-fighting capabilities. In the case of the United States, this will occur as the erosion in parts of the deterrent capability becomes undeniable by the late 1980s. Second, horizontal proliferation—whereby states not now possessing such weapons will acquire them and design their armed forces to have a CBW war-fighting capability—is even more likely.

Chemical and biological weapons could have irresistible appeal to many Third World countries whose military limitations may make such weapons particularly attractive. These weapons are low technology, require minimum training and capital, and have application to many military problems, both tactical (such as waging unconventional warfare) and strategic. The ability of many Third World nations to fight and survive in a chemically or biologically contaminated environment is increasing as Soviet-made equipment, especially armored combat systems (which are designed with a nuclear-biological-chemical environment in mind), is integrated into Third World arsenals. There is also cause for concern in the fact that many Third World states may not share the powerful cultural and religious inhibitions against this form of warfare common in the West. A factor that is likely to drive CBW proliferation is the proliferation of nuclear weapons. This will lead those without the requisite technical expertise or financial means for nuclear weapons to search for a “poor man’s deterrent;” some may be inclined to develop a CBW capability for this purpose.

The Response

The United States historically has followed a dual-track approach to the CBW threat, combining efforts to contain or eliminate the threat through arms control with efforts to deter their use. Although the general parameters of this response have remained fairly constant, the particular policy components of each track have been defined differently for each type of weapon, and policy has been modified as perceptions of the threat or the utility of a given approach have changed.

Track One: Arms Control

The current international legal regime for CBW control makes important inroads in the problem but does not provide for meaningful arms control. The only relevant international agreements, the Geneva Protocol of 1925 and the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) of 1972, are neither comprehensive, universal, nor adequately verifiable. The BWC was considered a major achievement in making CBW arms control more meaningful, and it has had a positive impact on certain problems in the biological weapons arena. But its limitations are becoming more apparent, and its continued utility as an instrument of arms control may require that it be amended. For chemical weapons, the pursuit of meaningful arms control has entailed attempts to negotiate a complete and verifiable ban. Discussions in the Geneva-based Committee on Disarmament have now dragged on for more than ten years, and though agreement seems closer than in years past, it remains elusive.

There has been a high degree of confidence in the BWC to contain the proliferation of such weapons. The convention is widely subscribed to and evidence suggests that it has to date dampened the fear of, and hence perceptions of the need for, such weapons. But it is impossible to know whether the BWC's effect has been to stop or merely slow proliferation.

There has been somewhat less confidence in the BWC as a means to contain the Soviet biological weapons threat, and this confidence is eroding. Numerous incidents, including the Sverdlovsk incident of 1980 and the allegations of yellow rain phenomena in Southeast Asia, Afghanistan, and Ethiopia, have raised questions about Soviet compliance.

To redress these new dimensions of the problem, it has become necessary to add meaningful verification and compliance provisions to the BWC. None were deemed necessary when the convention was formulated in the early 1970s, for a variety of reasons, including (1) the threat was perceived as primarily superpower derived; (2) the United States had unilaterally destroyed its biological weapons stocks during the negotiation of the convention; (3) there was a perception that the Soviets held biological weapons in similarly low esteem; and (4) it was presumed that they were dependable participants in the arms-control process.

But such provisions have become necessary today. The amendment of the BWC to include compliance and verification provisions has recently been called for by a number of states in the UN. The move is supported by the United States. The United States must do everything possible to ensure that the BWC retains its utility as a vehicle to contain the biological weapons threat. In the current international climate, this requires subtle diplomacy to get other nations to take the lead on this issue so that nonaligned and other nations might favor the move to amend the BWC without fear that their

earnest support will be co-opted by the United States in its competition with the USSR.

In the chemical weapons arena, the problems are less manageable. In fact the arms-control process may well fail to produce an effective agreement (one that prevents proliferation and ensures compliance). There is cause for pessimism today that did not exist 5–10 years ago.

Progress in the talks has been slow. The Committee on Disarmament is a UN-affiliated, multilateral forum, whose working groups on specific issues have made important contributions toward the goal of an arms-control agreement by working through many of the knotty technical and definitional issues. But its highly politicized character has tempered optimism for the eventual attainment of an agreement. During the 1970s, bilateral talks between the United States and the USSR provided much of the impetus to the multilaterals by narrowing perceptions and differences. But what progress occurred was on many of the peripheral issues and not on the central ones of compliance and verification. The bilateral talks have not been reconvened since the Reagan administration came into office since it believed (justifiably) that the Soviets were exploiting the secrecy of the bilateral talks to convey an impression of themselves as generous and earnest at the expense of the U.S. image.

In addition there is doubt as to whether Soviet and U.S. negotiating objectives are similar at all; the Soviets have articulated a clearer interest in containing chemical weapons proliferation than in eliminating them. They have been astute propagandists, whose intense focus on temporary, tactical advantage raises questions about their commitment to the broader arms control goal.

Whether such an agreement is even possible is in question. Even with systematic and ad hoc international on-site inspections, it may prove very difficult to detect production of militarily significant quantities of chemical agents, especially since any future agreement would have to apply not just to the chemical, pharmaceutical, and fertilizer industries in the Soviet Union and the United States but to all such industries globally.

A major cause for concern about arms-control prospects in the chemical weapons arena is that the one-time consensus on the nature of the U.S. bargaining posture has disintegrated. During the 1970s the main policy instrument used by the United States in support of the arms-control goal was a unilateral moratorium on the production of chemical weapons, imposed by the army during the Nixon administration when the president called for talks to ban them. Until recent years there was general consensus that this moratorium was perceived by the Soviets and the world as a symbol of U.S. good faith. But this consensus has eroded, and an increasingly vociferous group has argued that it is instead a symbol of U.S. paralysis and weakness, exploited by the Soviets who hope to see the United States disarm itself

unilaterally by allowing its chemical weapons stockpile to disintegrate with age. The Reagan administration views renewed production as a signal of U.S. resolve and as a bargaining chip that makes an agreement more likely. Others see it as a sign of insincerity about the goals of arms control, making an agreement less likely. This lack of consensus cannot be lost on the Soviets and does not augur well for the future attainment of a meaningful agreement.

Another reason that an agreement has not been achieved is the low credibility many accord the United States on chemical weapons arms control. U.S. prestige has been tarnished by the fifty years it took the country to accede to the Geneva Protocol and by the five years delayed between the time bilateral talks on chemical weapons were proposed by President Nixon in 1969 and the time they actually commenced. The Reagan administration's reluctance to return to bilateral talks is increasingly perceived as a sign of U.S. insincerity; many look at the record of the administration and conclude that multilateral discussions are in fact a charade that provides the cover for an expansion of the U.S. chemical war-fighting capability.

It is not clear what can be done to reassure the world of U.S. goodwill, nor is it clear whether an agreement is possible even with more positive perceptions of U.S. sincerity. Nonproduction of chemical weapons no longer seems enough. Returning to bilateral talks would still appear problematic. Recently the United States has spelled out in detail its views on the necessary contents of a chemical weapons ban. The document's submission broke a long lull in U.S. activism. But cynics in the United States and Europe see its purpose primarily as palliative, assuaging congressional and European concern about administration goodwill without a strong commitment to chemical weapons arms control. Such cynicism is likely to continue to be in evidence until and if the Reagan administration is widely perceived to have disavowed its strong anti-arms-control positions during the 1980 election campaign.

Track Two: Deterrence

Failing meaningful arms control, the United States has sought to maintain a deterrent capability in each arena. The biological weapons deterrent consists primarily of nuclear and chemical war-fighting capabilities; given the battlefield characteristics of biological weapons, it has not to date required an in-kind, biological retaliatory capability. The chemical weapons deterrent consists of a chemical war-fighting capability that, for reasons of the battlefield characteristics of chemical weapons, has been understood to require an in-kind capability to respond to chemical weapons use. Each of these deterrents, while problematic today, will become more so in the future.

Biological weapons traditionally have been understood to be weapons of mass destruction, and their use in either conventional or unconventional conflict would likely result in very large numbers of deaths, especially among civilians. It is generally assumed that an attack on a nuclear-armed state employing biological weapons would be met with the use of another available weapon of mass destruction, i.e., the nuclear weapon.

This nuclear weapons capability is likely to retain its utility against any state employing biological weapons against the United States. Its utility against nonstate actors (such as terrorists) is ambiguous. Whether it retains its utility in the long term is dependent on the capabilities of others to use biological weapons in militarily effective ways with effects short of mass destruction (such as in unconventional wars or in areas of low population density). If a potential opponent possessed a large biological weapons arsenal, carefully constructed to match the capabilities of particular mixes of agents and weapons to target characteristics and war-fighting needs, it could derive decisive military advantages while depriving a nuclear response of its utility. If there were some doubt about whether nuclear weapons might be used in retaliation, then the deterrent value of those weapons would be lessened. This would render the logic of current U.S. policy moot, and the United States may have to examine whether nuclear weapons are adequate for deterrence and retaliation.

The chemical weapons deterrent consists of an elaborate chemical war-fighting capability, the primary utility of which resides in the defensive ability of U.S. forces to wage combat in a chemically contaminated environment. Chemical weapons exhibit battlefield characteristics different from their biological counterparts, and, as a consequence, a chemical war-fighting capability has generally been understood to require having a meaningful capability to impose the burden of chemical warfare on those who initiate it, by in-kind retaliation. As in the biological arena, all-out conflict in Europe might render some of these distinctions moot. But in a world where CBW have proliferated and where they might be used in nonnuclear conflicts, the mechanisms of their deterrence must be fully articulated.

There were major divergences in the way the U.S. and Soviet chemical war-fighting capabilities developed in the 1970s when the United States produced no chemical weapons and allowed its limited chemical war-fighting capability to wither. In contrast, the Soviets fielded improved equipment, upgraded training, and retained the prominence of their chemical corps in the force structure. Since the late 1970s, the United States has undertaken efforts to redress deficiencies in its chemical war-fighting capability. These efforts fall under the rubric of a chemical preparedness program, which has begun to command significant and increasing budget resources. This program has five essential goals: to upgrade defensive measures and readiness, to improve training and force expertise, to manage the current stockpile

systematically and cost-effectively, to assess the chemical warfare threat precisely, and to move toward chemical weapons production in a two- to three-year time frame.

This program seems likely to receive continued congressional support, even as the budget demands grow. Where support has not been forthcoming is in the area of renewed production. There is no clear consensus for or against renewed production; rather, there is a tenuous middle position that permits movement toward the creation of U.S. production facilities while stopping short of actual production. This policy will not be an option by the mid-1980s when those facilities will presumably be complete. If no production occurs in the late 1980s or later and if no effective arms-control agreement is achieved, the United States will disarm itself unilaterally as aging weapons are deemed unusable. Without arms control, there must be a retaliatory capability; without either, the chemical weapons threat will not be contained, with monumental implications for military balances globally.

The erosion through age and deterioration of the U.S. chemical stockpile will become acute by 1990. Few would argue that the United States does not today possess a formidable capability to wage offensive chemical warfare. But only 12 percent of the stockpile has any immediate military utility, the remainder being in bulk storage (lacking both filling facilities and munitions to fill) or in deteriorated or outdated delivery systems; that proportion will fall at an increasingly precipitous rate by the late 1980s. The 12 percent is, of course, meaningful only relative to the capability of potential opponents. The only nation today possessing a capability anywhere near as large as that of the United States is the USSR, and it is generally understood that a higher percentage of the Soviet stockpile has immediate military utility; it is also understood that that higher percentage is of an overall total larger, and some suggest much larger, than that of the United States. In addition, there is today no capability to threaten with chemical attack critical elements of the force structure behind enemy lines (airfields, supply depots, command centers) and no flexibility to match a chemical strike to target characteristics or military objectives. The United States once had a greater capability in this regard, but those munitions have deteriorated beyond use. The Soviet chemical stockpile is not marred by these deficiencies.

Failing an agreement, production of binary chemical weapons will become necessary simply to maintain a chemical weapon deterrent. But renewed production alone will not suffice. The qualitative deficiencies of the current stockpile will have to be redressed since bringing an early end to chemical weapons use once deterrence fails requires a chemical retaliatory capability, now lacking, to match weapon and agent characteristics to target characteristics.

There are, however, legitimate questions today about the U.S. production of binary chemical weapons. The breaking of a fourteen-year morato-

rium on the production of chemical weapons could jeopardize other U.S. foreign policy goals such as promoting arms control, dampening penchants for proliferation, and preserving the international prestige of the United States. Also, stockpile modernization may be moot because to have any utility in Europe, such weapons must be forward deployed, requiring the politically tenuous replacement of unitary munitions currently deployed in Europe. But a few years hence, perceptions of priorities and constraints may have changed.

To forgo entirely a retaliatory capability is not possible. The unilateral use of chemical weapons would afford substantial military advantage to those prepared to do so in a surprise, offensive capacity; the advantage is not marginal. Improved defensive measures alone are not an adequate deterrent. Measures to protect combat forces from chemical weapons degrade combat capability, sometimes as much as 100 percent (depending on the particular task). Forcing the opponent into a cumbersome defensive posture may actually be an incentive to chemical weapons use. Nor are nuclear weapons an adequate substitute for an in-kind retaliatory capability. Reliance on a nuclear attack has the unsalutary effect of lowering the nuclear threshold. It also would prove difficult to justify employment of a weapon of mass destruction in response to a chemical attack that produced few deaths.

Conclusion

A CBW threat is well perceived; speculation as to its likely evolution leads to considerable alarm. The dual-track policy response has had some efficacy in both arenas. But failing the relatively prompt achievement of an effective international legal regime for the control of CBW, the coming years will see an erosion of confidence in U.S. policy to contain the threat posed by these most abhorrent of human inventions. Both horizontal and vertical proliferation seem likely. The United States must exhibit a firm commitment to the arms-control process in both biological and chemical arenas, and it must understand that it may have to face some difficult decisions about the nature of its deterrents to CBW use.

11

Chemical and Biological Warfare: An Army Perspective

Amoretta M. Hoeber

The U.S. Army's chemical program is a logical derivative of national policy on chemical warfare, which is centered on the ultimate goal of achieving a complete and verifiable ban on the development, production, and stockpiling of chemical weapons. Until such a ban can be achieved, however, the United States must continue to develop, acquire, and maintain a capability to deter the use of chemicals in war.

The Soviet Union and its allies are well prepared to wage chemical warfare and to fight on a chemically contaminated battlefield. The USSR possesses a variety of lethal and incapacitating chemical agents and the means to deliver them, including modern missiles, rockets, artillery, and aircraft. It has a large and well-trained chemical organization. It has an expanding proving ground and it trains with actual agents.

The advantages the Soviets enjoy in the conventional arena are amplified when their chemical capabilities are considered. A situation where such asymmetries exist encourages rather than deters the Soviet use of this form of warfare.

Their use, or sponsored use, of chemical and biological weapons in Southeast Asia and Afghanistan—in direct contravention to their signatures on two treaties (the 1925 Geneva protocol and the 1972 biological weapons convention)—provides evidence of Soviet willingness to use these assets. The need of the United States to develop a credible chemical deterrent does not rest on these examples of use, however. Rather it is based on the evidence accumulated over several years on the growing Soviet capabilities for chemical warfare. Recent uses have merely confirmed Soviet doctrine, which envisages the use of chemical weapons in warfare and acknowledges their value, particularly when used in massive quantities and with surprise. The reality of this threat means that there is no doubt that the U.S. Army must treat chemical warfare as potentially an integral part of any future conflict. Consequently it must be prepared to deter through both defensive and retaliatory measures.

The first component of deterrence of chemical weapons use is protection, and the army program emphasizes this strongly. Improved protection

The views expressed in this chapter are solely those of the author and do not reflect the positions or policy of the Department of Defense or any other agencies within the U.S. government.

can save lives and reduce casualties and hence is critical. Indeed, this component of the program was allocated 74 percent of the chemical warfare resources requested in the fiscal year 1983 budget, divided as follows:

Research, development, testing and evaluation	\$221.3 million
War reserve	75.5 million
Operation and maintenance	64.7 million
Procurement	100.6 million
Training	9.2 million
Total	\$471.3 million

The remaining 26 percent of the \$633.8 million budget was divided between disposal or demilitarization of old stocks and modernization of the deterrent stockpile with binary munitions. The focuses of the large defensive program are to develop new technology for detection, improved protection, decontamination, medical treatment, and antidotes; provide improved smoke and obscurant capability; provide protective clothing and equipment to support training and war reserves; provide chemical alarms, modular collective protection, and protective masks; and provide decontamination training sites at Fort McClellan, Alabama, and Grafenwoehr, West Germany. The objective of the protective component of the program is to ensure that U.S. military forces can survive and sustain effective operations in a contaminated environment.

To meet this objective requires a strong RDT&E base to provide insurance against technological surprise and to produce new protective systems. Simultaneously sufficient quantities need to be procured of the best equipment currently available, and training in the most realistic conditions possible must also be provided.

As important as they are, protective measures alone are insufficient to deter the potential use of chemical weapons. With current protective gear, troops face at least a 50 percent decrement in operational effectiveness due to the restrictions imposed on human performance and operational procedures by awkward suits, respiratory equipment, and decontamination procedures. Improvements in the protective equipment and practices cannot fully eliminate this problem. Consequently if U.S. forces must operate encumbered by protection while the enemy is allowed to operate unencumbered, the enemy would achieve a significant and potentially decisive advantage. Hence protection alone does not provide deterrence and may in fact act as an incentive.

In view of the overall military balance between the United States and the USSR, the United States cannot rely on other components of its military

capabilities—in particular, nuclear—to deter chemical warfare since the Soviets have gained at least parity in the nuclear arena. Furthermore, barriers to nuclear weapons use should be kept as high as possible, not lowered to counter threats that should be handled in other ways.

In view of the history of arms control and Soviet actions, the United States cannot rely on an early achievement of a comprehensive and verifiable ban to eliminate the need for retaliation as a component of deterrence. Indeed the United States would prefer to but has tried negotiating with the Soviets on this subject since 1977, only to relearn the lessons that Soviet objectives for negotiating are significantly different from its own and that bargaining from a position of increasing weakness is difficult.

Given the current asymmetry in CW capabilities, the United States should not be surprised that the Soviets have continually refused to entertain any treaty proposal containing a verification regimen that would require mandatory on-site inspection and verification of suspected violations. Instead the Soviets are seeking a treaty similar to the current biological weapons convention, which appears to have been inadequate in removing the threat of biological weapons.

The U.S. objective for the retaliation element of its program is to maintain the safest, smallest chemical munitions stockpile that denies a significant military advantage to any initiator of chemical warfare. In view of the erosion of its current chemical stockpile, the United States cannot rely on it to maintain a deterrent function. The stockpile is inadequate and becoming more so. Most of the current World War II vintage stockpile is unusable because it is in bulk agent form, and much of the remainder is in ammunition for weapons that have been or will be shortly phased out of service. Also the stockpile is lacking in weapons that can be used against the rear echelons of the attacking forces.

Only 8.7 percent of the stockpile is today in what is believed to be usable munitions. The capability of these munitions cannot be fully ascertained since none have been test fired since 1969. Further, less than 20 percent is in what is believed to be repairable munitions, and these are mostly the less useful mustard agent left from World War II.

Without modernization, therefore, the United States in effect would be continuing to disarm unilaterally before securing an effective, verifiable treaty, just as it did in the case of biological weapons.

The use of existing unitary agents in new munitions has been suggested, but the success of this option would be problematic as well as expensive. Although it might well be an approach to redressing the quantitative deficiency and provide munitions for modern delivery systems, it would not eliminate the qualitative deficiencies that limit the potential effectiveness of such munitions, including safety and logistic difficulties throughout the life cycle.

The safety, security, and logistical advantages that binary weapons offer during the life cycle—from manufacturing through storage and transportation to eventual disposal—make binaries the logical choice for stockpile modernization. Additionally the proposed binary program is the most cost-effective way of achieving the required modernization of U.S. retaliatory capability and will provide the smallest stockpile because of the logistic flexibility.

Plans are to produce two binary weapons: the 155mm artillery projectile, which, when fired, will yield the nonpersistent nerve agent GB, and the Bigeye bomb, which will yield the persistent nerve agent VX. When combined with planned demilitarization of current munitions, the program will result in a stockpile that will produce less chemical agent than the United States now has.

The army has been criticized for pursuing stockpile modernization, and in the course of this criticism, numerous reasons have been espoused for not producing binary munitions. First, let me speak to the nuclear deterrent myth—to those who espouse that it is immoral to use chemical weapons and in the same breath wish to retaliate with nuclear weapons if the Soviets use chemical weapons. Chemical weapons can decisively change combat power ratios and thus alter the course of battle dramatically without resorting to nuclear weapons. I am sure the Soviets recognize this and for this reason have placed the emphasis on their ability to conduct chemical warfare.

The absence of a credible chemical retaliatory capability invites the use of chemical weapons and lowers the nuclear threshold for NATO. If chemical weapons are used, it means NATO must cross the nuclear threshold or probably accept defeat. In such a decision, we must also consider the asymmetry in nuclear capabilities. Today the Soviets enjoy superiority in long-range theater nuclear weapons and at least parity in the theater nuclear forces. Given this imbalance, a threatened nuclear response to chemical attack is a questionable deterrent.

The continued worsening of the U.S. chemical retaliatory capability and the absence of any positive action to modernize the stockpile may allow the Soviets to conclude that a war in Europe can be won.

A myth that has taken on some respectability says defense is enough or that a force with the proper defensive equipment negates the military value of chemical weapons—hence, chemical weapons would not be used. This assertion is preposterous. The character of chemical defensive measures degrades individual combat effectiveness significantly. Degradation of individual combat effectiveness results from a variety and a combination of effects. Unit degradation of combat effectiveness is attributable to both the cumulative loss of individual combat effectiveness and the increased logistical requirements to support equipment and personnel decontamination, as well as the immense problem of resupply of individual and unit defensive equipment.

It is estimated that in the first twenty-four to forty-eight hours following attack with persistent agents, degradation in capability will probably be greater than 50 percent. In the longer term, days to weeks, the problems of operating on the chemical battlefield will be even more severe.

For these reasons alone, the use of chemical weapons is militarily warranted. It is also important to remember that in a chemical environment, a cracked eyepiece, a torn overgarment, or an improperly donned mask will be fatal. To those who suggest defensive measures are enough, I would ask why would they, should deterrence fail, want our forces to fight with such a handicap? We cannot and must not. What we must do is obtain a retaliatory capability to force the Soviets to fight in a similar degraded manner. We cannot let them fight unencumbered.

There is another myth: that if the United States builds chemical munitions, there will be a proliferation of chemical weapons. Let me caution those who believe that if the United States does nothing, all others will be restrained. Recent experience has proved this false. Although the United States has not manufactured chemical weapons since 1969, other nations could acquire a capability.

The Soviets in particular continued to increase their capability while the United States sat at the negotiating table with them. It must be remembered that the technology to manufacture chemical weapons is available to any country. A parallel myth would be to believe that if the United States did not have a nuclear capability, no other country would.

Another commonly heard myth is that there are enough chemical munitions to kill every person in the world fifty times over. This is simply a generalization, an emotional appeal, unsupported by fact or substance.

The army program is the most appropriate step toward a posture that meets its requirements. Having been unable to eliminate the chemical threat through negotiations or to affect the Soviet Union's increased emphasis on CW by unilateral restraint, it is now time to pursue improving the capability of the United States sufficiently to deny them any significant advantage in this aspect of warfare and, it is hoped, deter their introduction.

12 Strategic Planning on Legal and Institutional Barriers to Proliferation

Charles Van Doren

Non-Proliferation Treaty

The keystone of international institutional efforts to curb proliferation is the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which not only embodies the mutual obligations of 112 nonnuclear weapon states not to acquire nuclear explosives but also requires them to accept international safeguards on all their peaceful nuclear activities to demonstrate their compliance with that obligation. In fact, the pertinent safeguard agreements provide that they will remain in effect only so long as the safeguarded state remains a party to the NPT.¹

Thus any serious nonproliferation strategy must be concerned with keeping the NPT and related safeguards agreements intact. This requires heading off defections from the treaty; dealing with demands for changes in the treaty; weathering the 1985 and 1990 review conferences; and, securing agreement on extension of the treaty beyond 1995. Failures on any of the first three of these items could jeopardize achievement of the fourth.

Heading Off Defections

The NPT specifically permits withdrawal by a party if it determines that “extraordinary events related to the subject matter of this treaty have jeopardized the supreme interests of its country.” This seems to condition the withdrawal on acquisition of nuclear weapons by additional states posing a security threat to the country concerned and is not likely to be resorted to lightly. A flaunting of nuclear weapons by Israel or South Africa, however, could lead to such a reaction by hostile neighboring states that are now parties to the treaty. (Nigerian officials have indicated that a South African bomb could push them into developing nuclear weapons; Iraqi officials have made comparable statements with respect to Israel; and Colonel Qaddafi has made no apparent effort to conceal his thus far futile attempts to buy nuclear weapons.)

Heading off withdrawals of this type will require intensified efforts to prevent any worsening of the proliferation picture in Israel, South Africa, and other states inspiring such concerns, efforts to persuade the neighboring states that withdrawal from the NPT is not a useful response, and efforts to

prevent a bandwagon effect if any such withdrawal occurs. In view of the long lead time and technical and industrial hurdles that would be entailed in an effort by a state such as Nigeria to go nuclear, its withdrawal, though certainly a serious blow, would be more of a political gesture than an immediate break in the proliferation chain.

Another possibility would be the violation or abrogation of the treaty by a party such as Libya, whose respect for international law is less than notable, or a party such as Syria or Iraq, with a claim that the immediacy of the threat from Israel made it impossible to brook the delay involved in a formal withdrawal from the treaty.

A third potential cause of defection would be a radical change in the mutual security arrangements that enabled the respective allies of the United States and the Soviet Union to join the treaty. Disintegration of NATO or of the Mutual Security Treaty with Japan would be such a radical change of circumstances as might spur the reconsideration of the NPT in such countries. The principal means of heading off withdrawals of this sort is by continuing to promote the health and vigor of existing security commitments and interdependence in the field of nuclear power programs.²

Withdrawals from the treaty for less substantial reasons—for example, to make a strong political point about dissatisfaction with the implementation of articles IV and VI of the treaty—seem less likely but not inconceivable. A developing country might consider it had relatively little to lose by such a gesture of defiance, which might appeal to some of its fellow non-aligned members. But such an action, which it could not seriously argue was based on extraordinary events that jeopardized the supreme interests of its country, would be impossible to justify legally, would certainly not add to the country's access to peaceful nuclear cooperation or its influence on nuclear disarmament, would forfeit the assurance provided by the treaty that neighboring parties would not go nuclear, and would deprive the withdrawing country of the benefit of the nonuse assurances announced by the United States and others with respect to NPT parties.³

Dealing with Demands for Changes in the Treaty

U.S. support for an amendment of the NPT would carry serious attendant risks: disputes over other undesirable amendments that might be offered; the perils of reconsideration of the treaty by national parliaments, whose attitudes toward it might be more negative than when they originally consented to its ratification; the prospects of a split treaty regime, in which some parties would be bound by the treaty as amended and others by the treaty without the amendment;⁴ and the obstacles the three previous risks might present to the extension of the treaty beyond 1995.

The United States has the legal power to block an amendment, which can be adopted only by the vote of a majority of the parties to the treaty, including the affirmative votes of all three depository states and all parties that at the time the proposed amendment is circulated are members of the board of governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The latter is such an exacting requirement as to make actual adoption of an amendment extremely difficult. The fact that actual adoption of an amendment could probably be blocked does not dispose of two problems: how to achieve improvements in the treaty regime favored by the United States without the risks cited and how to cope with the pressures from other parties that give rise to proposals for amendment.

The answer to the first of these would seem to be by collateral approaches that do not require amendment of the treaty. For example, rather than seek an amendment of the treaty requiring full-scope safeguards as a condition of exports, international consensus on this requirement could be sought by other means, such as agreement among supplier states and reflection in the final document of the next NPT review conference. Similarly the gap in article II of the treaty, which does not explicitly obligate the nonnuclear weapon states to refrain from assisting or encouraging other nonnuclear weapon states to acquire a nuclear weapon, could be filled by a declaration at the NPT review conference that such assistance or encouragement would be incompatible with the treaty since it would subvert its purposes.

Coping with the frustrations of other parties may be more difficult. While it may be possible to sublimate some of them in forums such as the IAEA Committee on Assurances of Supply or the proposed 1983 Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy or (as in the case of the nonuse assurance given by the United States at the First UN Special Session on Disarmament) other international gatherings, demand for a binding legal instrument may become strong. One can conceive of protocols to the treaty, which would not change the treaty itself and whose adoption would be independent of the treaty. Unrealistic proposals for such protocols were made at the 1975 NPT review conference, but more realistic ones might have to be considered to preserve the treaty regime.

The risks involved in refusing to deal in any way with such frustrations are possible defections from the treaty and a compounding of the difficulty of securing extension of the treaty beyond 1995.

Weathering the 1985 and 1990 Review Conferences

Under the treaty, conferences of the parties are held at five-year intervals to review the operation of the treaty and to assess how well its objectives are

being fulfilled. The first such conference, held in 1975, was relatively successful in that it resulted in a generally constructive final declaration supportive of the treaty's objectives and of various collateral measures to improve the nonproliferation regime. The second review conference, in 1980, though still reflecting support for the treaty by its parties, was unable to reach consensus on a substantive final declaration. The difference stemmed from the larger and more active representation of the Group of 77 at the conference, who coordinated their positions with notable opponents of the treaty, the election of a conference president who was not strongly committed to a positive result, and mounting impatience at the lack of progress in nuclear disarmament by the superpowers, coupled with a decision by the Group of 77 to dramatize this impatience by creating an impasse at the conference. The next such review conference is scheduled to be held in 1985, and it is virtually certain that another will be held in 1990.

Although it is to be hoped that some constructive steps may be achievable at these future review conferences, the major challenge they present will be to emerge with a net positive result and to avoid serious damage to the strength of the nonproliferation regime. Criticism at these conferences that becomes too harsh might lead to defections from the treaty or demands for its amendment and would certainly add to the difficulty of obtaining agreement on extension of the treaty beyond 1995.

Obtaining Agreement on Treaty Extension

The NPT has a duration of twenty-five years from its entry into force in March 1970. Article X (2) provides that "twenty-five years after the entry into force of the treaty, a conference shall be convened to decide whether the treaty shall continue in force indefinitely, or shall be extended for an additional fixed period or periods. This decision shall be taken by a majority of the parties to the Treaty." It seems reasonable to assume that the U.S. objectives at such a conference would be to obtain agreement on an extension of the treaty for an indefinite period, or if this is not attainable, for as long a fixed period as possible with provisions facilitating subsequent further extensions, and to avoid having to pay an unreasonable price for such extension. The latter issue could present the principal difficulty. Let us examine some of the demands that might surface at such a conference:

Demands for Treaty Modification: The risks of the amendment process would be greatly compounded if they arose in connection with the extension of the treaty's duration. For insistence on amendment as the price of an extension could destroy the chance of obtaining, by vote of a simple majority of the parties, an extension binding on all parties to the Treaty. The treaty provides that amendments will be binding on only those that ratify them,

and if extension were coupled with adoption of an amended treaty text, the treaty would simply expire for those who did not accept the amendment, and there could be considerable time gaps even for parties willing to accept it. Moreover, since the vote required to adopt an amendment is not a simple majority of the parties but a majority that includes the three depository states and all parties who at the time the amendment was circulated are members of the IAEA board of governors, the difficulty of achieving an extension coupled with an amendment would be considerably greater than that of achieving a simple extension.

Thus an important element of the strategy for extending the duration of the treaty should be an effort to prevent the coupling of such extension with amendment of the treaty itself. If new demands become the price of gaining extension, they should be met by separate means that do not skew the extension procedure.

Demands for Security Assurances: One of the demands encountered both during the negotiation of the NPT and since has been for security assurances for the nonnuclear weapon states parties to the treaty. While there was some pressure for affirmative security assurances for the parties that became the subject of a nuclear attack or threat of one, the most that could be agreed on in 1968 was UN Security Council Resolution 255, with related declarations by the nuclear weapons states parties to the treaty, and this was fairly thin gruel. On negative security assurances (undertakings not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against its beneficiaries), more has been done since 1970, including no-first-use policy declarations by the Chinese and the Soviets and the announcement by the United States at the 1978 UN Special Session on Disarmament of a nonuse policy with respect to nonnuclear weapon states party to the NPT.

In the wake of these developments, surprisingly little emphasis was placed on security assurances at the 1980 NPT review conference. But—especially if doubts arise as to whether subsequent U.S. administrations support the U.S. policy announced in 1978—there is likely to be some pressure for a protocol (comparable to protocol II to the Treaty of Tlatelolco) binding the nuclear weapon states not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against nonnuclear weapon states that are party to the treaty. In my view, serious consideration will need to be given to the possibility of concluding such a protocol if one has not been adopted prior to 1995.

Demands Relating to Curbing Vertical Proliferation: While it is to be hoped that much greater progress on nuclear arms control will be made in the second half of the NPT's twenty-five year life than in the first half, this is far from certain. Yet from the very outset, many states have expressed the view that they consider the NPT a bargain under which an important part of

the price for their avoidance of nuclear weapons was progress in nuclear disarmament by the superpowers. It is hard to know if such progress would in fact affect decisions of nonnuclear weapon states on going nuclear or whether this is primarily a debating point. But it has been argued with increasing vociferousness, and the obstacle it presented to consensus at the 1980 NPT review conference should not be ignored.

One such measure—a comprehensive test ban treaty—has been the most persistently demanded. Such a treaty, if joined by those who have been demanding it, would not only help answer the complaints about implementation of article VI of the NPT but would be an extremely significant nonproliferation measure in itself.

Clearly substantial breakthroughs in the START talks would also be helpful in responding to this pressure, but a START agreement seems considerably more difficult to achieve than a Comprehensive Test Ban (CTB), if the United States were willing to resume negotiations.

If no substantial progress has been made by 1995 in limiting the superpower's arms race, it may well prove impossible to obtain an extension of the NPT beyond that date.

Demands for Cooperation in Peaceful Uses: The other major element of the NPT bargain that is likely to continue to be pressed during this period is fulfillment of the expectations of the nonnuclear weapon states that joined the treaty in order to gain increased international cooperation in the pursuit of their peaceful nuclear energy programs.

The record of the industrialized states on this score came under some attack at the 1975 and 1980 review conferences. The topic is being discussed rather cautiously to date, in the IAEA committee on assurance of supply, and will also be at issue in the proposed International Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy. In these forums, however, special preferences for NPT parties may be contested by states that have not joined the treaty and even by NPT parties that value their solidarity with fellow nonaligned members more than gaining such preferences for themselves.

It appears unlikely that the issue will be settled in these forums, and demands by NPT parties in this area are bound to persist, as well as complaints that recent restrictions on the export of sensitive nuclear technology are inconsistent with Article IV of the NPT. The weight of such complaints will be affected by the evolution of nuclear power during this period. It is very hard to predict how bright the prospects for nuclear power will look in 1995 or the impact in the interim of high escalation in the cost of nuclear facilities and of public attitudes toward the safety and environmental problems entailed in the construction of these facilities.

One issue that has loomed smaller than originally expected is article V of the NPT, providing for peaceful nuclear explosion services by the nuclear

weapon states for the nonnuclear weapon parties in return for the latter's renunciation of the right to conduct such explosions themselves. There has been widespread recognition of the unlikelihood of developing environmentally acceptable applications of such explosions, as well as their potential conflict with test ban limitations. The matter could be put to rest by a comprehensive test ban treaty that precluded such explosions by the nuclear weapon states (as the Limited Test Ban Treaty already does for any such explosions that cause radioactive venting beyond the national borders of the country in which they are conducted.)

Demands for Safeguards in Nuclear Weapon States: One other possible demand should be noted: a demand that the nuclear weapon states accept safeguards on their own peaceful nuclear activities. This has largely been met by the U.S. and U.K. offers to permit the IAEA to safeguard facilities in their territory, as well as by the more limited offer of France (not a party to the NPT) to do so. Until recently, no movement in this direction had been made by the Soviet Union, but a Soviet memorandum to the UN Special Session of Disarmament in June 1982 stated that the Soviets were prepared to accept safeguards on some facilities in their territory.

Assuming the Soviet offer is implemented, it should help defuse this issue unless the incremental burden of safeguards on the nuclear industry of nonnuclear weapon states becomes significantly greater than it has been. Both for this reason and because of its importance as a precedent for on-site inspection in the Soviet Union, the United States should encourage prompt implementation of the Soviet offer.

International Safeguards and the IAEA

Extension and Improvement of Safeguards

Since international safeguards serve the dual function of embodying a separate international undertaking not to divert safeguarded materials or facilities to military or explosive use and providing international verification of compliance with that undertaking, they are an indispensable tool for any effective nonproliferation strategy. But to reach their full potential, their coverage should be made more nearly universal, their terms and durability should reflect recent reforms, their implementation should be improved, and sanctions against their violation, abrogation, or termination should be strengthened.

Coverage. The objective with respect to coverage is to secure a commitment by nonnuclear weapon states that do not already have such a commitment to accept safeguards on all present and future peaceful nuclear activi-

ties. The number of states in this category that have any present nuclear activities is small, but they include most of the states of greatest proliferation concern: India, Pakistan, Israel, South Africa, Argentina, and Brazil. The most promising approach, which is nearly within reach, is the adoption by nuclear-exporting states of a norm that confines any new supply commitments to states that accept full-scope safeguards. This differs from the U.S. Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act of 1978 in two respects: it would not attempt to apply the criterion retroactively to existing supply agreements, and it would not settle for a *de facto* full-scope safeguards coverage. The latter concept—which would permit nuclear exports if at the time all peaceful nuclear activities in the recipient country were in fact covered by safeguards but would leave the recipient free to change this situation at any subsequent time if it were then willing to forgo further nuclear imports from the United States—has serious defects. They are most serious where the country uses reactors fueled with natural uranium, for which there is far less continuing dependence on imports than is the case for light-water reactors.

This approach through supply conditions runs the risk of stimulating efforts by the target countries to develop unsafeguarded nuclear trade with each other. But none of them (except possibly India, which has rather scrupulously avoided going this route to date) is in a position to furnish the full range of supplies that would be needed for a viable nuclear power program.

Incorporation of Recent Reforms. It is important to insist that safeguards agreements incorporate the reforms developed over the past decade, including unequivocal preclusion of all nuclear explosive use, application of safeguards to material derived from the use of exported materials, equipment, or technology, and continuation of safeguards even after the expiration or termination of the safeguards agreement under which they were initiated. These reforms are generally reflected in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act of 1978 and in the Nuclear Suppliers' Guidelines, but both leave several gaps: they do not require safeguards on reactors built with imported technology, the mechanisms for ensuring that safeguards are applied to any heavy water produced in a facility built with the use of imported technology are still under development, and the safeguards agreements with NPT parties contain no provision for their continuation after termination or withdrawal from the NPT. The first of these loopholes—which was in fact exploited by the Indians, who built an unsafeguarded replica of a reactor they had imported from Canada under safeguards—could be plugged by further consultation among the countries exporting reactors and adoption of appropriate changes in their export regulations. The second is being worked on but should be accorded greater urgency. The remedy for the third is back-up safeguards arrangements, such as those provided in most U.S.

agreements for cooperation, that will at least ensure the continuation of safeguards on materials and equipment derived from imports.

Finally, continuing efforts should be made to avoid resort by NPT parties to the withdrawal of materials from safeguards for nonexplosive military purposes—a risk that can be narrowed by supply agreements precluding such use.

Improvements in Implementation. A major challenge in the safeguards area is to obtain improvements in their implementation, a goal that can be achieved only through sustained effort with sufficient international political support. Some illustrations of the improvements needed include the following: adoption of better national systems of accounting and control, an important starting point for international safeguards; increased staffing and financial support for safeguards, which may require a change in the method of financing them; development and use of improved safeguards instrumentation and techniques, particularly for continuously fueled reactor types and for enrichment, reprocessing, mixed oxide fuel fabrication, heavy-water production, and fast critical facilities; measures to curb the abuse of the privilege of rejecting particular inspectors and to overcome resistance to the use of safeguards improvements; application of safeguards to materials other than fuel irradiated in a reactor; and fuller use of permitted inspection efforts.

Sanctions. The disincentives to violating, terminating, or abrogating an effective safeguards system should be strong and clear. Article XII C. of the IAEA Statute, which deals with noncompliance with safeguards, is a good starting place but needs supplementation. The potential hurdles to be overcome include reluctance of the IAEA staff to advise the board of governors of possible violations, hesitancy of the board to call for the cutoff of nuclear cooperation with an errant member, lack of cooperation by member states in heeding such a call, if made, and actual undercutting of sanctions by some members willing to become substitute suppliers. Some progress in dealing with the last three of these was made by the Nuclear Suppliers' Group in the late 1970s, but further efforts in this direction should be part of an effective nonproliferation strategy.

The IAEA

Since the IAEA will have the responsibility for administering safeguards, a crucial element of an effective nonproliferation strategy will be maintenance of a strong, technically effective agency, as independent as possible of political bias yet dedicated to nonproliferation. This will be a formidable

challenge in the light of the increasing aggressiveness of a voting coalition of the developing countries, which are generally more interested in obtaining technical and financial assistance than safeguards. But assuming effective leadership of the secretariat, continuing cooperation in this field between the Western and Soviet blocs, and no further deterioration in the structure of the board of governors, the IAEA should be able to meet this challenge.

One aspect of the politicization of the IAEA is its possible effect on the objective of universal membership. Threats to oust Israel and South Africa from the agency on political grounds ignore the advantages of retaining the knowledge of and influence on their nuclear programs that can exist while they continue to be members. (This price has been paid in the case of Taiwan.) An ouster would not necessarily result in the discontinuance of existing safeguards in the ousted state but would make it far more difficult to obtain expanded safeguards coverage there. On the other hand, China's entry into the IAEA will depend more on a political decision by China itself than on the political situation in the IAEA.

Because of the political problems, a substantial expansion of the role of the IAEA during the period under consideration seems unlikely. Possibly a marginal increment in its safeguards responsibilities—in the form of an international plutonium storage system—could be agreed on, though this will probably not constitute a major breakthrough from a nonproliferation point of view. It seems much less likely that the agency will be given a major role in international nuclear supply functions or operational responsibility for commercial nuclear facilities.

The future of the agency may also be affected by the current widespread disenchantment with nuclear power because of escalating costs and safety and environmental considerations. This could lead to a loss of interest in the support for the IAEA and its gradual stultification. While the same trend might reduce the rate of increase in the number of facilities to be safeguarded and limit the number of sensitive facilities involved, the problem of safeguarding existing facilities and materials would still remain and could be neglected only at great risk.

Regional Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zones

An effective nonproliferation strategy should not neglect the potential contribution of regional nuclear-free zones. They can provide an alternative that may attract states unwilling to join the NPT but that would still embody an undertaking not to acquire nuclear explosives and to accept full-scope safeguards; a mechanism under which these undertakings can be supplemented by prohibitions on possession, testing, storage, stationing, deployment, and use of nuclear weapons, including an obligation on the part of the

parties to prohibit and prevent such activities by others on their territory; and a regional institution, supplementing IAEA safeguards, to help verify compliance with such undertakings.

In the case of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, the scheme also involved a treaty undertaking by all five nuclear weapon states not to contribute to any violation of the treaty and not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against its parties (Protocol II). A similar protocol will doubtless be demanded in connection with any other such zone that may be created. Although the prospects for extending this concept to other regions currently seem very limited, more aggressive exploration of its potential application to the Middle East and possibly North Africa seems warranted. The U.S. role in such efforts must not be obtrusive, but it could help encourage them and ensure that they avoid serious pitfalls (such as a loophole for peaceful nuclear explosions). And it must be prepared to consider whether to contribute to their creation by adhering to undertakings such as those in Protocol II to the Tlatelolco Treaty.

One intriguing variant, which might be considered where the parties in the region balk at negotiating directly with each other, would be an initiative by the nuclear weapon states to enter into a Protocol II-type arrangement that would apply as long as the countries in the region in fact refrained from acquiring, testing, or deploying nuclear weapons. The maintenance of such a pledge by the superpowers could provide an incentive to refrain from such activities.

Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty

Notwithstanding the recent reported decision to suspend negotiations for a comprehensive test ban (CTB) treaty, it is important to consider the contributions such a treaty could make to nonproliferation. Too little attention has been paid to this aspect of a CTB. Admittedly it would be crucial for this purpose that states of proliferation concern would join it, but there are reasonable grounds to believe they would do so. All such states except Pakistan and Argentina are already parties to the Limited Test Ban Treaty, which specifically contemplates the conclusion of a CTB (as does the NPT). Many of these states have been among the most persistent in criticizing the delays in reaching agreement on a CTB and have repeatedly joined in resolutions calling for its prompt conclusion. Although this does not ensure that they would join such a treaty, their failure to do so would fly in the face of the public postures they have consistently taken for the past quarter of a century.

A CTB would have a number of nonproliferation advantages. Being nondiscriminatory in its effect, it could attract states that refused to accept

the discrimination embodied in the NPT. Being independent of the NPT, it would reinforce the latter by preventing its parties from demonstrating a nuclear explosive capability; and by adding to the difficulty of achieving such a capability with confidence; and by precluding the development of advanced nuclear weapons by parties that had not previously tested them. It would further reinforce the NPT by providing a significant response to the growing demand of the parties to that treaty for progress in curbing vertical proliferation. It would pose an additional political hurdle for a state contemplating withdrawal from the NPT—not only because the state would have to withdraw from both treaties but because its withdrawal from the CTB would weaken the inhibition on the nuclear weapon states against resumption of testing. If it was of unlimited duration, it would provide a safety net in case the NPT were allowed to expire in 1995.

Although the Soviets have evinced a willingness to join in such a treaty without China or France, major efforts should be made to engage these two countries in the negotiations early enough to forestall the argument that their views were not considered. Each has an interest in inhibiting further testing by the Soviets as well as in preventing further proliferation, and Chinese adherence is likely to be important to an Indian decision to join the treaty and to Soviet willingness to make the treaty of unlimited duration.

It would be important for such a treaty to ban so-called peaceful nuclear explosions (PNEs), as the Soviets appeared willing to do at least temporarily in the most recent negotiations. The alternative of a treaty permitting such explosions by the nuclear weapon states but not others would create a loophole that could impair the security advantages of the treaty from the point of view of the superpowers and would almost certainly be nonnegotiable with the nonnuclear weapon states. A treaty that excepted PNEs for all parties would be a sham. A CTB that banned PNEs would not only add to the inhibition against others following the Indian path but also would neatly dispose of the problem posed by article V of the NPT (which, in the absence of such test ban restrictions, contemplates the provisions of PNE services by the nuclear weapon states).

These observations indicate that future attempts to achieve a CTB should avoid the following major mistakes made by the Carter administration, which undercut the nonproliferation advantages of such a treaty: restricting the treaty to the United States, the Soviet Union, and the United Kingdom and making it of short duration and creating presumptions against its extension. They should also avoid providing for permitted experiments that would either create a loophole that could weaken the treaty as a nonproliferation device or (if the exception were confined to the nuclear weapon states) decrease its acceptability to nonnuclear weapon states by introducing an element of discrimination.

Finally, in view of the fact that virtually all states of proliferation concern are parties to the Limited Test Ban Treaty, consideration should be given to using the amendment procedure in that existing treaty to achieve a CTB. That treaty provides that amendments become binding on all parties when ratified by a majority of its parties (including the three nuclear weapon states).

Other Institutional Arrangements

A survey of international institutional barriers to proliferation would be incomplete without mention of the suggestions that have been made for regional or multinational fuel cycle centers, international plutonium storage and spent fuel storage arrangements, and comparable institutional arrangements. These are by no means substitutes for the more global measures already discussed; rather they are supplemental measures designed to limit the total number of sensitive facilities in the world, to ensure that they are located in relatively safe countries from a nonproliferation viewpoint, and to give countries other than host states a possible alternative to the development of national facilities of the same type.

The prospects for establishing such facilities will be governed primarily by their economic attractiveness, including, in the case of regional facilities, potential savings in transportation costs. Business considerations are likely to be the decisive factor not only in whether such facilities are established but where and by whom. This will not necessarily detract from their utility as a supplementary measure to prevent proliferation but may well limit the number of countries affected.

For some such facilities, the problem of siting will be paramount. Thus in the IAEA Export Group on International Spent Fuel Management, it became apparent that some countries might welcome the establishment of an international spent fuel storage facility as a resource available to them at their option but not as a required choice, but finding a country willing to accept foreign spent fuel was a well-nigh insurmountable problem.

Another potential limiting factor, whose impact is difficult to assess, is the possible decline in the expected demand for fuel cycle facilities in the absence of a strong revival of the nuclear power market and resolution of the problems of public acceptance.

Conclusion

In considering international legal and institutional barriers to nonproliferation it is necessary to avoid two distorted conclusions: that total faith can be

placed in such measures and the underlying political-military pressures ignored with impunity or that such measures cannot have a significant impact on proliferation prospects. Both are clearly wrong. The best treaty structure imaginable would not stop a sufficiently determined state from going nuclear. But effective legal and institutional barriers can raise the political price of doing so, create reciprocal obligations that a state may be reluctant to lose, and provide support for domestic forces opposing such a move. They also can help gauge progress in containing proliferation and highlight outstanding proliferation problems, help alleviate concerns about the intentions of other states, and prevent reactions based on misperceptions of such intentions. Thus they are a vital part of any effective strategy for dealing with proliferation.

Notes

1. In the case of most states having agreements for cooperation with the United States, there are fallback arrangements for continuing safeguards on materials and equipment derived from U.S. cooperation but not on any purely indigenous nuclear activities of such states.

2. The one case in which there has been a serious degradation of mutual security arrangements is Taiwan, but the sizable proportion of its electric power production that is dependent on enriched uranium and replacement parts from the United States and absence of any available alternative source of supply have helped induce Taiwan to continue to adhere to the NPT.

3. For example, the announcement made by Secretary of State Cyrus Vance at the UN Special Session on Disarmament in 1978.

4. Article VIII of the treaty provides that after an amendment has been approved by the conference convened to consider it, it will enter into force for those that ratify it on ratification by the requisite qualified majority of parties but not for other parties until they ratify it.

13

Some Possibilities of More Vigorous Nonproliferation

George H. Quester

Changing International Climate

The world's attitudes on the legitimacies and illegitimacies of nuclear technology are changing steadily. Where nuclear weapons options were once treated as one of the inherent prerogatives of sovereignty, much of the world is coming to see things differently. Where controls on the by-products of a peaceful nuclear reactor program were once viewed as an insulting intrusion into national sovereignty, this also has changed.

The range of efforts to head off nuclear proliferation could thus conceivably extend from the current efforts based on the NPT and the IAEA all the way up to the use of existing nuclear arsenals to frustrate the emergence of additional arsenals. The upper extreme of this range would hardly be so unthinkable in the light of history. Navies were deployed in the past to frustrate the development of rival navies, and armies were used to repress the deployment of hostile armies. Air forces have been directed often enough against adversary air forces, and the grand strategic logic of many military officers, since Clausewitz and even before, has been inclined toward this counterforce role. If there was ever a prospect of precluding every kind of nuclear proliferation, it would thus have come after 1945 in some kind of application of the U.S. nuclear monopoly to preserve itself.

Yet any use of nuclear weapons today promises to be very destructive and very counterproductive for all the purposes of arms control. Far too many civilians would be killed as the collateral damage of any such attacks. Equally bad the application of nuclear warheads, even if they were limited in blast and radioactive yield, would erase an important arms-control accomplishment of the years since Nagasaki—the nuclear taboo by which no such weapons have been used in anger since 1945, despite the many thousands of such warheads that have been assembled and the more than one thousand that have been detonated as part of the testing process. This nuclear taboo is an important bolster for any nonproliferation effort for it makes nuclear weapons look less normal and less useful than conventional weapons and supplies an important benchmark for mutual restraint among the major powers.

Much can thus be gained if any military action designed to forestall an *n*th nation from acquiring nuclear weapons is carried through only with high

explosives. Some of this will now become technologically easier because of the dramatic improvement in accuracy for ballistic and cruise missiles. Such improvements in accuracy indeed sometimes suggest that a missile war between two such nuclear powers as the United States and the USSR could be fought out with conventional warheads, as tunnels on the Trans-Siberian Railway or bridges in Poland became targets for conventional explosives, with little damage to the surrounding populations and with substantial restraint on the escalation likely on either side.

If such weapons are instead brought into an antiproliferation effort, we may see more strikes such as the one carried through by the Israelis against Osirak, now perhaps using unpiloted vehicles exclusively. Sabotage will also play a role, as might commando raids by submarine or helicopter. The targets will be the reactors or reprocessing plants suspected of having been harnessed to a bomb project. The aim will be to interdict such bomb projects, with a minimum of damage to the surrounding environment,

Short of violent conventional military action or blending with it through the medium of clandestine sabotage, we will also see a stepped-up campaign of open embargoes and licensing cutoffs as world concern about the proliferation of additional nuclear forces appends legitimacy to such efforts.

The world is becoming more and more opposed to nuclear proliferation and more and more inclined to demand that any nation engaged in peaceful nuclear activity offer satisfactory assurances that no weapons are being produced as a by-product of such activities. When such assurances are not delivered, this world will acquiesce to greater restrictions on commerce with the uncooperative party and may even go along with some military initiatives. It was not remarkable that Israel was condemned at the UN for its air strike at Osirak; Israel will be condemned in the General Assembly for almost anything it does. What was remarkable was how muted and perfunctory the condemnation of the air-strike on the Iraqi reactor turned out to be, showing that many states had entertained their own concerns and fears as to what the Iraqis were up to.

Conventional Military Interventions

Two important kinds of doubts will emerge on the application of missile or bomber-borne conventional warheads to interdict the nuclear weapons acquisition of any foreign country. First, such explosives may not offer enough assurance of vaporizing any stockpile of fissile uranium or plutonium that had been identified as a target. Hitting the same target with a nuclear warhead, by contrast, would ensure its vaporization and destruction.

Second, where the crucial target for preventing proliferation was still a reactor or a reprocessing plant, when threatening amounts of fissile bomb

material had not yet been produced, there might be some hazard that a conventional attack would release too much radioactivity into the area from the destroyed reactor or plant, especially once the reactor had gone critical.

The erstwhile *n*th nuclear power, playing out a complicated game of nuclear deterrence, might thus in effect be using its own population as a deterrent to shield the development of its nuclear force, exploiting the vulnerability of this population to a slightly different form of nuclear destruction, making it far more difficult for any foreign armed force to carry through air strikes or commando raids to interdict the nuclear weapons program.

If the threat of radioactive fallout to one's own population is not enough of a deterrent to outside attack, one can always exploit the prevailing winds to put someone else at risk as well. Israeli nuclear facilities could certainly be located so as to put Damascus or Amman at risk, and Pakistani facilities could, if attacked, leak radioactive fallout imperiling large numbers of people in India. One could even imagine a bomb-minded nation's deliberately designing its reactors to be slightly less safe, with less shielding, so that any damage to the operations of the plutonium production flow would be surer of releasing this radioactive fallout into the air.

Yet these barriers to this ultimate in surgical strikes are never final here. Timing, always of the essence, depends on good intelligence. If the Israelis could know enough of what was happening inside Iraq to guess when the Osirak reactor was likely to go critical, similar information will have to be found and applied for other cases.

Whatever intelligence capabilities the United States possesses will surely be brought into play for early detection of moves to develop nuclear warheads. This will include such technologically advanced means as satellite and electronic surveillance and such traditional human intelligence ("humint") approaches as having espionage agents in place. Fuller coordination between the intelligence services of the United States and its allies, or even with such traditional rivals as the Soviet Union, will also be possible because the interest in heading off further spread of nuclear weapons will be recognized as a shared interest.

Given that the time gap between peaceful uses of nuclear energy and the production of warheads will be small, timing will be of the essence for violent interventions heading off such moves. Capabilities approaching real-time surveillance of the nuclear scene will thus be sought and in some ways will be attainable. The various surveillance devices introduced as part of IAEA safeguards will be a part of this; advanced reconnaissance vehicles deployed in space orbit are another part. An agent in place, working for one or another of the superpower secret services, will provide some of the rest of what is needed.

As the prospective accuracies of cruise missiles and smart bombs improve, matched up with elegantly designed dynamite charges capable of time delay or prior imbedding before explosion, some additional options should emerge for doing all damage desired and only the damage desired. Nothing will be perfectly certain, but nothing really needs to be, for many governments contemplating nuclear weapons programs may well be deterred if there is merely a good prospect of such conventional attack on their operations.

Given the greater willingness of the world community to accept preemptive military activity but the substantial advantages of avoiding any use of nuclear weapons themselves in such preemptive activity, considerable attention will thus have to be assigned to developing and expanding capabilities for conventional attack against threatening nuclear facilities.

Where unmanned cruise missiles can do the job, their superb accuracies may finally come into use. This kind of application is probably more likely than in the hypothetical East-West all-out war for which they are so often analyzed and discussed. Where the precarious physical state of the reactor made such an attack too risky, even taking the special accuracies of cruise missiles into account, human forces would have to be brought into action.

The United States and other powers opposed to nuclear proliferation have developed specialized commando teams capable of being brought to the scene by submarine or helicopter, including specialists trained in the design and construction of reactors and other nuclear facilities. These teams presumably have a good chance of penetrating the facility and crippling it without endangering the population areas downwind from it.

An important difference between rescuing hostages and disabling reactors works to the benefit of the antiproliferation campaign. A failed attempt at rescuing hostages can be a disaster for the power seeking such a rescue, as the hostages perish in the attempt, as the government looks foolish, as the terrorists look all the more resourceful and important. A failed attempt at crippling a reactor is not nearly as much of a disaster for the outside interveners, however, for it looks more like a failed terrorist attack than a failed hostage rescue. The commandos can always try again some other time; the *n*th country trying to sneak into nuclear weapons production will be in a dilemma as to whether it should publicize or hush up the raid. To publicize the attack may serve to alert the world much more to the question of possible nuclear weapons proliferation in the first place, with suppliers drawing back in the face of the possible hazards of participating in a nuclear deal with the suspect country.

Some attacks on offending nuclear facilities may thus be carried through on a clandestine-proxy, not-for-attribution basis. The model might be the rumored earlier Israeli air attacks on Osirak in aircraft painted with

Iranian markings. Another model might be the mercenary coup attempt in the Seychelles by a team of men probably known to, and supported by, the South African government. Greater openness and identification of the origins of the intervention will become possible as there is greater international backing for this kind of antiproliferation effort.

Sabotage

If the erstwhile nuclear proliferation state is not deterred by the damage in such sabotage and attacks, one valuable spin-off is that other states and firms supplying expertise and equipment may be deterred. Such states and firms were probably rationalizing to themselves that no weapons project was underway, being so intent on earning profits and foreign exchange that they pulled a blanket of wishful thinking across themselves. As with the impact of the Israeli Osirak air strike, such wishful thinking about nuclear by-products and the threat of diversion to weapons can be punctured by unilateral violent action, as the French government has moved toward a more restrictive posture on future sales to Iraq.

The fact that a French technician was killed in the Israeli air strike contributes to the deterrent in a different way; engineers have to be paid more when a project involves risks to their lives, as firms have to be paid more when their equipment is too prone to air attack or to sabotage. In a manner that looks rather criminal and arbitrary, some of the risks of war will thus be brought home to business men who, by their pursuit of profits, would be greatly expanding the risk of nuclear war around the globe.

As indicated by the earlier sabotage of reactor cores in France scheduled for shipment to Iraq, some of such low-level violence intended to interrupt the development of nuclear weapons capabilities around the globe can go back to the source of the critical inputs or to interrupting them in transit to their intended destinations. In a world where exact blame for such sabotage can never be settled, some additional deterrent or barrier to nuclear proliferation might yet be added thereby.

Just as with air raids on the suspect reactors or separation plants themselves, such sabotage at the source will have a double effect, interrupting some flows of equipment and deterring or discouraging firms and individuals from enlisting in such work, or at least driving them to demand considerably higher rate of profit and pay to compensate for the physical risks.

Many of such activities amount to the mirror opposite of the clandestine grey market activities of the would-be proliferators, as states like Pakistan try to circumvent barriers to the sale of sensitive nuclear materials and equipment by various illegal purchases, using false front business concerns

and secret agents, at times actually engaging in the theft of materials. Illegal activity by the would-be developer of nuclear warheads would thus draw some illegal counteractivity in response; the world generally will not like to see such an escalation of undercover espionage, sabotage, and even murder but surely will prefer this to a continued increase in the number of separate arsenals equipped with nuclear warheads.

Everyone's first choice will continue to be full-scope IAEA safeguards, established by adherence to the NPT or through other legal stipulations committing each country to renounce nuclear weapons when it pursues peaceful applications of nuclear physics. It is where this can not be obtained, where IAEA safeguards look as if they might be circumvented, that some additional military, political, and even illegal action might have to be contemplated.

Reshaping the Legitimacy

When nations seize a certain license for themselves on matters they deem of paramount importance, they can get away with deviations from strict legitimacy after establishing some precedent for such deviations. What the United States has seized as prerogatives for the deployment of its own nuclear weapons may have to be marched by prerogatives for interfering in the acquisition of other additional powers' nuclear weapons. Hence U.S. policy on, say, the question of a hypothetical attack on an Argentina or Pakistani reactor should be, "We can neither confirm nor deny."

The same model for arbitrary and high-handed behavior emerges in the various layers of Israeli clandestine activities directed at any signs of an Arab nuclear program. Observers around the world are shocked by the rumors; the Israelis then refuse to confirm or deny the rumors; world observers on reflection then sense the importance of the Arab nuclear weapons acquisition risk for Israel and for themselves, and a new license to kill has in effect been minted up.

Almost all of such sabotage, and even many of the commando raids of air raids or cruise missile attacks, may thus come without any open acknowledgment of responsibility by the United States (or by whatever other proliferation-resistant power launched the attacks). The world will be able to guess the source of the attacks fairly easily by considering the strategic realities and the likely capabilities for such actions, but the avoidance of open admissions of responsibility will soothe some of the legal sensitivities, even as many of the spectators on the world scene approve of the actions taken.

Over time the world's ideological endorsement of such counterproliferation moves ought to spread out about as widely as that for the current more above-board efforts of the London Supplier's Club, aimed at Libya, Iraq, South Africa, Pakistan, Taiwan, Argentina, Brazil, and South Korea.

It is more questionable whether any such campaigns will ever be launched against countries already long suspected of having violated the proliferation barrier. The military operations outlined here might include attempts to capture or destroy stockpiles of fissionable material already accumulated and stored at some location. Yet would we contemplate an attempt to capture or destroy nuclear warheads that had already been assembled and deployed to the custody of the Indian or Israeli armed forces? Nonproliferation has always been a goal less ambitious and more manageable than the disarmament of nuclear forces that have already come into existence.

Peaceful PAL

Because nuclear weapons are so important, special locks are imposed on them. Known as permissive action links (PAL), they serve to make it impossible for a lower-ranking military officer to fire such weapons without a key or numerical combination given from above. Similar consideration should be given to the installation of the equivalent of PAL devices in power reactors in countries like Pakistan or Argentina, with the continued operation of such facilities then being at the sufferance of an outside authority, either the country supplying the facility or a more multinational body like the IAEA. Any country receiving such facilities would thus know that it could continue to produce electricity as long as it had truly satisfied the concerns of the outside world but that its electricity from such power reactors would be shut down (without any recourse to violence, without any danger of radioactive leakage, simply by the denial of the next month's necessary code number input) if it did not satisfy such concerns.

Unlike the PAL for ordinary U.S. nuclear weapons, where the weapons cannot be operated at all without the prerequisite combination, the system here might be to allow the reactor to function for the remainder of the calendar month, requiring a new number relayed in from Washington or Vienna for each next month.

Most nations would balk at such restraints. Most would also expect to draw a great deal of international sympathy in balking at such a humiliating demand. Yet the world opinion audience might soon see the demand as necessary and proper, might soon be telling the Brazils and Argentinas and Pakistans and Iraqs that there is no humiliation, that such locks are to be viewed as normal and necessary wherever nuclear industry can spin off bombs as by-products.

Some technological research and development work ought to be done on the possible designs of PAL for civilian nuclear facilities. Some further

political work needs to be done in breaking the idea to the world community, perhaps by citing the analogy with U.S. military arrangements or beginning to install such devices on facilities within the United States.

Short of an explicit installation of a device like PAL, we might approximate such leverage by designing reactors and related peaceful nuclear facilities in the future such that they are workable only on a shorter time leash, perhaps computer controlled, with a continuing demand for replacement chips that can be manufactured only in the United States, perhaps in other ways requiring some constant flying in of updates and replacement parts from sources outside the erstwhile *n*th nuclear weapons state.

The International Nuclear Fuel Cycle Evaluation devoted some study to separating the kinds of peaceful nuclear industry that lent themselves to bomb manufacture from those that do not, with results that suggested few clear distinctions existed. The distinction to be explored here would be between systems leaving the recipient continually dependent on the supplier and the systems promising a dangerous independence.

From such subtlety in steering toward more veto-prone nuclear technologies, it is only one more small step to looking for clandestinely inserted veto devices, gadgets interposed in the design of a reactor or other nuclear facility to shut it down, without violence or hazard, by the transmission of some signal from the outside. If countries are willing to support prior sabotage as part of heading off bomb projects, they should be just as willing to consider and to finance more subtle steps short of this, implanting design features into nuclear equipment assemblies that will allow later sabotage by remote control if the state operating such equipment becomes suspect of seeking nuclear explosives.

Ideally this would be a reversible kind of sabotage, inducing the kinds of shutdowns that could be terminated once replacement parts or assistance were sent in from the outside, parts and assistance that could be expedited when the particular country was being cooperative on the arms-control reassurance question and would be delayed when it was not.

We are thus comparing the returns for a very explicit building in of PAL-type vetoes with the returns of a more subtle and clandestine approximation of this kind of veto system. The explicit system is much more open, with the final source of judgment and authority, releasing whatever is needed to let nuclear equipment operate, being clearly identified. In its openness, however, it forces the recipient nation to accept such vetoes explicitly, possibly affronting its sense of pride, possibly irritating the rest of the world if the prior diplomatic homework has not yet been done. The clandestine approach reduces the dangers of humiliation but raises the risks that nuclear plant operations would be aborted and sabotaged without any clear knowledge of where the veto was being exercised.

Military PAL

The United States might wish to offer ordinary military PAL devices to a friendly n th nation that had defied the nonproliferation system to go ahead to get its own nuclear explosives. A malicious imagination then could make the next logical leap by which the PAL devices offering the n th government a veto over any insubordinate use of its nuclear weapons then were subtly or secretly configured to give the United States a veto also, thus ending the proliferation. (Safety catches by definition are an antidote to proliferation.)

Perhaps we would accomplish this by tricky gadgetry. Perhaps our own veto would have to be activated only after some time delay so that it would not show up at the early stages when the n th power decided to try a test detonation of one of its warheads.

Perhaps we would rather come to approximate this kind of U.S. veto more asymptotically by offering, and getting the n th government to purchase, a very tight PAL veto, whereby only the president of the country and his immediate staff carried the necessary numerical combination for activating the warheads, thus in an emergency offering the United States the option of trying to preclude all use of such nuclear weapons by simply reaching the center of government.

There is little doubt that the United States would be able to supply PAL devices considerably superior in reliability and applicability to any that could be designed by the countries acquiring nuclear weapons of their own. At the same time, the nation accepting such devices will thus always have to worry that U.S. supply of such devices may compromise the independence of its nuclear arsenal somewhat. It is not out of the question that a number of n th nations would elect to accept this compromise, fearing the unpredictability of their own lower-ranking military even more than the interventionary inclinations of the United States.

In supplying PAL devices, the United States may never go so far as to booby-trap them to support nonproliferation by keeping the nuclear weapons from ever being used. Yet as a supplier, it can counsel its customers to purchase and install PAL systems that err on the safe side, require more elaborate keys or numerical combination locks, and are difficult to bypass. If such supply of equipment did nothing more than elevate future n th country decisions on the use of nuclear weapons to the very highest level within the country's political structure, this would be a considerable accomplishment in terms of arms control and nonproliferation. By making the use of nuclear weapons less likely in one country, it might make the acquisition of such weapons less likely in another country, preserving the nuclear taboo and its beneficial impact so much longer.

Nuclear Military Interventions

Finally, when all else fails, might nuclear weapons be mobilized against the imminent nuclear arsenals about to be developed in some country?

Where conventional warheads are likely to fail to cripple the key nuclear facilities of the suspect nation or fail to destroy a known stockpile of fissile material, this might yet be an argument for carrying out the attack by nuclear means. The costs of such an operation would go down, and the chances of success would go up, if the right kind of nuclear warhead could be brought to bear, one so configured in yield and radioactive aftereffects to approach a surgical strike.

Before we become too optimistic about solving a proliferation problem through nuclear attacks, however, we should remind ourselves of the dimensions of this task. When faced with a stockpile of fissile material, sitting in a cave or in a reactor core, we would want to eliminate that material from existence while doing as little damage as possible to whatever surrounds it.

Where twenty bombs worth of material (or perhaps twenty bombs) have been hidden in a remote cave, a single nuclear warhead delivered precisely to the cave's entrance might accomplish the task when no other weapon could. Where the fissile material or the reactor is located closer to population centers, however, a nuclear approach to the problem may be out of the question.

Smaller nuclear warheads will generally be candidates for use; larger ones will not. All of the U.S. hydrogen bomb stockpile can thus be reserved entirely for other uses. Weapons low in radioactive fallout will probably be preferable, although one could imagine a few rare and special situations where the United States would wish to pollute a remote site with radioactivity so as to prevent the forces of the local government from entering it and recovering any fissile material that had been buried to escape destruction.

Enhanced radiation weapons look like the opposite of clean warheads at the outset, having less blast and a greater initial flow of deadly neutrons, but the long-term radiation is less also. While this feature may make such weapons relatively more attractive for defending one's own nation, the applicability of such warheads to interfering with someone else's nuclear weapons ambitions is not so clear.

Perhaps the most useful nuclear warhead would be the very smallest; such a warhead should be just enough more potent than an ordinary high-explosive warhead to make the difference in surely taking out the offending fissile material but would otherwise add as little as possible in blast and radiation.

U.S. nuclear weapons designers at times have taken what seemed inordinate pride in conjuring up nuclear warheads that would be so small as to close the continuum with conventional weapons. While this might be a scientifically elegant exercise, it posed the threat of eroding the conven-

tional nuclear firebreak on which so much of war limitation and practical arms control has depended. If such mini-nucs were ever used in a war between the United States or its allies and the Soviet Union or its allies, some important parts of the nuclear taboo would have been lost. And so, of course, would be lost this taboo if such weapons are used in an antiproliferation military intervention. Yet the difference might be that such mini-nukes would accomplish something that could be carried through in no other way. If a Libyan stockpile of bomb material were the target, such an erosion of the conventional-nuclear distinction might be worth the sacrifice.

Logic of Violent Nonproliferation

There will be cases where a preemptive attack can eliminate an erstwhile nuclear weapons force, and there will be other instances where such attacks are perhaps more likely to destroy only 95 percent of such a force. Are such preemptive attacks out of the question when 5 percent of the offending force might be likely to remain? The answer is not clear for it depends heavily on the logical analogies drawn.

For some kinds of preemptive attacks, only total or near-total success would suffice. This is basically the case for a U.S. strike against Soviet nuclear forces or a Soviet window of opportunity-vulnerability strike at U.S. nuclear forces. During the Cuban missile crisis, the proposed surgical strikes against the Soviet missiles deployed to Cuba might have been regarded as inadequate if they could not be sure of destroying 100 percent of the force, on the premise that whatever survived would be fired at targets in the United States.

But the proper analog for the sabotage and conventional (or even nuclear) military attacks may not be this kind of hit-or-miss first strike but rather the continually nonviolent efforts of the United States since 1960 to hinder and slow down the development of the French nuclear force, efforts that probably cut the size of this force in half, signaling to Paris that it was encountering opposition to its military nuclear efforts.

The reason the preemptive strike does not have to be totally effective is that the n th country is not itself being threatened with total nuclear destruction or total conquest if the preemption succeeds. It is not being left in a situation where there is nothing left to lose. If the United States had been able to disarm the Soviet Union, or vice-versa, there might have been nothing left to deter or check the victorious power. But if Iraq or South Africa or Argentina is stripped of nuclear forces, the superpowers will continue to check and balance and deter each other such that the subsequent political and military pressure directed against any of such powers, whether they had only a few nuclear warheads left or none, would be approximately the same as that it is normally today.

Part IV Strategic Responses and Thresholds



TREE *of* LIBERTY SOCIETY

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On the Future of Thresholds

Michael A. Freney

In a widely publicized address in 1982, Secretary of State Alexander Haig advised each succeeding generation and each new administration to examine continuously nuclear strategy and the “awesome responsibilities” and “awful dilemmas” associated with that strategy.¹ He then went on, in what William Buckley labeled a preemptive response,² to attack the ideas in the equally widely publicized *Foreign Affairs* article by McGeorge Bundy, George Kennan, Robert McNamara, and Gerald Smith in which they call for a shift to a declaratory policy of no first use of nuclear weapons by the United States.³

That article, the Haig speech, and subsequent reactions by a variety of people of affairs, strategic analysts, and politicians have engendered new public interest in the basics of deterrence. In particular, attention has been focused on the so-called nuclear threshold, that situation or set of events that would or could cause a nation to resort to explosion of a nuclear weapon to influence an adversary.

The debate has ranged broadly, but in all of it there is a certain sense of déjà vu. Bernard Brodie developed many of the basic arguments in the late 1940s. The reexamination of those concepts in the mid-1960s when flexible response was announced by Robert McNamara, denounced by President Charles de Gaulle, and subsequently formally adopted by NATO at the cost of France's participation in the military structure of the alliance, produced reams on which strategies, policies, or actions raise the nuclear threshold (make the resort to nuclear weapons less likely) and which policies, strategies, or actions lower it (make nuclear use more likely).

In spite of the surfeit of literature on such factors and at the risk of appearing pedantic about jaded issues, it seems useful to take Mr. Haig's advice and look again at some of the notions associated with security in a nuclear world that inspire fear and concern after nearly two score years without use of nuclear weapons in battle. A good place to start is with deterrence itself.

Deterrence

Some general points early on may help to put this discussion about thresholds in conceptual context. First, it is worthwhile to recall that deterrence is a

process designed to prevent action by threat of denial or punishment. It is a two-sided process. A nation that sets out to deter has engaged in a strategy designed to reconcile ends, specifically a dynamic international stability, with capabilities to deny or punish. As Thomas C. Shelling has shown in his parsimonious model in *The Strategy of Conflict*, a multiplicative relationship between capabilities and the will to use them is a helpful device in understanding the dynamics of deterrence from the standpoint of the nation that deters.

But ultimately, the second process, that in the minds of the decision makers of a nation to be deterred, is the more important. As the variety and volume of literature on Soviet perceptions with respect to Western capabilities and intentions attest, the United States and its allies are not in a position to ascertain what transpires in the minds of leaders in the Kremlin. Those in the West are therefore left to guess what level of capabilities and what degree of bellicosity in proclaimed intentions will in fact prevent Soviet action inimical to Western interests.

Leaders in the West have attempted to inhibit Soviet tendencies toward expansion by acquiring and maintaining significant military capabilities and displaying them in convincing nuclear and conventional force postures, within and without alliances, while declaring intentions designed to ring true to the Soviet decision maker as well as to U.S. allies and the rest of the world. In the process of trying to accomplish such a prodigious task, the United States and its allies have had to wander through a morass of ambiguity, uncertainty, and paradox. Thinking productively about deterrence requires a tolerance for paradox.

Paradoxes

Three considerations at the heart of the notion of deterrence have paradoxical qualities: level of threat, degree of certainty, and probability of desired outcome.

It is well known in psychology that threats have value in affecting human behavior only within certain parameters and over certain periods of time. Too high a level of threat in the environment, especially over a prolonged period of time, can provoke counterthreat or even violent, some would argue irrational, forms of action that the threat itself may originally have been designed to prevent.⁴

There are close parallels in strategic deterrence. The high level of threat to second-strike capability moved both superpowers in the direction of highly expensive and, many argue, destabilizing programs of investment in less vulnerable but even more capable systems. Indeed some argue a high level of threat to existing systems can reach an intensity that leaves preemption as an opponent's only perceived option.

On the other side are those who argue that the inability to punish an enemy or to prevent his perception of the possibility of victory is likely to provoke that potential enemy into a preemptive strike. In short, too high a level of threat is seen by some as a principal danger to stability, while too low a level of threat is seen by others as the principal dilemma. The strategists and policymakers are trying to find that level of threat that neither destabilizes because of its high intensity nor tempts an expansionary opponent by providing an appearance of weakness either in terms of capability or resolve.

A second difficulty exists with respect to the certainty a potential opponent might have about actions called for in an opponent's strategy. Uncertainty can breed anxiety and fear that prevent action. It can also create a situation where action of some sort is preferable to the continued intense discomfort brought on by that anxiety.

Conversely, explicit realization of the high likelihood of punishment or denial can prevent action. But clear perception of probable response can lead to a situation where cost and risk can be carefully calculated and action undertaken with determination when risks are tolerable. In the strategic environment, strategists and policymakers must find a middle ground between a level of uncertainty that prevents close calculation of acceptable risk on the one hand and, on the other, a level of certainty about denial and/or punishment that deters certain forms of action.

Third, associated with the notions of certainty and uncertainty is the pull between self-negating prophecy and self-fulfilling prophecy. That tension becomes most evident in the strategic arena in discussions about first-strike capability and counterforce targeting. Some argue that stability demands that neither the Soviet Union nor the United States attempt to achieve first-strike capability. Still others argue that the Soviet Union essentially has achieved that capability with the newest generation of missiles and that the United States must pursue a counterforce, hard-target kill capability not only to demonstrate resolve but also to provide for damage limitation. In short, a capability to carry out substantial counterforce strikes is seen by some as a guarantee of eventual attempts at nuclear blackmail. Others see a counterforce capability as essential to negating that threat. Again, strategists and policymakers must work between the horns of that dilemma and provide a force posture that is not only affordable but neither provokes egregious behavior nor conveys impressions of lack of capability or resolve.

Thresholds

In the behavioral sciences a threshold is technically defined as a state at which a stimulus can be seen as producing a response. As little as that technical definition may apply in the tremendously complex behavior of national leaders and states, it has come into play in strategic literature as a

way of identifying discernable changes in patterns of behavior. Indeed, NATO strategy places a special emphasis on qualitative change in behavior among conventional defense, theater nuclear defense, and strategic nuclear exchange.

One of the most debated elements in nuclear theology is the importance of the shift from conventional weapons to nuclear ones. It is a convenient point around which to organize debate because, at least until recently, there were clear qualitative distinctions between nuclear weapons and other kinds of weapons. Whether that is still so, whether the nuclear threshold is the most important threshold for planners and decision makers, and how the three paradoxical notions already identified enter into that debate are the points to be taken up next.

A threshold frequently neglected is that between violence and non violence. Nations raise armies, equip them to be operationally viable, provide them with research and development capabilities, and support them with men, taxes, and goodwill primarily because armed forces serve to provide security. The forces must have the ability to face potential adversaries on land, on sea, and in the air if they are to have influence in the international community.

At the heart of the no-first-use debate is the notion that a declaration designed to strengthen the conventional-nuclear threshold must be built in turn on more robust conventional forces in the European environment designed to confront the Soviet–Warsaw Pact threat there. Indeed critics of the Bundy piece see a combination of the continuation of the conventional imbalance in Europe with a no-first-use declaration as an invitation to the Soviets to conduct conventional conflict.⁵ Supporters of the no-first-use provision argue that it is based on a righting of the conventional balance and that no change occurs by invoking such a declaratory posture since the ultimate threshold of concern all along has been that between nonviolence and violence in the European theater.

Calls for improvement in NATO conventional force posture have been continual and shrill since the alliance was formed. How to go about that has, however, created much discussion.⁶ Although certain concerned U.S. politicians argue about redeployment of U.S. forces in the European central region, prepositioning supplies and munitions, exploiting technical advantage, and improving warning time,⁷ others, like Ambassador Robert Komer, stress continuing conventional patterns of diplomacy within the alliance structure.⁸ Still others, like Jeffrey Record, argue that the only solution to conventional inadequacy is for the United States to withdraw its forces, thereby forcing Europeans to take up the slack in their own conventional defense.⁹

Many Europeans, however, wonder whether, by raising the conventional force capability of NATO and thereby raising the nuclear threshold,

they will stimulate even further improvements in the Soviet–Warsaw Pact force capabilities. They wonder whether a higher probability of prolonged conventional defense might not precipitate a re-creation of the situation in World War II on the European continent. They wonder whether evenly matched Warsaw Pact–NATO conventional forces might not be more rather than less likely to confront one another. And finally, and most important, they wonder whether the NATO defense posture has succeeded only because there has been a clear link to the relatively early use of nuclear weapons, which has in turn deterred the Soviets.¹⁰

Associated considerations include speculation on the Soviet propensity to preempt highly lucrative counterforce targets in Western Europe, either with modern precision-guided munitions armed with a variety of highly destructive new warheads or with either conventionally or nuclear-armed intermediate-range ballistic missiles. There is also concern about whether Soviet–Warsaw Pact leaders will be willing to remain in a conventional mode when combinations of improved manpower, weaponry, and deployment of NATO forces make an adventure in the central European theater more costly, time-consuming, and challenging in terms of both military and political capabilities.

Certain other thresholds are also products of modern technology or products of alliance relationships. The Soviet Union has deployed in Eastern Europe and elsewhere substantial numbers of troops trained to fight in biologically and chemically hostile environments, and indeed they are equipped to perform that function. Although NATO defensive capabilities for fighting in such environments are improving, NATO troops are far from levels of readiness that commanders hope for. This situation, combined with the apparent Soviet experiments in genocide in Southeast Asia and Afghanistan, point up the need for intense concern over Soviet chemical and/or biological capabilities short of the nuclear threshold, especially in high-density environments like Western Europe and Japan.

Similarly, developments in missile propulsion technology, the accuracy of guidance systems, the array of explosive devices available, as well as microelectronic advances that facilitate target acquisition, terminal guidance, and command, control, and communications, make the likelihood of successful blitzkreig lower while increasing the probable length and destructiveness of a conventional conflict.¹¹ The impact of such conflict on the internal authority structures within Eastern and Western European countries, to say nothing of the centrifugal effect on alliance structures, make political considerations worthy of strategists' continual attention.¹²

In addition, the capacity of the Pershing II system and of cruise missiles to carry highly potent conventional warheads to targets in the Soviet Union raises questions with regard to Soviet threat perception, clarity of the technological distinctions between nuclear destruction and conventional

destruction, and willingness by the United States and/or its allies, especially Britain and France, to attack targets in the Soviet Union short of the nuclear threshold.¹³ Further, the growing capacity to accentuate certain weapons' effects like radiation or blast while minimizing others complicates the problem of establishing promptly whether a particularly destructive act is accomplished with a nuclear weapon or with a conventional weapon. The relative ease of distinguishing between nuclear and conventional weapons was one of the principal reasons for causing the break between them to be regarded as a highly influential psychological and policy threshold. The implications in terms of bilateral relations among allies, multilateral alliance decision procedures, and capacity to levy culpability in case of attack all make the utility of the nuclear threshold subject to question.

First Use

The nuclear threshold nevertheless appears to have continuing psychological and political impact. Categorical arguments to the effect that the Soviets do or do not believe in the threshold beg the question of its importance. If such a threshold has clear meaning to potential Soviet adversaries, then it must have meaning in the eyes of thoughtful Soviet decision makers. What levels of threat will precipitate violent, albeit self-destructive, nuclear reaction from a potential adversary? What levels of uncertainty with regard to Soviet behavior in a conventional military action will precipitate the same? What degree of Soviet bellicosity with nuclear weapons could precipitate preemptive action? All are real concerns for Soviet decision leaders. These same concerns must be paramount in the minds of any other nuclear power contemplating military action. Whether such contemplation takes place in the pressure of a crisis in Europe or elsewhere or in the more constrained and rigidified atmosphere envisioned in an alliance decision-making process is immaterial.

Another set of factors becoming increasingly important bears on the durability of a nuclear threshold: the capacity to use the nuclear weapons in conjunction with highly refined guidance systems, very small yields, and modern delivery systems including both cruise and ballistic missiles in such a way as to produce what could be politically described as a surgical result.¹⁴ Colin Gray, among others, has argued persuasively that we must go through the metaphors and scenarios associated with this new capability in order to understand the potential for limiting damage should the nuclear threshold be breached.¹⁵ Others, including the four no-first-use proponents, argue that mere contemplations of such activity is a bow in the direction of self-fulfilling prophecy.¹⁶

Whether, when, and how to deploy modern nuclear systems is the principal bone in the throat of the NATO alliance at the present time. Two consequences of the ongoing debate are particularly important. The first is a probable, if not already realized, erosion of the ability of the United States to dominate the allies on nuclear matters. The Nuclear Planning Group, which for several years served primarily as a schoolhouse of sorts with the United States as teacher and which for years thereafter managed to skirt the most tendentious issues associated with NATO nuclear posture, is likely to be forced by the debate to become more productive, more insightful, and more specific in the treatment of nuclear policy questions.

In a related development, the ability and inclination of statesmen to face up to nuclear issues is increasing because of perceived increases in Warsaw Pact conventional capability, because nuclear weapons targeted at Europe have multiplied, and because those weapons have increasingly diverse capabilities. Moreover, there has been a proliferation of strategic literacy, if not knowledge or wisdom, particularly in Western Europe, but also in the United States, which forces elected officials to be conversant with nuclear issues.¹⁷

Theater versus Strategic Weapons

Stanley Hoffman observed not long ago that when NATO adopted the flexible response strategy in 1967, the United States favored the strategy because it was flexible and Europe accepted it because of the word response.¹⁸ Put another way, the Europeans wanted direct, visible, credible linkage between conventional defense of Europe on the one hand and U.S. strategic capability on the other. The Americans in turn, wanted a situation where they would not be provoked to a large-scale attack from the United States against the Soviet Union when an eventuality arose that could be handled with a lower level of force. The differing perspectives continue in varying degrees of intensity today.

Soviet deployment of the SS-20 and other longer-range Soviet systems capable of devastating all European-NATO capitals and the planned modernization of NATO systems with Pershing II and cruise missiles capable of striking Moscow significantly blur the distinction between a theater weapon and a so-called strategic weapon. Some, like Donald Kerr and Robert Kupperman, argue that this blurring is acknowledgment of a reality that can be used to the advantage of NATO because it would allow insertion of European-based systems directly into integrated operating plans, which in turn will become, because of the uncertainty they introduce and because of the improved reliability, effectiveness, and responsiveness of modern nu-

clear systems, a much more potent deterrent than currently exists. They point out that systems based farther to the rear in Europe are less vulnerable in crisis, thereby providing greater decision time, while simultaneously providing capacity to attack the SS-20. They stress that "the more modern, the more useful, and the more secure set of weapon systems" may lower the firebreak between theater and strategic warfare but will simultaneously allow a decrease in the numbers of systems required in Europe and in their costs, thereby increasing capacity to strengthen conventional war-fighting capabilities.¹⁹

The dilemmas in their proposal relate back to the three paradoxes previously discussed. First, how threatening will new systems appear to the Soviet Union? Will they be so threatening as to tempt Soviets either to blackmail potential recipient countries or, in the worst of all eventualities, threaten direct action should deployment begin? Second, with regard to the uncertainty, although the Soviets might be able to be kept somewhat uncertain (if secrecy in NATO improves substantially), are allies likely to be as tolerant of the uncertainty? Political pressures on leaders and states that accept the new systems will be substantial. Accountability will be at the heart of public attention to politicians' performance. That emphasis on accountability combined with improved strategic literacy among informed and even mass publics could lead to a whole new series of decision processes and institutions in the European environment.²⁰ Third, as others have argued in connection with the existing United States single integrated operating plan (SIOP), will weaving various elements of our defense capabilities into a seamless web become a device that decreases rather than increases flexibility and that increases rather than decreases the potential for escalation?²¹ In short, could actions planned to deter conflict turn out to precipitate it?

Technology and Numbers

A consideration that crosses the conventional-nuclear boundary in present-day plans to improve NATO capabilities involves applications of new technologies as a hedge against superior Warsaw Pact numbers. Precision-guided munitions are a case in point.

Precision-guided munitions are deployed in such a way as to prevent concentrations from becoming lucrative counterforce targets. But dispersed deployment brings with it increased difficulty in command, control, and communication. Procedures for release of weapons, particularly if they are nuclear, become a problem. Large numbers of highly potent weapons under

less than tight control create uncertainty for a potential aggressor but could as well disabuse that opponent of any confidence in controlled escalation and, indeed, could seriously erode confidence in the conventional-nuclear threshold itself.

If, as possible a few years ago, Soviet--Warsaw Pact technological capabilities could be regarded with some disdain, we might have excuse to think that quality of weapons could make up for numbers, but the capabilities have improved substantially. Their precision-guided munitions have performed well under certain circumstances. As one-for-one kill probabilities are approached, it is clear that the side with the larger numbers will prevail. The message here is not that technological advantage should be slighted (indeed it should be exploited.); rather the message is a caution against allowing preoccupation with highly capable technologically advanced systems to the extent that the requirement for well-armed, well-trained, capable, and numerous forces is neglected.

That caution carries with it a special urgency in an age where improved conventional accuracy and firepower combine with the evolution of small, reliable, and accurate nuclear systems. Technical capacity could be seen as an alternative, indeed a cost-effective alternative to well-equipped troops. If that type of thinking should prevail, the blurred distinctions and reduced troop strengths would encourage, especially in crisis, a decision-making environment in which there must be no justification for even a pause at any nuclear threshold.

Conversely, inability to analyze origin of destruction, sure to occur in the fog of war, could combine with a highly reliable but highly rigid system to control weapons release, resulting in increased casualties, lost battles and territory, frustration, anxiety, and perhaps paralysis of friendly forces and ultimately defeat. In short, technology designed to make large numbers of advanced weapons susceptible to orchestration may actually strengthen a nuclear threshold to the point where political objectives in war would be unattainable.

These considerations have stimulated the U.S. Army, in its AirLand Battle 2000 study, and a variety of critics of U.S. Air Force systems to advocate relatively simple systems in great numbers that can operate in self-contained units without the drag produced by long logistical trains or oppressive command, control, and communications. The questions raised by those suggestions have serious political dimensions beyond the cost-combat effectiveness calculus, especially in alliance environments. Not the least of those concern the practicability of thresholds in a relative free-wheeling conflict with highly destructive modern conventional or small nuclear weapons.

Commitments

Perhaps the most serious challenge to thresholds comes from situations where political objectives have been clearly identified, either before or during crisis, but where conventional capabilities are inadequate in the face of challenge to vital interests. There is, the Cuban missile crisis showed, a threshold of frustration in the decision processes of nuclear armed states when choices can appear to be limited to humiliation or escalation. The potential for such a situation is clearly present for the United States in Southwest Asia.

Naval forces with substantial conventional capabilities are seen by some as a possible hedge against such an eventuality. But those forces that steam in harm's way must be backed by some stringent assurances that any attack against U.S. warships places the perpetrator in grave danger of nuclear retaliation. Without such assurances, which could be seen as making the nuclear threshold brittle and lower than advocates of flexible response would favor, the fleet in Southwest Asia becomes more a part of the problem than part of the solution in a crisis.

Airlift, if range, basing, and sustainability factors are dealt with, can provide faster, and some argue much less vulnerable but clearly much more limited, capabilities in regional contingencies. But until recently airlift has been a stepchild in the air force, and lift shortfall is currently a major problem.

Although both airlift and sea-lift capabilities and force protection capabilities can provide a hedge against nuclear use, another critical consideration is the mix between commitments and capabilities. The combination of a rhetoric of determination and a shortage of lift, rather than technological convergence of conventional and nuclear capabilities, could very well be the catalyst for erosion of inhibitions against nuclear use.

Conclusion

My discussion represents an attempt to tease out difficult and perennial questions associated with warfare in the nuclear age. Short of technical advances that blur some previously easily made distinctions among weapons types and provide important new choices to planners and commanders, a similar paper could have been written in 1948 or 1962, when flexible response was announced, or in 1966–1967 when NATO finally agreed to adopt that doctrine.

The two overwhelming changes are the giant leap in Soviet–Warsaw Pact capabilities along the spectrum of violence and the increasing probabil-

ity of proliferation of nuclear weapons. Those changes intensify pressure to seek definitive solutions to persistent problems. But paradoxes do not have definitive solutions. Categorical abjuration of nuclear first use promises no near-term change in Soviet declared policy. Most observers of the Soviets appear pessimistic about the likelihood of adjustment in Warsaw Pact doctrine on the basis of a such a pronouncement. And the ability some might derive from a no-first-use declaration to ignore the paradoxes at the heart of deterrence must be regarded as a loss rather than a gain in the credibility of Western deterrent posture.

“Wars are won in the minds of an opponents’ leadership” is a cliché, but clichés are not necessarily worthless observations. They can be instructive, as that one is. But it does distract from two central ideas in strategic thought. The first, from Bernard Brodie, is that security in the nuclear age rests on the ability to retaliate in kind, thereby, it is hoped, deterring an opponent but, if not, encouraging rapid war termination instead of insensate escalation.²² The second, developed eloquently by Michael Howard, is that success in modern war ultimately rests of the support—moral, material, and personal—that populations supply to their leaders and armies.²³

Concerned citizens, some following Secretary Haig’s advice, are becoming more involved in strategic discourse. Strategic questions are seldom easy and hardly ever answered simply. Strategic thinking today requires awareness of and tolerance for paradox along with a consistent sensitivity to the wisdom of people like Professors Brodie and Howard.

Notes

1. Alexander M. Haig, “Peace and Deterrence” (speech delivered at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., April 6, 1982).

2. William F. Buckley, Jr., “Taking Us at Our Nuclear Word,” *New York News*, April 13, 1982, p. 16.

3. McGeorge Bundy, George F. Kennan, Robert S. McNamara, and Gerard Smith, “Nuclear Weapons and the Atlantic Alliance,” *Foreign Affairs* 60, no. 4 (Spring 1982):753–768.

4. Prolonged high level of perceived threat can also result in paralysis.

5. See, among others: Buckley, “Taking Us at Our Nuclear Word”; Herman Kahn, “First Use Nuclear Flirtation Foolish,” *New York Times*, June 13, 1982; Paul H. Nitze, “A-Arms and NATO,” *New York Times*, April 13, 1982, p. 27; Maxwell D. Taylor, “The Trouble with ‘No First Use,’” *Washington Post*, April 18, 1982, p. B8, Barry Blechman, Henry A. Kissinger, and Sam Nunn in separate articles in *Washington Quarterly*

5, no.3 (Summer 1982); Karl Kaiser, Georg Leber, Alois Mertes, and Franz-Josef Schultze, "Nuclear Weapons and the Preservation of Peace," *Foreign Affairs* 60, no. 5 (Summer 1982):1157–1170, and letters in the same issue.

6. Political and economic differences among the allies are intensifying with substantial recrimination from all sides about who is doing enough; on unequal benefits from procurement programs; on conscription versus volunteer forces, and so on.

7. Sam Nunn, "NATO: Saving the Alliance," *Washington Quarterly* 5, no. 3 (Summer 1982):19–29.

8. Robert W. Komer, "Maritime Strategy vs. Common Defense," *Foreign Affairs* 60, no. 5 (Summer 1982):1124–1144. Also "Pull U.S. Troops Out of Europe?" *U.S. News and World Report*, February 1, 1982, pp. 17–18.

9. In writing and orally in several places, including "Pull U.S. Troops Out?" and at greater length in "Should American Pay for Europe's Security?" *Washington Quarterly* 5, no. 1 (Winter 1982):19–23.

10. See Kaiser, et al., "Nuclear Weapons."

11. Among others, see Richard Burt, *New Weapons Technologies: Debate and Directions*, Adelphi Paper 126 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1976), esp. pp. 15, 22–24, 31–32.

12. Michael Howard, "On Fighting a Nuclear War," *International Security* 6, no. 4 (Spring 1981): 3–48. See also his "The Forgotten Dimensions of Strategy," *Foreign Affairs* 57, no. 5 (Summer 1979):975–986.

13. Nunn, "NATO."

14. Barry Blechman, quoting William Perry, former under secretary of defense for research and engineering, "Is There a Conventional Defense Option?" *Washington Quarterly* 5, no. 3 (Summer 1982):62.

15. "The Future of Land-Based Missile Forces" in Christopher Bertram, ed., *Strategic Deterrence in a Changing Environment*, Adelphi Library Volume 6 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1981).

16. Bundy et al., "Nuclear Weapons," p. 762.

17. In fact, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, minister of foreign affairs in the Federal Republic, has publicly advocated mandatory inclusion of basic concepts of strategy in school and university programs.

18. Stanley Hoffman, "NATO and Nuclear Weapons," *Foreign Affairs* 60, no. 2 (Winter 1981–1982):327–346. Also see his "New Variations on Old Themes," *International Security* 4, no. 1 (Summer 1979):91–92.

19. Donald M. Kerr and Robert H. Kupperman, "A New Nuclear Force Architecture," *Washington Quarterly* 5, no. 1 (Winter 1982): 119–129. Kupperman expands these notions in a crisis management – arms-control context in his "Defusing Nuclear Proliferation," *Newsday*, August 19, 1982.

20. Edward Luttwak, who regards the no-first-use proposal as “colossally insane,” suggests, “If we have a supreme court to look after the Constitution, we ought in my view have a Supreme National Council to look after nuclear weapons.” *Newsweek*, April 26, 1982, p. 29.

21. See, for example, Desmond Ball, “Counterforce Targeting: How New? How Viable?” in John F. Reichart and Stephen R. Sturm, eds., *American Defense Policy*, 5th ed. (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1982), pp. 227–234. For broader treatment, see Ball’s *Can Nuclear War Be Controlled?* Adelphi Paper 169 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1981).

22. Bernard Brodie, ed., *The Absolute Weapon* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1946), quoted in Howard “On Fighting a Nuclear War.”

23. Howard, “Forgotten Dimensions.”



15

Thresholds and Theologies: The Need for Critical Reassessment

Catherine M. Kelleher

The beginning of the 1980s has seen a long-postponed debate on the requirements of national security in an era of nuclear parity finally come to the forefront of public concern. The increased emphasis placed on the military by the Reagan administration has provided the basis for this debate, the scope of which seems virtually unconstrained. Included in this discussion are the need for a land-based missile force, however vulnerable; the choice for a peripheral naval strategy as opposed to forward basing and coalition warfare; and the nature of economic and political constraints in an era of rapidly escalating military costs and increasing social demands.

What is surprising is the public attention devoted to the interrelationship between conventional and nuclear forces and how the significant changes that have occurred in both the political and strategical environment have affected this relationship. The context in which the nuclear threshold figures most prominently is the question of European defense. The political importance of the European antinuclear movement and the operational concerns of civilian strategists and military commanders alike have forced new attention and analysis on the traditional problem of defending Europe from across the Atlantic. But outside of the U.S. antinuclear movement, the debate has recently become of major importance in the United States, and it has only now begun to be conducted in public in other than the most general and traditional terms.

Few are willing to confront the threshold question openly in the United States because of the implication of any change in the status quo for both current strategy and force structure. Among professionals, there is little willingness to think through what raising the nuclear threshold will entail in terms of greater conventional capabilities, exploiting new technologies and traditional tactics simultaneously, new forms of military organization, training, and leadership that will be required. The alternative—lowering the threshold at least selectively and substituting the deterrent effect of early first use of nuclear weapons for greater war-fighting capabilities, both conventional and nuclear—has presented many hard choices and costly political and military changes.¹ The outcome has been to continue the beliefs and partial solutions of the past in the hope that the long-lamented strategy-force mismatch will never be tested and that rhetoric will be an

adequate short-term substitute for both action and analysis. Any development that threatens this quiescence—the enhanced radiation warhead (ERW) controversy, tactical use for INF, the question of conventional deterrence—is to be suppressed. These concerns are left to the experts and the operational commanders.

The goal of this chapter is to touch on three critical assumptions about nuclear thresholds that have been central to the debate and often unexamined aspects of the public discussion of current defense planning. The approach will be diagnostic, not prescriptive; future change will require far more extended discussion and assessment than can be attempted here. But the basic conclusion remains the same: the issue of the nuclear threshold can be ignored only with potential short-term effects for U.S. national strategy and the political basis of broad Western security.

Transitivity of Thresholds

The most basic of the undebated assumptions about the undebated nuclear threshold is the public belief that the threshold is nontransitive. Once it has been crossed and the use of nuclear weapons has begun, the states involved will have entered a different phase of conflict. The most likely, if not indeed assured, outcome will be rapid escalation to all-out strategic nuclear war. And perhaps the more critical effect will be to render all earlier notions of deterrence and war-fighting inoperative; conventional capabilities, the management of resources and reserves, even the application of deterrence principles to the use of nuclear forces, will all be largely irrelevant.

This linear escalation model has not gone unnoticed.² Almost from the start of the nuclear era, military and political figures have suggested the need for broader planning and preparation—as for example, in the U.S. Army's advocacy of “broken-back” war in the early 1950s (a “broken-back” war is a war in which both countries' nuclear arsenals have been exhausted, with no clear outcome. The U.S. Army suggested that the battle would go on at the conventional level until resolution of the conflict) or the scenarios of the counterforce advocates of the 1960s. Indeed, the reported core of the Carter–Reagan strategic reforms encapsulated in presidential directive 59(PD-59) and in national security directive (NSDD) 32 is the assertion that nuclear war at any level, even protracted strategic conflict, will require greater sustainability and greater flexibility in the use of all military capabilities.³ This is true in terms of forces the United States now possesses or those usually included in its planning or programming of military capabilities.

It is far simpler and less burdensome to assume that nuclear and conventional capabilities are both separate and sequential in their most probable

application. At the popular level, for example, it has always been easier to promote NATO doctrine, especially the deliberately ambiguous phrasing of the basic military committee statement 14/3 (which stated NATO's support for modernization of U.S. theater nuclear forces stationed in Europe) by emphasizing the commitment to both conventional defense and rapid nuclear escalation. The present debate in Europe underscores both the virtue and the drawbacks of this ambiguity. Those on both the Right and the Left who see the solution in greater conventional preparedness can base their argument on what was really intended in the doctrine of flexible response and MC 14/3. Other critics more concerned about the coupling of the U.S. nuclear deterrent find greater conventional emphasis as threatening and stress the provisions of 14/3 that highlight maintenance of countering capabilities, nuclear and conventional, at every step of the escalation ladder.

The ambiguity serves a number of functions of enormous political utility, at least in the short run. It allows at least the formal convergence of U.S. and allied descriptions of strategy and a consensus within the NATO Nuclear Planning Group. It is probably not possible, given the enormous political and psychological constraints on allied governments, to go beyond the level of casual consensus except in a wartime situation. Most U.S. observers and most allied governments have consistently refused to engage in public consideration of preferred defense strategies should deterrence, nuclear or conventional, fail.

The central question is whether the functional advantages retain the same validity in a time of aroused public concern and considerably constrained resources about the nature of Western dependence on nuclear capabilities. The case of the ongoing debate in the Netherlands presents the dilemmas most dramatically. Recent research suggests that a significant proportion of the Dutch decision-making elite believes that the Netherlands should assume no new functions relating to nuclear defense and should divest itself of existing nuclear missions as soon as is consistent with NATO planning and renegotiation of alliance burden-sharing formulas.⁴ This stance is not solely based on the existence of a noisy antinuclear movement; it flows rather from a set of coherent, consistent propositions about the appropriate scope of Dutch defense efforts and the appropriate role the Netherlands should assume for its own security, as well as that of others. The Dutch decision-making elite has carefully avoided linking nuclear divestiture to the advocacy of greater conventional efforts or greater reliance on conventional deterrence. The explicit goal is to set an example ("To begin global nuclear disarmament first in the Netherlands"), and the obvious political parallel is to the nonnuclear policies of the Scandinavian members of NATO, Norway and Denmark, which have rejected any peacetime nuclear deployment on their territory. The tone is pragmatic; the expecta-

tion is that very little change will be made either in the level or the structure of the Dutch armed forces.

The issues of significance for both the political and military stance of NATO, however, remain unaddressed. To what extent is Dutch participation in NATO's nuclear missions a necessary exercise in risk sharing, of commitment at least to the requirements of nuclear deterrence, if not of war fighting? Is it possible to draw political or military distinctions between peacetime posture and wartime capability? Moreover, what is the impact of continued reliance on the ultimate guarantee of U.S. nuclear deterrence while refusing visible involvement in the extended deterrence system that has been the professed basis for NATO security for almost three decades?

A final question concerns the limits to which this form of national declaration can be tolerated without significant damage to the basic Atlantic community of interest. The nuclear assignments of the Dutch are not numerous or particularly critical to the performance of functions on the central front or sea control in the North Sea. But which forces will assume these roles? Will it be in addition to or in trade for other NATO responsibilities? And what will be the costs—economically if a strapped Britain assumes the maritime air function or politically if a vulnerable Federal Republic of Germany or a Belgium plagued by cabinet immobilism takes over the antiair or battlefield nuclear artillery tasks? What are the demands of burden-sharing equity in terms of the Dutch role: more conventional capabilities in the same mission areas, substitution in other roles, or greater reserve commitments, to name just three options? Finally, how will the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) and Dutch leaders ensure that should deterrence fail, Holland will be a certain, credible participant in NATO's nuclear strategy? At what point in the warning scale will this participation begin?

Quite apart from these political imponderables are the significant questions about linear escalation regarding the outcome of conflict scenarios. Probably the most troublesome issues arise if the Soviets do indeed initiate an attack that exploits both conventional and nuclear capabilities. The issues will then be the adequacy of command and control to ensure discriminating use of force and the sufficiency of Western forces to fulfill the simultaneous target assignments and functional missions. In the opinion of many observers, military and nonmilitary, the Western allies would find this a difficult and exhausting process. In a relatively short period, the West would find itself before the unacceptable choice between initiation of strategic nuclear exchanges and negotiation on the basis of existing conflict terms.

Hardly more favorable would seem the outcome of sequential use of conventional and nuclear force. As both the Rogers' argument and the Bundy-McNamara critique rightly emphasize, reliance on Western first use of nuclear weapons has always presupposed the existence of a highly reliable

and sophisticated system of command and control and of political communication.⁵ In a conflict situation, the West must assess accurately the terms of ongoing conventional conflict (on the same scale and at perhaps twice the speed of World War II engagements in some scenarios) as well as charting the rate and displacement of Soviet and Eastern reinforcements at the second and third echelon. To the degree possible, the allies are then pledged to consult and to authorize, or perhaps more correctly validate, first nuclear use. The scope of the present system is not considered adequate in terms of reliability, sustainability, or flexibility under wartime conditions. To build a system of greater reliability would require more than the investment currently planned. Agreed guidelines dictated by the political realities in Europe and the United States constrain further delegation of missions in peacetime.⁶ Other outstanding issues concern the coordination of independent British and French nuclear capabilities, the probable loss of a significant number of battlefield systems given even a limited delay in release authority, and the questions of integrating warhead stocks with systems assigned to dual-capable missions.

Thresholds and Geography

The dilemmas on NATO's central front are clearly the most dramatic and well defined in analytic literature. Less often recognized are those that arise in other areas of U.S. military engagements, both within and outside the NATO sphere.

Defense of the NATO flanks, northern and southern, poses the question of separable-simultaneous use of conventional and nuclear forces from a somewhat different perspective. Since the late 1950s, Norwegian and Danish politics have essentially proclaimed that a visible nuclear presence is not needed for the operation of the U.S. deterrent guarantee on the northern flank. No nuclear weapons, indeed no foreign offensive forces, are to be stationed on their territory during peacetime. And although in practice these two states have agreed to informal measures and siting of U.S. facilities for the purpose of peacetime coordination and planning, there is little public support for any participation in preparing to fight a nuclear war. Indeed as evidenced by the recent Danish decision to withdraw from infrastructure cost-sharing agreements in support of the INF dual-track decision of December 1979, any government that supports direct involvement courts electoral defeat.

Most officials and observers agree that all this would change once war began; as necessary, nuclear weapons would be used in the defense of the northern flank as in every other part of NATO territory. The nuclear-

capable systems to be used presumably are those of the United States and Britain. The functional spectrum will include ground defense, tactical air engagement, and particularly naval defense in the North Sea and the Baltic, as well as in the Norwegian Sea. Given geographic limits and the size and significance of Soviet deployments on the Kola peninsula and in the northern military districts, prospects for a direct conflict's remaining purely conventional for any duration seem slim.

A more problematic threshold is the linkage of a northern flank conflict with that prosecuted on the central front. It is possible that nuclear use might be limited to only one theater, either through Soviet nonadherence to their professed doctrine, Western self-limitation, or negotiation within the conflict itself?

Unquestionably the concept of subregional limitation of nuclear use is as politically unacceptable as the idea of a nuclear exchange limited to Western Europe is to European, if not all NATO, governments. Moreover, there are few manifest, recognizable geographic boundaries that might serve the interests of both sides, even asymmetrically to discriminate. But given the size of Western capabilities in the early phase of a conflict and the imperative of escalation control, it may well be that political leaders will wish to consider this form of intrawar deterrence for at least an interim period. It would be of particular significance for a conflict that might be limited to the North Cape and the immediately adjacent sea areas—separable enough to allow both damage limitation and capabilities for political signaling yet capable of controlled expansion and escalation. Needed technologies, such as ERW and mini-nukes, are already at hand; in the next decade, the promise is of even greater opportunities for limited, discriminate use in areas low in both population and number of critical targets.

Scenarios for a limitation of nuclear use to the southern flank are unquestionably more implausible given the array of forces in the Mediterranean, especially both U.S. and Soviet naval task forces and American forward-based systems. The scenario most often discussed in the past foresaw the use of nuclear area denial munitions to deny access in northern mountain areas, a function that might also be performed now by conventional munitions. Somewhat more likely in the coming decade might be the option of conventional warfare concurrent with limited nuclear use on the central or northern flank front or in association with a flare-up in the Middle East or Persian Gulf theater.

However improbable or imprudent the preservation of these options may appear, Western capabilities are probably not now fully adequate to the tasks. What is needed is the same set of capabilities already discussed: capabilities that can be distinguished as either conventional or nuclear in configuration, a reliable, survivable intelligence and warning net able to provide adequate surveillance of second- and third-echelon forces, and a

secure, credible command and control system. Most important of all is a political context, both within the United States and across the major alliance members, that will support discriminate escalation control and accept both the risks and the damages, heavy and unequal, entailed. Assumed throughout this strategy are forces adequate to perform both missions or at least to permit leaders and commanders choices other than use or lose.

A more significant type of geographic threshold underlies consideration of U.S. global strategy in an era of nuclear parity. Inherent in all postwar strategic planning has been the probability of global engagement in more than one theater. The usual assumption has been of one major war, perhaps on more than one front, but eventually a nuclear confrontation with the Soviet Union. More or less simultaneous would be a second war or front, waged against a Soviet proxy, at times a Chinese ally or an ambitious regional contender.

Although planning has not always been explicit, the expectation has often been of a conventional conflict in which, since at least the Kennedy administration, the assumption has been that nuclear weapons would not be used short of direct Soviet intervention. Extended deterrence defined most broadly would be assured by visible U.S. commitments and aid, the presence of U.S. advisers, or the eventual deployment of U.S. forces in numbers perhaps no greater than in Korea or Vietnam. Moreover, drawing on the experiences of Korea as well as World War II, most U.S. planners have assumed that the formal threat definition of, say, one and one-half or "one plus" wars constituted merely a force planning requirement. The United States in all likelihood would be able to deal with such threats on a sequential basis (as the European-Pacific trade-offs of World War II) or in a separated and separable mode.

Under the Reagan administration, the newly articulated concept of horizontal escalation has brought many of these earlier assumptions into question.⁷ Part of the difficulty arises from the confusion surrounding the concept itself, which has been only partially explained and most often denied as a departure from the past. Critics indeed have vacillated from seeing it as the first step toward a return to Mahan's peripheral strategy based on a new fleet, to dismissing it as merely a reformulation of the traditional artilleryman's "Hit 'em where it hurts." Few have seen the military applications as one (and perhaps the least significant) facet of a broader Reagan strategy of confronting the Soviet Union—in the area of trade and economics, ideological and philosophical principles, communication, and technological prowess.

Whatever its merit as a general organizing principle in the formulation of national strategy, the concept focuses analytic attention squarely on the assumed interrelationship of U.S. theater engagements. At this point in its strategic evolution, are there circumstances in which the United States

would be willing to retaliate in John Dulles's phrase, "at times and places of our own choosing"? Much of the critical examination of the concept has been in the context of the Carter-Reagan commitment to the security of the Persian Gulf. Is it probable that, whether by choice or circumstance, the United States might find itself in a nuclear or combined conventional-nuclear conflict within the NATO area at the same time it is prosecuting conventional war against a Soviet proxy in the Persian Gulf? If the primary threat were actual or potential Soviet intervention, would not the conflict rapidly escalate to global nuclear engagement? Are there any conceivable conditions under which either theater might remain exclusively or primarily conventional in nature?

Focusing on U.S. force planning guidelines highlights perhaps the more critical question: does the United States have or plan to have sufficient capability to meet the conventional force requirements in two or possibly even three major theaters of operation? The answer is no; nor will it have such capability in the foreseeable future, even under the most optimistic projections of five-year defense spending totals. Public reports indicate the need for swift, decisive action to effect immediate containment in the Gulf or, alternatively, to emphasize once again the Western commitment to controlled escalation in Europe. The need for coordination, even with the new unified command overseeing planning and operation for the Gulf, and the task of allocating resources, whatever the feats of peacetime legerdemain, will parallel those of grand strategy in World War II. Technology and a fully manned All Volunteer Force (AVF) unquestionably make some of the dilemmas less intense. So too would a substantial commitment of force by the other NATO states, particularly Britain and France, under circumstances acceptable to them and without significant drawdowns or redistribution of security burdens within Western Europe. But the assumption of continuously strained U.S. military capabilities will remain.

The arguments on preserving an escalation option in the Persian Gulf have ranged a wide field. Some analysts have suggested that the low population density and easy acquisition of isolated military targets augur well for selected nuclear use, particularly in terms of time-critical resistance to a major Soviet ground intervention through northern Iran. Others have seen this as an option of greater risk than benefit in terms of both the political context and the risks of Soviet escalation against Western Europe or direct attack on the United States. Still others have seen the possibility of sufficient conventional resistance involving precision-guided munitions and specially trained light, highly mobile elite units to stem a Soviet advance and bring about negotiation on favorable terms. Almost all, however, have assumed that it should or must be possible to separate action in the Persian Gulf from any necessary direct relationship to either engagement or nuclear use in other theaters of Soviet-U.S. confrontation. The question of tit-for-tat

exchange over Cuba or Berlin should not have to arise; nor is a theater-to-theater escalation linkage the necessary or even preferred strategy to ensure deterrence or successful war fighting.

Ultimately the choice lies with the political leadership, which, all signs suggest, will wish in its current mode to have the fullest possible range of choice. The requirements thus remain secure C³I, reliable and timely warning and intelligence, and the capabilities with which to carry out the option chosen. If it is possible to imagine a walled-off Persian Gulf theater, obviously there must be capabilities recognizably (and verifiably) dedicated to either a conventional or nuclear option, not to both. The tendency toward what might be called the creative bookkeeping of dual capability in Europe would seem to pose inordinate risk in most conceivable Gulf scenarios. The most probable result of such paper assignments will provide paper in peacetime and too little capability to provide needed choice in the event of conflict. Here as perhaps nowhere else, technological change may help blur the effects of crossing the conventional-nuclear threshold. But it will have far more limited effects on the conditions for political choice, before or during a conflict.

Thresholds and the Duration of Conflict

A third often-unexamined assumption about the crossing of the nuclear threshold concerns the probable duration of foreseeable conflicts, in Europe and elsewhere. Broadly described the dominant prediction has been for conflicts of relatively short duration, measured in days and weeks rather than years or even months. With the exception of the Kennedy-McNamara period, there has been little more than formal acknowledgment of the possibility of a prolonged conventional or tactical nuclear engagement in either planning or operational efforts. A repetition of warfare on the time scale of World War II with major U.S. and Soviet involvement has been rejected out of hand. And as the reaction to both Korea and Vietnam well demonstrates, there has been a tendency among politicians and professionals alike to disparage the ability of democracies (and particularly the United States) to wage protracted war.

Much of the present debate about thresholds arises from the concerns of the Reagan administration about the possibility of protracted nuclear conflict. As earlier in the Carter administration's PD-59, a number of administration officials question the necessity of spasm, inevitable escalation leading to immediate annihilation. The administration's principal focus has been on the major increase in Soviet military power over the 1970s and the 1980s in the redundant capabilities, hardened C³I, and defensive efforts, both military and civilian, that might allow the Soviet Union to ride out even a

general nuclear war. Although somewhat less dramatically phrased in 1983 than in 1982, the clear Reagan call has been to move in a parallel direction by expanding U.S. abilities to perform and prevail in a conflict environment. There have also been echoes of the counterforce advocates of the 1960s; given present Soviet nuclear strength, the United States must have the capability to carry deterrence into conflict itself through discriminate, surgical targeting of its own choosing and the signaling of clear incentives for the avoidance of total war.

The debate over the improbability of such extended conflict and the magnitude of force requirements such a strategic option would impose still rages. But one conclusion is evident in all discussions: present planning and force structuring leaves most of U.S. conventional and tactical nuclear capability in an uneasy middle ground. U.S. and allied forces have neither the equipment nor the supplies to fight a long conventional conflict as originally envisaged under the strategy of flexible response. The goal of ninety days' logistical support is very far from present thinking and even further from the reality of present defense budgets. And as the experience of recent Arab-Israeli conflicts suggests, the rapidity and consumption rates of modern conventional conflicts involving both maneuver and attrition strategies impose vastly higher requirements than those originally foreseen at Lisbon in 1952 or in the initial implementation of MC 14/3.

Exhaustion of tactical nuclear stocks in a conflict lasting longer than a few days also seems plausible. This stems in part from the present distribution of available warhead stocks as in the proportion of NATO warheads deployed toward the forward edge of the battlefield and assigned to battlefield mission and therefore in the "use or lose" category. There are also the familiar problems of resupply and the complexities of constant support during conflict, particularly if one were to embark on any of the threshold-blurring plans suggested during the 1970s. Additional points of recent worry are the questions of shelf-life of warhead stocks, the trade-off between the requirements of storage security in peace and the need for dispersal and assured access in war, and the possible conflict between mission requirements close to the forward edge of the battle area and those involved in any significant second-echelon strikes.

Many of the questions raised previously are of obvious significance here. What is assumed about the separability of conventional and nuclear conflict? In Europe as opposed to the Persian Gulf contingency or elsewhere? What number of dual-capable systems is assumed, and with it the accessibility of both conventional and nuclear explosives on demand? What priority will be given to the logistical requirements of the European theater as opposed to the Pacific or the unified command in Europe?

Perhaps of greatest significance here are the questions of the political

requirements imposed by the U.S. reliance on coalition warfare, especially in NATO but also in the Pacific. The dilemmas are obvious, well recognized, and seemingly intractable in political discourse. Assumption of a long conventional war is anathema to Europeans, especially those with memories of World War II or with apprehensions about the new horrors made possible by successive conventional modernizations by both East and West. Reliance on early engagement in tactical nuclear warfare is even less acceptable but carries with it at least the possibility of continuing deterrence and the explicit linkage of the United States to the European status quo.

For the United States, on the other hand, assumption of an extremely short conventional phase to a European conflict both limits options for war termination and imposes requirements for forces in being. The latter not only undercuts the possibility of extensive reinforcement and the rationale for much of existing force structures, it also is vulnerable to increasing domestic pressures for defense cuts and gradual withdrawal from overseas basing. But planning for a nuclear conflict limited to Europe for an extended period of time, quite apart from any attempt to implement such plans, raises questions about the basis of the western coalition and the continuation of political cooperation at any level. It is this political dilemma that has always made insistence that deterrence cannot fail or, if it does, escalation to all-out war is inevitable, the least worst political option for the Western leadership.

Notes

1. The issues in the public arena have been focused most sharply in the two contrasting articles appearing in *Foreign Affairs* on the specific issue of no nuclear first use: the first by McGeorge Bundy, Robert McNamara, George Kennan, and Gerard Smith, "Nuclear Weapons and the Alliance," *Foreign Affairs* 60(Spring 1982):756–766, and that by the German quartet Karl Kaiser, George Lever, Alois Mertes, and Franz-Josef Schulze, "Nuclear Weapons and the Preservation of Peace," *Foreign Affairs* 60(Summer 1982):1168.

2. Clearly the classic reference is to Bernard Brodie's critique of linear thinking, *Escalation and the Nuclear Option* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1966).

3. A contemporary account that reportedly provides the best general outline of these still-classified decisions is Thomas Powers, "Choosing a Strategy for World War III," *Atlantic Monthly* (November 1982):82–110.

4. For a description of the relative contribution now being made by the Dutch, and in particular their consistent equipment modernization for all forces during the late 1970s, see Caspar Weinberger's two reports to the

Congress on alliance burden sharing (*Secretary of Defense Caspar W. Weinberger, Annual Report to Congress—FY1982 and FY1983*), dated March 1981 and March 1982.

5. A useful discussion of the various statements by Rogers and of an alternative conventional strategy for NATO focused on second-echelon Soviet and Warsaw Pact forces is Benjamin Schemmer, "NATO's New Strategy: Defend Forward, But Strike Deep," *Armed Forces Journal International* (November 1982):50–68.

6. For perhaps the most comprehensive discussion of NATO guidelines and the degree of preattack agreement reached during the last decade, see *Theater Nuclear Weapons and the NATO Strategy of Flexible Response*, by Michael Legge, (Washington, D.C.: Rad Corporation, 1983).

7. It is of note that in Secretary of Defense Weinberger's *Annual Report to the Congress Fiscal Year 1984* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1983) that there is a far less emphasis than in his first report (for fiscal year 1983) on the notions of horizontal escalation (never denoted in those terms) and of protracted nuclear conflict at any level.



TREE of LIBERTY SOCIETY

16

On Thresholds in Soviet Military Thought

Benjamin S. Lambeth

Since the early 1960s, U.S. strategic theory has dwelled heavily on the question of conflict thresholds and their significance in determining the advisability of various U.S. options in crises. This approach has been part of a broader tendency to regard military power as a bargaining tool for selectively influencing adversary behavior in circumstances where the destructiveness of nuclear weaponry has ruled out more undisciplined modes of force employment. Its object has been to identify distinct levels in the scope and intensity of violence whose manipulation might influence an adversary's crisis decision making and thus capitalize on reluctance to assume escalatory risks. The quintessential example of this fixation was Herman Kahn's classic escalation ladder, which depicted forty-four discrete rungs of interstate violence ranging from prewar crisis maneuvering to full-blown, insensate nuclear war. Although largely untested in practice, the intellectual premises that inspired this and similar notions have exerted a major influence on U.S. strategic concepts, not only for European and other regional contingencies but also for direct conflict with the Soviet Union.

This chapter reflects on how the Soviets have come to think about thresholds in their own strategic planning. Such an inquiry is important for two reasons. First, any U.S. strategy aimed at influencing Soviet behavior through a combination of measured action and threats of graver moment must be based on at least some appreciation of Soviet sensitivity levels and the kinds of Western military moves the Soviet leadership would be inclined to regard as intolerable. Second, even if we stipulate the Soviet leaders' willingness in principle to indulge in slow-motion escalation games (itself a questionable proposition), it is important to know whether they will recognize U.S. rules of engagement and interpret U.S. intentions correctly. Without confidence that the Soviet Union was operating on a common wavelength, the United States could run substantial risk of playing to a threshold that was entirely a construct of its own imagination. A case in point might involve launching of a single intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) into an unpopulated part of the Soviet Union during an intense crisis in an effort to demonstrate U.S. resolve and warn the Soviets to desist from further military action. If the other side failed to perceive the intended purpose of such a demonstration or was unable to distinguish it from less discriminate measures, any attempt to raise the stakes of conflict by intimi-

dating the adversary through seemingly controlled escalation management could backfire and produce catastrophic results.

An inquiry of this sort must be heavily qualified at the outset. One reason is that the secrecy surrounding all matters of an operational nature in the Soviet Union makes it difficult to discern the real pattern of authoritative thinking that lies behind the facade of Soviet declaratory rhetoric. If Soviet doctrine as it relates to thresholds is taken to include explicit force employment plans, attack schedules, escalatory options, and related considerations of a specific military nature, we can say little about its content because those individuals who would ultimately determine the issue of war and peace do not discuss such matters outside the private councils of Soviet strategic planning. What little we have to go on must be drawn from the published body of Soviet commentary on military strategy, by and large written by military academics rather than by military professionals. Furthermore, it serves many purposes besides describing and explicating Soviet operational concepts: educating the Soviet officer corps, justifying Soviet military programs in the internal bureaucratic and budgetary arena, and manipulating foreign perceptions of Soviet military prowess, among others. Although it would clearly be wrong to describe this material as international disinformation, it offers at best only a rough portrait of Soviet thought about the probable character of a future nuclear war. True, it illuminates some important Soviet predispositions about defense borne of years of history, tradition, and practice. As such, it has a place in helping to separate U.S. strategies that might work from those that would most likely prove futile. Beyond that, however, Soviet military writings contain very little of a hard predictive nature regarding how the Soviet high command might respond to various U.S. and NATO military initiatives.

Second, even where Soviet writings do offer a measure of specificity, they do not address the thresholds issue within the same frame of reference to which most Western defense specialists are accustomed. The idiom of Soviet military thought employs language and logic quite dissimilar from that of the West. Accordingly, we are left with little choice but to draw informed inferences about how the Soviets think about thresholds. Furthermore, while Soviet doctrine does stipulate an accepted image of nuclear war (featuring such familiar themes as surprise, momentum, preemption, combined-arms employment, the feasibility of victory, and so on), it provides nothing in the way of a reliable forecast of future Soviet military conduct. At bottom, these Soviet principles of war are little more than general prescriptions for an ideal world. Although they tell a great deal about peacetime Soviet operational proclivities, they are scarcely binding on Soviet political leaders and combat commanders. Neither would feel compelled in a crisis to carry out doctrinal edicts that ran against common sense, and both have abundant capacity to improvise as circumstances warrant.

Nevertheless, as well as we can gather from the indicators available, Soviet thought on the question of thresholds, like Soviet military theory in general, derives from a distinctive mind-set whose terms of reference are quite different from those of the West.

Soviet Views on Gradations of Conflict

One periodically senses a strain of thought in U.S. strategic discourse that implies that conventional war can be countenanced with relative equanimity and that only when the nuclear threshold is breached does the situation acquire the full gravity traditionally assigned to military showdowns. Whether this tendency stems from U.S. lack of experience at combat on its own soil since the Civil War, its short memory of World War II, or its recollection of Korea and Vietnam as political-military games that were not played for ultimate stakes, it pervades much of the U.S. literature on strategic matters, particularly those writings that portray nuclear weapons as the critical factor affecting the livelihood of the international community. It is a strain of thought that evokes profound unease among West German allies, whose principal nightmare is the specter of a superpower war waged solely in the NATO center region, with each side's homeland remaining a sanctuary from combat operations.

For the Soviets, by contrast, the key threshold is not nuclear employment but war itself, irrespective of its geographic setting, level of intensity, or type of weapons used. For good historical reasons, Soviet leaders approach war with deadly seriousness and reject any idea that it can be played at with less than full determination. Their attitude on this score is akin to the proposition that one does not hit a king in the face unless one is prepared to kill him. Seen from this vantage point, Western intimations that limited wars can be carefully stage managed "on the cheap" are reflective more of academic musings than of sober military deliberation. Since the Soviets are risk averse by disposition and constantly fear the prospect of losing control of events, any confrontation in which the forces of the opposing superpowers are directly engaged must be viewed with the utmost concern and managed with appropriate dispatch.

In the ongoing defense debate, one frequently hears allusions to the notion that the Soviet leadership thinks it can fight and win a nuclear war. Although well founded in spirit, such assertions are considerable overstatements of reality. The Soviet refrain that victory in war, even in nuclear war, is feasible is merely an operational imperative, not a prediction or a reflection of underlying Soviet confidence. Whatever their doctrinal exhortations may suggest, Soviet leaders are no more assured that victory would be achievable in practice than are their U.S. counterparts or anybody else. For

them, war of any sort is to be avoided with every effort unless circumstances rule out less uncompromising alternatives. It follows that once the war is on, however it may have been precipitated or whatever its underlying issues, the Soviets must prosecute it with every means necessary to produce a favorable outcome in the shortest possible time.

Given this predisposition, Soviet leaders are not likely to be impressed by such refined threats as nuclear demonstrations, limited sanctuary attacks, counterforce-only strikes, or any other such recondite niceties that figure so prominently in U.S. strategic theory. Their main concern attaches to the simpler notion of what Thomas Schelling has termed "just plain war." Ideally their preference is to pursue victory without having to resort to combat in the first place. Both their ideological conservatism and their historical tendency toward patience will incline them strongly to withhold the critical initial move in any circumstance where forceful preemption might be safely left to another day. But should they ever find themselves in a situation comparable to August 1914, in which they felt that war was definitely coming and were persuaded that continued inaction would carry greater long-term risks than some sort of bold initiative, they would feel powerful compulsions to nip unraveling events in the bud with whatever measures they felt appropriate (including massive employment of nuclear weapons, if necessary) without much agonizing over adversary sensitivity levels or how Soviet actions might relate to some hypothetical escalation ladder. In sum, the threshold of principal significance to the Soviets does not lie within the war process; rather it focuses on the fundamental question of whether to go to war in the first place. Once that decision is made, all preexisting rules of coercive diplomacy will most likely become displaced in Soviet planning by the operational injunction to make the best of a highly undesirable set of circumstances through timely application of appropriate military measures.

This does not mean that the Soviets would feel inexorably committed to unrestrained global nuclear war in such a situation. On the contrary, they expressly recognize that war can remain localized to the contested theater should adversary forbearance permit it. Both their doctrinal literature and their normal peacetime status of forces indicate an underlying Soviet belief that any war would most likely begin as a local confrontation, whether in Europe or in some other contested area such as the Persian Gulf. In contrast to some 50 percent of the U.S. Navy's nuclear submarine (SSBN) fleet, only a handful of Soviet missile submarines are deployed on operational patrol at any given moment. Similarly, the Soviet long-range bomber force does not possess a quick-reaction launch capability anything like that routinely maintained by the U.S. Strategic Air Command. While these illustrations are clearly a revealing testament to the depth of Soviet concern over nuclear command and control, they also attest to the Soviet leadership's abiding

disbelief that any global war would be triggered without ample warning to bring Soviet forces up to a fully generated alert posture. So beyond the fundamental war versus no war threshold, Soviet officials also recognize a distinction between local and general wars.

Furthermore, short of an unrestricted global nuclear exchange, a local or theater war could expand in a variety of ways. Either superpower could feel driven to put pressure on the other in a noncontiguous area by some horizontal escalation gesture aimed at compensating for faltering performance in a primary confrontation elsewhere. Whether the Soviets would be inclined to view such horizontal escalation as a crossing of some distinctively salient threshold or merely as a further compounding of the existing operational situation is not clear. There are indications, however, that the Soviets do accept the possibility of superpower wars remaining limited to local and theater (even multitheater) arenas, including war at sea, short of uncontrolled nuclear cataclysm. They also recognize the possibility of a two-front war involving both NATO and China. Indeed they have come to feel increasing concern over this possibility in recent years as the Chinese have deepened their adversary relationship with the Soviet Union and moved closer toward shared geostrategic interests with the United States and its allies. This concern has been underscored by the formation of an independent Soviet Far East theater of military operations aimed at providing a standing capability for dealing with a possible Chinese contingency without the need for drawing down Soviet forces committed against NATO. None of this provides much ground for comfort for U.S. and NATO planners, however, since the Soviets show little confidence that such theater wars could remain limited for long, particularly if nuclear weapons were to be used. In such circumstances, they remain inclined to believe that the adversary would eventually be driven by desperation to raise the ante with large-scale theater or intercontinental nuclear strikes, in which case massive Soviet preemption would be the only appropriate countermeasure.

Finally, the Soviets probably recognize a distinction between wars fought for limited gains and those conducted for more all-inclusive goals. The evidence here is slender, but one can imagine conflict scenarios in which the Soviets could be quite satisfied with achieving relatively modest geopolitical objectives. Such a situation, of course, would be a function of how the war was initiated. The Soviets routinely assert that any full-fledged global war involving the superpowers would constitute a decisive clash between the opposing social systems. In any such war, Soviet combat efforts presumably would be directed toward uncompromising goals: continued survival of the Soviet state, complete Soviet dominance of the Eurasian periphery, and elimination of the United States as a significant player in international affairs. Yet the Soviets could also find themselves committed to a conventional war in Europe that grew out of some remote-area conflict, in which

the main stakes were Soviet alliance cohesion rather than Soviet survival. In such an event, however improbable, Soviet leaders might be content to achieve a prompt and decisive *fait accompli*, such as capturing a major part of West Germany. Although this is purely speculative, it is not inconceivable that the Soviet military even has selective contingency plans (a France withhold option, for example, or a Germany-only invasion plan) expressly tailored for such situations. In the light of the Soviet doctrinal emphasis on maintaining the initiative and constantly striving for the quick kill with whatever means necessary to attain established war objectives, one would not expect the Soviets to observe contrived restraints on the type of weapons or intensity of fire employed to pursue these limited goals. But the possibility of Soviet combat operations aimed at selective terms of settlement is more than simply conceptual and should be kept in mind in thinking about alternative modes of Soviet force application.

Contrasts in U.S. and Soviet Perspectives

Soviet defense planners do not preoccupy themselves with (or in many cases even recognize) the sort of refined distinctions among levels and varieties of armed conflict that so heavily pervade Western strategic discussion. They regard such notions as escalation ladders and comparable artifacts of Western discourse with a combination of bemusement and contempt. At bottom their inclination is to view these formulations as products of misplaced scholasticism on the part of naive civilian defense intellectuals who neither understand war nor treat important defense issues with appropriate seriousness. For them, the purpose of military power is not to manipulate perceptions, manage crises, or otherwise play games at the edge of war but to underwrite key Soviet national security interests for which lesser means, such as diplomacy and coercive persuasion, have proved unavailing. In practice, this means the Soviets are not likely to be much inclined to respect thresholds governing the intensity of military commitment, even though they may be prepared to recognize distinctions among various objectives for which military forces might be employed.

Seen from a different perspective, the Soviet approach appears primarily oriented toward practical rather than theoretical contrasts among variants of weapons use. Most of the escalation concepts and associated thresholds that figure in U.S. writings are based on abstract distinctions among levels of violence, types of weapons, or extent of combat involvement, all more or less irrespective of what the war is about and how closely it impinges on the core interests of the major participants. For example, the United States routinely attaches great importance to the so-called firebreak separating conventional from nuclear force employment, as though nuclear use in

itself, rather than the motivations and consequences of that use, were the overriding concern. It also typically fractionates the overall war into neat conceptual packages without much attention to how events in one category might relate to and affect events in the others. The classic example is the disproportionate stress given in U.S. defense debates to the massive ICBM exchange, as though this episodic duel were somehow coextensive with another world war itself. As my Rand colleague James Thomson has rightly pointed out, the stereotypical counterforce exchange is merely a tactical event. However unprecedented its destructive effects might be for both sides, it may or may not by itself determine the ultimate outcome of the war. This perspective is almost certainly shared by senior Soviet commanders and planners.

Beyond the intercontinental missile exchange, U.S. defense analysts also indulge in detailed and often heavily quantitative manipulation of scenarios alternatively oriented toward conventional war in Europe, theater nuclear campaigns, tactical air warfare, and war at sea, as though these were somehow independent processes. All too often studies that concentrate on any one of these dimensions of warfare remain indifferent to all the others and to how they might interact in determining the ultimate resolution of the issues at stake. Instead these distinctive categories of fighting are treated as set-piece confrontations of forces against forces without adequate attention to their broader contextuality. By contrast, the Soviets tend to view war as a seamless web consisting of all elements of combat necessary to respond to the operational challenge and produce the desired results.

Probably the most notable distinction between U.S. and Soviet approaches to the thresholds issue relates to the question of conventional versus nuclear use. Soviet military thinkers ascribe less salience to the nuclear threshold than the West does. To be sure, they scarcely view the specter of nuclear war with equanimity and clearly appreciate both the damage and grave escalatory risks that would attend any nuclear weapons use. Nevertheless, while they will make every effort to avoid needless initiation of nuclear strikes, their decision to cross that threshold will be governed primarily by studied contemplation of the costs of not doing so rather than by any thoughts regarding the supposedly unique properties of nuclear weapons themselves.

Soviet doctrine and tradition have long treated nuclear weapons as extensions of conventional firepower. This does not mean that Soviet planners equate nuclear weapons with conventional artillery. It does mean, however, that any Soviet decision to use nuclear weapons in an escalating war would probably not be vexed by the sort of agonizing over the stigma of letting the nuclear genie out of the bottle that has characteristically influenced Western deliberations about the nuclear option. Their principal criterion would be strictly utilitarian and would turn primarily on the question

of whether the gain was worth the risk. It bears repeating that the key threshold for Soviet planners is the initiation of war itself, not the use of any particular weapon in any particular manner of targeting. Once the war is on, the Soviets will presumably have already decided that the game justified the gamble and will have reconciled themselves to calling on whatever means of combat they felt were required to accomplish those objectives for which the engagement was joined in the first place.

This contrast between U.S. and Soviet views is of more than simply academic significance. A guaranteed recipe for disaster would be a crisis in which Western decision makers wrongly persuaded themselves that the thresholds they themselves attached importance to were equally respected by their Soviet counterparts. To give an example, in any major war that had thus far remained confined to the non-Soviet portion of Central Europe, the Soviets probably would be less provoked by NATO limited nuclear use in the theater than they would be by any sort of attack on the Soviet Union proper. As long as Soviet conventional forces were maintaining offensive momentum, Soviet decision makers might be prepared to countenance certain limited forms of NATO nuclear use, whether for signaling purposes or out of desperation, without responding in kind. (They would also remain under powerful compulsions to initiate the first decisive use of theater nuclear weapons in any situation where they felt that large-scale enemy escalation was imminent). On the other hand, any NATO effort to carry the war directly to Soviet soil, even if largely symbolic, could entail a major change in the rules of the game in the Soviet view. Not only would this dramatically denote an end to superpower sanctuary status, it would also imply U.S. willingness to risk unrestricted global war, thereby lifting whatever inhibitions the Soviets may have formerly felt against carrying out strategic strikes against the United States.

It follows from this logic that distinctions between theater and strategic war are meaningless to the Soviets. For them war involving direct combat between U.S. and Soviet forces, whatever the operational setting, is indivisible. Any confrontation that even indirectly put basic Soviet security values at risk would be strategic by definition. The various thresholds of significance to the Soviets that might be crossed in the course of that conflict accordingly would relate not to changes in the intensity of violence or the weapons employed themselves so much as to how closely those events impinged on the most vital Soviet security sensitivities.

Implications for Western Planning

This idiosyncratic Soviet approach to the thresholds issue has consequences of great practical import for the United States. Reduced to its essentials, it

means that most of the distinctions drawn by U.S. strategic theory among alternative levels of conflict would not be perceived as being equally salient by the Soviets in the heat and confusion of war. There is no indication, for example, that Soviet war planners harbor anywhere near the concern over unintended collateral damage from nuclear strikes that we in the United States routinely worry about. True, they would seek to maximize economy of force, even in a war involving intercontinental nuclear exchanges, and would therefore strive to avoid gratuitous and unnecessary damage to nonmilitary facilities. But it is highly unlikely that they would go out of their way to hobble their attacks against vital military targets through self-imposed restraints intended to reassure the United States that they were observing tacit rules of warfare aimed at controlling the escalation process. It is equally unlikely that they would be impressed by similar U.S. efforts to avoid civilian by-product damage, particularly if those efforts involved attacks against military targets inside the Soviet Union. In such a case, Soviet decision makers probably would be far more influenced by the fact that such attacks had occurred than by any connotation of restraint the United States might seek to attach to them.

Even in a war that remained limited to theater confines, the Soviets probably would not be persuaded to observe restraint simply because the United States had studiously strived to avoid transgressing certain thresholds, such as the use of chemical or nuclear weapons, in the interest of inducing Soviet reciprocity. On the contrary, Soviet military commentators tend to reject the whole business of strategic bargaining with distaste as a bourgeois notion more appropriate to the marketplace than to the battlefield. For them war has always ultimately involved political objectives. Any war in which they find themselves irretrievably caught will thus be fought in ways appropriate to the rapid achievement of those objectives rather than in obedience to any concern that Soviet operational choices be correctly perceived by the adversary.

Given this Soviet predisposition, efforts by the United States to play on Soviet perceptions by manipulating thresholds in order to signal U.S. intent could have precisely the opposite effect from that intended. For example, a single U.S. nuclear shot intended to demonstrate resolve might be interpreted by the Soviets as a demonstration of weakness instead; it could inadvertently telegraph an indication of underlying lack of U.S. willingness to use nuclear weapons in a truly decisive manner, as well as suggest an impression of U.S. desperation that necessitated such a dramatic yet operationally futile gesture in the first place. Also a single U.S. nuclear demonstration against an isolated target within the Soviet Union during the course of an intensifying European war might well be assessed not as the highly discriminate show of force it was intended to be but rather as the precursor of a full-fledged intercontinental nuclear attack, requiring the appropriate Soviet preemptive response.

The gloomy side of this conclusion is that U.S. planners risk deluding themselves severely if they believe the Soviets will ever be susceptible to highly refined variants of U.S. threshold avoidance or selective threshold crossing once the dice of war are rolled. But there is an optimistic side as well. The tendency of the Soviets to see war in black-and-white terms once diplomacy has failed and major fighting has begun implies not only a Soviet determination to fight with unrestrained ferocity once events have foreclosed other alternatives but also a powerful Soviet incentive to avoid becoming so committed in the first place if at all possible. Notwithstanding its impressive forces and combat-oriented doctrine, the Soviet military is beset by profound uncertainties that make it highly reluctant to seek out any test of its combat potential. These uncertainties include fear of the loss of initiative in war, the question of how Soviet forces would actually perform in combat, the extent of alliance solidarity the Soviets could count on once the pressure was on, and a whole host of related apprehensions that raise serious doubt about the self-fulfilling character of Soviet doctrinal assurances regarding the attainability of victory.

The more we concentrate on the fine-grained details of various U.S.-Soviet conflict scenarios, the easier it is for us to forget that the main function of U.S. forces is to deter rather than fight a war. For all its military robustness, the Soviet Union remains eminently deterrable. The key to such deterrence lies in sustained U.S. and NATO efforts to acquire the conceptual and hardware ingredients of a denial strategy aimed expressly at disabusing the Soviets of any confidence that their war plans could succeed if put to the test. Toward this end, conscientious but ill-informed proposals for no first use of nuclear weapons and related efforts to respect thresholds that do not figure in the Soviet strategic calculus are not only misdirected but potentially quite harmful to the security of the United States and its allies.

Part V
Strategic
Responses to
Regional
Conflicts: Europe



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17 Strategic Responses in the 1980s: A Framework for Discussion

Jeffrey Record

Any discussion of strategic responses to conflict in Europe in the 1980s must be predicated on assumptions about the political-military environment governing Europe and the world as a whole in the late 1980s. An effective strategy for Europe's defense in the latter half of the decade must be sensitive not only to the evolving character of the Soviet threat but also to present and likely future political and military developments within NATO itself. P.G.T. Beauregard's plan for the defense of the southern Confederacy, although strategically brilliant, failed to take into account the limitations imposed on the full exploitation of the South's military power by Jefferson Davis's system of military departments and by the authority of virtually sovereign state governments to deny Richmond desired quantities of manpower and material. As an alliance of sovereign states with a military strategy all too often reflecting the lowest common political denominator, NATO today is not unlike the Confederacy of yesterday.

I should like to provide a framework of general assumptions about the political-military environment of the coming decade in which strategy and force planning choices are likely to be made.

The first is that the magnitude and basic character of the Soviet military threat to NATO are unlikely to change dramatically. This is not to deny the real possibility of a leveling off or even decline in real Soviet defense expenditure, a possibility heightened by the convergence of mounting economic difficulties, adverse demographic trends, a growing desire to end the costly adventure in Afghanistan, and the near certainty that the decade will witness replacement of the present aging Soviet leadership by a new and younger elite. Some measure of comparative disinvestment in preparation for war would seem imperative if the Soviet Union is to avoid an economic debacle.

Any significant reallocation of Soviet resources from the military to the nonmilitary sector is, however, likely to be gradual and almost certainly will not encompass abandonment either of nuclear parity with the West or of the Warsaw Pact's long-standing conventional force preponderance in Europe. On the contrary, given the momentum of present Soviet strategic nuclear weapons programs and the uncertain future of some of the Reagan administrations's counterinitiatives, the West will have difficulty simply maintaining the current strategic nuclear balance. The Soviet military will stoutly resist

proposed cuts in defense spending, and any post-Brezhnev leadership, even one bent on major reforms, must first consolidate its own power, an impossible task for any group or faction professing a willingness to sacrifice traditional or acquired Soviet military advantages over the West. In short, the power and behavior of NATO's principal adversary are unlikely to change markedly in a direction favorable to the alliance.

The second assumption is that the credibility of NATO's declared strategy of flexible response and forward defense, already compromised by the loss of strategic and theater nuclear superiority, will continue to decline, placing a premium on a credible conventional defense whose creation is likely to entail substantial real increases in NATO defense spending.

The declining credibility of flexible response and its profound implications for the alliance have been concisely addressed by Senator Sam Nunn:

This strategy was adopted at a time when NATO possessed strategic and theater nuclear advantages over the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact. NATO's quantitative inferiority in conventional forces deployed in or readily available for combat in Europe was deemed tolerable because nuclear superiority permitted the Alliance to escalate a conflict across the nuclear threshold to the disadvantage of the Pact.

During the past decade and a half, however, the Soviet Union has managed to eliminate NATO's nuclear superiority at both the strategic and theater levels, while at the same time expanding his traditional advantages in conventional forces.

By attaining strategic nuclear parity with the United States, the Soviet Union has severely undermined the credibility of U.S. strategic nuclear forces as a deterrent to a conventional attack in Europe. By deploying theater nuclear forces that are now superior to NATO's the Soviet Union has reduced the effectiveness of NATO's tactical nuclear forces both as an instrument for defeating a massive non-nuclear invasion and as a deterrent to Soviet use of nuclear weapons. By enhancing its longstanding quantitative superiority over NATO in conventional forces with greatly improved quality, the Soviet Union has diminished the prospects for a successful forward defense.

Under conditions of strategic parity and theater nuclear inferiority, a NATO nuclear response to non-nuclear Soviet aggression in Europe would be a questionable strategy at best, a self-defeating one at worst. Thus major responsibility for continued deterrence in Europe has shifted to NATO's outnumbered, outgunned and maldeployed conventional forces. Flexible response in theory has become inflexible response in practice.

The United States' loss of strategic nuclear superiority, which many observers regarded as inevitable, was not in and of itself fatal to NATO's flexible response strategy. Had the demise of strategic superiority been attended by retention of theater nuclear advantages and by creation of conventional defenses unambiguously capable of mounting an effective forward defense of the Federal Republic of Germany, the basic integrity of NATO's strat-

egy could have been preserved. During the 1970s, however, the Alliance chose to rely for the most part on the aging theater nuclear weapons deployed in the late 1950s and the early 1960s. Despite mounting evidence that the Soviet Union was mustering in Eastern Europe the capacity for a conventional blitzkrieg (thereby reducing the degree of warning time so essential for a successful forward defense), NATO's conventional defense posture vis-a-vis the Soviet-Warsaw Pact was allowed to deteriorate further.¹

Senator Nunn's conclusion that the credibility of flexible response and forward defense can be restored only through creation of truly effective conventional defenses seems unassailable. The crucial questions are thus whether a successful conventional defense of Western Europe is militarily feasible, and, if so, whether NATO's member states are politically willing to bear the substantial costs of such a defense.

Although the question of whether Europe can be defended against a massive conventional Warsaw Pact attack without early resort to nuclear fire has been a subject of discussion for decades, most responsible defense analysts today reject the proposition that Europe is inherently indefensible without reliance on nuclear weapons. To be sure, few are happy with NATO's present conventional force posture, plagued by maldeployment, lack of barrier defenses and sufficient operational reserves, inadequate war reserve stocks of equipment and critical combat consumables, vulnerable command, control, and communications, and, in the opinion of some, inappropriate force structures and operational doctrines. Yet none of these deficiencies is innately irresolvable. The principal obstacles to their resolution are largely political: unwillingness on the part of many European members of NATO to finance needed improvements in conventional defenses; resistance of national and collective military bureaucracies to structural and doctrinal innovation; and public concern, often deliberately fanned by governments themselves, over putative moral and political implications of certain new weapons, technologies, and operational doctrines.

I am persuaded that a combination of increased defense expenditure, structural and doctrinal reform, and uninhibited exploitation of selected technologies could provide a firm foundation for a credible conventional defense of Europe by the end of the decade, but prospects for acquiring and sustaining the necessary political support for these initiatives are not promising. The continuing failure of key member states to meet even the established (and relatively modest) goal of 3 percent annual real increases in defense expenditure, rising opposition in Europe to fulfilling the declared goals of the alliance theater nuclear force modernization program, and growing political disarray within NATO over a host of other critical issues suggest that for the foreseeable future there will be little political tolerance, at least in Europe, for the measures necessary to create a credible conven-

tional defense. In sum, even though NATO's loss of strategic and theater nuclear advantage has made greater investment in and attention to its conventional defenses imperative, neither is likely to be forthcoming in sufficient measure.

Worse still—and this is the third assumption—the present contribution of the United States to Europe's forward conventional defense is likely to shrink during the decade, thus imposing on European allies proportionally greater military requirements. There are already strong political and strategic pressures on U.S. force levels in Europe (now totaling 337,000 personnel), especially forward-deployed ground forces, and these pressures are likely to increase. The political pressures are manifest in mounting congressional irritation over what is perceived to be a refusal on the part of key European allies, increasingly suborned by détenteist illusions and the lure of commercial opportunity in the East, to pull military weight in the alliance, at a time when the United States has embarked on a major rearmament designed in part to protect common Western interests outside the NATO Treaty area.

Whether justified or not, growing congressional discontent with NATO is a fact. For the first time in almost a decade, Capitol Hill is seriously discussing unilateral withdrawals of U.S. troops from Europe, and barring major alterations in present allied political and military behavior, such discussion is likely to lead to legislation.

Even more ominous is the fact that in contrast to the early 1970s, political pressure on U.S. troop levels in Europe today is centered largely among centrist and conservative Republicans who enjoy a potentially sympathetic audience in the Reagan administration. Unlike the Johnson and Nixon administration, this group appears to be less tolerant of allied misbehavior in general (evident in the administration's punitive albeit hypocritical stance on the Siberian natural gas pipeline), as well as convinced that Europe is no longer the primary locus of the Soviet threat. Indeed, a prominent Reagan campaign defense critique of the Carter administration was its heavy strategic focus on Europe at the expense of forces dedicated to contingencies outside the NATO treaty area.

Intensifying political pressures on the character of the U.S. commitment to Europe's defense are compelling strategic arguments for a reallocation of U.S. military forces away from Europe. The new and substantial demands on U.S. military power in Southwest Asia and the Indian Ocean can be satisfied only through a major expansion in present U.S. force levels or a substantial reduction in force deployments in Europe and the Far East. The first option does not appear feasible in lieu of a return to conscription and a level of defense spending significantly higher than that contemplated even by the Reagan administration. The second option thus possesses a certain political attractiveness, especially to a public and a Congress increas-

ingly—and correctly—persuaded that European and East Asian allies could do far more for their own defense than they are now doing, thereby releasing substantial U.S. military power for the defense of Southwest Asia, an area on which U.S. allies are far more economically dependent than is the United States.

To be sure, the Reagan administration, like its predecessors, will oppose any congressional attempts to cut U.S. forces in Europe unilaterally. Yet administration spokesmen on a number of occasions have conceded that a sizable and expanding gap exists between post-Afghanistan U.S. military commitments abroad and U.S. ability to fulfill those commitments. Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger's announced goal of being "able to meet the demands of a worldwide war, including concurrent reinforcement of Europe, deployment to Southwest Asia . . . and support in order areas on conflict" is unattainable without major increases in active-duty U.S. general-purpose force levels not now envisioned or greater allied investment in their own self-defense.²

The abyss between commitments and capabilities is nowhere more evident than in the so-called rapid deployment force, the chosen instrument of U.S. military intervention in Southwest Asia. Most of the ground and tactical air units assigned to the force are also slated for NATO's reinforcement.

A fourth assumption is that NATO's political cohesion, already buffeted by a plethora of critical policy disputes, is likely to be subjected to even greater strain, thus further reducing prospects for consensus within the alliance on strategic responses to future conflict in Europe. The present political disarray within NATO, and especially between the United States and its Central European allies, over issues related to threat perception, perspectives on détente, burden sharing, and commercial relations with the East reflects in no small measure some fundamental political and cultural trends in Europe, especially in West Germany and the Low Countries, that are inherently antagonistic to the collective security values embodied in the NATO treaty.

The complete triumph of the welfare state in West Germany and the Low Countries has created strong internal political constituencies inherently resistant to any reallocation of public money toward the military. Far more disturbing has been the rise of powerful political forces, notably in West Germany and the Netherlands, that are prepared directly or indirectly, wittingly or unwittingly, to accommodate the Soviet Union in a manner incompatible with efforts to reinvigorate NATO as an effective deterrent to Soviet aggression in Europe. These forces, which command the public allegiance of a vocal minority, particularly among the postwar generation, range from outright pacifist groups openly sponsored by established churches to conservative business interests dedicated to pursuit of un-

restricted commercial intercourse with the East. Within this range are environmental, antinuclear, and proneutralism groups, as well as left-wing socialist factions and organizations. Almost all are resolutely antimilitary and manifest varying intensities of distrust or dislike of the United States, which they commonly regard either as the major military provocateur on the European stage or as sharing equally with the Soviet Union the onus for the security problems confronting Europe today.

The burgeoning influence of these forces on state policy is profound, and likely to continue unchecked. Walter Laqueur, chairman of the CSIS International Research Council, has so aptly explained the results of this influence on allies "who want equidistance from the two superpowers, who want defense (but not too much of it), who are more afraid of American sanctions than of events in Poland, more apprehensive about American than Soviet missiles, who want to be allies and mediators at the same time."³ It accounts for the Netherlands' refusal to accept its share of ground-launched cruise missiles slated for deployment under the Long-Range Theater Nuclear Force (LRTNF) modernization program. It also accounts for West Germany's behavior during the Polish crisis in December 1981.

Indeed, since the Soviets invaded Afghanistan in 1979, the West German government has pursued a foreign policy whose principal aim seems to be avoidance of actions that might in any way disturb the Federal Republic's relationship with Moscow. This relationship is characterized by West Germany's growing economic entanglement with the Soviet Union, increasing reliance on Soviet oil and natural gas, and abject dependence on Soviet goodwill for the preservation of the special benefits afforded by Ostpolitik.

An overpowering desire to stay in Moscow's good graces explains West Germany's conduct of business as usual with both the Soviet Union and the Polish Jaruzelski regime during and following the Polish military's coup in December 1981. Chancellor Helmut Schmidt did not allow the brutal suppression of Solidarity to disturb his meetings in East Germany with State Council chairman Erich Honecker, and Bonn subsequently received Polish deputy Mieczyslaw Rakowski. It also explains Schmidt's even more manifest view of himself and West Germany as impartial brokers of conflicting U.S. and Soviet interests in Europe.

To be sure, the Federal Republic has not been "Finlandized." Nevertheless Konrad Adenauer's Germany, the United State's staunchest and most reliable major security partner on the Continent, has faded, if not altogether vanished. It has been replaced by a West Germany whose leadership and younger generation are increasingly incapable of making a moral distinction between the superpowers (hence the equation in many West German political circles of fifty or so U.S. military advisers in El Salvador to the presence of 100,000 Soviet combat troops in Afghanistan); are increasingly

blind to menacing Soviet and Soviet-sponsored military activity in and outside Europe (hence, Defense Minister Hans Eberhard Apel's opposition to a U.S. defense of the Persian Gulf at the expense of forces now allocated to NATO); and who increasingly want to pursue meaningless arms-control ventures at the expense of sound force planning (hence, the hope within the Social Democratic Party's (SPD) left wing that the LRTNF negotiations themselves will obviate the need for new missiles). Illustrative of the acute political dry rot now engulfing the Federal Republic is the disparity between the tiny public demonstrations against the crushing of Solidarity (the largest to date encompassing about 2,000 protestors in Munich) and the massive rallies against NATO's new missiles program, one of which had a turnout of an estimated 250,000 demonstrators in Bonn.

The decline of West Germany as a resolute ally acutely cognizant of the threats posed to its security by events east of the inter-German border was glaringly revealed in late 1981 and early 1982. Dismissing Jaruzelski's coup as a purely internal Polish matter in which the Soviet Union had no hand, the Bonn government undertook a campaign within NATO and the European Economic Community to oppose imposition of all but token sanctions against either Warsaw or Moscow. To have acted otherwise would have incurred Soviet disfavor and possible reprisals.

In conclusion, for the remainder of the decade, NATO is likely to confront a grim geostrategic environment characterized by declining political and military cohesion inside the alliance in the face of an undiminished Soviet threat to Western interests both in and beyond the NATO area. Whether effective and politically sustainable strategic responses to future conflict in Europe can be devised within such an environment is not certain. What is certain is that those who seek to do so will discover, as have so many in the past, that NATO is often its own worst enemy.

Notes

1. Sam Nunn, "NATO, Can the Alliance Be Saved?" Report to the Senate Armed Services Committee, 97th Cong. 2nd session, May 13, 1982 (Washington, D.C.: GPO 1982).

2. Caspar W. Weinberger, "Annual Report to Congress from Secretary of Defense Caspar W. Weinberger, Fiscal Year 1983," (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1982) p. III-91.

3. Walter Laqueur, "Poland and the Crisis of the Alliance," *Wall Street Journal*, January 5, 1982, p. 30.

18

Strategic Responses to Conflict in Europe

Robert W. Komer

Any future European conflict involving U.S. forces is unlikely to be of low intensity. It is hard to conceive of raids or conflicts of up to brigade size involving two or more nations. Nor is Western or Soviet assistance likely to bring internal upheavals in the others' sphere. The risks of escalation are simply too great.

Even that recurrent NATO specter, a modest land grab (of north Norway, part of Thrace, Hamburg, or even Berlin), is as unlikely now as in the past. Even these modest objectives would risk bringing the North Atlantic Treaty into play. Equally deterring is the prospect that if the USSR were successfully to pinch off such a piece of NATO territory without NATO response, the NATO allies would almost surely take this as a clear signal that war was likely and engage in frantic rearmament. Why should Moscow risk triggering such a NATO reaction for less than decisive stakes? In short, conflict in Europe would most likely be high-intensity conflict involving large coalition forces on both sides.

Nuclear versus Nonnuclear Response

Most knowledgeable observers believe that the USSR would not launch a nuclear first strike unless it felt it had to preempt an impending NATO nuclear escalation. Brezhnev specifically eschewed first use and called on the United States to do the same. The Soviets are confident in Warsaw Pact conventional superiority at a time of nuclear stalemate.

Until this stalemate emerged, U.S. and NATO strategy called for massive nuclear retaliation against any Warsaw Pact attack, an arguably credible deterrent so long as the United States possessed massive nuclear superiority. By the early 1960s, however, the United States was already pulling back to flexible response, and NATO followed suit with MC 14/3 in December 1967. Nonetheless, because of European failure to build up more than the capability for a brief conventional pause while United States resources were diverted to the Vietnam war, NATO has remained basically dependent on early escalation to deter.

Nuclear stalemate (indeed Soviet superiority in some weapons categories), however, has reduced the credibility of this response. As James

Schlesinger put it, "The fatal flaw in the Western Alliance system is its over-reliance on nuclear deterrence."¹ U.S. efforts to strengthen theater nuclear deterrence by LRTNF and so-called battlefield neutron weapons have run into serious political opposition in Europe. Instead the advent of nuclear stalemate has led to growing efforts to deemphasize nuclear weapons, such as a nuclear freeze and a no-first-use policy.

While it is quite true that reviving primary emphasis on theater-strategic nuclear deterrence would be far less expensive than building up conventional deterrents, the political impediments alone are so great as to make it a nonstarter. No recent U.S. administration has endorsed it; only the French still seem to cling to such outdated doctrine.

Nor is it at all likely that the United States and Europe could ever regain that degree of perceived theater and strategic nuclear superiority that would offer high confidence deterrence of Warsaw Pact conventional attack as well. Most believe that, having caught up, the USSR would do whatever is necessary to maintain at least a nuclear standoff at whatever level. Thus this option is probably technically as well as politically a nonstarter.

This is not to say that the United States or NATO should imprudently abandon nuclear capabilities or even first use as a declaratory strategy. It is imperative to maintain credible modern theater and strategic forces, if only to forestall Soviet nuclear escalation. The uncertainty thus created also significantly aids nonnuclear deterrence. Therefore simple prudence dictates maintaining countervailing nuclear capabilities and not prematurely abandoning nuclear response doctrines until something comparable can be put into their place.²

TREE of LIBERTY SOCIETY

Why Defend Europe Anyway?

A recurrent question in U.S. circles is why defend Europe anyway. This manifestation of an always latent strain of U.S. neo-isolationism has revived recently. Some argue that European allies are not bearing their fair share of a mutual defense burden, which necessarily grows as the United States shifts to greater reliance on more costly conventional forces. Since they are now economically capable of defending themselves, let them do so.

Others argue that Europe is no longer strategically vital to the United States. A variant of this argument is that a Warsaw Pact attack on NATO Europe is the least likely scenario; hence, the United States should stress dealing with more likely contingencies like Third World conflicts or threats to Persian Gulf oil. Only a few are so bold as to argue that the United States should cut its commitments to fit its constrained resources and domestic priorities and hence defend only the Western Hemisphere.

All of these shortsighted arguments ignore the basic facts of strategic

life. Europe still is the single greatest concentration of industrial power outside the United States; its GNP is now even larger than that of the United States. Hence classic balance-of-power considerations dictate that preventing it from falling under hostile domination remains as vital a U.S. interest as it was in World Wars I and II. Second, Europe in fact contributes more to its own defense than simplistic comparisons of total defense spending suggest.³ True, the United States must concern itself with other threats than that to Europe. But it must not fall prey to the fallacy that because some contingencies are more likely than others, it should posture to meet them even at the expense of less likely but more strategically important ones. For example, why defend Persian Gulf oil if its chief customers are lost? The United States should continue to pursue a force projection strategy, aimed at deterring or defeating threats far from its own shores instead of its own backyard. The United States's increasing dependence on overseas trade and materials emphasizes this rationale.

How Best to Defend Europe

If defense of Europe remains a vital U.S. interest but nuclear stalemate dictates greater reliance on conventional defense strategies, then the issue becomes one of which alternative offers the best prospects at affordable cost. The first aim of this alternative response must remain deterrence, but credible deterrence requires that allies as well as foes perceive that the United States can defend itself adequately if required.

It ought to be equally obvious that such a deterrence-defense posture (globally as well as for NATO) must be a coalition effort, based on mutual sharing of the collective security burden by a system of alliances. Neither the United States nor its allies can ensure their security alone. Although this became a cornerstone of U.S. security policy after World War II, it is even more essential today.

The reasons lie largely in the relative decline of U.S. power. As late as 1949, the United States produced over half the world's GNP. Today it produces 20 percent while Europe and Japan alone produce over 30 percent. Forty years ago the United States enjoyed nuclear superiority and commanded the seas. But the growth of Soviet military power has produced a nuclear stalemate and a challenge to U.S. maritime superiority. Not only the growth of Soviet nuclear-missile capabilities but greater U.S. reliance on overseas trade and raw materials makes the United States vulnerable as never before.

U.S. security policy must also take fully into account the historical reluctance of democratic societies to fund adequate preparedness in peacetime, which means that collective security is the only avenue. Given the

likelihood of persisting economic difficulties affecting U.S. and allied economies, there is little prospect of NATO military investment sufficient to cope with the Soviet bloc unless constrained military resources are pooled. Only a totalitarian system like that of the USSR can siphon off 15 to 16 percent of GNP for defense.

Last, U.S. strategies now confront a three-front problem of an unprecedented magnitude. Europe, Northeast Asia, and the United States now face a great threat to the chief source of their economic lifeblood, oil. There is no realistic way in which the United States can cope with such a three-front threat without assistance from allies and friends in these regions. In short, there is no viable alternative to a coalition response as the cornerstone of strategy.

This said, our problem still is not solved. Given that conventional deterrence-defense will be far more costly than nuclear, especially since the USSR has a far larger conventional advantage (except at sea) than nuclear, how does the United States rationally share the burden of collective response? The answer depends on a logical division of roles and missions and a strategically sensible prioritization of responses in the light of economic and political constraints.



Maritime Supremacy

Great maritime powers have traditionally relied primarily on maritime superiority (later supplemented by strong air defenses) for their security. Yet even before the nuclear-missile age, this did not suffice. For example, in the centuries long debates between the British Admiralty and War Office over shares of constrained peacetime resources, the former almost invariably won. Yet long before World Wars I and II, Britain found that command of the sea and naval blockade, plus amphibious harassment and subsidies to continental allies, were far from enough to forestall French and then German domination of the Continent. In most cases Britain also had to raise sizable wartime armies to support its continental allies, a belated response that too often resulted in long, exhausting wars.

The same analogy holds true for a great Eurasian heartland power like the USSR. Its geopolitical position and resources, and its autarchic economy, make it much less dependent on overseas trade and materials than even the United States. Would driving the USSR completely from the seas cripple its war economy, prevent it from seizing continental Europe, stop its threat to Persian Gulf oil, and preclude its cowing China and Japan? These questions answer themselves.

Seapower did not defeat Germany in two world wars, although without it the allies could never have returned to the Continent in World War II. But

if NATO lost the Continent this time, could its forces hope to repeat the massive amphibious assaults from U.K. or Mediterranean bases, which this time would be exposed to massive air and missile attack on a scale unimagined in World War II? Given current global surveillance capabilities, could NATO again expect the tactical surprise achieved in the North African, Normandy, Sicily, or Anzio landings? And remember that in World War II, Soviet allies engaged the bulk of the Wehrmacht, while this time they would be foes.

It remains to ask whether any countervailing conventional response strategy could seize assets of strategic value comparable to the loss of Europe (or Persian Gulf oil since both are part of the same strategic problem). Would seizing every Soviet surrogate overseas bring down the USSR, any more than Britain's sweep of France's overseas colonies brought down the French kings or Bonaparte? Could nibbling at the USSR's maritime flanks with carrier strikes achieve more than harassment?⁴ Even bottling up the Soviet navy in the narrow seas (which the United States could not achieve without allies) would not deprive the USSR of assets that are central to its ability to dominate Eurasia.

In sum, primary reliance on a maritime strategy is not an effective response to the Soviet threat to Europe. Maritime superiority to achieve control of the sea-lanes of communication is, of course, vital, but to control the seas at the expense of a balanced defensive posture would be to lose Europe.⁵

The Flanks versus the Center

Some maritime strategies also deplore not only the Euro-centrism of a NATO-first strategy but also its fixation on the center region at the expense of the flanks. This argument, which has deep historical roots, can be dismissed in much the same way as General Marshall did in 1943–1944. NATO could hold the center even if it lost the flanks, whereas the opposite is not true (especially of the southern region). If NATO held in the center, it could mobilize its superior war potential to retake the flanks in time.⁶ But if France and West Germany were lost (an analogy to 1940), the Soviets could seize the flanks at leisure, as Germany did in 1940–1941. Could NATO hold on to Italy, Greece, Turkey, or Norway if it lost the center region? Could the U.S. Navy even operate large carrier or amphibious forces in the narrow Mediterranean once the northern littoral was hostile? These strategic questions must be asked and answered.

This is not an argument for neglect of the flanks but for sound prioritization of strategic responses and allocation of our resources. Strategically the key to defense of NATO's flanks lies on the north West German plain, where the issue would ultimately be decided.

European Defense

A more sophisticated variant of revisionist strategic thinking is that the United States faces too many other serious strategic needs to keep investing so heavily in the defense of Europe at the expense of other key theaters, like the Persian Gulf; hence the United States should reduce its ground forces and perhaps tactical air, commitment. Since the United States already plans to provide most of the nuclear umbrella, sea-lines of communication control, tactical air, and the like, it is said, Europe should provide the rest of the forces. Supporting this argument is a deeply held American feeling, especially in the Congress, that allies are not carrying their fair share of the burden.

In fact the alleged U.S. overcommitment to NATO is misleading. That both wars the United States engaged in since World War II (Korea and Vietnam) were in Asia, not Europe, and that it deployed large forces also earmarked for a NATO scenario illustrates how forces earmarked for a European contingency are also available for other contingencies. They are general-purpose forces after all. Hence estimates that the United States currently spends \$129 billion on NATO defense are ridiculous; this figure must include all general-purpose forces earmarked for NATO (including naval) in a NATO–Warsaw Pact contingency but equally usable elsewhere. A more valid cost figure is that of existing forward deployed forces and stocks, under \$25 billion in today's dollars. Similarly, there would be no saving from withdrawing forces from Europe unless they were demobilized; moreover, the Department of Defense estimates that it would cost \$17 billion just to restate all current Europe-deployed forces in the United States.

In any case, since any conventional response in Europe will require more, not fewer, alliance forces, it hardly gives allies an incentive to build up if the United States is simultaneously cutting back. SACEUR is calling for 4 percent real growth in allied defense outlays, saying that this will provide a credible conventional deterrent by 1989 or so. The *London Economist* talks of 4.5 percent as being adequate. But even if economic conditions improve, U.S. allies will not increase spending by any such magnitude if the United States is cutting back at the same time.

A NATO commitment of roughly five U.S. forward deployed divisions and five more postured with prepositioned equipment for rapid reinforcement (the so-called ten-division D-Day force) is probably the minimum essential U.S. contribution to a stalwart initial NATO antiblitzkrieg defense. I have no doubt the SACEUR would agree. Even this leaves six active U.S. divisions (plus marines) for other missions. As the former chief civilian policy planner in the Pentagon, I know of no alternative contingency scenario that calls for more than this many divisions to be deployed elsewhere.

The United States lacks the lift and logistic support to deploy more than this elsewhere in any event. Thus, proposals to cut back in Europe smack of disguised efforts to cut back the U.S. Army in favor of other services.

On the other hand, other global commitments that only U.S. force projection forces can adequately meet, especially in the Persian Gulf, suggest that the United States should put a ceiling on its initial NATO ground force commitment at ten divisions and warn its allies that they must meet any added needs. In fact, a case can also be made for reducing the two marine amphibious forces earmarked for Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) reserve to one and one-third in order to free up more mobile marine forces for other contingencies.

Coping with the First Echelon

At this point we must address the question of what kind of affordable conventional option would offer sufficient confidence of halting a Soviet blitzkrieg in the NATO center. Many of the issues currently being debated miss the point. Trading space for time versus forward defense is not an issue. NATO is so lacking in strategic depth that defense must begin at the border. Forward defense is a strategic and political imperative; the United States cannot afford to sacrifice the bulk of West Germany's population and industry, nor will the West Germans allow it.

But Europe could do a lot more to facilitate the U.S. contribution to forward defense. Even the U.S. ten-division commitment to forward defense should be hinged to the trans-atlantic bargain agreed on in NATO's long-term defense plan whereby U.S. allies in turn provide extensive host nation support to these forces plus airlift and sea-lift to help move them. These are cheap roads to more rational burden sharing.

Another form of burden sharing on which the United States is entitled to insist is increasing the NATO infrastructure program to fund jointly the military construction needed to enable U.S. reinforcements to deploy and fight. Infrastructure has long been NATO's most effective burden-sharing device, and it is self-defeating for Europe to balk at the modest outlays required to utilize U.S. forces already bought and paid for at twenty times the cost. The most egregious example is how U.S. ability to triple its on-line air strength in Europe (which would make it greater than all of NATO Europe's put together) is hamstrung by allied unwillingness to help fund modest additions to existing operating bases. West Germany's reluctance to increase infrastructure spending is incomprehensible, even from an economic point of view.

Maneuver versus positional defense is another nonissue. The real problem is that NATO's lack of forces condemns it to a linear (six hundred miles

long) defense that absorbs almost all of its heavy divisions. This maldeployment of NATO's most mobile divisions leaves Allied Forces Central without adequate operational mobile reserves to contain threatened breakthroughs or to counterattack, the optimum role for these heavy mobile divisions. The answer is to generate a thicker defense in depth that can absorb a Warsaw Pact attack, while at the same time freeing up NATO's expensive mobile forces for the counterattack maneuver role. This might even extend to a counteroffensive.

Fortunately the growing urban sprawl in Central Europe creates a form of urban (and forest) barrier system that can be manned by lighter, less mobile reservist units drawn from continental Europe's large pool of trained but unallocated conscript manpower. The Bundeswehr is already moving in this direction by organizing reserve maneuver brigades. Perhaps twenty to thirty of these brigades, well equipped with antiarmor weapons, would add depth to forward defense at relatively low cost and permit many heavy divisions to be reallocated to their proper role.

If Europe truly wants a conventional option in order to raise the nuclear threshold, then these continental allies should also reexamine their political inhibitions against strengthening conventional defenses by such classic economy of force measures as configuring canals, roads, railway embankments, and so on as antiarmor obstacles, prechambering for demolitions, and even constructing permanent field fortifications along the most likely avenues of approach. If I lived in Hannover, I would rather be defended by a barrier system on the outskirts than in the streets of Hannover itself. Political arguments that such barriers along the inner West German border would confirm the division of West Germany strike me as ill founded. The best support for Ostpolitik is a well-defended West Germany. It is also the best way to prevent reunification under Soviet auspices.

The greatest added increment to center region defense could come from France. Here the issue is not whether France will fight but whether France will make the contribution to center region defense that its strength and geostrategic position make so indispensable to its own security. French return to NATO's military wing in peacetime is not essential to this end. Practical cooperation and a reconfiguring of French forces to optimize their contribution to forward defense are the essentials. France's allies also need the logistic depth and rear airfields French soil provides, but this must be planned and prepared well in advance. Thus, one of the most crucial responses to prospective conflict in Europe is for its allies to convince France to contribute what only it can provide. They should be prepared to pay whatever price is required. Nor need this mean abandonment of France's nuclear *force de frappe*, although it implies some reconfiguration of its battlefield nuclear posture and doctrine.

These are only a few of the most important responses that could change the stripes of the center region defense problem and, hence, indirectly that of the flanks. None is outrageously expensive; none needs high technology.

Attacking the First versus Second Echelon

It remains to see how the United States could exploit its remaining technological edge most effectively to the same end. Promising state-of-the-art concepts and technology for locating and disrupting Soviet follow-on forces before they can reach the battlefields offer further prospects for credible conventional defense. NATO's problem is not just to hold the first wave of Soviet attackers but to prevent its defense from being swamped by the second and even third follow-on fronts that Soviet doctrine calls for and Soviet forces exercise. The issue is not attack on the first echelon versus attack on the second echelon. NATO must provide an adequate counter to both. As Trevor Dupuy points out, it avails little to disrupt the follow-on forces if the first wave of attackers breaks through.⁷ But the reverse is also true.

Even if the estimated cost of enough missiles for the purpose, including preemptive attack on forward airfields, is off by a factor of two, it would still be well worth the price. A logical way to fund it would be as a shared coalition program, with the Europeans paying their fair share of the costs.

Alternatively, it should be possible to devise a scheme whereby if the United States funds the system, allies staff and support it. A third alternative would be for the United States to fund and staff all the systems in return for its allies, meeting some other comparably costly added NATO need, such as fielding and equipping thirty additional light reserve brigades.

Future Role of Theater Nuclear Defense

One great advantage of the more credible conventional option is that it would permit reconfiguring NATO theater nuclear forces for greater survivability, hence greater deterrent utility. At present NATO's theater nuclear forces (and their command, control, and communications) risk being so degraded in the initial conventional defense called for by the flexible response doctrine that the pressure to use them or lose them would be great. The necessary "withholds" of dual-capable forces also degrade conventional defense. It is much better to separate nuclear and conventional forces to the extent possible and hold mobile theater nuclear forces well in the rear, which makes them more survivable and hence a better deterrent.

Sustainability

Admittedly none of the measures discussed solves the sustainability problem. If NATO held but conventional war were prolonged, would it need sustainability as in World Wars I and II? But if NATO is defeated by the initial Warsaw Pact blitzkrieg, then sustainability becomes an academic issue. Hence, the order of priority among constrained resource inputs must be to guarantee top priorities first. Moreover, the Warsaw Pact is structured for a quick victory (though its defense industrial base for a longer war is bigger than NATO's). Aggressor general staffs always plan and program for a quick victory. Therefore a strong initial defense that deprives the attacker of confidence that quick victory can be achieved is the most credible form of deterrence.

Conclusion

I am confident that a credible conventional NATO defense posture is militarily feasible and economically attainable, provided the necessary political will exists. I have yet to hear of any other response that serves U.S. vital strategic interests half as well. Certainly primary emphasis on maritime supremacy would risk leaving the United States commanding empty seas but unable to prevent the USSR from consolidating its control over the resources of Eurasia.

A credible conventional defense must be a coalition effort entailing more rational burden sharing. The NATO allies as well as the United States must do more and do it more efficiently, given constrained resources. We need a thicker forward defense in depth, which the Europeans must chiefly provide so as to contain any breakthrough and free up mobile forces for the maneuver role. This can be done by inexpensive reservist brigades to exploit the urban and forest barrier, which should be strengthened by economy of force measures. Europe must also provide more host national support and infrastructure to facilitate effective U.S. reinforcement. To prevent the Warsaw Pact from ultimately swamping the defense, the U.S. and its allies need to exploit available technology for disrupting the Soviet air offensive and follow-on forces. France must play an indispensable role in this grand design.

Notes

1. James R. Schlesinger, "The Handwriting on the Wall May Be a Forgery," *Air Force Journal* (March 1982):28.

2. Even the U.S. "Gang of Four" say the no-first-use doctrine should be studied, not adopted today. See McGeorge Bundy, George F. Kennan, Robert S. McNamara, and Gerard Smith, "Nuclear Weapons and the Atlantic Alliance," *Foreign Affairs* 60, no. 4 (Spring 1982):753–768.

3. See R.W. Komer, "Alliance Burdensharing: The Trick Is How to Get It," *Air Force Journal* (October 1981). Conscription makes most NATO forces far more cost-effective than U.S. forces. Europe also supplies the battlefields. Moreover, U.S. forces are postured globally, European regionally.

4. Many senior U.S. admirals regard land attack missiles as far more cost-effective than carrier air for this mission, rightly in any view, but the mode of attack would not alter the strategic result.

5. For a well-argued case that Britain needed both a maritime strategy and a continental commitment, see Michael Howard, *The Continental Commitment: The Dilemma of British Defense Policy in the Era of the Two World Wars* (London: Temple Smith, 1972), and Brian Bond, *British Military Policy between the Two World Wars* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980).

6. If NATO loses them in the first place, I see no overriding strategic reason why the Warsaw Pact nations should simultaneously attack in the center, north, and south when it can get the flanks cheaply once it wins in the center.

7. Mark Steward, "Second Echelon Attack: Is the Debate Joined?" *Air Force Journal* (September 1982).

19 **Conventional Deep Attack: A Realistic NATO Alternative**

Jack Welch

NATO forces on the central front face a very capable and growing conventional Warsaw Pact (WP) threat. This large numerical superiority in men and materiel may force NATO to consider early use of tactical nuclear weapons in the event of conflict. Escalation to strategic nuclear exchange then looms on the immediate horizon, an unacceptable situation. NATO must evolve military alternatives and develop a force based on conventional munitions that is capable of defeating the WP. Two basic alternatives present themselves. First, the alliance can increase conventional maneuver forces to oppose directly the attack, thereby offsetting the now-existing WP numerical superiority. Or NATO can embrace the evolving U.S. Army doctrine, AirLand Battle 2000, which calls for delaying, disrupting, and killing WP second-echelon reinforcing units deep behind the lines and then counterattacking the resulting lesser reinforced and undersupplied WP front-line units. Delay, disruption, and kill of WP second-echelon forces is achieved by using a greatly augmented conventional deep attack capability.

The first alternative is excessively expensive in terms of both dollars and manpower requirements. The second alternative appears to be effective, affordable, and available and can significantly raise the nuclear threshold. Conventional deep attack is an innovative, feasible solution.

At present, performance of the conventional deep attack mission can be accomplished only by aircraft and the nonnuclear version of the Lance surface-to-surface missile. Both have problems in this role. The aircraft capable of deep attack are also required to attain air superiority and in addition are unlikely to survive deep penetration of the extensive WP air defenses with acceptable attrition. Nonnuclear Lance assets do not have the range required for conventional attack of the WP second echelons. Furthermore, a major portion of the Lance weapon inventory will likely be held in reserve for nuclear attack.

The technology base and systems development background exists to field very effective deep attack systems quickly. Development activity has been ongoing over the last several years and has encompassed the following critical areas: battlefield control notably target detection, information fusion, and situation analysis systems; munitions, including advanced anti-personnel-antimateriel bomblets, hard target warheads, and advanced chemical and nuclear warheads; and delivery systems, as evidenced by the

simplified inertial guidance demonstration (SIG-D) and assault breaker programs.

The U.S. Army and Air Force have been directed by the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) to undertake a common missile program to perform the surface-to-surface and standoff air-to-surface conventional deep attack roles. An associated airborne surveillance and targeting radar is also under development. Other system components, such as C³I and warheads, continue to be investigated and developed actively.

Both air-launched and surface-launched systems are necessary to accomplish the deep attack mission, are highly complementary, and are much more affordable than an increase in the number of ground divisions to counter WP forces head on. Some essential points must be noted. There is critical need to delay, disrupt, and destroy WP second echelons in order to counter the momentum and shock tactics of first-wave WP armies. Many second-echelon targets can be acquired now; even existing detection capabilities provide more targets than current NATO attack systems can handle. As technical developments proceed, NATO forces will be able to locate and identify additional targets; concurrently more effective warheads to attack those targets will become available. Successful attack on the full spectrum of important targets calls for both air-launched and ground-launched deep attack systems in Central Europe. And finally, by providing an effective conventional response to a WP offensive, the probability of nuclear war is lessened or, at the very least, the threshold is markedly raised. In short, deep attack is a vital mission, and it can be executed today and even more effectively with systems that can be fielded in a short time. Most important, deep attack greatly increases the probability that NATO's conventional defenses will succeed.

Challenge

NATO's defense policy has traditionally assumed that only tactical nuclear weapons can counter massed WP forces. Three lesser assumptions have been used to support this basic tenet:

1. Rearmament with conventional weapons would be prohibitively expensive.
2. NATO does not have sufficient manpower to handle the number of conventional systems required to defeat the threat.
3. Conventional weapons would, in any case, not inflict sufficient damage on WP forces.

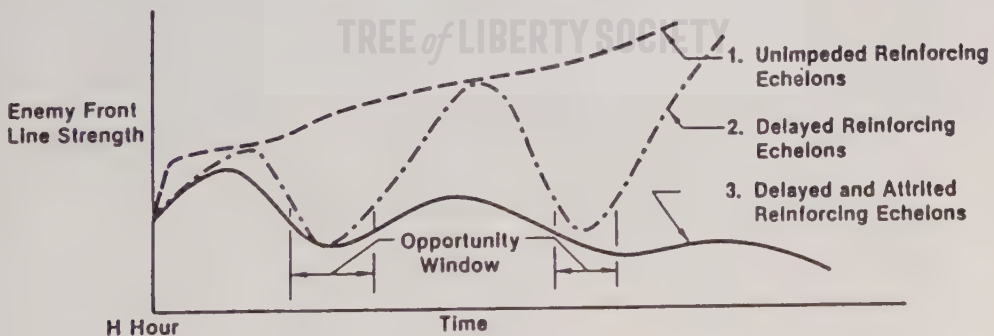
In terms of the threat, NATO forces on the central front can probably defend against up to about 90 WP divisions. At mobilization, the WP will

have 60 or more division equivalents on the central front. Two weeks later the number will approach 90. Within thirty days about 120 divisions can reach the front, permitting WP forces to achieve force ratios as high as six to one at selected breakthrough points without unduly weakening their forces elsewhere.

This rapid buildup is the essence of the conventional threat that NATO must counter. The purpose of deep attack is to delay, disrupt, and, where possible, kill those reinforcing echelons. It must reduce their mobility, deny their resupply, attrit their combat elements—in short, break their forward momentum without resorting to tactical nuclear weapons.

Doctrine

The U.S. Army recognized the problems inherent in the NATO central front and has developed an operating doctrine designed to defeat the WP using only conventional arms. This evolving doctrinal concept, known as AirLand Battle 2000, states that the ability of the enemy to reinforce and resupply must be controlled to levels permitting successful NATO counterattack at the front. Conventional deep attack plays a vital role in the AirLand Battle 2000 concept in that it is the means by which WP reinforcing second-echelon units are metered. Figure 19–1 illustrates one aspect of this doctrine by portraying enemy force buildup at the front if second-echelon re-



- Aggressive Thinking Reintroduced
- Deep Attack to Delay and Attrit Reinforcements in Rear
- Complementary Use of Air and Ground Assets
- Disrupts Warsaw Pact Attack
- Enables NATO Counterattack/Counteroffensive

Figure 19–1. Extended Battlefield: The New Doctrine

inforcements arrive unimpeded, if those same reinforcements are delayed and disrupted, and if they are delayed, disrupted, and also attrited. Delaying and disrupting the reinforcing echelons over an extended battlefield creates windows of opportunity in which NATO forces can maneuver and counter-attack. Figure 19-2, a notional outlay of WP forces, indicates that deep attack could occur principally in the region of 30 to 150 kilometers beyond the close combat area, but it could also occur profitably beyond 150 kilometers.

The concept of the expanding battlefield has blurred previously clear lines of responsibility. Weapons are becoming available that reach far beyond the forward line of own troops (FLOT). At the same time, the necessity for coordinated attack of approaching WP echelons at much greater ranges has been magnified. This extended battlefield concept raises issues concerning service responsibilities in executing the deep attack mission. Within the U.S. Army, focus has been on the corps commander as the decision level, but operational reasons require a careful reexamination of the level at which coordination must occur. Doctrinal and tactical concepts, as well as service roles and missions, come into play, and intelligence, targeting, C³, and weapon system assignment and employment must all be considered in an integrated solution of the problem.

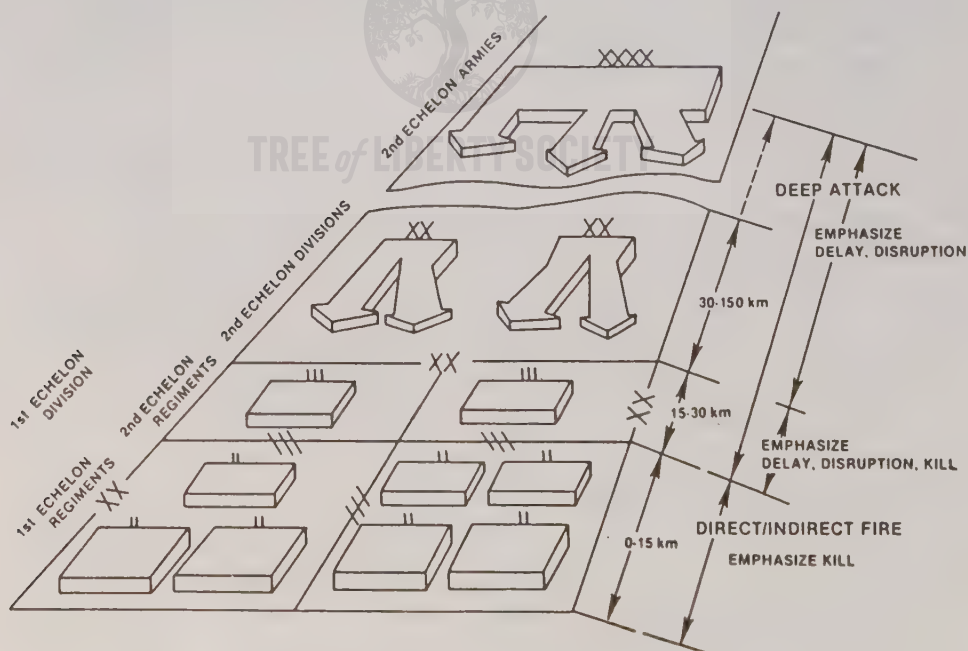


Figure 19-2. Second-Echelon Threat

Since the close coordination of deep attack is a relatively new concept, additional technical, doctrinal, and institutional issues will require resolution as systems evolve. Foremost among them are how to target more effectively, what weapons to use, how to make those weapons survivable, how to control the weapon(s) that would be so employed, and how to keep those weapon(s) and the systems that support them affordable.

Targeting

NATO's ability to detect and identify deep targets is expected to evolve in three fairly distinct phases: the present to 1985, 1986 to 1988, and 1989 to 1991. These phases correspond to projected improvements of sensor capabilities.

NATO's targeting capabilities through 1985 are essentially those in place now. They include long-term surveillance from a variety of sources. Current surveillance can pinpoint fixed targets, such as forward airfields, ground control intercept radars, bridges, and so on. By combining surveillance data with a knowledge of terrain, enemy practices, and the overall battlefield situation, current systems can also target many long-dwell movable targets, such as fuel dumps, command posts, forward ground control intercept radars, and heavy maintenance facilities.

As a result, NATO deep attack systems are not constrained by lack of targets in the period through 1985. On the contrary, the number of deep fixed targets alone exceeds NATO's ability to attack them. Moreover, many of these same fixed targets (notably forward airfields and ground control intercept radars) play such an important role in blunting a WP offensive that even in the 1990s, when technological advances are expected to provide many other targets, NATO will still have to assign them top priority and employ large numbers of delivery systems to attack them.

The first major expansion of the acquirable target spectrum will occur in the period 1986 through 1988 when a precision emitter location capability is scheduled to become operational. This system will target deep sources of electromagnetic emissions, including such short-dwell movable emitters as air defense units and tactical command posts. It also will increase the accuracy of deep attack missiles by providing terminal updates to missiles about to strike the target.

The second expansion of the target spectrum will come about with the introduction of a high-resolution, moving target indicator, surveillance, acquisition, and directing radar system between 1989 and 1991. This capability will be effective against many more target classes, including small, moving targets. Although the exact level of discrimination against very deep targets remains to be determined, effectiveness of the system does not

necessarily depend on its ability to resolve specific target types at a maximum range. Rather, the most important consideration is the system's terminal update capability, which is the key to striking nonemitting moving targets. Terminal updates are also useful at very long ranges against difficult fixed targets like concrete runways and hardened bunkers, which call for precise placement of specialized conventional warheads.

For all three levels of targeting capability, the most vital function remains the fusion and analysis of data from all possible sources. Deep strike systems must exploit current and future surveillance assets to the fullest, and they must also correlate surveillance data with information from intelligence, combat reports, and a thorough knowledge of military practices. Integration of all potential targeting assets is essential for effective deep attack.

Munitions

The antipersonnel-antimaterial warheads now available are effective against the soft area and point targets that can be attacked at this time. Moreover, bomblet performance continues to improve, yielding ever higher effectiveness against these targets.

Development is underway on two special conventional submunition families for the 1989–1991 time frame. The first is the precision guided munition (PGM). The PGM's self-contained guidance and antiarmor warhead are designed for use against tanks and other armored vehicles. A warhead carrying multiple PGMs flies to a specific point in space; then a dispenser system in each PGM removes the small residual targeting error by directing each PGM to an individual target. The second submunition is a penetrating high explosive designed to defeat runways, bunkers, and other hardened installations. Both the penetrating submunition and the PGM require accurate delivery, which can be achieved with precision guidance capabilities projected for that time period.

Advanced missiles will have sophisticated dispensing systems. Target geometry cues read by or presented to the missiles over the target prompt it to dispense its submunitions in a linear or circular pattern to suit best the target's geometry.

Delivery Systems

NATO can perform range-limited and target spectrum-limited deep attack missions today. This capability must and can be strengthened. Development of conventional standoff missiles for tactical aircraft and improved performance surface-to-surface missiles is mandatory. These advances are under-

way. Delivery system development can keep pace with advances in targeting and munitions.

The means of deep attack have improved remarkably in recent years. Quantum advances have occurred in aircraft performance and avionics. Extraordinary changes have occurred in surveillance, navigation, communications, and battlefield command and control. Finally, rapid improvements in range, payload, guidance, and lethality have given tactical surface-launched missiles an equally important and complementary role to tactical air in deep attack. Taken together, these advances herald a new era in the application of firepower.

Analysis of advances in delivery system performance indicate that two air-launched and ground-launched systems could become available in the near future: an air-launched system with 200 to 300 kilometer standoff range, a versatile 500 to 1000 pound warhead, and precision inertial guidance with terminal updates to achieve high accuracy, and a ground-launched system with 150 to 200 kilometer target coverage from setback depths of 50 to 100 kilometers, a versatile 1,000 to 1,500 pound warhead, and precision inertial guidance requiring no terminal update.

Both the air-launched standoff and ground-launched surface-to-surface missile will likely be a rocket-propelled missile as opposed to adaption of a tactical cruise missile for the deep attack role. Cost of a cruise missile appears to be considerably higher than a rocket-propelled system, and the cruise missile offers no payload or accuracy advantages. The relatively low speed of the cruise missile is an additional and important consideration in its rejection for the deep attack mission. High-speed profiles flown by rocket-propelled missiles increase system survivability over that of a cruise missile, and the time to target the rocket-propelled missile is considerably less, thereby minimizing moving target location uncertainty.

Surface- and air-launched systems form a complementary package allowing exploitation of unique advantages. For air-launched systems, they are long-range target coverage, real-time intelligence and decision, autonomous target acquisition (direct attack), mobility, and responsiveness. For surface-launched systems, they are suitable for all weather conditions, survivability, and high-volume fire support. Further, surface-launched systems are not weight or configuration constrained, they free Tactical Air Force (TACAIR) resources for early air battle, they are resistant to Electronic Warfare (EW), and they have a quick reaction time.

In the early days of a European war, the main deep attack burden will fall on surface-launched systems, which are ideally suited for this mission. Figure 19-3, which shows an attack capability trade-off between surface-launched and air-launched systems, indicates why this is so. For example, one battalion of nine ground launchers firing two missiles per hour per launcher is almost equivalent to one wing (seventy-two TACAIR aircraft) flying two sorties per day and attacking four targets per sortie. Under surge

AIR SYSTEMS

- LONG RANGE
- MOBILE
- FLEXIBLE/MISSION VERSATILITY
- REAL-TIME INTELLIGENCE/DECISION
- WEIGHT/CONFIGURATION LIMITED

SURFACE SYSTEMS

- QUICK REACTION
- SURVIVABLE
- NIGHT/ALL-WEATHER
- EW RESISTANT

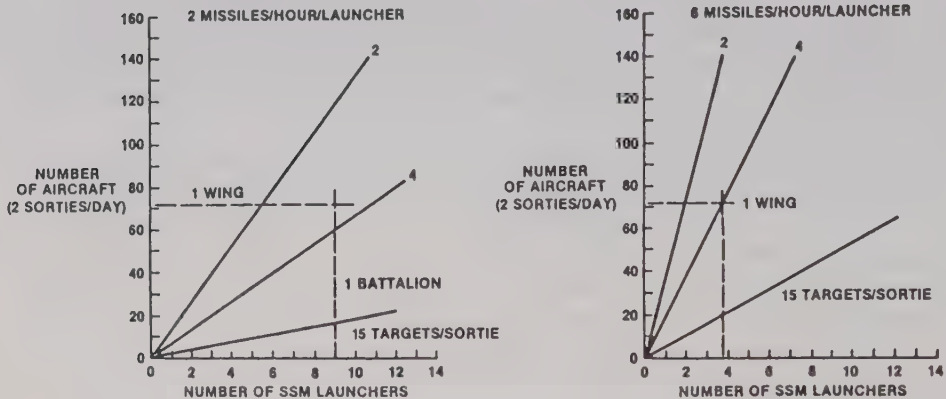


Figure 19-3. Attack Capability Comparison

conditions demanding high fire rates, the surface-launched system can fire six missiles per hour per launcher. Under those conditions, only four launchers would provide firepower equal to one TACAIR wing flying two sorties per day and attacking four targets per sortie. Surface systems are also quick to react, are survivable, and are available at night and in bad weather.

Ground systems, with their greater rate of fire, should shoulder the main burden of early deep attack, while TACAIR assets are husbanded for the air battle and for providing a highly mobile force of air-to-surface missiles. Mobile air systems can quickly reach any point along the central front to augment other forces. Missile-carrying TACAIR need not consist of first-line aircraft since flight performance is less important at a 200 to 300 kilometer standoff range.

It would make sense to have the air-launched conventional deep attack missile compatible with the F-4 aircraft. If the F-4 is retained in TACAIR inventory longer than currently planned, it would free all deep attack F-15 and F-16 aircraft for the air superiority mission.

Effectiveness

Conventional deep attack can delay, disrupt, and kill WP second-echelon forces, appearing to provide a significant military advantage for NATO

forces. The results of battlefield simulation models showing forward line of own troops (FLOT) movement, with and without deep attack systems, reinforce this perception. In a combat situation depictive of the central front today, the FLOT collapses after several days of combat, and the WP overruns secondary defensive positions. Introduction of deep attack, however, stabilizes the forward line and enables NATO to contain WP forces and execute aggressive counterattacks. Thus battlefield simulation suggests that conventional deep attack can be a powerful force to counterbalance the numerical superiority of WP forces.

Cost and Schedule

Of the two conventional ways in which to contain a WP attack, the deep attack approach is the most inexpensive and politically acceptable. The other alternative of adding ground forces (ten to twelve armored divisions) to contain an attack would require at least ten times as much in manpower and at least five times the financial outlay. Moreover the addition of offensive maneuver forces could add a politically unacceptable dimension.

Currently deployed TACAIR and existing NATO artillery missiles form the basis of a structure that, when upgraded by a preplanned product improvement (P³I) program, provides an effective conventional deep attack capability without the severe cost and time penalties associated with new weapons development. Upgrading a current surface-to-surface missile system through a P³I program would provide, at low risk, both surface-launched and air-launched missiles that share subsystem and program commonality. Because conventional deep attack offers NATO an effective, affordable counter to WP forces, it is imperative that these systems be fielded as soon as possible. These systems could be operational five years in advance of a new system development and produced at a considerably lower cost. A P³I program would provide delivery systems on a schedule compatible with advances in targeting system deployment and munitions development, thereby maintaining maximum system capability by incorporating these advances as they occur.

Summary

Growth in the numbers and capability of WP forces has cast doubt on NATO's ability to defend its borders without resorting to tactical nuclear weapons. Even the nuclear option fails to guarantee success. Not only does it promise unacceptable destruction and long-term habitability problems on NATO soil, it does not necessarily ensure a tactical advantage for NATO and can lead to a strategic nuclear exchange that neither side can hope to

win. It is to raise the nuclear threshold that the alliance should be developing the tactics, doctrine, and weapon systems that can give central front forces a capable and affordable deep attack capability.

Extensive study to date indicates that the deep attack mission is critical. NATO forces must be able to delay, disrupt, and, where possible, destroy attacking second echelons. Complementary air and surface assets must exist to execute deep attack. It is not possible to perform the entire mission with either system alone. Rocket-propelled air- and surface-launched systems are more survivable and target responsive than are air tactical cruise missiles. Accuracy and payload capabilities do not clearly favor either system; however, the rocket-propelled deep attack missile system will probably be less expensive. Upgrading a current NATO artillery missile through a low-risk P³I program will result in very effective conventional deep attack surface-launched and air-launched systems that can be produced five years sooner than a new development and at considerably lower cost. Targeting is satisfactory today for many high-priority second-echelon targets. Attack system development must not fall behind targeting capabilities. Targeting systems are under development to counter deeper and more elusive targets. Emitter locator and high-resolution, long-range radar systems will come on line in the 1986 to 1991 time frame and will increase NATO capability to target and attack second-echelon forces. Deep attack will create opportunity windows near the FLOT which NATO commanders can exploit by timely counterattack. Effective deep attack depends on cooperative employment of all NATO assets. A conventional deep attack system is more affordable in men and money than any other means of countering WP forces. An effective conventional deep attack system will significantly raise the NATO tactical nuclear threshold and is basically defensive in character. Such a system will permit NATO to counter a 120-division WP attack using conventional armament. In short, conventional deep attack is affordable in both manpower and money and promises an extraordinary and indeed crucial payoff.

Part VI
Strategic Responses
to Regional Conflict:
Persian Gulf
and Southwest Asia



TREE *of* LIBERTY SOCIETY

20

The Formulation of U.S. Strategy in Southwest Asia

William O. Staudenmaier

The peace of the world was shattered with dramatic suddenness when twenty-five Soviet divisions invaded Iran. The United States had been alerted to the impending invasion by the increasingly aggressive Soviet reaction to the domestic turmoil that plunged Iran into chaos following the death of the Ayatollah Khomeini and by the actions taken to increase the readiness of the Transcaucasus military district divisions. As the president discussed U.S. strategic options with the National Security Council, the Soviet armies attacked the disorganized Iranian forces. Under the protective cover of frontal aviation, the Soviet divisions began a deliberate advance in the direction of Tabriz, Qazvin, and Tehran. Regional military observers speculated that after seizing these strategic areas and moving frontal aviation units to forward bases where they could support ground operations farther south, the attack would resume to seize the Khuzistan oil fields.¹ The Soviets were also massing ground and air units along the Iran-Afghanistan frontier. Potentially these forces could be used to control the vital Strait of Hormuz. As the USSR slowly advanced into Iran, the world awaited the U.S. response.

This hypothetical scenario illustrates the Western expectation of a Soviet attack in Southwest Asia, if not the intentions of Soviet war planners. Certainly other threats to Western interests such as intraregional war or internal instability are more likely to occur, but none can match a Soviet attack in the seriousness of its consequences should it occur, let alone succeed.² The purpose of this chapter is to explore some of the major strategic considerations that impinge on the formulation of a U.S. military strategy to protect U.S. national interests in Southwest Asia in the face of the hypothetical Soviet invasion scenario. In order to understand fully how strategy is formulated in the United States, the theoretical underpinnings of the strategic process should be examined.

Strategic Process

Military strategy in the United States follows an informal process that requires that national goals or objectives be derived from the nation's

The views expressed in this chapter are solely those of the author and do not reflect the positions or policy of the Department of Defense or any other agencies within the U.S. government.

interests, that a national strategy employing all of the nation's elements of power (political, economic military, psychosocial, and technological) be developed to achieve the national goals, and that, based on the national strategy, a military strategy be created. This strategic process is based on three hypotheses.

First, military strategy must have some political purpose as its objective. To ensure the ascendancy of the political purpose, policy must operate at two levels in the strategic process. First, it establishes the political objectives that the strategic concept must achieve and, second, policy establishes the framework to which strategy must conform. Strategy, or more specifically, military strategy, is the plan or concept created to secure the political objectives in accordance with the policy rules established by the political leaders. This integration of objective, policy, and strategy is not easily achieved.

The second hypothesis on which strategy rests is that the current international strategic environment operates according to the principal tenets of realist theory. That is, nations have conflicting interests, some of which are solved by resort to military force. Although not all competition between nation-states leads to war, the lack of a legal and political (or military) system superior to the nation to enforce solutions to international disputes means that power is the final arbiter of conflicts among nations. The United States uses diplomacy in an effort to achieve its political goals peacefully and military strategy to protect national interests when force is required.³

Third, policymakers and military strategists, both friendly and enemy, act rationally in setting goals and in choosing policies and strategies to achieve them. This is not to deny that "irrational forces and erroneous perceptions can influence significantly the calculations of 'players' who opt for war."⁴

Strategy can tolerate the notion that a nation's political objectives and security policies are not made strictly according to the rational actor model, but the strategist who must devise a course of action that will achieve the political objectives within the established policy framework must assume that the enemy will act rationally, else the strategic process would be stymied.⁵ Within these theoretical parameters, U.S. policymakers and military strategists share the responsibility to determine how political objectives, security policy, and military strategy can be coherently integrated to ensure that U.S. interests in Southwest Asia are preserved.

Political Objectives in Southwest Asia

Victory in Southwest Asia is defined by the selection of a proper objective that has a high probability of being attained and by the selective application and control of military power. The selection of a political objective in Southwest Asia is based on a consideration of U.S. national interests in the

region. In 1980 President Carter declared that the Persian Gulf was a vital interest of the United States and that any attempt by an outside power to gain control of the region would be repelled by any means necessary, including the use of force. This statement was more detailed than most other statements of national interests; nonetheless, it still left many questions unanswered. For example, it was unclear what precisely was vital to the United States in the Persian Gulf. Presumably it was the continued access to Persian Gulf oil. But did the Persian Gulf include Iraq, Iran, and the Arabian Peninsula or some other configuration?

Neither did the president's statement indicate the intensity with which this interest was to be pursued other than to state that military force could be used. Not all national interests are of uniform importance. The prevention of nuclear war is clearly a more important national interest than, say, internal stability in the nations of sub-Saharan Africa. Political objectives derived from national interests may be pursued with varying degrees of vigor. This intensity of effort might be expressed in many ways, but it is important that it be communicated unambiguously to military strategists early in the strategic process. The use of *vital* by President Carter to describe the importance attached to U.S. Persian Gulf interests is not helpful in the absence of a common understanding of the meaning of that much abused word. Does *vital* mean that the interest was so important that the United States would risk nuclear war to preserve it, or does it mean that the United States would use only limited air and naval forces to support indigenous ground forces? If a rational decision to use force is to be made and translated into a strategic plan for action, the value of the national interest at stake and the intensity with which it will be pursued must be made explicit. The value of the national interests of other nations involved in the region and the capability that they have to threaten U.S. interests is a strong determinant of the intensity of effort that will be required.

A comparison of the U.S.-USSR national interests in Southwest Asia (see table 20-1) shows that the Soviet Union does not have any compelling interest rivaling that of the United States and its industrial allies for continued access to Persian Gulf oil that might induce them to confront the United States militarily.⁶ Although at first glance the Soviet interest in the security of its southern borders could be viewed as an interest comparable in value to that of the United States and the West's need for continued access to oil, further examination reveals an asymmetry of interests that favors the United States and the West. This is true for two reasons. First, the Soviet interest in the security of its borders is a defensive one. For this reason, it is important that Iran remain stable and not become a base of operations for a country hostile to the Soviet Union. The USSR can secure this interest by having the military capability to intervene quickly in northern Iran. This has been the perennial Soviet policy. Second, the only power capable of a serious threat

Table 20-1
U.S.-USSR National Interests in Southwest Asia

<i>United States</i>	<i>Soviet Union</i>
Survival	
Deterrence of nuclear war non-proliferation	Deterrence of nuclear war nonproliferation
Territorial integrity	
None	Security of southern border
Economic well-being	
Retain access to oil and other natural resources	Access to warm water port
Continued free passage over international air/sea routes	Maintain and expand trade and investments
Maintain and expand trade and investments	
World order	
Maintain U.S. credibility and regional influence	Maintain USSR credibility and regional influence
Limit Soviet influence	Reduce U.S. influence
Reduce threat of insurgency	Reduce Chinese influence
Prevent outbreak of hostilities in region threatening to Western nations	Participate in international decisions regarding Southwest Asia to demonstrate superpower status
Settle Arab-Israeli dispute without losing moderate Arab states	

to the Soviet Union is the United States. The one offensive act that would be certain to bring the U.S. military forces to Iran is a Soviet invasion aimed at denying the West access to Persian Gulf oil. Other Soviet interests, such as their own access to Iranian oil and natural gas, whether for themselves or their East European allies, cannot begin to equal in importance the West's interests. Therefore in the context of a crisis that involves a Soviet threat to the Iranian oil fields, the asymmetry of interests rests with the United States.⁷ This has important strategic implications.

Militarily the capability of the Soviet Union to invade the region despite a U.S. pledge to respond is considerable but not without limitations. These limitations include troop readiness, geography, and air tactics. The Soviets have approximately twenty-five divisions available for use in Southwest Asia, most of which would require some mobilization before they could be used in combat; therefore, it would not seem likely that the Kremlin could achieve strategic surprise. Warning measured in weeks rather than days would probably be available to the United States. Although the propinquity of Iran to the USSR provides the Soviet army with a strategic advantage, its importance is diminished by geographic considerations. All of the Soviet invasion routes into Iran will eventually encounter some of the world's most rugged mountainous terrain, which can easily be interdicted by the destruc-

tion of bridges and tunnels. Off-road movement is difficult and often impossible, and the roads themselves can be blocked by landslides caused by explosives. Considerations of geography and distance also limit Soviet frontal aviation (FA) capabilities in Southwest Asia. One strategic analyst points out that "the combination of limited combat radii and no in-flight refueling capabilities for FA aircraft keeps Soviet tactical planes from being able to support many military operations [in Iran] from bases in the USSR."⁸

Given the asymmetry of interest that favors the West and Soviet military constraints, it would seem that the U.S. objective in Southwest Asia should be deterrence. In a situation where the strength of the U.S. motivation exceeds that of the Soviets, deterrence is enhanced and threats of military escalation are more believable. A strategy aimed at deterrence must be accompanied by a reduction in the need of the West for Persian Gulf oil by the creation of adequate petroleum stockpiles, the diversification of oil supplies, energy conservation, and the development of energy alternatives. Certainly the strategic elements to deter the Soviets are present in Southwest Asia.

But military contingency planners must assume that deterrence has failed in order to get on with their job. Even when deterrence is preferred, its failure must be anticipated by the policymakers and military planners. Unless deterrence has failed, conflict termination as a concept is not relevant. To devise a war-fighting strategy that will lead to successful war termination, the two U.S. strategic advantages that result from this consideration of comparative national interests and threats—favorable asymmetry of interests and strategic warning—must be exploited. However, before a strategic concept can be developed that embodies these two strategic advantages, the political objective of the contingency must be translated into a military objective.

Political and Military Objectives

To translate the political objective of continued access to Persian Gulf oil into proper military terms, the military strategist must look beyond the immediate political objective to the conditions that will prevail afterward; these will be major determinants of the military objective and the strategic concept. For example, during the Suez crisis in 1956, Field Marshal Bernard L. Montgomery was asked by Prime Minister Anthony Eden to review the operation plan. As a matter of priority, Montgomery wanted to know why military force was being used.

To knock Nasser off his perch [Eden answered]. Such an aim, Montgomery replied, . . . just would not do, asserting that he himself would have needed

to know what the political object was when Nasser *had* been knocked off his perch, because that would determine how the operation should be carried out.⁹

The strategic implications of Montgomery's point are significant. To illustrate, the military requirements for the overthrow of Nasser would be much greater than those needed to seize the Suez Canal. Since the overthrow of Nasser would require a march on Cairo and probably the partial occupation of Egypt, a larger port, perhaps Alexandria, would be needed to handle the enormously increased logistic and manpower requirements.

Similarly, in Southwest Asia it is important to know the political effect desired before the military objective is selected. If the oil fields are successfully defended, for example, how long will the U.S. or allied force remain? One year? Five years? What political environment is desired? These questions and other similar ones must be answered by policymakers, not military strategists, before the decision to use force is made.

Complicating the strategic problem is the nature of oil fields. The vulnerability of oil fields and their associated installations has been demonstrated by the actions of both Iran and Iraq during the Gulf war. Oil fields can be shut down in many ways ranging from air attack to sabotage by terrorists. The oil flow can be stopped at the well, at pumping stations, at the terminal, and even at sea. Oil facilities, whether used for extraction, production, refinement, storage, or distribution, are expensive and time-consuming to repair. Given the difficulties that face any military operation to defend oil fields, it seems that they must be defended as far forward as possible. Enormous manpower resources will also be needed to protect the critical oil installations, even where the population is friendly. If the population is hostile, which would seem to be the case in Iran for the foreseeable future even if the Soviets invaded, the manpower requirements and strategic difficulties multiply exponentially.

The United States could be faced with a number of liabilities even if the Soviet invasion were stopped. The United States could find that although it might be able to prevent a total Soviet takeover, what remains of Iran may not be worth saving. As a result of the chaotic conditions following the fall of the shah and the destruction caused by the Iran-Iraq war, Iran's economy is in a shambles. The further destruction accompanying a Soviet invasion contested by the United States could lead to more social upheavals, possibly exacerbated by the U.S. force presence. In any event, the United States must be prepared for a successor government unless it plans to occupy Iran. Moreover, minorities such as the Kurds might take advantage of the confusion to challenge the Iranian government, and U.S. soldiers might be drawn into such a contingency. While even success would bring problems, the failure to stem the Soviet invasion would have more serious consequences.

Apart from the high human cost for the United States, several other disadvantages could accrue from failure. First, the Soviets would gain Iranian territory as a base for further adventures in the Persian Gulf. Second, using their Iranian position, the Soviets could pressure other Persian Gulf nations, such as Saudi Arabia. Third, the Strait of Hormuz could come under Soviet control, causing serious economic problems if the Soviets interfere with transit rights and, conceivably, raise the price of oil. Fourth, U.S. credibility would suffer, and the United States would be seen once again as a weak and ineffective power. Finally, failure could have an adverse impact on the cohesion of NATO and the political stability of Western Europe.

Given the possibilities of these risks associated with a Soviet invasion of Iran, a careful and precise definition of conflict termination conditions is needed before the decision to use force is made. To the strategist, the primary objective of conflict termination is not peace but victory; the purpose of strategy is to design and control a military course of action that will win. *Winning* and *victory* are normative terms that have many meanings. In the classical age, victory was equated with the total defeat of the enemy army. Clausewitz, however, reminds us that the defeat of the enemy army is only a means to a greater end: the political objective for which the war was fought. Clausewitz wrote:

Since war is not an act of senseless passion but is controlled by its political object, the value of this object must determine the sacrifices made for it in *magnitude* and also in *duration*. Once the expenditure of effort exceeds the value of the political object, the object must be renounced and peace must follow.¹⁰

With this concept of moderation on the battlefield, Clausewitz introduced the notion of limited wars. In the modern era, this concept has meant strategies that are limited in aim, in which the means used are proportional to the ends desired, and which are contained geographically. In the nuclear age, the United States and the Soviet Union, being mutually vulnerable to nuclear missiles, have perceived that their mutual interests are best served by not pursuing victory in regional conflicts to its ultimate nuclear end. Therefore the parameters of victory in Southwest Asian contingency strategy are defined—first, by the selection of a limited objective that has a high probability of being attained and, second, by the selective application and control of limited military power. In a hypothetical Soviet invasion, for example, would the conflict be considered successful only if the Soviets completely withdrew their forces from Iran? Would the United States consider its national interests protected if the Soviets occupied only Azerbaijan? What if the Soviets occupied the Khuizistan oil fields but did not interfere with oil shipments through the Strait of Hormuz?

Military objectives may be chosen that relate to each of these three conflict termination possibilities. By jointly considering the ramifications of each of these conflict termination points and the potential costs in blood and treasure associated with each, including the probabilities and consequences of success or failure, the policymaker and strategist will have established a dialogue that could result in an effective strategic concept. All of this must be done before the decision to use force is made, and security policies that are compatible with the objectives (political and military) must be promulgated.

Security Policies for Southwest Asia

Compatibility of the political objective, the security policies, and the strategic concept is crucial to the development of an effective strategy. Today there are potential disconnects among these three strategic factors. The following are cases in point.

Conflict avoidance. Since the end of World War II, the United States and the Soviet Union have avoided situations in which a direct military confrontation between the superpowers seemed probable. This mutually accepted policy of conflict avoidance has served each nation well. A scenario depicting a Soviet invasion of Iran aimed at the Khuzistan oil fields contemplates the breakdown of this policy. Policymakers, Soviet and U.S., must realize that a significant strategic firebreak will be crossed in the event of the Iran scenario. The asymmetry of interest that favors the United States and the assessment that the United States will receive some strategic warning should enable it to send strong strategic signals to the Soviets outlining the importance of the region to the West and the potential adverse consequences of their act. Mobilization of U.S. forces is one of the strongest signals that can be sent in this regard.

Mobilization. A policy of early mobilization of U.S. forces, after strategic warning of an impending attack is received, will be a difficult political decision; it will also be a decisive one. Today the active components of the military services are composed largely of combat forces; the reserve components are structured, for the most part, to perform combat support missions. The result is that any contingency plan that requires a strategic deployment will require the president to mobilize 100,000 reservists on his own authority. The potential scope of the Iran scenario would probably require a subsequent full mobilization (the filling out of the approved force structure). The political decision to mobilize must be made very soon after the Soviet mobilization is discovered if the strategist is to reap the most benefit from it. Indeed an early decision to mobilize could easily be the difference between victory or defeat for the United States. During the planning for the Iranian scenario, the military strategist must also make assumptions regarding the

mobilization of airlift and sea-lift if political guidance is not forthcoming. If these assumptions are incorrect, then the operation plan developed by the theater commander will not be effective. This points to an indispensable need for authoritative policymakers to be briefed on the principal provisions of the key military contingency plans that could be executed during a crisis involving the Persian Gulf region and to provide input to ensure that the contingency plan's policy assumptions are correct.

Collective defense. Because of the extensive manpower requirements necessary to implement a Southwest Asian strategy, consideration must be given to collective defense arrangements. The introduction of allies, however, is always constraining because allies do not share equally in power or interests within an alliance area but even more so outside it. The West Europeans and Japanese are more dependent for oil from the Persian Gulf, but because of constitutional constraints (Japan and West Germany), economic considerations, and lack of military capability, the United States has become the executive agent for safeguarding the democratic industrial powers' interests in Southwest Asia. A reciprocal policy of burden sharing by NATO or a substantial increase in the defense budget of Japan has not followed. The addition of Southwest Asia as a vital interest has created a strategy-capabilities mismatch for the United States of serious proportions that can be resolved, in the opinion of some defense analysts, only by more rational burden sharing among the allies. If relief in the form of more equitable burden sharing does not come, there are many defense experts in the United States who would advocate taking a unilateral, if not neoisolationist, position to protect U.S. national interests abroad, some going so far as to support the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Europe if protection of U.S. interests in the Third World should require such action.

War widening. In peacetime, the presence of U.S. military units, particularly of the army, in Southwest Asia is politically and culturally infeasible. Because many defense analysts believe that this would preclude the peacetime forward stationing of U.S. units, which they consider necessary to the development of an effective strategy to counter a Soviet invasion, war widening, or horizontal escalation as it is often called, is seen as an attractive policy. Since the United States could not defeat the Soviet forces in Southwest Asia, the advocates of war widening argue that the conflict should be broadened geographically to attack or threaten other Soviet vital interests. The trick to this indirect strategy is to identify those vulnerable areas so critical that their exploitation would cause the Soviets to abandon their invasion in Southwest Asia yet not choose an area so vital that the Soviets would escalate the crisis, putting more important U.S. interests at risk, such as territorial integrity or survival.

Before adopting a war-widening policy for Southwest Asia, U.S. policymakers must consider the ramifications of horizontal escalation. In terms of

Southwest Asia, a number of scenarios could develop. First, NATO allies could become involved in either a direct or supportive role; then the Soviets could put pressure on the Europeans where it hurts most—in Europe. NATO would then be forced to respond, meaning that the United States would be involved in two theaters simultaneously, putting almost intolerable pressure on the current force structure. Second, should other friendly Southwest Asian countries become involved in assisting the United States to respond throughout the spectrum of conflict in the Persian Gulf, this could be the catalyst for many ethnic or religious factions (such as the Baluchis) to renew their efforts toward obtaining autonomy from their central government. Finally, the war-widening initiatives that are often suggested—blockade of Cuba, closing the Bosphorus to Soviet naval movements, or attacking the Soviet fleet in the Indian Ocean—do not secure the United States access to Persian Gulf oil, although the options escalate the conflict to dangerous proportions.

Nuclear escalation. The current U.S. nuclear policy is that the United States has not disavowed the first use of nuclear weapons, but there are significant drawbacks to their use in Southwest Asia. Consider a scenario in which the United States made a decision to use theater nuclear weapons to counter a Soviet conventional incursion in the Persian Gulf region. Not only would the United States incur the wrath of the rest of the world for initiating the use of nuclear weapons, but the potential of uncontrollable escalation, conceivably threatening U.S. survival, against a power with as much nuclear clout as the United States, would become a reality. It is one thing to threaten the use of nuclear weapons from a position of strength; to do so to compensate for force structure weaknesses would be inexcusable. On balance U.S. nuclear policy in southwest Asia should not disavow first use but should seek to achieve U.S. objectives and to secure U.S. national interests without resorting to nuclear weapons. However, the public discussion of such nuclear alternatives could add to deterrence in the sense of declaratory strategy.

Conclusions

The indispensable need for cohesion among the elements of the strategic equation in Southwest Asia demands the initiation of a close and continuous dialogue between military strategists and political policymakers, not only in the implementation of strategy under the stress of crisis decision making, but, more important, in the development of military plans to cope with international crisis. Any strategic concept that deals with the hypothetical Iranian crisis that has been presented must be compatible with the following policy framework.

First, every attempt must be made to ensure that the U.S.-Soviet tacit

policy of conflict avoidance remains operative. Because the United States can expect a reasonable period of strategic warning, its policymakers must send strong signals to the Soviet Union clearly conveying the asymmetry of interests that favors the West. A clear enunciation of U.S. objectives at stake and the urgency that is attached to them must be communicated to Soviet diplomats. These lines of diplomatic communications must remain open even as the fighting takes place. Furthermore, clear policy guidelines must be provided to military strategists identifying the intensity and risk that decision makers are willing to accept to achieve U.S. interests and objectives.

Second, if deterrence (and conflict avoidance) fails, U.S. political aims must be moderate, with a high probability of achievement because the military means must also be constrained to avoid escalation to nuclear war that could threaten the survival of the United States. The minimum political aims of the United States in an Iranian scenario are continued access to oil from the Arabian Peninsula and free passage through the Strait of Hormuz. While more ambitious war aims may be pursued, they must not arouse the passions of the U.S. or Soviet people, which could result in unwanted escalation.

Third, partial and full mobilization must be authorized not only to provide the manpower required for the contingency but to signal further the seriousness with which the United States views the Soviet action. This political mobilization decision must be given early in the crisis to be effective. If this order is not forthcoming, U.S. military leaders must explain the resultant adverse impact on military capabilities and plans for Southwest Asia. Moreover, this impact must be understood at the highest executive levels. The importance of this and similar policies on strategic planning is precisely why these political-military discussions must take place before the decision to use force is taken.

Fourth, the United States should follow a policy of collective defense. The linkage of Southwest Asia to NATO strategy is obvious. Either Europe or Southwest Asia could be used as a leverage point by the Soviets in some sort of strategic effort to throw the West off balance while it achieves some limited political objective. NATO and Japan could significantly add to the defense of the sea-lines of communication and ease the economic burden of defense on the United States. Translating this policy into action will not be easy; it will require understanding and compromise by the United States and its industrial allies. If it does not become a reality, what Benjamin Franklin said at the signing of the Declaration of Independence will certainly also apply to the West: "We must all hang together, or assuredly we shall all hang separately."

Fifth, closely associated to the policy of collective defense is the need for regional bases or access to support facilities. If politically possible, the acquisition of regional bases in peacetime that could be used in an Iranian

scenario would add immeasurably to deterrence and to the U.S. military capability to counter a Soviet invasion of Iran successfully.

Finally, compatible with the policy to limit war aims, the United States should avoid both horizontal and vertical escalation. Significant economic and world order interests are at stake in Southwest Asia. In the pursuit of these goals, the United States should not put its survival at risk. Initiating either theater nuclear warfare or war-widening options, in my judgment, would begin an escalatory process that probably could not be controlled, and control is the essence of strategy.

Given these policies and objectives, which are clearly the purview of the civilian policymakers, many of my colleagues will argue that I have not left much with which to build a strategic concept. They may be right, but it is essential to ensure that strategy is indeed governed by policy, that it remains focused on the political objectives, and that war remains under as much rational control as it is in our power to provide. The policies I have suggested may not be the ones that the responsible policymakers would choose. Whatever their policies, they must communicate them to the strategist as early in the strategic planning process as possible. Lest we forget, the price of a military strategy uninformed by policy is paid in the blood of U.S. soldiers.



Notes

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3. For a more detailed discussion of realism, see James F. Dougherty and Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, Jr., *Contending Theories of International Relations*, 2d ed. (New York: Harper and Row, 1981), pp. 84–113.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 187.

5. Graham T. Allison, *Essence of Decision* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1971), pp. 32–35.

6. For detailed discussions of U.S. national interests and objectives in the Middle East and Southwest Asia, see John M. Collins, *U.S.-Soviet Military Balance: Concepts and Capabilities, 1960–1980*, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1980), pp. 367–395; U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, *United States Foreign Policy Objectives and Overseas Military Installations*, 96th Cong., 1st sess., 1979, pp. 84–121; and Amos A.

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7. For another viewpoint, see Wohlstetter, “Meeting the Threat,” pp. 138–140.

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9. Roy Fullick and Geoffrey Powell, *Suez: The Double War* (London: H. Hamilton, 1979), p.185.

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21

The United States and Southwest Asia: Policy Guidelines for the 1980s

Keith A. Dunn

U.S. Interests and Objectives

Strategy is built on the concepts of national interests and the specific objectives to attain those national interests. Four fundamental national interests have guided U.S. strategy and policy since the creation of the United States: survival, protection of territorial integrity, maintenance or improvement of economic well-being, and promotion of a favorable world order. Significant and often heated debates occur over the best means to achieve these fundamental national interests. Historically, however, the most vital U.S. interests have been, in order of priority, survival and protection of territorial integrity. Actions that jeopardize those interests should not be initiated lightly or occur haphazardly. Some analysts legitimately debate what the rank order between economic well-being and world order is or should be.

In Southwest Asia, U.S. policy and actions since the end of World War II have been concerned primarily with supporting economic well-being and world order interests. U.S. survival and territorial integrity interests would be involved in Southwest Asia only if a regional conflict escalated to a global superpower conflict with the risk that strategic nuclear weapons might be used.

The primary objective of the United States not only in Southwest Asia but also worldwide is deterrence of Soviet or Soviet-sponsored aggression. Deterrence is the essential objective because military conflict, involving either the United States or the USSR, or their primary allies' forces, will threaten the achievement of other U.S. objectives in the region. If forces were engaged in conflict, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to achieve political stability in the region or peaceful solutions to problems or ensure the flow of oil. Moreover, a nuclear escalation is a significant risk if deterrence fails.

Traditionally, U.S. interests are best served by an international order of stability. As a result a second major U.S. objective in Southwest Asia has been the promotion of peaceful solutions to the myriad historical, cultural, religious, ethnic, ideological, and economic differences that make the region unstable. To the extent that the United States can pursue peaceful solutions to the regional problems confronting Southwest Asia, it supports the process of evolutionary versus revolutionary change, limits the need of

regional states to resort to violence, curtails Soviet access and influence, and forces Moscow to compete in areas (such as political and economic support) where it has few strong cards to play.

Third, the United States has important economic objectives in the region. It continues to be interested in maintaining and expanding its trade and economic investments in the region. The most important economic objective for the remainder of the 1980s, however, will be the same one that has affected U.S. policy so much during the last decade: ensuring that Persian Gulf and Middle East oil will be available to the United States and, particularly to U.S. allies, at reasonable prices.

In recent years the United States has made progress in reducing its Persian Gulf oil dependency, however, it is hard to imagine, as some have suggested, that by the end of the century the United States may no longer require Persian Gulf oil.¹ Even if this did occur, continued access to oil will remain an indirect vital interest of the United States.² If the flow of Persian Gulf oil ceased for a prolonged period or its price became prohibitive, the United States would be affected, but more significantly the economies of Western Europe and Japan could be disrupted, given their energy dependence on Persian Gulf oil. An economic collapse within Europe and Japan would make it virtually impossible to achieve the U.S. national interest of maintaining or increasing the U.S. economic well-being. A major economic disintegration in either Western Europe or Japan also would have political repercussions adversely affecting U.S. world order interests.

The linkage between access to oil for U.S. allies and achieving U.S. national interests is an important issue. On the one hand, this linkage could underscore the region's importance to the United States and thus provide the Soviet Union a plausible explanation of why the United States might use military force to protect its objectives there. Also it should reinforce the idea that U.S. and USSR economic interests in the region, at least during the 1980s, are asymmetrical.³ This is important because traditionally the nation recognized as having the stronger interests in a region has a better chance of successfully defending them in a crisis than a nation with lesser interests. On the other hand, because ensuring the flow of oil is an indirect vital U.S. interest, if a crisis occurred over Persian Gulf oil and U.S. allies did not provide full support, the United States might be unwilling to put its survival interests at stake to defend oil that in the short run is more critical to European and Japanese survival. If such events were to occur, the linkage between oil and U.S. allies would actually undermine rather than reinforce deterrence.

Fourth, a U.S. objective since the end of World War II has been to contain communism. Containment of monolithic communism drove U.S. thinking in other parts of the world during the 1950s and 1960s. In Southwest Asia, however, the primary U.S. concern has been to keep the Soviet Union

physically out of the region. Washington has used a variety of political, economic, and military instruments over the years to curb Soviet political and military expansion in the region and to ensure that U.S. allies and other friendly states can resist Soviet coercive efforts.

Fifth, the United States is committed to the political survival and security of Israel. This objective more than any other demonstrates how the pursuit of one regional objective can conflict with the achievement of others. In addition it indicates why strategists cannot become myopic and think of only one geographic area in their development of military strategy. For the purist, Israel is in the Middle East, not Southwest Asia. But there is no doubt that the Arab nations of Southwest Asia perceive that U.S. support for Israel is out of proportion to the true interests of the United States in the region: access to oil, survival of moderate Arab governments, and containment of Soviet expansion. A primary challenge for strategists is to develop a strategy that balances the objectives of maintaining Israel's security, good political relations with the Arab states, and access to oil.

Sixth, the United States wants to prevent or, at a minimum, delay nuclear weapons proliferation in the region. The United States and the USSR can agree on this objective. Ironically, however, the one objective on which the superpowers can agree causes friction between the United States and traditionally friendly states, such as Pakistan.

Threats

The threats to U.S. interests and objectives in Southwest Asia are diverse. They run the gamut from domestic and intraregional conflicts that could jeopardize many U.S. interests in economic well-being or world order to a Soviet military threat that ultimately could escalate and endanger survival if the policy of superpower conflict avoidance, which has guided U.S. and Soviet behavior world wide in the post-World War II period, should collapse in the region. Detailing the threats each country within the region faces is beyond my scope here. Therefore, this section sketches the general magnitude of the problem and lays the groundwork for the final section on policy guidelines for the 1980s.

Crises of Internal Authority

Possibly the most critical threat to U.S. interests and objectives in Southwest Asia is the internal political instability that occurs outside the matrix of East-West competition. As the International Institute of Strategic Studies said, these developments are "immune to military force," but their "out-

come could have significant strategic implications for the United States."⁴ In a region where the political status quo always seems to be in jeopardy, such domestic conflicts and crises of internal authority are a serious problem. The Iranian revolution is one of the most recent and obvious examples of how such crises can seriously affect U.S. interests and objectives.

Many of the factors that led to the fall of the Pahlavi dynasty were unique. Nevertheless, the Iranian experience is not an isolated example without lessons for the whole region. The conditions that galvanized the Iranian radical Left, middle class, extreme Right, and fundamental clerics were internal problems of modernization: unfulfilled expectations, disparity of wealth, destruction of traditional values, corruption, a gap between economic reality and expectations, restricted participation in the process of government in a monarchical and authoritarian society, and a government weakened by fragile domestic political consensus.

These conditions exist in varying degrees in other Southwest Asian countries. For example, Saudi Arabia walks a fine line in trying to modernize, to protect traditional Islamic values, and to achieve a smooth integration of the large number of Western-educated students, who in the future are supposed to hold important jobs in the bureaucracy and military. If the Saudis are successful, events like the 1979 religious fanatics' attack on the Grand Mosque will continue to be isolated incidents; if they are unsuccessful, future crises of internal political authority will have serious implications for the United States.

Large immigrant, nonnative populations in many Southwest Asian nations are another potential source of political instability. In some instances, 50 to 60 percent of the labor force are not citizens of the country where they live. Thousands of foreign-born workers, primarily Pakistanis, Baluchis, Indians, and other Asians, do the heavy construction work and menial oil-related tasks in Qatar, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Kuwait.

According to a recent work by John A. Shaw and David E. Long, the total Saudi work force is over 3 million workers.⁵ More than 2 million of them are immigrants and foreigners hired to do specific jobs. Over the next five years an additional 500,000 foreign workers may be imported to complete projected developmental plans. As many as 500,000 to 750,000 Yemeni laborers work heavy construction and oil field jobs that native-born Saudis refuse to hold. Over 100,000 Palestinians and Jordanians and 300,000 Egyptians hold important positions in the Saudi bureaucracy and educational system. The Pakistani population in Saudi Arabia may be as high as 300,000. Finally, Western presence is growing. The U.S. business, military advisory, and technical assistance population is estimated to range between 40,000 and 45,000, and the German, French, Italian, Swedish, Greek, Canadian, and Australian community is over 60,000.⁶

The Saudis and most other states in the region are quite sensitive to the potential destabilizing aspects that such large foreign-born populations can cause. As a result, they closely watch the activities of the nonnative groups within their boundaries. In the Saudi case, any sign of dissident behavior normally results in quick deportation. A large portion of the foreign-born workers in Saudi Arabia see themselves as engaged in temporary work, trying to save money so they can return home to a better life. Therefore the threat of deportation is enough to ensure their political acquiescence.

Most observers seem to believe that the foreign-born work force is not an immediate internal security threat for regional states in the short run.⁷ For at least two reasons, however, one cannot be too confident that the situation is conducive to the region's long-term political stability. First, given the number of workers, the positions that they hold within various countries, and the fact that most foreign workers are isolated within the countries and are not allowed to participate in the political process, they are classical and obvious targets of opportunity that adversaries would want to exploit in the event of a political crisis. As William B. Quandt has said about the Saudi Arabian situation, "If Yemen were to be ruled by a regime hostile to the Saudis, . . . [the] large Yemeni population in Saudi Arabia might be used as a destabilizing element."⁸ Second, even if the large foreign presence were never radicalized, the mere existence of a significant U.S., West European, and non-Islamic Asian presence could threaten the traditional values of Islamic nations by creating counterculture trends.

Regional Rivalries

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The traditional regional rivalries endemic to Southwest Asia present two major threats to U.S. interests and regional objectives. First, they provide the Soviet Union opportunities to exploit. The USSR has very little political or economic influence in the region. Except for the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY) no other nation in the region wants to see Soviet presence or access expanded or consolidated.⁹ Southwest Asian regimes are predominantly authoritarian and Islamic. They have few long-term commonalities with communism or the Soviet Union. What access the USSR has gained in the region over the years has occurred primarily because of its willingness to provide arms and military equipment to various nations. Actions that reduce regional political-military rivalries would undercut Moscow's most important means of access to the region.

Second, the possibility always exists that one of the traditional rivalries could escalate into a full-fledged armed conflict. If this occurred, the United States would face the unwanted situation of having to choose between parties in conflict. Washington wants to avoid another Arab-Israeli war, a classic no-win situation for the United States.

If another Arab-Israeli conflict should occur, continued U.S. political support and military assistance of Israel may result in another oil embargo. Over the long run, it would complicate the position of the moderate Arab states that are politically, economically, and philosophically inclined toward the West in general and the United States especially but find themselves involved in unwanted confrontations with their radical Arab brethren because of the U.S.-Israeli relationship.

Coup d'Etats

Coups and attempted coups are a political fact of life for many Southwest Asian states. Southwest Asia ranks second only to Latin America in the total number of coups and attempted coups that have occurred since the end of World War II. Some states have been more prone to coups and attempted coups than others. The severity of coups also varies. The 1972 Qatar coup, where one cousin replaced another with little impact on the population as a whole, was bloodless. The Baathist coup in Iraq was initially bloodless, but in the consolidation phase, the army was extensively purged, members of the former government were given long jail sentences, and public executions were common.

Many conditions that have caused past coups not only in the region but also in other areas of the world continue to exist in Southwest Asia.¹⁰ Issues like the minority Sunni domination of the majority Shiite population in Iraq or, conversely, the Shiite minority problem in Saudi Arabia provide fertile ground for coups. The lack of a pluralist tradition, where various interest group objectives are satisfied through compromise, makes many states in the region vulnerable to coups because the political outs can satisfy their desires only by seizing political power. Also, the numerous political-military rivalries may contribute to coups in the future.

National humiliation as a result of a military defeat always has been a major cause of coups in Southwest Asia. Rules of political succession generally do not exist throughout the region; it is the exception rather than the rule when power transfers from one political leader to another in an orderly fashion. This situation may not cause coups, but it contributes to an environment of political uncertainty and potential instability, a necessary precondition for a coup. Finally, the modernization process itself causes political friction within a country when one institution or group perceives its development to be retarded and restricted.

Soviet Threat

The Soviet Union can threaten U.S. interests and objectives in Southwest Asia in a variety of ways. The direct Soviet military threat is most often

stated in terms of another Afghanistan-type Soviet invasion, and a specific area of concern in recent years has been Iran. If another Soviet military contingency should develop in Southwest Asia, the immediately available ground forces that Kremlin defense planners could call on are the twenty-five divisions located in the north Caucasus, Transcaucasus, and Turkestan military districts. Tactical air support initially would be provided by one tactical air army from the Turkestan military district and another in the Transcaucasus military district. Between these two districts, 450 to 600 aircraft could be provided. Most would be older-generation planes, but if the conflict did not escalate to a global war, Moscow could possibly redeploy some more modern generation aircraft from other military districts. Naval support would be provided from the Indian Ocean squadron. Normally this squadron has been composed of approximately four to five combatants. If a military crisis in Southwest Asia developed or Moscow believed that one was possible, the squadron probably would be reinforced with forces from the Pacific or possibly the Northern Fleet since Moscow has followed this pattern during past regional crises.

On the surface, the quantitative Soviet military threat is imposing; however, significant Soviet and regional military factors limit and constrain Soviet military options in the 1980s.¹¹ First, the rough and rugged terrain of Iran favors the defense rather than the offense. Second, the geography of the region is not conducive to a Soviet armored and mechanized blitzkrieg military operation, as the Soviet attempt to pacify the Afghan rebels demonstrates. Third, Soviet forces in the region are not postured for an attack that comes without warning. Most Soviet ground forces divisions stationed in three military districts bordering Southwest Asia are not at full strength (category III) and would require significant inputs of men and trucks from the civilian economy to make them combat ready. To bring the divisions up to strength would require approximately 200,000 reservists. Fourth, specific Soviet military equipment capabilities—limited range and no air-refuelable capability for frontal aviation aircraft, a lack of staying power, little offensive punch in the Indian Ocean squadron, and limited naval force projection capabilities because of too few modern logistic ships—constrain military options. Finally, the lack of Soviet friends and allies, a lack of guaranteed access to facilities, and a general dislike for not only the Soviet Union but also the communist system throughout the region are major political constraints that adversely affect Soviet military capabilities.

Support for regional nations involved in conflict is another potential Soviet threat to U.S. interests and objectives. Initially this type of threat would be more indirect than direct; however, one can imagine different types of scenarios in which Soviet forces ultimately could become directly involved. Moscow could alter the readiness posture of its forces and reposition them to show its support for a nation or faction involved in conflict.¹² The USSR could provide logistic and arms support to friends, allies, and

proxies involved in conflict. If Soviet troops must force their way into a theater, Moscow faces numerous constraints on its abilities to support friendly groups or nations noncontiguous to the USSR. Nonetheless, when one compares the lack of Soviet capability in the Congo in the 1960s with what it did in Angola, Ethiopia, Egypt, Vietnam, and Afghanistan in the 1970s, it is clear that Moscow can provide strategic logistical support to certain types of Third World insurrections, guerrilla activities, and proxy movements that threaten U.S. interests and objectives. Also, Moscow has an extensive and proved network of propaganda instruments and tools to encourage and support the various radical, separatist, antigovernment, and secessionist groups that exist in the region. To the extent that Soviet propaganda, psychological operations, and declaratory support for these groups encourage them to continue their actions, this is an additional indirect Soviet threat.

Finally, the Soviet Union's proximity to Southwest Asia creates another whole set of indirect threats from the U.S. perspective. As Shahram Chubin has argued, "Geography provides the Soviet Union with a permanent presence that the West can match only with great difficulty." Even before the invasion of Afghanistan, the Soviet Union cast a long political shadow over the region. Soviet presence may not lead to direct influence over the foreign and domestic politics that Southwest Asian nations pursue; nevertheless, the Soviets' ever-present nature and the fact that they can never just pack their bags and go home (or, as Chubin has said, they are "in the region and unable to get out") means that regional nations must shape policies and actions with an eye always over their shoulder toward their northern neighbor.¹³ The primary risk or threat from a U.S. perspective is that the region could become politically neutralized or frightened into inaction because of the Soviet Union's proximity; no U.S. interests and objectives would be served by such an event.

Conclusions and Policy Guidelines

Two major policy-oriented conclusions can be drawn. First, political instability, a major characteristic of the region, results from many causes and issues. They are historical in nature, the result of local power politics, and a product of social, political, economic, and ethnic conditions indigenous to the region as a whole. Therefore, they will not disappear quickly, if ever. No panacea or single solution will eliminate all the problems. Solving the Israeli-Palestine issue, if that is possible, would remove only one problem. Admittedly this is an important issue, but solving it would have little affect on other causes of instability, such as coups or traditional political-military regional rivalries that exist without regard to the Israeli issue. Similarly,

containing and/or blocking Soviet access to the region is only part of the solution because Moscow is not the only, or even the primary, catalyst of political instability in Southwest Asia.

Second, because of the magnitude and diversity of U.S. interests and objectives and threats to them, policymakers and strategists alike must guard against the temptation to choose single-issue answers to problems with multiple causes. As one observer has said, "the search for a 'pure' contingency (internal versus external) is as illusory as the quest for one instrument of response. The issues are not 'political' versus 'military' and never have been."¹⁴ Some priority or understanding of the most immediate or likely threats to U.S. interests and objectives is necessary. But the idea that one can develop an economic or political option without considering military options, or vice-versa, is myopic at best. The problems and the resulting threats to U.S. interests and objectives in the region cut across the entire political, economic, social, and military spectrum, and they require comprehensive rather than incremental, ephemeral attention.

In the pursuit of a strategy for Southwest Asia, several policy guidelines should be kept in mind:

Collective and alliance approaches versus unilateralism. Currently there is a public debate over the degree of emphasis that the United States should give to collective and alliance versus unilateral approaches. The question being asked is whether the U.S. political and military strategy for the region should be based primarily on an alliance or unilateral approach. Obviously a unilateral strategy places fewer restrictions on the United States and, if the capabilities to execute such a strategy exist, makes a strategist's job easier. A coalition or collective approach requires all participants to sacrifice a degree of their sovereignty and independence of action because of the need to compromise and the requirement for states to agree that each one's interests are affected to the same degree before they are willing to initiate a collective action response. However, the United States has few viable options other than continuing its present nonunilateral approach toward Southwest Asia.

The total cost of trying to build a U.S. military structure capable of carrying out unilateral military actions in the region would be prohibitive. Moreover, despite a nostalgia for a bygone era when the United States was the unchallenged political, economic, and military leader of the world, it is impossible to return to a period of fortress America. The United States can no longer, if it ever could, feel safe and secure in a world in which everyone is hostile or even neutral toward it. In an interdependent world, we need friends and allies to obtain most of our national interests. World order, economic well-being, and even territorial integrity and survival interests would be threatened if the United States had to face a hostile world alone. Through alliances and collective responses to mutual security threats, the United States is not only defending allies' interests but also defending those

U.S. interests and objectives most important to it. Also, effective alliance structures and coalition partnerships are force multipliers enabling the United States militarily to balance Soviet power.

Critics of alliance, collective action, or coalition approaches claim that there is no guarantee that in a crisis other nations will support U.S. policy. This is a real risk of nonunilateral approaches. There is, equally, no guarantee that the U.S. public will or should bear the financial burden required to build a military capability for unilateral military action in Southwest Asia. Besides, ensuring the flow of Persian Gulf oil is an indirect vital U.S. interest, but it is critical for U.S. allies' economic survival. As a global nation and the most militarily powerful adversary of the USSR, the United States has a responsibility as well as a need not to think in ethnocentric terms. Nevertheless, before the United States uses military force to protect Persian Gulf oil, it may not be too much to ask that its allies support such a venture. Otherwise in the effort to defend economic well-being interests, the United States might put at risk its survival interests.

Arms sales. The United States must be careful in selling sophisticated military arms and equipment. In a region like Southwest Asia, this has been and will continue to be a very difficult goal to uphold because a precedent to sell has already been established. The United States has sold Israel the F-15 and F-16; Egypt has bought the F-16; Saudi Arabia has purchased the F-15 and the Reagan administration has agreed to sell five airborne warning and control system (AWACS) aircraft to the Saudis; and Pakistan has been offered the F-16. The push to sell is compounded because the United States is not the only arms supplier. The Soviet Union and France have been more than willing to sell first-class military equipment to regional states.

The reasons Southwest Asian nations want the newest generations of military equipment are as diverse as the countries themselves. Some believe that threats to their security require such weapons. Others view the delivery of modern weapons as tangible evidence of a U.S. security commitment to them. As Andrew Pierre has said, "Arms sales are a barometer of politics among nations."¹⁵ In certain countries modernizing the military and buying the newest equipment possible is a convenient method for satisfying the military elites and keeping them depoliticized. Prestige and honor are also important ingredients in the desire for weapons; if one's neighbor has first-line equipment, one's own country needs such equipment or its relative political position in the region will decline.

Despite the cogent arguments to justify the sale of sophisticated military equipment to Southwest Asian states, policymakers must be careful with arms sales and closely evaluate each request for two important reasons. First, the more sophisticated the weapons system, the greater the possibility that the sale may create intrusive conditions in the recipient country's political system in the long run. For example, the sale of a weapon system

(such as AWACS to Saudi Arabia) that is beyond the capabilities of the nation to maintain or to operate effectively without technical assistance can lead to an increased foreign civilian and possibly military presence. Depending on which Southwest Asian country is being considered, an expanded U.S. presence may be counterproductive and contribute to the very condition—internal political instability—that the United States is trying to avoid.

Second, in the past, proposed sales of advanced military equipment to Southwest Asian countries have received close scrutiny in Congress, and it does not seem likely that this will change much in the future. While in a democratic nation this debate is not only healthy but also necessary, it is often insulting and humiliating for the recipient countries because every aspect and motive behind a proposed arms agreement is publicly aired in Congress and the press. Not infrequently the net result is a strain in political relations between the United States and the recipient country. Given the nature of the U.S. political system, these strains will never be eliminated totally, but they can be ameliorated. The guidelines that William Quandt has established for arms sales to Saudi Arabia are a good proposal and should be applied to the entire region:

The first order of business is to try to reach agreement on a military posture that makes sense . . . and that the United States in good conscience can defend before Congress and the American public as meeting legitimate security needs . . .

If the United States cannot justify the sale of equipment in military terms, it should not make the sale, since other justifications are often ill-considered, misleading, and can leave a residue of bitterness.¹⁶

Iran. Much of the general U.S. public feels indignation or downright anger at Iran. Some want to punish or get even with Iran for the hostage crisis and a series of other indignities that Khomeini has heaped on the United States since the fall of the shah.

This tendency may be understandable, but U.S. policymakers must resist the temptation to seek retribution in the coming decade. U.S. interests and objectives would not be served if Khomeini's departure (whether by natural causes or political overthrow) resulted in Iran's dismemberment or the development of a political vacuum within the country. U.S. policymakers should educate the public about the geostrategic importance of Iran so they will be prepared to support future policy options aimed at improving U.S.-Iranian relations. Likewise, persistent but modest efforts should be made to reduce an Iranian image that the United States is the major threat in the hope that the regime that follows will not be as irrationally anti-U.S. as Khomeini has been.

Be judicious in requesting bases. After the fall of the shah and the invasion of Afghanistan, there was a strong push on the part of the United

States, particularly within the Department of Defense, to obtain bases and increase the U.S. military presence in the region. The desire for an increased military presence in the region was driven primarily by concerns that distance factors favored the USSR and that without a U.S. military presence immediately available, the United States would not have sufficient time or in-place capabilities to react to another Soviet incursion.

Subsequent analyses indicate, however, that the United States is not competing in a zero-sum game where Moscow has all the military advantages. Distance factors, when considered in conjunction with Soviet force posture and equipment characteristics and the geography of the region, limit Soviet, as well as U.S., capabilities. Moreover, the low readiness status of Soviet ground forces in the three military districts bordering Southwest Asia and the normal peacetime Soviet naval deployments in the region indicate that Moscow believes that any conflict in the region would be preceded by a period of preconflict political crisis when it could mobilize reserves and realign its naval forces. In other words, strategic warning will exist prior to a conflict in Southwest Asia and the United States should have time to react. Whether the United States will have the intelligence to see it and the political will to act are major unanswerable questions. Nevertheless, it is important to note that we are not talking in terms of hours and days of warning, but it is more likely to speak of weeks. This argues in favor of flexible naval and air forces near the region as over-the-horizon deterrents, which could be reinforced rapidly in the event of a crisis. If the United States has ample strategic warning, there is less need for land-based forces in the region that may create political problems for the host nation and contribute to the regional instability.

The United States must also be judicious in its push for bases and facilities in the region because, as John Campbell has said, "the urge for nonalignment within the region is real, for it stems from the experience of peoples long subject to domination by outsiders."¹⁷ In times of crisis, when the United States seeks a military relationship that regional states perceived as being too close and intrusive, such actions generally have not resulted in creating confidence within the region or a desire to support U.S. policy. Most Southwest Asian states are favorably inclined toward the West, but that does not mean that they favor U.S. bases in the region because of their broader concerns about superpower domination and intrusion into the region. A U.S. military desire to acquire bases in the region to counter Soviet proximity must be balanced by those regional concerns. In the long run, encouraging nations like Saudi Arabia to continue overbuilding their own military facilities, even without an explicit commitment that U.S. forces could use them in a crisis, and combined military exercises with Australian, British, and French forces in the Indian Ocean area, may have just as much deterrent effect on the USSR as would U.S. bases in the region. More

important, they would avoid the potential adverse political ramifications associated with bases.

Status quo. Changes in the status quo will occur in Southwest Asia. In some instances, those changes may be conducive to U.S. objectives. For example, the neutralization or even the Finlandization of Afghanistan resulting in the withdrawal of 100,000 Soviet troops clearly would be in U.S. interests. On the other hand, political instability within Saudi Arabia because of intrafamily rivalries or foreign worker problems would not be in U.S. interests.

At the national policy level, it is important to avoid adopting or assuming that any change to the status quo is bad. Some changes are not. Also, it is important to avoid an assumption that changes to the status quo that result in increased Soviet access will automatically result in an increased Soviet influence over the actions of the regional states. The Soviet track record in Southwest Asia is spotty at best, and throughout the Third World in general, Moscow has achieved a mixture of successes and failures. The United States is not involved in a competition where the USSR has all the advantages or has achieved complete success. As a result, it must have a policy predicated on managing change rather than being fixed rigidly to the status quo.

A strategy for Southwest Asia built along the lines suggested here has a reasonable chance of being successful. It would recognize both U.S. and USSR advantages and disadvantages in the region while understanding the indigenous dynamics. We do not want to "engulf the Gulf," as Christopher Van Hollen has warned against, but a completely "laid back," inactive political strategy is equally inadequate.¹⁸ The United States needs a strategy that not only is based on an alliance or collective approach but also integrates all the instruments of national power (political, diplomatic, economic, and military) and does not concentrate on one or two to the exclusion of others. This is not a simple task, but it is imperative for Southwest Asia.

Notes

1. For just one example of this type of thought, see Christopher Van Hollen, "Has the Persian Gulf Passed Its Prime?" *Washington Post*, December 27, 1981, p. D7.

2. I am using *indirect* vital interest in the manner that William O. Staudenmaier has used it. He defines intensity of U.S. interests in the following manner: A vital national interest is "of such importance as to have a direct bearing on the attainment of basic U.S. national security objectives. The United States would risk escalation to general nuclear war to protect a vital interest. Hypothetically, if Western Europe is a vital interest of the United States, then the Persian Gulf oil fields and sea-lanes of communica-

tions between the Persian Gulf and Western Europe, which the Europeans consider vital to their interests, would also be a vital interest of the United States, albeit indirectly." William O. Staudenmaier, "Strategic Concepts for the 1980s," *Military Review* 62, no. 3 (March 1982):39.

3. For more on Soviet energy picture, see Bernard Gwertzman, "CIA Revises Estimate, Sees Soviet as Oil-Independent through 80s," *New York Times*, May 19, 1981, pp. A1, D11; Thane Gustafson, "Energy and the Soviet Bloc," *International Security* 6, no. 3 (Winter 1981-1982):65-89.

4. International Institute for Strategic Studies, *Strategic Review* (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1979), p.1.

5. John A. Shaw and David E. Long, *Saudi Arabian Modernization: The Impact of Change on Stability* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1982), p. 46.

6. These figures were compiled from a variety of sources, including *ibid.*; John K. Cooley, "Iran, the Palestinians, and the Gulf," *Foreign Affairs* 57, no. 5 (Summer 1979):1020; William B. Quandt, *Saudi Arabia in the 1980s: Foreign Policy, Security, and Oil* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1981); John Keegan, ed., *World Armies* (New York: Facts-on-File, 1979), pp. 607-620; Christopher Van Hollen, "Don't Engulf the Gulf," *Foreign Affairs* 59, no. 5 (Summer 1981):1069; and John Duke Anthony, *Arab States of the Lower Gulf: People, Politics, Petroleum* (Washington, D.C.:Middle East Institute, 1975).

7. Quandt, *Saudi Arabia in the 1980s*, pp. 100-101; William B. Quandt, "The Middle East Crisis," *Foreign Affairs* 58, no. 3 (1980):553-554; and Shaw and Long, *Saudi Arabian Modernization*, p. 110.

8. Quandt, *Saudi Arabia in the 1980s*, p. 27.

9. I do not equate Afghanistan with the PDRY because using over 100,000 troops to enforce Soviet desires on a country hardly fits my definition of a country wanting to see Soviet presence and access consolidated.

10. For more general information and theoretical discussions about coups, see William R. Thompson, *The Grievances of Military Coup-Makers* (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1973); Sebastian de Grazia and Livio C. Stecchini, *The Coup D'Etat: Past Significance and Modern Technique* (China Lake, Calif: U.S. Naval Ordnance Test Station, 1965); S.E. Finer, *The Man on Horseback: The Role of the Military in Politics*, rev. ed. (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1976).

11. For a full discussion of my views on Soviet military constraints on Southwest Asia, see Keith A. Dunn, "Constraints on the USSR in Southwest Asia: A Military Analysis," *Orbis* 25, no. 3 (Fall 1981):607-630.

12. For the most detailed account of how the USSR has used its military forces as a political instrument to obtain interests and objectives, see Stephen S. Kaplan, *Diplomacy of Power: Soviet Armed Forces as a Political Instrument* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1981).

13. Shahrum Chubin, "U.S. Security Interests in the Persian Gulf in the 1980s," *Daedalus* 109, no. 4 (Fall 1980):47–48.
14. Ibid., p. 40.
15. Andrew Pierre, *The Global Politics of Arms Sales* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), p. 275.
16. Quandt, *Saudi Arabia in the 1980s*, p. 156.
17. John C. Campbell, "The Middle East: A House of Containment Built on Shifting Sands," *Foreign Affairs: American and the World* 1981 60, no. 3 (1982):625.
18. Van Hollen, "Don't Engulf the Gulf," pp.1064–1978.



TREE of LIBERTY SOCIETY

22

Threats and Conflict on the Arabian Peninsula

Thomas L. McNaugher

Domestic Turbulence

On the face of it, the sheikhdoms of the Arabian Peninsula (Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, and Saudi Arabia) look like political disasters waiting for a chance to happen. Political and social evils accompany economic development; emerging working classes of relatively oppressed have-nots, a class of educated technocrats anxious to participate in politics, and incredibly well-armed militaries threaten regimes as well as defend them; additional sources of domestic turbulence arise from both the Palestinian problem and the presence of Islamic forces in their societies. All of these factors seem likely to tax the political resources of these authoritarian, traditional political institutions to the breaking point.

Yet surprisingly these regimes have weathered the past two decades rather well. They have survived plots, occasional riots, and outbreaks of religious fanaticism. Moreover, neither Nasser in the 1960s nor Saddam Hussein in the early 1970s managed to topple these regimes, and Khomeini has thus far had no luck either; strengths are hidden in these societies. There are four potential sources of domestic turbulence and conflict: the pains of modernization, the threat posed by modernizing militaries, the persistence of tribal or regional divisions within states, and the threats to stability associated with the Palestinian issue.

Growing Pains in the Gulf

Economic development tends to mobilize the citizens of traditional societies, breaking them away from past allegiances and forming them into new classes, mostly urban in nature, that place new and often unmeetable demands on old institutions. To some extent the Gulf sheikhdoms have experienced these problems for two or three decades, the more so since 1973 when the first oil price hike vastly increased their wealth. Yet the development process in these states is given a special character by their size, history, and sociology, and on balance this special character seems to mitigate some of its more disruptive aspects.

Although the beginnings of industrialization are producing a labor class

in the Gulf, the oil sheikhdoms themselves are too small and backward and their revenues too large to keep up with the labor demands of modernization. The sheikhdoms obtain the additional labor they need from other countries, notably the Yemen Arab Republic, Pakistan, Egypt, and India. Significantly, although the indigenous labor force grows as education and jobs spread, the expatriate component of the work force tends to grow more quickly. In their second five-year plan, for example, the Saudis estimated conservatively that between 1975 and 1980 the indigenous component of their work force would grow 3.4 percent while the non-Saudi work force would grow by 21 percent. Whereas in 1975 20 percent of the work force was non-Saudi, in 1980 the Saudis expected expatriates to comprise 35 percent of the force.¹ While figures are scarce, observers generally place the current ratio of Saudi-to-expatriate worker at between one- and two-to-one.² These trends accord well with the experience of Kuwait, the sheikhdom with the longest experience in collecting oil revenues; there the expatriate portion of the population is high and still growing.³

The ethnic divisions in these small but growing proletariates on balance work to limit their revolutionary potential. Indigenous workers generally look down on expatriates and also tend to be better off financially. While expatriates may be politically oppressed, they also are likely to be split ethnically into small and often isolated groups. Besides while expatriates may be oppressed in comparison to indigenous workers, they may do fairly well in comparison to what they could be doing at home. Many send remittances home and look forward to the day when they can return with sufficient savings to live comfortably there.

To be sure, expatriates are not totally quiescent. Saudi Arabia experienced violence among Shia laborers in its eastern province in December 1979 and February 1980, sparked partly by the revolution in Shia Iran but no doubt also because of the poor circumstances of these workers.⁴ The Saudis fear that the Shias, who comprise about 35 percent of the oil field work force, may use their special oil-related skills to sabotage the fields. They look on Yemeni expatriates, their most populous group, as a potential fifth column for radical causes from either of the Yemens.

Still, expatriates are likely to be more manageable than indigenous workers. They may be physically distinguishable from the rest of the population and often live in isolated areas. Many are looked upon as second- or third-class citizens. All can be deported and replaced. For all these reasons expatriates are more easily managed by indigenous police than citizen labor. Expatriate groupings can be subject to a form of social engineering too. Fearful of its growing Palestinian community, for example, Kuwait has started to bring in Egyptians instead.⁵ The Saudis can always replace Yemins with more quiescent Baluchis or Koreans.

A more likely source of domestic trouble on the peninsula is the growing

class of white-collar technocrats. Such is the wealth of most of these countries that indigenous Saudis, Kuwaitis, or Qataris pass up a place in the real work force to become well-paid government bureaucrats or business partners with an expatriate firm. If Kuwait's relatively long period of development is any example, this class can be expected to be politically articulate and possibly to challenge the power of the sheikhs.⁶ There is a genuine problem here, or at least one in the making.

At the moment, however, two factors seem responsible for curbing the potential obstreperousness of this class: sheer wealth, which seems to be capable of buying a good deal of political acquiescence, and the family ties that run across this emerging class, giving many of its members a stake in the existing system and providing the ruling elite with fairly close ties to the society they rule. Over the long term, however, family ties will thin out with each generation, and a decline in oil revenues is likely to set members of this class at odds with one another. For the near and medium term, however, this class would appear to be happy with its rather sizable lot.

Above and beyond the specific features of these emerging groups and their relationships to existing political institutions lies the force of Islam, which has two quite different effects as far as the potential for conflict is concerned. On the one hand, the force of Islam in these societies places strict limits on developmental choices. Islam demands purity and sacrifice; it abhors the godless, crass materialism its adherents see in the West. While no oil state has been willing to eschew the material fruits of its oil wealth, each is trying urgently to find an Islamic path to modernity. To do otherwise is to court a legitimacy crisis.⁷

Whatever other threats revolutionary Iran poses to the Gulf sheikhdoms, its example threatens them because it reinvigorates the image of Islamic purity. To be sure, citizens on the Arab side of the Gulf are aware of the bloodshed and chaos that has attended Iran's revolution. They are aware that these revolutionaries are Persians and Shias, not Sunni Arabs. Still, the vision of Islamic forces rising to shed all trappings of imperialism, of a seemingly free and independent Islamic state, is a powerful one that serves to narrow the road these states walk toward modernity.⁸

But if the forces of Islam make the modernization process in these countries more arduous, Islam also provides these societies with a powerful unifying force. On balance it is this side of the Islamic issue that is more important to the Gulf states. The Saudis, for example, had their Islamic revolution two centuries ago when their family first allied itself with the puritanical reformer Abdul Wahhab. Saudi Islamic credentials are in good order, and members of the Saudi elite are acutely aware of how much their future depends on keeping those credentials intact.⁹ It is more than likely that any sensed deviation from Islam will precipitate a rapid reorientation within the family as more conservative members move into positions of

dominance within it in an attempt to prevent any wider loss of legitimacy to the family as a whole. At the moment this seems unnecessary, however; the Saudis, as well as the other sheikhs around the Gulf, effectively use Islam as a unifying agent in their domestic policies.

The presence of Islam, fragmentation among these states' laboring class, the quiescence of the white-collar class, and the presence of widespread family ties across it all help explain why the stress and distortions arising from modernization have been contained surprisingly well in the sheikhdoms. Further, they suggest that in the short and medium term, the prospects for major conflict arising from modernization are low. In any case, revolution seems far less likely than conflict among the top and middle echelons of these societies, pitting technocrats, merchants, and sheikhs against one another.

In the long run, however, it is difficult to see how these regimes can survive. They have their roots in bedouin culture and use the symbols and trappings of that culture to help sustain their legitimacy. But rapid growth has begun to pull the bedouin into towns and to send an increasing fraction of bedouin children to school. So far these regimes have experimented with only the barest rudiments of representative institutions, and all but one of these have been dissolved. Real conflict resulting from modernization may yet come when a generation rises whose quiescence cannot be purchased (or for whom there is less oil revenue to go around), that will not accept the dissolution of a national assembly, and that refuses to see the Majlis as a legitimate form of representative government.

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Threat from the Military

It seems strange to speak of an indigenous military threat to the Gulf sheikhdoms. Historically these ruling families rose to power and sustained themselves largely through their own military exploits. Their military forces were in a very real sense extensions of themselves. This remains the case, by and large, in the smaller sheikhdoms. True, it has been years since a ruling sheikh led his bedouin forces to victory. Still, in states like Qatar, Bahrain, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the minister of defense is a trusted family member (usually the crown prince), as are the senior commanders of what are in any case rather small military forces.¹⁰ Although these states have begun to acquire sophisticated weaponry, these are supported by expatriates rather than a group of technocratic indigenous military officers. In these states, the military remains very much a traditional family affair.

These remarks hold least true for Saudi Arabia. The Saudis carry the foreign policy and external security burden for the other sheikhdoms, except possibly Kuwait. They are also the largest and richest of the sheikhdoms. As

a consequence they have the largest military forces. Although the minister of defense and aviation, as well as senior officers in all services, are family members fairly closely tied to the central elite, at junior and middle levels, officers are non-Saudis or cadet princes whose loyalty to the existing hierarchy may be questionable. All of these officers especially those in the air force, are exposed to Western and modernizing influences. Not surprisingly, perhaps, since the early 1960s the Saudis have experienced defections and plotting among their military officers, especially those in the air force.

Historically King Abdul Aziz used a divide-and-control approach to his military forces. He unified much of what is now Saudi Arabia using the Ikhwan, a ground force of fanatically Wahhabist bedouin recruited from the Nejd and Hasa areas of the country (the interior and eastern coastal regions). These soldiers proved overly zealous, however, and in the 1920s Abdul Aziz began to organize an army drawn from other areas of his kingdom, which he used to subdue the Ikhwan in fierce combat in 1930. Thereafter the two forces existed in uneasy balance. The Ikhwan was permitted to regroup and became first the White Army and, in 1962, the National Guard. Other forces were grouped under a regular army, which became the Royal Saudi Army.¹¹

These two forces still exist and continue to reflect the regional character given them by Abdul Aziz. The guard recruits almost solely from Nejd and Hasa. Although it has elements stationed along the borders and in virtually all Saudi cities, its principal bases are still in Saudi Arabia's oil regions. It alone is responsible for oil field security. The army recruits from a wider area of the country, including the Hijaz, and is not deployed in the oil regions. The historical differences separating the two forces have acquired a family dimension as well. The guard is commanded by Crown Prince Abdullah, whose roots go back to the Jiluwi side of the Saud family. The army comes under the minister of defense and aviation, Prince Sultan, one of the well-known seven sons of the Sudairi branch of the family.¹²

In purely military terms, these two forces could hardly be called balanced. In seeking to build the country's armed strength after 1962, King Faisal focused almost exclusively on the army. By 1973 the National Guard's poor state of health was recognized, and soon after the Saudis sought U.S. help to restore its effectiveness. The SANG (Saudi Arabian National Guard) program has produced a much more efficient force, to be sure, but one both smaller and less well armed than the Saudi Army. On a unit-for-unit basis, the guard's V-150 armored cars would be no match for the army's AMX-30 and M-60 tanks.

Today the Saudi elite seems to be divided on the future of these forces. Many apparently feel that Saudi Arabia is too important and too deeply involved in regional security matters to continue to maintain two separate forces.¹³ They also see the guard as ill prepared to deal with a serious

armored threat to the country's oil fields. Significantly, in 1979 the Saudis sought to buy 300 of West Germany's top-flight Leopard II tanks for the National Guard, though it is not clear whether this was the beginning of an attempt to merge the guard with the army or simply an attempt to upgrade the guard's forces. The presence of fairly deep family and regional differences between the two forces suggests that a formal merger would probably mask the continued existence of two forces.

Whatever the outcome of this debate, at the moment these two forces exist, and however skewed the balance between them, it is likely to have some value in deterring or dealing with potential threats from within the military. While the army is clearly superior to the guard in size and weaponry, it is scattered to widely separated posts.¹⁴ The guard tends to be more centrally located near Riyadh and the oil fields. In any case, plotters within one or the other military organization, or within the air force, probably would have the use of only a small portion of the overall force. Under these circumstances they might be deterred from initiating a coup or small revolt; they could not expect to take over without a fight.

Besides the continuing existence of divided forces, there are a variety of these factors that tend to limit potential threats to the Saudi elite emanating from the military. While family ties may be stretched too thin to create tight bonds of loyalty across these services, the presence of family members at all posts and most levels of the services no doubt provides the elite with good intelligence on their forces. It is worth noting that although there have been plots within military circles, these have been discovered before major action could be taken on their part.

Two other factors are worth mentioning. One is a consequence of buying highly sophisticated weaponry. Most of the support for these weapons, especially in the air force, will continue to come from expatriate labor; Saudis themselves will at best be pilots and members of first-line ground crews. The Saudi elite thus can hope to undermine a coup attempt by recalling all support. The second factor is the existence of small, highly trained, and intensely loyal Royal Guards units in Saudi Arabia, as well as in the other peninsular states. These supply the elites in these countries with a potent last-ditch line of defense should a plot reach the point of implementation.

One should not be too sanguine about the Saudi elite's ability to control its military. Plots have been hatched in the past and may become more numerous as the military, like the Saudi white-collar class, becomes more technocratic in outlook. Still, the Saudis are much more in touch with their militaries than was the shah. And in retaining the loyalties of a strong and fairly stable upper crust of officers in all services, they seem thus far to have escaped the problems so common in highly political armies like those of Iraq, Syria, and Egypt. Moreover, they preside over a military rent by

enough divisions and populated by enough people whose loyalty they can count on that should a takeover bid nonetheless arise from some part of the military, they stand a good chance of coming out the winner.

Family Affairs

In some of these states, family rivalries could produce open conflict under certain conditions. In tiny Qatar, the ruler's son has been designated crown prince as well as commander in chief of the armed forces, but the ruler's younger brother has asserted a claim to the throne and reportedly has armed some of Qatar's tribes for the day when he may claim his right more forcefully.¹⁵ And if the UAE is considered a single state, the historical, cultural, and political differences that still separate Sheikh Zayid of Abu Dhabi from Sheikh Rashid of Dubai may also be considered a potential dynastic squabble.

In general, these differences are held in check reasonably well. Most members of the Gulf's ruling families know that open conflict in so important an area could serve as an excuse for intervention by larger regional or world powers and that intervention in so weak an area could be lethal to local regimes. They assert repeatedly their desire to be left unmolested by both superpowers and thus far have upheld their side of the bargain by quieting family disputes as well as other kinds of domestic turbulence. The Saudis set the example here, keeping differences among various branches of the family largely out of sight. One suspects that they are prepared to move forcefully, either diplomatically or militarily, to stifle family quarrels in bordering sheikhdoms.

The most worrisome case is the UAE. Because this is the largest and richest of the seven UAE sheikhdoms, Sheikh Zayid of Abu Dhabi is titular head of the union. He is regarded as something of a parvenu, however, by the Rashids, whose port town of Dubai was an important trade and pearling center in the Gulf when Zayid's ancestors were still desert nomads. Until 1976 several of the sheikhdoms of the UAE maintained their own defense forces apart from a small Union Defense Force (UDF), and to this day many observers question the degree of integration among these formerly separate organizations.¹⁶ There are no real family ties to mitigate these animosities.

The danger in this particular case lies in the allies each sheikhdom might draw into a ruling quarrel. Dubai's merchant community is heavily Persian, and Sheikh Rashid had fairly close relations with the shah of Iran. Abu Dhabi is Arab and bedouin in composition and leans toward the Saudis for support.¹⁷ The ingredients are here for, at the very worst, a proxy war between Iran and Saudi Arabia, not unlike that between Egypt and the Saudis in Yemen two decades ago.

Palestinian Issue

Americans tend to make too much or too little of the Palestinian problem. Encouraged, perhaps, by Arabs who exaggerate the issue's importance simply to make the point, some Americans see it as the source of all instability on the Arabian Peninsula. Others correctly note that there are many sources of instability on the peninsula but then relegate the Palestinian issue to an almost inconsequential role in Gulf or Arab affairs. The truth is somewhere in between. Seeking justice for the Palestinians has become part of the legitimacy formula for all Arab governments, whether their states host a large contingent of Palestinians.¹⁸ The issue has become a central symbol of Arab nationalism in the present era. The Arab failure to effect a solution to the Palestinian issue, and especially their repeated defeats at the hands of Israel, hardly sits well with their populations.

To some extent the Palestinian issue affects Arab countries across the board simply because they are Arab. But to the extent that problems concerning the issue spring directly from Palestinian expatriates within individual states, its effects vary from country to country. Kuwait has a relatively large, well-educated, and politically articulate Palestinian community, and it is here that political friction is most visible. Kuwait experienced a series of PLO-PFLP-inspired terrorist actions between 1972 and 1975, and in 1976 the emir dissolved the state's national assembly, reportedly in response to an outcry among Kuwait's Palestinians concerning Kuwait's tacit endorsement of Syria's oppression of the PLO in Lebanon.¹⁹ By contrast, countries like Oman have few Palestinians and tightly control their immigration. This helps explain why Oman has been the most outspoken of the Gulf states in its support of the United States and the Camp David accords.

That many of the peninsular states are closely tied to Israel's major ally is a source of continuing embarrassment to these regimes, as is their seeming inability to affect U.S. policy on this issue. Obviously it has not stopped them from dealing with the United States—the U.S. presence in Saudi Arabia has grown throughout the past decade—but it does place limits on what these states are willing to be seen to do with the United States. However much they may feel the need to keep the U.S. connection, for example, they have been unwilling to permit basing of U.S. forces in their countries, and even Saudi Arabi controls the size and, especially, the visibility of its U.S. community.

The trends surrounding this issue are not encouraging. King Faisal sought to keep his country a safe distance from the Arab-Israeli conflict, but the increased importance of oil to the industrialized world, the increasing size of Saudi subsidies to the PLO and the confrontation states, and the increasing sophistication of the Saudi military all served in the 1970s to drag

Saudi Arabia closer to the dispute. This has tended to exacerbate the tension between the country's support of Palestinian rights and its close relationship with Israel's chief ally, while in a purely military sense it has put them in a position only slightly removed from the confrontation states.²⁰ Indeed in the late 1970s, Israelis spoke ominously of their need to conduct preemptive strikes on Saudi Arabia's growing air and ground forces should a future war occur in the region.²¹ Should the Israelis carry out that threat, it would probably force the Saudis to distance themselves dramatically from the United States.

The existence of these trends makes the recent Reagan Middle East initiative that much more important. This is not a static issue that needs only an occasional symbolic gesture on the part of the United States to keep Arab-U.S. relations reasonably well tempered. It is rather an issue that is squeezing the Arabs, and especially the Saudis, more with each Arab-Israeli crisis. Should the Reagan initiative suffer the same fate as the Rogers plan, in some future Arab-Israeli conflict the Saudis are likely to be faced with some very hard choices that neither we nor they will be anxious to see them confront.

Regional Threats

So-called domestic threats are often provoked or fueled by regional trends and events. On Islamic and Arab nationalist issues in particular, the ebb and flow of regional trends can affect the internal stability of the Gulf sheikhdoms. This section deals with active threats at the regional level; that is, occasions on which one state reaches across its border with military force, subversive agents, or merely subversive propaganda in an effort to influence events in its neighbor.

Iran and the Regional Giants

Iran constitutes the most notable regional threat at the moment. Its military forces, seemingly in chaos after the shah fell in January 1979, have coalesced in the face of Iraq's invasion. The Iranians have made equal use of U.S. weaponry and Islamic zealots to push Iraq's forces out of their country. Where it was possible in 1979 to speak of a power vacuum on the northern shores of the Gulf, Iran is now the reemergent local superpower, more feared than the shah both because of its revolutionary fervor and its lack of dependence on the United States. Nor is the threat solely military. Iran's Shi'ite subversives have visited other states in the region, most notably Iraq; fear of these messengers may have been the key reason Saddam Hussein at-

tacked Iran. Bahrain, with half of its small population Shiite, has already been the object of an unsuccessful but ominous Iranian-backed coup attempt in December 1981.²² The regional threat from Iran thus operates on two levels to threaten other states in the area.

There is useful perspective to be gained on the Iranian threat by remembering that a decade ago Iraq was playing a surprisingly similar role in the Gulf. Where today Iran sends its messengers to Gulf states, a decade ago Iraq actively supported the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Arab Gulf (PFLOAG). Today the Gulf states fear Iraq's defeat and an Iranian military drive south into the Gulf sheikhdoms. Yet for most of the 1970s the standard planning scenario for Gulf military contingencies was an Iraqi thrust through Kuwait to the Saudi oil fields. If in the past two years Kuwait has suffered an occasional bombing attack by Iranian aircraft, from 1961 to 1973 that poorly located country experienced a series of border crises involving Iraqi threats and troop deployments.

Back yet another decade, the primary disturber of peninsular security was Nasser's Egypt. From 1962 to 1967 Nasser and Faisal, Egypt's Arab nationalism and Saudi Arabia's conservative Islam, confronted one another through Yemen's civil war. Radio propaganda was beamed between the two countries, Saudi princes defected to Cairo, and fear ran high in Riyadh of radical groups attempting subversion. Nasser's forces never performed very well in Yemen, and Israel finally put an end to this confrontation with its victory over Egypt in the 1967 war. Throughout the period, however, Nasser pressed on the peninsular sheikhdoms a form of ideological as well as active warfare as vituperative and worrisome as Khomeini's today.

This replay of past events is a reminder that Egypt, Iraq and Iran together are the regional giants that border the Arabian peninsula. Each vastly overshadows the peninsular states in terms of population resources, and any one of the three could intimidate the peninsula at will if it were free to do so. Indeed the disparities in military force posture among these three giants and all of the Gulf sheikhdoms put together make detailed assessments of the balance virtually unnecessary.

Led by Saudi Arabia, which by virtue of its size, location, and oil wealth is far and away the major actor, the Gulf Sheikhdoms have exploited the natural cleavages among their militarily superior neighbors to maintain a balance of power in the region that gives them diplomatic room to maneuver. While in the last two decades, and especially since 1973, these states have expanded and modernized their military forces, these have played a small role in their foreign and security policies. Indeed, an important goal of Saudi diplomacy has been to avoid the need to use force for the obvious reason that against the regional giants it is vastly outgunned. Instead the Saudis have used their financial power and their symbolic importance as home for Islam's holiest shrines as primary tools of foreign policy. They have

played the balancing game well, and the other peninsular states have on balance been net beneficiaries.²³

Their success in this game depends on a balance that is only partly under their control, and in recent years especially their control has been threatened. For two decades Saudi foreign policy evolved against a background of stability in Iran that is no longer there. Although the Gulf states were always suspicious of the shah's regional aspirations, he was a monarch of pro-Western outlook like themselves, and they were able to count on him as a counter to Iraq and as a source of military power for regional disturbances, as in Oman in 1975. Moreover, they could assume that the shah's relationship with the United States brought him under some control, at least in extreme cases. Today Iran is a revolutionary power with a surprisingly effective army, beholden to neither superpower and not yet willing to play by the rules. Under these circumstances the Saudis might naturally turn to Egypt for a counterweight, but Egypt effectively took itself out of the Arab world when it signed a peace treaty with Israel in 1979. Unable to mobilize Egyptian power in the short run, the Saudis have done their best to bolster Iraq with their financial support. Nonetheless, over the past year Iran has come close to breaking through Iraq's defenses, and the Saudis have had little to say in the matter.

It is worth considering this last scenario in greater detail, for it suggests the military problem that the United States faces in this region. If Khomeini were to realize his goal of toppling Saddam Hussein's regime and creating a Shia state in all or part of what was formerly Iraq, he would eliminate one of three regional giants, at the very least making Saudi Arabia's balancing act that much more difficult in the future. His forces would have flanked the sheikhdoms, leaving Kuwait especially exposed to intimidation or invasion. Finally, he would probably have restored momentum to the revolution, increasing the ideological threat it has posed all along to the Gulf regimes.

It does not require detailed military analysis to understand that Saudi forces, alone or reinforcing Kuwaiti units, would be incapable of meeting this threat. To be sure, the Saudis could retreat, trading vast stretches of sand for time and thereby overextending an Iranian attack. But this overlooks the extent to which an Iranian attack would be as much a political as a military problem to the Saudis, for such an attack would threaten their legitimacy as well as their territory. The Saudis would have to worry that even a marginal Iranian encroachment onto their territory might cost them the loyalty of some of their subjects.²⁴ An Iranian attack might have the opposite consequence; popular reactions to military attack are difficult to predict. One suspects, however, that members of the Saudi elite would not be anxious to find out which of these reactions would be forthcoming; for them the notion of trading space for time has never been very comforting.

So the Saudis would look for help. Jordan would be willing but unable to

offer units large enough to deal with a concentrated Iranian thrust. Egypt would have some forces but limited transport for its armor. The United States probably would receive the most urgent call for help, as it has occasionally in the past. When Egyptian pilots strafed a Saudi village along the Yemeni border in 1963, the Saudis requested and received a visit by a squadron of U.S. Air Force F-100s as a means of warning the Egyptians of the risks they were taking. When in 1979 the endemic border violence between the two Yemens escalated to an uncomfortably high level, U.S. pilots flew AWACS aircraft over the Saudi border with these states. The AWACS returned in 1980, this time to oversee the Iran-Iraq war, which threatened to spill over into the rest of the Gulf.

But although there is precedent enough for the Saudis to turn to the United States, in the case of an Iranian threat both the stakes and the possibility for conflict would be considerably higher than ever before. Iran's military is fanatical, battle tested, and well armed; at this point in the scenario it also would be recently victorious. The United States would have to consider the prospects for ground combat involving some of its major land formations. Moscow probably would not be sitting idly by this point, either, so the United States would have to consider the long-term implications of its intervention on superpower involvement in the region. U.S. stakes might be very high, but so might the risks.

This is only one possible outcome of the present situation, and not a very likely one at that. Today it would appear that although revolutionary fervor and genuine military acumen sufficed to drive Iraqi forces from Iran, they seem incapable of producing victories on Iraqi territory. Both Iran and Iraq seem desperately in need of a truce that would allow them to export more oil and turn their attention to domestic concerns. It is difficult to see how such a truce would emerge given the extent to which this war has become a personal battle between Saddam Hussein and Khomeini. One suspects, however, that the latter is angling for reparations from the oil sheikhdoms and that as the prospects for an Iranian victory dim, Khomeini may be willing to accept a reasonable sum, declare victory, and retreat behind his own borders, at least for the moment. Such is their fear of an imbalance among the giants that the oil states may well come up with the money, despite the obvious burden any reparations payments would impose under current oil market conditions.

A peace such as this one would not eliminate the threat from Iran, whose messengers are likely to continue their journeys through the region, whose military forces may attack Iraq when they again sense a chance for victory, and whose aircraft can still attack oil installations in all the sheikhdoms. Still, the Gulf sheikhdoms have held up very well under the prospect of an expanded war in the Gulf. Should Egypt continue its steady diplomatic return to the Arab mainstream, the Saudis may have in hand the necessary resources and allies to continue their balancing game into the

foreseeable future. This exercise nonetheless illustrates the extent to which major portions of this game are beyond Saudi control and that serious imbalances can very rapidly produce military threats of alarming proportions. This has almost happened in the case of Iran; over the next ten or twenty years the threat may come from Egypt or Iraq. The Saudis may be successful in balancing these giants most of the time. In the unlikely but possible event that they fail to do so, however, they are likely to ask for a major commitment of U.S. military resources.

Threat from Yemen

The Saudis worry about threats from the two Yemens. Of all the countries with which they share borders, North Yemen is the only one in whose domestic politics the Saudis actively meddle, through subsidies to the Zeydi tribes of the northern mountains and through the manipulation of subsidies to the regime in Sana. The Saudis have located a major military base at Khamis Mushait, just above their border with North Yemen, and they maintain a small mechanized unit and an airstrip at Shaurarah, at the nexus of their borders with North and South Yemen. When the Soviets invaded Afghanistan, the Saudis were quick to point out that the real Soviet threat emanated from their presence in Aden and nearby Ethiopia.

Perhaps the Saudis have good reason to be worried. In 1934 Abdul Aziz ibn Saud actually invaded Yemen to Hodeida, retreating only when the Yemenis gave up claims to Saudi Arabia's coastal Asir province. The dispute still rankles many Yemenis, who feel that Asir province is rightfully theirs.²⁵ In the 1960s the Saudis fought a proxy war here against Egypt, sensing that Nasser's eyes were focused less on Yemen than on Saudi oil and the Saudi regime itself.²⁶ In the years since, they have engaged in border skirmishes with both Yemens. Now they see the Soviets in Aden and Ethiopia and fear the possibility of a replay of the 1960s against a much better-endowed foe. Nor surprisingly the Saudis are especially alarmed by talk of Yemeni unity, a possibility that would make Yemen the most populous state on the peninsula and, they fear, a pro-Soviet state at that.

Saudi fears of the Yemens cannot be assessed in purely military terms. The distances from Sana or Aden to any target of value in Saudi Arabia are vast, and the ground between is fairly barren. Besides the Yemenis are not very expansionist. Although the Zeydi tribesmen who populate northern Yemen have a deserved reputation as fierce fighters, they fight when they are bothered and are unlikely to venture out of their mountain homes. The Shaifi tribes to the south are mostly sedentary farmers and craftsmen. That leaves Aden, whose rhetoric has at times certainly been fearsome but whose population and financial resources are meager.

To be sure, the PDRY regime was actively involved in what began as the Dhofar rebellion in Oman's southern region, and to this day a PDRY invasion of Oman is the core scenario around which the Omanis do their defense planning. But few Omanis take this threat very seriously. A PDRY invasion would take some months to piece together and would be difficult to support without a highly visible and vulnerable buildup at Sarfait and Habruit. An invading force would be channelized to the river beds that run west of the mountainous and verdant areas of the Dhofar and would be highly susceptible, the Omanis contend, to precisely the kind of weaponry they have purchased for their defense. A PDRY invasion of Oman is a real possibility—military objectives exist at distances that are not insuperable—but nothing to get very excited about.²⁷

Like the military threat from Iran, the military threat from Yemen is not properly measured in the traditional terms of objectives, force levels, and distances. As much as anything else, the military threat from Yemen is one of embarrassment. Losing a portion of their territory to either of the Yemens, even temporarily, would confront the Saudis with unpleasant consequences at two levels. On the one hand, it would embarrass them domestically. Theirs is, after all, a regime built on military conquest of fairly recent vintage; the Saudi elite no doubt feel that it would still have to prove itself on military grounds if confronted. This helps explain why the Saudis work so hard to avoid confrontation. On the other hand, a loss to the Yemens would undermine their power position in the region. Rich but poor in population resources, the Saudis have sought to construct a high-technology deterrent. But the essence of deterrence is the credibility of the deterrent threat. Were the Saudis to lose visibly to either Yemen, its ability to deter others, and in general its reputation in the region, would probably suffer.

Besides the military threat, the Yemens also confront the Saudis with the threat of subversion. Yemenis constitute the largest single expatriate group in Saudi Arabia, perhaps a million strong. Although most of these Yemenis seem content to earn their money, send most of it home, and follow after it when they have earned enough, the Saudis nonetheless regard them as a source of radicals and malcontents. Conversely the Saudis worry that a strong and revolutionary Yemen would become a haven for their own radicals. Cairo played this role in the 1960s, but the Yemens are even closer and share a border. This helps explain why they dabble so perversely in Yemeni politics.

Saudi Arabia's fear of the Yemens leads them to employ policies that may only exacerbate threats from these countries in the long run. On the whole, the Saudis abhor instability on their borders because it is likely to attract the Soviets or other radical groups. Yet they are not beyond provoking instability in North Yemen to exert influence over the government there

or simply to keep a populous country from becoming too strong. In doing so, however, they risk opening possibilities for increased Soviet involvement. Some evidence suggests that over the past year the Saudis have decided to curtail their intervention in North Yemen's domestic politics, opening the possibility for the development of a stronger central government there. While there is some risk that in doing so they will risk the creation of a pro-Soviet state, they are running that risk with their current policies in any case.

Old Border Disputes

Mention of the 1934 Saudi-Yemeni border war raises a third category of potential regional conflict, that stemming from the fact that many of these borders remain matters of dispute. Abdul Aziz ibn Saud's drive to consolidate the peninsula began in this century; the old warrior has not been dead that long, and some of the ruffled feelings engendered by his acquisitive style are still alive, as in North Yemen. As late as 1969 the Saudis supported the imamate against Sultan Qabus's father in Muscat as a means of sustaining a tenuous border claim there. Elsewhere the British intervened to freeze Saudi aggrandizement, as at the Buraimi oasis, leaving embittered feelings to be aired after they departed the region in 1971.

Nor are the Saudis the root of all dispute. Omanis can remember when their territory and what is now the UAE were collectively referred to as Muscat and Trucial Oman. Oman has no embassy in Abu Dhabi and still disputes a border with Sheikh Saqr of Ras al Khaimah.²⁸ To the north, the shah of Iran settled a long-standing Persian claim to Bahrain early in the 1970s but took the Tunbs and Abu Musa, small islands of the UAE, as compensation. Farther north, Iraq sought repeatedly from 1961 to 1973 to gain broader access to the Gulf at Kuwait's expense.

Not surprisingly, many observers, as well as the rulers of the smaller Gulf states, feared that Britain's departure from the Gulf in 1971 would lead to rampant feuding over borders sanctified by the British presence. Very little conflict occurred. It appears that the Gulf states, and especially the sheikhdoms, have recognized the danger of drawing the superpowers into the region should they be unable to keep their own houses in order. With oil revenues present to salve injured feelings, they have for the most part been able to maintain the borders Great Britain left them or find satisfactory solutions to outstanding disputes. Significantly, the Saudis set the example here by settling the Buraimi border issue peacefully in 1974.²⁹

Yet the possibility for border conflict remains, as evidenced by Oman's brief argument with Ras al Khaimah in 1977. To the extent that oil revenues buy acquiescence in existing arguments, a decline in oil revenues might

rekindle some of these disputes. The emergence of a radical or fundamentalist regime less interested in oil revenue than in Islamic or revolutionary purity might also raise some of these issues. Iran is a potential case in point here; Bahrainis fear that Khomeini might resurrect the Persian claim to their island. Alternatively, the Gulf sheikhdoms might resurrect oil claims as a means of preempting radicalism in one of their border states. The most likely case here is the UAE, which has a large and growing Palestinian community, an old but potentially restive Persian community, and an inordinate amount of internecine warfare among its seven emirates. Should the UAE appear to be on the brink of a major upheaval, Oman and Saudi Arabia might cooperatively move to reclaim territory around the Buraimi oasis and between Oman's coastal strip and the Musandam peninsula.³⁰

The West should fear these border disputes for the same reason states in the region fear them. They are not themselves necessarily dangerous, but they could become the excuse for excessive meddling by regional powers, as well as by the superpowers themselves. In this sense they could set in motion forces much larger than those surrounding the border issues themselves, forces that might undo the balance that keeps all these states together.

Israel

Americans generally do not see Israel as a threat to the other Gulf states. They are aware of the bombing of Beirut and the Osirak reactor near Baghdad, they recognize that Israel occupied Egyptian, Jordanian, and Syrian territory in the course of the 1967 war, and a few even know that two Saudi islands off the Gulf of Aqaba were occupied at the same time. In the United States these actions and words tend to be excused as legitimate expressions of Israel's right to defend itself.

By contrast, most Arabs see these actions and words as expressions of Israel's self-proclaimed right to bomb anything and anyone it chooses. More important, the Arabs react by structuring their own defenses to hedge against an Israeli attack. An example is the Saudi base at Tabuk, where are deployed a squadron of F-5Es, much of the Saudi armor corps, and the Saudi armor school. An American looking at Saudi deployments might wish to see many of those tanks moved east to the border with Iran and Kuwait, there to guard against an Iraqi or Iranian thrust southward. Perhaps the completion of King Khalid Military City, near the Iraq-Kuwait-Saudi border, will lead to such a redeployment. For the moment, however, Saudi deployments are skewed to the west to handle the potential Israeli threat.³¹

Like the Palestinian issue, the threat of an Israeli attack, using weapons supplied by the United States, stands between the United States and the states of the Arabian Peninsula. Like the Palestinian issue, it has not

prevented these states from dealing with the United States, but it sets limits on the relationship and adds an element of tension that would not be there were the Arab-Israeli dispute settled or were the United States to react more strongly to some of the more egregious Israeli attacks. Finally, like the Palestinian issue, this one has in it the seeds of serious problems in the U.S.-Saudi relationship.

Conclusions

This chapter may appear to present a relatively sanguine assessment of potential threats and conflict on the Arabian Peninsula. It certainly is if events in Iran are allowed to color our view of the rest of the region. The Gulf sheikhdoms have little in common with Iran politically or socially; by and large their Islamic credentials are in good order, their labor classes are small and fragmented, and their technocrats, the most likely internal threat, seem reasonably content with the economic opportunities open to them. Moreover, the Saudis have done a remarkable job of maintaining the peninsula's independence over the past twenty years. They seem to be acutely aware of their strengths and weaknesses and have managed their regional situation successfully using money, forces borrowed from others, and their close relationship with the United States. Credit should be given where it is due; few observers watching the British leave the Gulf in 1971 expected the sheikhdoms to handle internal or regional security as well as they have.

This is not an argument for complacency, however, for out of this assessment emerge three problems with these countries and their situation that have the potential to create trouble in the future. The first of these has to do with the legitimacy of these political systems. These are changing societies in which the bedouin comprises a small and decreasing part of the population. At the moment, it is only a slight exaggeration to say that the sheikhdoms have chosen to remain politically traditional despite social change and tend to use their enormous revenues to buy a certain amount of political quiescence from the more modern elements of the population. It is not clear how long this formula can be applied successfully. To the extent that modern, bourgeois elements become more visible and powerful in society, the sheikhs may lose some of their Islamic respectability and thus risk attack from the Right. To the extent that they remain deeply Islamic and traditional, they risk attack from educated and bourgeois elements for whom the Majlis lacks political efficacy and from whom oil wealth no longer can buy quiescence.

The second problem springs from the wide gap between military power on the peninsula and that surrounding it. The military giants that surround the sheikhdoms have been far less stable than the Gulf sheikhdoms them-

selves, making the balancing act that has characterized Saudi foreign policy for two decades difficult to maintain. It is unlikely that these giants would ever unify under the Islamic creed or some other pan-Arab ideology. An emerging imbalance that sets one of them free to intimidate or even attack the sheikhdoms is more likely and would pose a military threat to the peninsular states that they themselves would have trouble meeting. The prospect of further instability in Iran suggests that dangerous alterations in the balance could occur rather quickly.

Finally, the growing importance of the Palestinian issue must be stressed. Saudi Arabia's growing involvement in the Arab-Israeli conflict places its relationship with the United States, if not the regime's legitimacy as a whole, on the line in any future conflict. Such wars tend to break out suddenly and to proceed with a pace and logic beyond the control of regional powers, let alone the United States. Should there be another round of conflict, the U.S. position in the region may suffer a serious reversal. Certainly its loyalties to Israel and its Arab friends will be sorely strained.

These three underlying problems help define a serious challenge to U.S. military planners. For long periods of relative stability, the United States will be asked to stay over the horizon while local powers manage their security as they have in the past. But the situation may deteriorate rapidly, leading to a sharp cry for help from those same local powers. The help required may be substantial, especially if the threat is posed by a regional giant, or the requirement may be for a more surgical operation, perhaps to help a local state deal with a domestic threat. In either case, the nation's ability to move quickly from a distance to support friends in harsh and unfamiliar terrain will be a severe test of U.S. military capabilities and political will.

Notes

1. Adeed Dawisha, *Saudi Arabia's Search for Security*, Adelphi Paper 158 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1979), p. 14.
2. See, for example, David B. Tinnin, "The Saudis Awaken to Their Vulnerability," *Fortune*, March 10, 1980, p. 51.
3. John Keegan, *World Armies* (New York: Facts-on-File, 1979), p. 416. Gwynne Dyer, author of this book's Kuwait study, notes that the "estimated 130,000 Indians and Pakistanis in Kuwait, originally imported as temporary labor for specific projects . . . show every sign of becoming permanent as the sole source of semi-skilled labor for general construction and Kuwait's new industries, in which almost no Kuwaiti citizens are willing to work."

4. At least one observer holds that tape cassettes bearing sermons by the Ayatollah Khomeini were circulating among these laborers for nearly a year before the violence occurred. See Arnold Hottinger, "Who Held the Grand Mosque Hostage?" *New York Review of Books*, March 6, 1980, p. 36.

5. Keegan, *World Armies*, p. 417.

6. Dawisha argues that Kuwait's merchants have already begun to challenge the emir. See his *Saudi Arabia's Search for Security*, p. 33. For a counterargument referring to Saudi Arabia, however, see Modechai Abir, *Oil, Power and Politics* (London: Frank Cass & Co., 1974), pp. 59–61. Abir argues that the Saudi elite is basically bourgeois and unrevolutionary. At most it has some problem with the regime's theocratic nature.

7. Not surprisingly, some of the wealth in these countries builds mosques as well as airports and refineries, and hints of religious unrest, as occurred in Mecca in November 1979, quickly elicit confirmation of religious orthodoxy in the words and behavior of ruling elites.

8. To the extent that Iran's is perceived as a Shia rather than an Islamic revolution, the effect of its example varies with the domestic composition of individual sheikhdoms. Hardest pressed in this regard is tiny Bahrain, whose population is 60 percent Shia. The Shias in Saudi Arabia number in the hundreds of thousands and tend to be concentrated geographically around the oil fields. In both of these countries, Iran's Islamic revolution not only sets a general example but also can cause civil disturbances.

9. For more on Wahhabism's influence today, see William Ochsenwald, "Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Revival," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 13 (1981):271–286.

10. Alternatively, expatriates staff key slots in both the armed forces and the internal security organizations. British are preferred, though Jordanians occasionally serve with distinction. In the UAE the army's enlisted ranks are primarily expatriate Omanis, while its air force is flown and supported by Pakistanis.

11. See Keegan, *World Armies*, p. 607; Richard F. Nyrop et al., *Area Handbook for Saudi Arabia* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1977), pp. 320–330.

12. See Keegan, *World Armies*, pp. 608–612. For a vivid and very readable account of the origins of these military forces, see David Howarth, *The Desert King: Ibn Saud and his Arabia* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964).

13. Anthony H. Cordesman, "Saudi Arabian Defense Planning," unpublished paper (Spring 1982).

14. Of special significance here is the location of most of the Saudi armor corps, as well as Saudi Arabia airborne battalions, at Tabuk—about as far from Riyadh as is possible.

15. Keegan, *World Armies*, p. 586.
16. Significantly, Abu Dhabi's contribution to the UDF is far larger than the rest; it is some 10,000 strong and includes the UAE's small air and naval elements. The original UDF numbered about 3,500, while Dubai's contribution to the combined forces was 1,500. Nyrop, *Area Handbook*, p. 326.
17. See *ibid.*, p. 328; Keegan, *World Armies*, p. 752.
18. For a general discussion, see Michael Hudson, *Arab Politics: The Search for Legitimacy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), p. 54–55.
19. Nyrop, *Area Handbook*, pp. 202–203. See also Bruce R. Kuniholm, "What the Saudis Really Want," *Orbis* (Spring 1981):112. Another country whose Palestinian population is large and growing is the UAE. See Abdul Kasim Mansur (pseud.), "The Military Balance in the Persian Gulf: Who Will Guard the Gulf States from Their Guardians?" *Armed Forces Journal International* (November 1980):62.
20. Dawisha, *Saudi Arabia's Search for Security*, p. 33.
21. For a clear statement of Saudi fears, see "RDF Plea: Saudis Play It Cool," *8 Days*, February 20, 1982, p. 27.
22. This event was given surprisingly little coverage in the United States. See "65 Arabs Arrested in Sabotage Plot," *New York Times*, December 17, 1981, p. A7.
23. An excellent assessment of Saudi Arabia's balancing policy is Robert K. Sullivan, "Saudi Arabia in International Politics," *Review of Politics* (October 1970):436–460.
24. "In the process of transferring the loyalty of the Bedouin from tribe to the nation." Indeed, Dawisha states, "successive Saudi monarchs have over the last half-century tended to act, and be perceived, simply as tribal overlords." But tribal overlords in Bedouin society never enjoyed the loyalty or legitimacy of the tribal chiefs themselves; indeed, beyond family and tribe, bedouin loyalties were fickle and tended to go to the stronger overlord. Abdul Aziz himself melded the tribes of Saudi Arabia together by means of his military genius, his marital policies, and his larger-than-life reputation. His sons ultimately must live in the shadow of that reputation. Hence their legitimacy in this case would depend on their being able to head off the Iranian attack, meet it themselves, or, what is more likely, marshal U.S. support to meet it. See Dawish, *Saudia Arabia's Search for Security*, p. 13; Howarth, *The Desert King*, John Bagot Glubb, *The Story of the Arab Legion* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, Ltd., 1948), chap. 6, for discussions of legitimacy in bedouin society.
25. Christopher Wren, "Saudi-Yemeni Frontier: Skirmishes in the Desert," *New York Times*, May 8, 1980.
26. For one of the few books on this conflict, see Dina Andrews Schmidt, *Yemen: The Unknown War* (London: Bodley Head, Ltd., 1968).

27. Information in this paragraph taken from Oman intelligence briefings given to me in May 1982.

28. Keegan, *World Armies*, pp. 525–526, 749.

29. As Dawisha says of the Buraimi agreement, “Riyadh seems to have concluded that there was little point in trying to defend the area against external ‘aggression’ or internal ‘alien’ ideologies and influences, if frontier disputes continued to impede co-operation among states of the region and the co-ordination of their policies.” *Saudi Arabia’s Search for Security*, p. 20.

30. The fact that most of the UAE’s forces are Omanis who have been promised land and pensions when they return to Oman might make this a fairly easy operation.

31. The aircraft at this base also cover the Suez Canal, through which passes Saudi oil, in growing quantities as the pipeline to Yanbu, on the Red Sea, comes on line.



TREE of LIBERTY SOCIETY

Part VII
Strategic Responses
to Regional Conflicts:
Asia and the Pacific



TREE *of* LIBERTY SOCIETY

23

U.S. Security Strategies in Northeast Asia

James W. Reed

Current U.S. security relations in Northeast Asia derive from what is in many respects an unfortunate pedigree. U.S. strategic choices have sometimes been made by default in instances where U.S. interests in this area were perceived as subordinate either to objectives in other regions or to domestic political concerns. In recent years, however, increasing numbers of U.S. observers have seemed prepared to recognize Northeast Asia as “perhaps the most critical geopolitical region in the world.”¹

Heightened sensitivity to the niche that Northeast Asia occupies in the broader framework of U.S. security concerns could not come at a more opportune time; this focus runs in parallel with, and largely flows from, a series of events that collectively may transform the fundamental premises on which Asian security has rested.² The disintegration of the Sino-Soviet alliance, Nixon’s opening to China in 1971, the normalization of Sino-U.S. relations, and the consummation of a Sino-Japanese friendship treaty are all evidence of changing political alignments in Northeast Asia. From these new patterns arise opportunities for the United States to reexamine the premises on which its security policies in Northeast Asia rest and, where necessary, to adjust its security strategies to address its interests better.³

U.S. Interests in Northeast Asia

A state’s perception of its own interests establishes the conceptual yardstick against which strategic responses must ultimately be gauged. Increasingly, modern industrial states have come to take a comprehensive view of their national security and have taken similarly expansive views of their security interests. Included within such rubrics have been a greater appreciation for the economic dimensions of security, as well as a recognition of the extent to which the security interests of states are largely intertwined. Richard Solomon has noted that “interdependence will be more than a matter of greater collaboration in security affairs. Evolving economic relationships are reinforcing new patterns of security cooperation.”⁴

The views expressed in this chapter are solely those of the author and do not reflect the positions or policy of the Department of Defense or any other agencies within the U.S. government.

In this light, an eclectic description of U.S. interests in Northeast Asia would seem appropriate. Conceptually U.S. interests in the region can be categorized in terms of core interests around which subordinate or derivative interests are arrayed. These core interests include maintenance of a regional balance of power that is at least not unfavorable to the United States and continued economic access to the region.

A regional power equilibrium allows the degree of flexibility in policy-making necessary to secure other U.S. interests. The importance of continued economic access to the region is underscored by the fact that aggregate levels of U.S. trade with East Asia currently exceed U.S. foreign trade with virtually every other region in the world, including North America and Europe.⁵

Subordinate or derivative U.S. interests in Northeast Asia are manifold: maintenance of friendly relations with states in the region, avoidance of internal instability within states in the region, raised levels of economic development among states in the region; a forestalling of nuclear proliferation; and an implicit interest in the internal character of regimes in the region. When aggregated, these interests reflect the comprehensive character of U.S. national security.

Possible Conflict Scenarios

Critical analysis of possible strategic responses in Northeast Asia requires not only a clear conception of U.S. interests but also an understanding of possible conflict scenarios.⁶ In general, successful security strategies are shaped to reflect not only the gravity of any particular threat but also the likelihood that any particular scenario will occur. Thus an evaluation of possible conflict scenarios must include an assessment of the probabilities associated with each scenario.

At least analytically, one can distinguish broad categories of conflict scenarios. Arranged from most to least likely, the following would seem to be relevant conflict scenarios in Northeast Asia.

Scenario 1: Conflict Generated by Instabilities Internal to a Particular Country

Gerrit Gong offers this assessment of such a scenario. The greatest likely causes of instability, tension, or perhaps conflict are those arising from potential domestic changes. A sudden or dramatic leadership transition, a rapidly changing public sentiment, or even internal political-military rivalries could presage the reorientation of a country's direction and policy in a region where the equilibrium is already precariously balanced.⁷

The countries in Northeast Asia most susceptible to such internal dislo-

cations are South Korea, Taiwan, and the PRC. Although Chun Doo Hwan has had several years in which to consolidate his leadership in the Republic of Korea, the stability of his regime is highly sensitive to both the vagaries of the Korean economy and the dynamics of the domestic political scene. Chun's regime continues to be plagued by domestic unrest among groups, especially of students, that hold up the government's brutal response to the May 1980 uprising in Kwangju as a symbol of their discontent.⁸ More recently, the financial scandals that surfaced in Seoul in the summer of 1982 further marred Chun's credibility.

While in the PRC Deng Xiaoping's control of the party apparatus seems to have been further ratified by the Twelfth Party Congress held in September 1982, China's political future continues to be clouded by memories of the turbulent past.⁹ Latent factional rivalries in China will continue to be a source of concern and uncertainty as China makes the transition to a new generation of leaders.¹⁰

Another scenario that cannot be excluded is the possibility of conflict within Taiwan between various independence groups and the government authorities. Key to this situation are Taiwanese perceptions of U.S. support for their status and security with respect to the mainland. Gong correctly notes that Taiwanese "confidence (or lack thereof) will be a primary factor in determining Taiwan's role in Northeast Asia over the coming decade, and in determining whether or not it contributes to the conflict potential of the region."¹¹

The implications of internal conflict within the Republic of Korea (ROK), Taiwan, or China are especially ominous because each relates directly to conflict in the second most-likely scenario.

Scenario 2: Conflict Resulting from Intraregional Tensions

Scenarios within this category include conflict along the Sino-Soviet border or an outbreak of war on the Korean peninsula.¹² Although both fronts currently seem reasonably stable, some observers suggest that as the Republic of Korea's military potential overtakes that of the North toward the late 1980s, Kim Il Sung may "go for broke" and move South before that option becomes indefinitely foreclosed. The probabilities of conflict rise dramatically should the domestic political situation in the PRC or the ROK become markedly destabilized. The relevance of conflict along either border to the U.S. interest in a regional power equilibrium is obvious.

Gong's conclusion that "it remains highly improbable that the PRC would contemplate, except as a last resort, an actual invasion of Taiwan," seems accurate.¹³ Carried within other territorial disputes, however—over the Kuriles, the Paracels, the Spratlys—are the seeds of conflict involving one or more Northeast Asian actors. The Falklands crisis may be a harbinger of similar possibilities in East Asia.

Scenario 3: Spillover Conflict Resulting from War in the Persian Gulf or Europe

The least likely yet the most dangerous conflict scenarios in Northeast Asia are those by which conflict external to the region comes to involve Northeast Asia, of which there appear to be two main possibilities. The first possibility envisions a Soviet attack in Northeast Asia, Japan in particular, as a diversionary tactic for use during a war in Europe. Alternatively a conflict in the Persian Gulf might necessitate a redeployment of U.S. naval forces to that region under the so-called swing strategy. The resulting power vacuum could encourage Soviet interdiction of U.S. sea-lanes of communication or threats to U.S. allies in Asia.

If internal, intraregional, and extraregional factors, in that order, are the most likely catalysts of conflict in Northeast Asia, this conclusion is not without policy implications. The logic of formulating responses geared to the probabilities associated with various threats is clear. Caution must be exercised, however, that formulation of such responses does not contribute unwittingly to the instability they seek to prevent. In Taiwan, for instance, the level of ambiguity in U.S. security commitments is directly related to perceptions of insecurity and, thus, internal stability. Conversely a U.S. security strategy of any description that embraces the Chinese too closely may provoke the very external influence—Soviet intervention—that it seeks to avoid.

Spectrum of Strategic Choices

The range of alternative strategic responses to likely threats in Northeast Asia can be conceived of as a continuum. The end points of the continuum represent not so much absolutes as general tendencies in policy approaches. Toward one end of the spectrum are a series of minimalist responses whose general characteristics include relatively lower levels of U.S. involvement and less integration among the actors in Northeast Asia.¹⁴ At the other end of the spectrum are a collection of responses under the general label of coalition strategies. Movement in this direction entails higher levels of U.S. involvement, as well as greater cohesion and coordination among states in Northeast Asia.

Minimalist Strategies

In its purest form the minimalist strategy advocates a strategic withdrawal, albeit gradual, from Asia “based upon the thesis that neither U.S. national

interests nor the general considerations of global security require our strategic presence in that part of the world."¹⁵ One such formulation prescribes that

the components of such a withdrawal would be: . . . a retraction of all U.S. troops from other mainland Asian countries and Taiwan and closure of all bases; termination of military assistance to mainland states and cessation of efforts to create proxy forces to continue our mission; and dissolution of our security alliances with the "forward-defense" countries of Thailand, Taiwan, and Korea.¹⁶

Although there are key differences even among the more extreme versions of such minimalist approaches, all display certain common features.¹⁷ First, each defines the Soviet Union as the sole threat to vital U.S. interests and argues that the Soviet threat, in terms of vital U.S. interests, becomes salient only in Europe and the Middle East. Second, to the degree the Soviets pose a threat in Asia at all, the pure minimalist strategy argues that military responses utilizing indigenous Asian manpower alone offer greater odds for success.

That such minimalist approaches in their more extreme versions bear little relationship to comprehensive U.S. security interests is a point that hardly needs emphasis. In denying the existence of vital U.S. interests in East Asia, the pure minimalist strategy simultaneously denies the relevance of any of the conflict scenarios outlined. The utility of such formulations is essentially academic; they require the United States to reexamine and rationalize its interests in Northeast Asia.

A more benign variation of the minimalist theme is evident in the recent call for a maritime, or blue water, strategy. As applied to East Asia, this strategy envisions a restructuring and gradual redeployment of U.S. land-based forces in Korea while focusing a response in increased naval capabilities and at the upper reaches of the escalatory ladder. As Jeffrey Record describes it:

The hallmark of the strategy would be avoidance of any major sustained inland ground combat in Europe (and Asia) against Soviet forces, whose requirements can and should be met by U.S. allies directly threatened by Soviet and other hostile ground forces, and increased reliance on military power capable of operating effectively on and along the Eurasian periphery. It is a strategy not only dictated by the strategic realities now confronting the United States, but also far more congruent with America's geographical position as an island continent possessing profound security interests across the seas. America's natural advantage has always resided in seapower, and the time has come to exploit that advantage to the utmost.¹⁸

Proposals for a maritime strategy in Northeast Asia bear some modest resemblance to the more extreme versions of the minimalist school. Both

are essentially unilateralist approaches, and both question the wisdom, and the need, to challenge Soviet land-based power in Northeast Asia. Accordingly both prescribe a gradual withdrawal of U.S. land-based forces from Northeast Asia. Clearly, however, the maritime strategy envisions vital U.S. interests in Asia where the pure minimalists do not. As such, the maritime strategy includes a role for restructured, largely carrier-based conventional forces in Asia.

In terms of U.S. interests in Northeast Asia, proposals for a maritime strategy include many problems.¹⁹ The inability of such restructured carrier-based forces to threaten credibly the Soviet heartland risks a dramatic realignment of the power equilibrium in the region. At the same time, the United States would not be well served by a strategy the political implications of which run counter to several of its derivative interests. Robert Komer notes, "Our already restive allies would correctly perceive such a U.S. strategy as at best a form of unilateral global interventionism and at worst a form of neoisolationism. Pressures for accommodation with the USSR would be powerfully enhanced."²⁰ To the degree they may detract from the credibility of U.S. security commitments, such strategies may give rise to the very sorts of conflict, especially of the internal and intraregional genre, they aim to deter.

Coalition Strategies

Further along the continuum in the direction toward higher levels of U.S. involvement and greater cohesion among states in the Northeast Asian region is a diffuse category of coalition strategies. The various alternatives subsumed within this rubric are united by a clear conception of vital U.S. interests in Northeast Asia and by a perception of increasingly converging interests within Northeast Asia among the United States, Japan, China, and Korea. "The rapid economic growth of Japan, and the emerging parallelism of strategic interests between China, Japan and the United States make East Asia the theater offering the most interesting new strategic opportunities."²¹

That there exists a commonality of strategic interests among the states of Northeast Asia and the United States is a thesis that finds growing acceptance. For their part, the Chinese have argued that the United States and China are brought together "by the growing Soviet menace to world peace and security, which they both have to face. These common strategic interests constitute a very important basis underlying Sino-U.S. relations which, it is hoped, will continue to grow on that basis."²² Similarly, the Japanese have recently evinced a greater willingness to consider multilateral security cooperation. One observer notes that strategic developments in the

Persian Gulf, the Indian Ocean, and Southeast Asia . . . have created a shared sense of urgency between Tokyo and NATO which may soon overcome the reluctance of both sides to move toward higher levels of security cooperation."²³ Still, it remains to be seen what patterns of security cooperation may emerge from this perceived convergence of security interests.

Such notions of parallel strategic interests can generate a multiplicity of potential coalition-type responses to threats. Each is rooted in a general preference for a cooperative multilateral framework based on shared interests. Of the many patterns possible, two modalities seem to capture the major alternatives: increased bilateral cooperation and a *de facto* or even formal multilateral security arrangement.

Increased Bilateral Cooperation: The formal basis for increased bilateral cooperation in Northeast Asia currently resides in the separate mutual security treaties that the United States has with Japan and the Republic of Korea. Although both treaties are clearly asymmetrical in character, each provides the seedbed for the expansive logic of cooperative behavior rooted in common interests.

Absent any similar treaty with the PRC, it is nonetheless clear that a convergence of interests between the United States and China, based on a common perception of the dangers inherent in the dramatic growth of Soviet military power in the Far East, exists to a degree that permits some manner of security cooperation.²⁴ In reality, however, the central question that runs throughout the various coalition strategies is how the United States should define its relationship with the PRC in what is likely to be the enduring context of the Sino-Soviet rift. How far is the United States willing to proceed in terms of security cooperation with the Chinese? The answer to that question determines in part the nature of the U.S. relationship with the Soviet Union and, by implication, the character of U.S. security relationships in Northeast Asia.

Depending on which specific relationship one addresses, bilateral cooperation could perhaps most easily encompass coproduction arrangements, including perhaps joint development of weapons systems. The United States already has substantial coproduction arrangements in place with Japan and the Republic of Korea, and the Chinese are clearly more interested in similar coproduction of U.S. weapons than in outright purchases.²⁵

Increased cooperation is also possible through the sharing of military-related technologies, though such technology-sharing proposals are plagued by numerous technical, political, and economic obstacles.²⁶ But at least for the foreseeable future of Japanese-U.S. security relations, this is one area that offers reasonable prospects for advance.

Other functional areas in which additional bilateral cooperation might occur include intelligence sharing, joint contingency planning, and joint

training. Efforts have already been undertaken in some of these areas, but much more is possible.²⁷ In these arenas, however, one runs headlong into Japan's domestic political constraints, so additional progress is likely to occur only slowly.

Multilateral Security Arrangement: As bilateral ties among Northeast Asian states increase and are strengthened, pressures to form a de facto multilateral alliance in coordination with the United States may increase. Clearly such a possibility seems remote today, but given the fluidity of political alignments in Northeast Asia, it may not be out of the question. In 1945 the possibility of a Japanese-U.S. mutual security treaty seemed remote; in fact it was a scant six years away.

What might such an arrangement look like, and how might it function? The answer pivots around the evolution of the Sino-U.S. security relationship. Although domestic sentiments in both Japan and South Korea currently pose a significant obstacle, a tripartite U.S. - Japan - South Korean alliance would seem to possess considerable logic. It awaits only the explicit and public recognition by the Japanese that their security is intricately bound up with the defense of the Republic of Korea. In fact, the recent negotiations conducted between Seoul and Tokyo concerning Japanese financial grants to Korea as an implicit offset arrangement are a modest step in this direction. That a formalized security arrangement might ultimately include the PRC is not unthinkable if one accepts that common threat perceptions more than shared values generate alliance formation.²⁸

Without question, though, formidable obstacles stand in the path of such a development. It is difficult to foresee the United States, China, Japan, and Korea undertaking multilateral security commitments beyond those bilateral obligations already in place. On this point the Chinese are quite specific:

At present, a rumor is circulating that China is seeking a military alliance with the United States. This is entirely groundless. In fact, neither China nor the United States has ever had such an intention. Judging from existing conditions, it would be more desirable for them to develop a relationship that will enable them to take concerted actions in international affairs on the basis of common strategic interests and to engage in friendly bilateral exchanges according to the principle of equality and mutual benefit.²⁹

Short of mutual security commitments, however, the states in question might use a multilateral consultative mechanism to supplement their bilateral alliances and to coordinate their regional security policies.³⁰ Such an arrangement might ultimately obligate the parties to consult one another prior to taking action should hostilities arise in the region. Precedents for such multilateral consultative mechanisms abound.

Such an arrangement would be fraught with difficulties. The sharply divergent levels of economic and military development among the members would pose difficult obstacles. More important, the likelihood that the Soviets would perceive such an alliance, *de facto* or formal, as extremely provocative relates to the earlier point that intelligent strategic responses should not foster the very threat they are designed to avoid.

Toward Coalition Strategies

To the extent that the strategic responses described here form a continuum, they overlap near the center. For example, both maritime strategies and coalition strategies argue for the maintenance of secure sea-lanes of communication.³¹ This underscores the point that the approaches described above here represent tendencies more than to absolute or neatly compartmentalized responses.

Surveys of the available responses, though, seem to make evident that strategies drawn from the coalition end of the spectrum offer greater promise than do minimalist approaches when measured against the full range of U.S. interests and threats. Such strategies seem more likely to preserve an acceptable power equilibrium in Northeast Asia. Equally important, to the degree forward-based coalition strategies provide a measure of reassurance to U.S. allies in that region, they help alleviate doubts about the steadfastness of the U.S. commitment to Northeast Asia in the aftermath of such ill-considered decisions as the 1976 troop withdrawal from Korea. In taking cognizance of latent Asian insecurities, coalition approaches serve other U.S. interests by reducing potential sources of internal instability, especially in Taiwan and Korea, and by not fostering incentives for nuclear proliferation.

Strategic responses drawn from the minimalist end of the spectrum, to include maritime strategies, are by contrast comparatively insensitive to Asian insecurities and the problems they may entail. Moreover, minimalist strategies take little, if any, note of the most likely conflict scenarios—those generated by factors internal to particular states in the region and by intraregional factors—focusing instead on conflict scenarios that are the least likely, albeit most dangerous.

Last, the importance of casting regional strategies in a global framework must be underscored. The interdependent nature of U.S. security interests pushes the United States in the direction of multilateral, not unilateral, approaches to national security. We delude only ourselves if we believe that the signals that would emanate from a minimalist strategy in Northeast Asia would escape the attention of allies in other parts of the world.

Some Policy Implications

Strategic responses in the character of coalition strategies carry with them, almost by definition, certain policy prescriptions. Briefly, with respect to Northeast Asia, these include:

1. Force structures tailored to the requirements of a forward-based land strategy in Northeast Asia.
2. The continued U.S. need to press its allies in the region, especially the Japanese, to contribute more equitably to the common defense, thereby relieving some of the asymmetrical qualities of current security arrangements.
3. The prudent use of security assistance to strengthen states in the region whose current levels of economic and military development are not sufficient to provide for their security arrangements.

From this broad survey of alternative strategic responses in Northeast Asia, it remains to develop the specific policy formulations needed to give effect to any particular strategic framework. The ability of the United States to craft intelligent policies toward this region hinges on a clear appreciation of the critical link that exists between U.S. interests in Northeast Asia and its concerns elsewhere around the world.

Notes

1. Edward Neilan, "American Policy and Northeast Asia," *Policy Review*, no. 6 (Fall 1978):105.

2. Richard H. Solomon, "American Defense Planning and Asian Security: Policy Choices for a Time of Transition," in Solomon, *Asian Security in the 1980s: Problems and Policies for a Time of Transition* (Cambridge: Oelgeschlager, Gunn & Hain Publishers, 1980), p. 1.

3. For differing treatments of the nature of U.S. interests in Northeast Asia, see, for example, William R. Feeney, "U.S. Strategic Interests in the Pacific," *Current History* 81 (April 1982):145–185; Henry Rowen, "American Security Interests in Northeast Asia," in John F. Reichart and Steven R. Sturm, eds., *American Defense Policy*, 5th ed. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981), pp. 265–274; and Richard L. Sneider, "U.S. Interests and Policies in Asia and the Western Pacific in the 1980s," in U. Alexis Johnson and George R. Packard, eds., *The Common Security Interests of Japan, the United States and NATO* (Cambridge: Ballinger Publishing Co., 1981), pp. 83–86.

4. Solomon, *Asian Security in the 1980s*, p. 6.

5. In 1981 the total volume of U.S. trade with Asia, defined as the sum of exports and imports, was \$155.9 billion; the total volume with North America was \$133.8 billion, with Europe \$123.1 billion. See U.S. Department of Commerce, *Survey of Current Business* 62 (July 1982):S-16, 17.

6. A more detailed analysis of conflict scenarios is contained in Gerrit W. Gong, "Northeast Asia in the 1980s: Possibilities for Conflict in an Era of Change," in William Taylor and Steve Maaranen eds., *The Future of Conflict in the 1980s* (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, D.C. Heath and Company, 1983). Gong undertakes a country-by-country, as opposed to categorical, analysis of the inherent threats.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 656.

8. See Edward J. Baker, "Politics in South Korea," *Current History* 81 (April 1982):173–178.

9. David Bonavia, "The Flight of the Phoenix," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, September 10, 1982, pp. 12–13.

10. One of the many variables influencing this process of factional rivalry will undoubtedly be the ability of Deng Xiaoping to demonstrate to the Chinese leadership some tangible benefits to be gained from his relatively pragmatic approach toward the United States.

11. Gong, *Future of Conflict*, p. 631.

12. For an assessment of the situation on the Korean peninsula, see Robert A. Scalapino, "Current Dynamics of the Korean Peninsula," *Problems of Communism*, 30 (November–December 1981):16–31. The Sino-Soviet border dispute is discussed in Harry Gurtov, "Outlook for Sino-Soviet Relations," *Problems of Communism* 28 (September–December 1979):50–66.

13. Gong, *Future of Conflict*, p. 631.

14. The minimalist label is from Robert A. Scalapino, "Approaches to Peace and Security in Asia: The Uncertainty Surrounding American Strategic Principles," in Sudershan Chawla and D.R. Sardesai, eds., *Changing Patterns of Security and Stability in Asia* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1980), pp. 1–21. Scalapino's piece is one of the more thoughtful and incisive treatments of this subject.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

16. Earl C. Ravenal, "The Nixon Doctrine and Our Asian Commitments," *Foreign Affairs* 49, no. 2 (January 1971):212. Excerpted by permission of *Foreign Affairs* (Winter 1971). Copyright 1971 by the Council on Foreign Relations, Inc.

17. Scalapino, "Approaches to Peace and Security," pp. 3–4.

18. Jeffrey Record, "Heavy and Light Forces in the Context of U.S. Grand Strategy" (Paper presented at the U.S. Military Academy's Senior Conference on the Military Reform Debate, West Point, N.Y., June 3–5, 1982).

19. For an excellent critique of the maritime alternative, see Robert W. Komer, "Maritime Strategy vs. Coalition Defense," *Foreign Affairs* 60, no. 3 (Summer 1982):1124–1144.

20. Ibid., p. 1134. Excerpted by permission of *Foreign Affairs* (Summer 1982). Copyright 1982 by the Council on Foreign Relations, Inc.

21. Ibid., p. 1139. Excerpted by permission of *Foreign Affairs* (Summer 1982). Copyright 1982 by the Council on Foreign Relations, Inc.

22. Huan Xiang, "On Sino-U.S. Relations," *Foreign Affairs* 60, no. 7 (Fall 1981):37. Excerpted by permission of *Foreign Affairs* (Fall 1981). Copyright 1981 by the Council on Foreign Affairs, Inc.

23. William T. Tow, "U.S. Alliance Policies and Asian-Pacific Security: A Transregional Approach," in William T. Tow and William R. Feeney, eds., *U.S. Foreign Policy and Asian-Pacific Security: A Transregional Approach* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1982), p. 30. It should be noted, however, that although the United States and Japan seem similarly impressed with the character of the Soviet military buildup in the Far East, they appear to reach divergent conclusions concerning the intentions that underlie that expansion. See Stephen P. Gilbert, "Northeast Asia in American Security Policy," in Tow and Feeney, *U.S. Foreign Policy*, p. 81.

24. See Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, Jr., "China, Soviet Strategy and American Policy," *International Security* 5 (Fall 1980):24–28.

25. See Douglas T. Stuart and William T. Tow, "Chinese Military Modernization: The Western Arms Connection," *China Quarterly* 80 (June 1982):253–270.

26. See Mike Tharp, "Technology and Trust," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, January 8, 1982, p. 16.

27. RIMPAC 80, a naval exercise involving U.S., Japanese, Canadian, Australian, and New Zealand naval units, remains to date the apogee of Japanese multilateral security cooperation. See Mike Tharp, "Allies in an Emergency," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, January 15, 1982, pp. 29–30. Stuart and Tow argue, "It is likely that China and the U.S. will continue to expand their arms trade relationship in the medium term. . . . [The arms sales] would be designed to achieve maximum psychological effect upon the Soviet Union and could be reinforced by other forms of Sino-American cooperation such as intelligence sharing, military training or even basing agreements." Stuart and Tow, "Chinese Military Modernization," p. 269.

28. "It is no secret that China and the United States have different social systems, but the difference is no obstacle to their cooperation on the basis of equality and friendship. This is firstly, and naturally, because the two countries on the whole do not constitute a major threat to each other; instead they are faced with a common major threat. The objective situation emphasizes the need for them to cooperate and not to enter into confrontation." Huan Xiang, "On Sino-U.S. Relations," p. 37. Excerpted by permis-

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29. Ibid, p. 37. Excerpted by permission of *Foreign Affairs* (Fall 1981). Copyright 1981 by the Council on Foreign Affairs, Inc.

30. One call for such a multilateral consultative mechanism is contained in Bernard K. Gordon, "Asian Angst and American Policy," *Foreign Policy*, no. 47 (Summer 1982):46–65. Gordon argues that U.S. policy cannot address our problems in Asia "without the most intense consultation and agreement with the other Asian-Pacific countries that share America's values. Sadly, there is no effective mechanism for that—not in ANZUS (Australian-New Zealand-United States security pact) nor in the annual ASEAN meetings nor in any of the other bilateral forums where Americans meet with their counterparts in the region" (p. 65).

31. Komer, *Maritime Strategy*," p. 1132.



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The Soviet View of the Strategic Triangle circa 1990

Thomas W. Robinson

It is impossible to believe that any forecast of international security relations seven years into the future will bear close resemblance to the reality of that time. It is equally unrealistic to think that an outsider can, with accuracy, peer into the state of the Soviet strategic outlook, since Moscow deliberately withholds even the most elementary facts and makes foreign access to its officials and territory difficult. Nonetheless, we know enough of Soviet strategic thought and military deployments, and we can presume that enough of the Soviet international position will be determined by trends, even now evident, over which they have no control, that a reasonable effort is possible to stimulate thought and discussion and to provide a basis for pointing up errors when, as is inevitable, the forecast goes awry.

The Soviet view of the strategic triangle in 1990, like today, will be the product of four sets of forces: developments within the Sino-Soviet-U.S. triangle, changes in the Soviet Union, factors outside the triangle and the Soviet Union over which Moscow has little or no control, and Soviet psychological precepts that operate on them and therefore distort their objective influence. It is not difficult to essay reasonably on the first three of these, since their value depends mostly on long-term forces not easily diverted. It is the psychological element that gives trouble because it is the product not only of such aspects, reasonably enough known, as Russian and Soviet political culture but the personalities of the top Soviet communist leadership, which cannot be determined with any degree of surety. Beyond that is the question of contingency; the influence of unexpected turns of events and the unknown but still important sequencing of known events. Contingency is perhaps as important as any of the other three elements, but there is no way of dealing with it other than by noting its dysfunctional role and adopting such methods as writing scenarios and playing political-military games. I propose to eliminate contingency, for the most part, in the discussion that follows, bringing it back in briefly at the end. Throughout it must be remembered that given the enormous number of variables and unknowns, the probability that the Soviet strategic outlook in 1990 will be as I indicate is low indeed.

Developments within the strategic triangle are perhaps the least difficult to deal with, even though the number of imponderables is already high. Present trends within China and the United States are well enough known,

the foreign policy options open to Beijing and Washington are reasonably constrained, and the military balance around 1990 within the triangle seems more or less clear. Inside both the United States and China, trends are similar. Domestically most of the rest of the decade will be spent trying to put their economies back in order after the ravages of the 1960s and 1970s. Slow but presumably steady growth will therefore result. By the end of the 1980s, the United States and China should have solved many of their economic problems and be able to harvest the first fruits of the investment and sacrifice that will, economically and socially, characterize the period. On that basis, by 1990 (but probably not much before) the United States and China, for separate and internal reasons, could take on a more optimistic and forward view of the international order. This is not to say that they will become aggressive. Their domestic situations will still not allow for that even were they so inclined (as the Chinese might be). It also seems likely that the political situation in the two countries will have settled down from the rather wide swings of the previous fifteen years. There are likely to be serious political problems in Washington and Beijing around mid-decade, but by its end their effects should have been overcome and a new era opened. A reasonable degree of political unity in both countries in 1990 might therefore be forecast. The domestic economic and political situation in the United States and China therefore would argue for a greater ability on the part of both states, whether separately or together, to confront the Soviet Union with derived diplomatic strength.

A similar picture emerges when the military situation, unadulterated by Soviet military changes, is considered. By 1990, both the U.S. and the Chinese military investment and expansion (in the Chinese case the product of economic and technological investment earlier in the decade) will have come to fruition. In the Chinese case, new weapons systems will have become available, larger numbers of modern ships and planes will have been deployed, and the training and tactical integration of those systems will have been achieved. In the U.S. case, capability to project significant forces over long distances at relatively short notice will have been accomplished. In both cases, updated and new nuclear missile systems (each at the level of technology capable of being handled in the two militaries) will be at their respective decisionmakers' disposal. Both nations will therefore feel somewhat more comfortable in matching military capabilities with force-related national interests. This is not to say that the present strategic and tactical imbalance that each suffers in regard to the Soviet military machine will be entirely overcome. The Soviet Union will have moved ahead, and significantly, in the military realm also. But the strategic military picture will probably be relatively improved by 1990 as compared with the early 1980s if one takes into account the separate U.S. and Chinese military programs and ignores for the moment diplomatic shiftings within and outside the triangle.

These developments would normally be of great concern to any Soviet leadership, and they may well be so to the group in the Kremlin in 1990. But the degree of that concern must also be affected by Moscow's own military-security and diplomatic efforts, the effect on the Soviet Union of Chinese and U.S. diplomatic postures within the strategic triangle, and the domestic situation in the Soviet Union itself. Looking at the last of these first, present trends seem to indicate no general weakening of Communist party rule in the country (although the quiet crisis of popular support and the decline in ideological belief will undoubtedly continue); probably continued economic growth in general and slow but perceptible rise in living standards; no enormous disunity within the CPSU (the Brezhnev succession having been well past and a new leadership firmly in power); and a degree of social tension within the population and between the nationalities still not much changed from the present (latently high but controllable). In short, the Soviet Union in 1990 will look not much different from the Soviet Union of the early 1980s, larger economically perhaps but hardly changed politically, sociologically, and administratively. That relative invariance will provide the Soviet leadership continued flexibility to pursue a foreign policy without having to worry too much about the domestic base.

In military procurements, it seems reasonable to assume that the historic trend of about 4 percent real growth annually will continue and that Moscow will therefore be able to project its power even farther from its borders, defend its territoriality, and threaten its neighbors even more convincingly than at present. Deployment of new strategic nuclear systems will have been completed, the Red Army brought to even higher states of training and equipment, and the Soviet navy provided with the capability to project force and defend itself over, on, and under all the world's oceans. In short, the Soviet Union will have significantly outdistanced the United States as the principal military power.

This overwhelmingly threatening military potential would normally enable Moscow to carry out an ever more forward political-diplomatic policy than in the early 1980s. And it can be expected that the Soviet Union will seek to involve itself in every region and issue merely to demonstrate its military primacy and will discover that its range of interests expands commensurately with its added martial power. The Kremlin will continue to take advantage of relatively risk-free opportunities when they arise and in addition will actively seek to involve itself in situations and places where it earlier professed or had no interest.

But it is the enormity of Soviet military power that will cause the other two members of the strategic triangle to react against it as best they can and each in their own manner. The watchwords of U.S. and Chinese policies during the period between now and 1990 are, respectively, coalition building and independence. On the U.S. side, the major efforts at rearmament,

useful and necessary as they are, can only fall short by themselves of the need to serve U.S. global interests and commitments and must in any event be intermingled with the pressing domestic needs to repair the economy (which will be even more costly than purchasing new military systems and reforming strategic systems). Washington must therefore seek even more assistance than in the past from its allies and must build new relationships, however informal, with states not now sharing a formal defense commitment. In particular, the United States will have to continue to encourage Beijing to cooperate in deterrence of Soviet military expansion in Asia and elsewhere, despite China's proclivities to emancipate itself from the U.S. embrace and despite the continuation of serious differences over Taiwan. There is no telling how successful U.S. efforts in this direction will be; much depends on China's innate receptivity (never too high), the characteristics of the Chinese leadership (highly nationalistic and exclusivist), and the degree of Soviet military pressure exerted on Chinese territoriality and Chinese decisions on how to deal with the Soviet Union.

On the Chinese side, there seems little doubt that Beijing will attempt to distance itself from Washington and seek to lessen tensions with Moscow to the extent made possible by favorable changes in the Sino-Soviet military balance and by Soviet policy concessions with regard to troop deployments along the Sino-Soviet border and elsewhere in Asian areas threatening to China (currently Vietnam and Afghanistan). If, as appears likely, the Soviets are at least minimally cooperative in striving for accommodation and the United States cannot bring itself to give way even more on Taiwan, the prospect is good for steady movement in the direction of equidistance between the two superpowers. By 1990, China should largely have completed this movement, although it is unlikely that Beijing will stand completely neutral between Washington and Moscow. The continuation of the Soviet threat and the near absence of a commensurate threat from Washington will probably make mandatory some sort of residual security tie with the United States.

These changes should be reasonably heartening to the Soviet leadership of 1990, if only because the overwhelming degree of hostility characteristic of Chinese policy of the 1960s and 1970s will have subsided considerably. It is true that the United States may have succeeded in fashioning a global anti-Soviet coalition of truly formidable proportions and thus make further Soviet military-diplomatic gains problematic in Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. But at least the Kremlin will have been relieved of the nightmare of having to engage in a two-front war with a combination of their worst enemies. Together with the much stronger Soviet military machine undoubtedly attainable by 1990, Moscow's strategic situation within the triangle should be much improved.

If the Soviets are smart, they will allow currently visible trends to take

their course, helping them along a bit in the case of the Chinese and attempting to divide the U.S.-led opposition as opportunities arise, but not in general taking bold initiatives that would unite the opposition or reverse trends. But two problems arise. First, will the Soviets see things in this manner and thus effectuate a policy of modified *laissez-faire*, relaxing a bit and waiting for strategic gains to drop into their lap, more or less? And second, will the Kremlin not attempt to exercise its newly minted power to help things along more than a little and in general take an increasingly assertive and interventionist stance, especially toward the U.S.-led world coalition in the making? What will their actual policies be between now and 1990? If we can reason effectively about that component, then we can essay more convincingly about the Soviet strategic outlook at that time.

If the past is a reliable guide, the Soviets will not be this reasonable. For one thing, the U.S. rearmament effort will, in Soviet eyes, be provocative and cause the Kremlin to increase its own military procurement and broaden its deployments. An even more vicious arms race will thus ensue, this time unmitigated by serious arms-control negotiations or agreements. Prospects for conflict will thus rise, and the Soviet leadership will be more prone to seize fleeting advantages to turn the tide more permanently in its favor. A similar conclusion seems in order regarding the effect on Moscow of Chinese military modernization. While slower and less threatening, by 1990 the People's Liberation Army will have begun to receive in quantity more up-to-date weaponry, the Chinese nuclear missile program will have advanced significantly, and the present military imbalance along the Sino-Soviet border will have materially, if not decisively, been redressed. Noting these impending changes, the Soviets would seem to have no choice (barring compromise political settlement) but to increase their own deployments against China and to take advantage, wherever possible, of political-military opportunities to deal blows to Beijing. In sum, far from pursuing a prudent policy of modified *laissez-faire*, the Soviet Union may consider it necessary to engage in separate military rivalry with the United States and China, leading by 1990 to a state of confrontation with each.

Moreover, the Kremlin may take fright at the success—if it turns out to be that—of the U.S. effort to fashion a world anti-Soviet coalition. While such prospects may seem rather dim now, any substantial degree of success in maintaining and strengthening NATO, refashioning Japanese-U.S. military ties such that a rearming Japan commits itself to participate in regional Asian deterrence of Soviet military expansionism, taking the Middle East situation beyond a strict Arab-Israeli stand-off and into patchwork cooperation against Soviet advances in that region, and some residual Sino-U.S. cooperation (beyond differences over Taiwan) against Moscow will in combination convince the Kremlin that its worst nightmare had come true. What the Soviet Union must fear most is a global combination of its many foes into

a force so strong that no effort could conceivably match, much less overcome, it.

If such an eventuality did appear to be more or less in being by 1990, the Soviet outlook would be pessimistic indeed, for it would be faced with the choice of splitting the coalition by force—say, by attacking China—and taking the chance that the others would not unite against it, or of admitting (at least to itself) that it was indeed deterred, that its days of expansion of influence and territorial command were over, and that the entire half-century's effort had been wasted. The choice would thus be between war and admission that the Soviet system was a failure (since the system's basic rationale is domestic sacrifice for military-based gain abroad). Indeed, the Kremlin would probably have come to that assessment even before 1990 and thus made its choice by then (which, incidentally, is the major reason I believe the mid-late 1980s will be a time of maximum danger to peace).

Finally, what is the Soviet Union to do, in 1990, with a China not only militarily much stronger but economically well on the road to eventual full modernization and thus, in most gross measures, of becoming a superpower? Although China surely will experience much rough going, politically as well as economically, eventually it will modernize. Although much will turn on Beijing's attitude toward solving specific disputes with Moscow, it is doubtful whether the two strongest continental states, with a long history of enmity and of competition for ideological primacy, will agree to put aside their differences entirely and agree to go their separate ways. That would be impossible anyway, for by 1990 the Soviet Union will be well along the road itself—a result of the greater development of Siberia—of becoming an Asian power in every sense, whereas it will be Chinese policy increasingly to exclude the Soviet Union as best it can from Asia as a whole. Once again therefore the Kremlin will think that it is confronted with an impossible choice: to stop the Chinese economic advance by force, thereby precipitating a global, and losing, conflict, or to let China go on, gradually excluding Moscow from an important region and threatening the Soviet Union at the point of its own greatest weakness. There is nothing the Soviet Union can do about this except try to delay Chinese industrialization, which will not work, or appease the Chinese, which will not work either because the price would be too high.

In sum, then, the Soviet Union in 1990 probably will not regard developments within the strategic triangle during the 1980s to have been in its favor, even though were it only to let things largely alone, the outcome would, for the most part, favor the Soviet position. Pessimism and frustration would thus be the order of the day in the Kremlin that year. Perceiving these unpalatable trends, the Soviet Union is unlikely in the interim to be so patient as I perceive would be in their interest. They would take action to

break these trends. And since the only efficacious means at their disposal is the military instrument of power, the probability of Soviet-induced conflict would rise to a high by the late 1980s. The year 1990 might thus find shooting war, even nuclear war, within the triangle.

This conclusion is accentuated by the natural propensities of a power, possessing as it does an escatological view of its role in history and seeing that its time of primacy is about to arrive, to help history along. That will be seconded by the inclination of any state, communist or not, emerging from self-perceived number two status to one of dominance, to exercise its newly developed power, to throw its weight around, to intervene in situations and regions where it heretofore had little or no interest merely to demonstrate its new status, and to demand forcibly its place in the sun and hence change the status quo in its favor (upset the balance of power) faster and more decisively than natural developments would allow. Every state in modern history perceiving itself to be in this position has done the same, and there is no reason to believe that the Soviet Union would be less prone to this disease than its predecessors.

It seems, then, that by the late 1980s, and surely by 1990, the Kremlin will have become impatient with the overly slow movement of global, and intratriangular, trends in its favor. An increasing number of Soviet leaders could well argue that the time has come to take the gains for which they had been striving and asking their population to sacrifice all those previous decades. While the specter of nuclear war will still be present and work to exercise restraint over hasty moves, that restraint will be somewhat dampened by a perception that neither the United States nor China would dare see nuclear weapons against a Soviet Union so obviously powerful and so obviously dominant in so many situations. Better to show both countries just where they belong—not in some central front attack or bolt out of the blue nuclear strike but in a local dispute where a quick Soviet military move could be accomplished and the two nuclear opponents would be left to acquiesce or escalate. They would not escalate; it would be argued the Soviet Union would be too strong and too well prepared. Once that had been demonstrated a few times, the world balance would have been shown to be what the Kremlin presumed it really to be: much in their own favor with Washington and Beijing pursuing policies, essentially, of bluff.

If the Kremlin were so foolish to try out such theories, the prospect in 1990, and probably before, is for a high level of conflict indeed, for it is unlikely that either the United States or China would knuckle under to Soviet threats, even if they were relatively unprepared for general conflict. Thus, by 1990 the view from Moscow of the strategic triangle could be very different from what it would probably be if only the Kremlin were to let nature take its course. Prudence, replaced initially with impetuosity, would

in the end by superseded by fear of war (if not by war itself) and by recriminations within the leadership over what went wrong and how to salvage a foreign policy.

What should the United States do, if anything, about this? Obviously it must be U.S. policy to avoid conflict while at the same time serving its own interests. The United States has no choice but to refurbish its military, transform its economy, strengthen its allies and alliances, and build a coalition (or a series of coalitions) among any and all states willing to stand against the Soviet Union. Washington should be ready, increasingly as the 1980s proceed, to stand down Soviet provocations and challenges, even at this risk of conflict, including nuclear conflict. That policy will become a critical element in convincing the Soviets that they themselves had better take interventionist and perhaps decisive measures to carry out their goals before it is too late. Thus, U.S. policy, constructed on the only grounds possible—rational self-interest amid a fluid intratriangular situation—could in the end lead to the very composite outcome than originally intended. It certainly would not be the first time; the stuff of international relations comprises the undesired consequences of carefully crafted policies. In this case, however, the penalties could be much higher—too high if general nuclear war ensues.

Fortunately, both the Soviet Union and the United States may be saved by developments outside the strategic triangle. These are of such magnitude that by 1990 the triangle may well have been distorted greatly from its present or projected form and may not even be the locus of global strategic-military affairs. These developments are two sorts: conflict laden and other. It is reasonably clear what conflicts could break out that would severely alter the shape of the triangle. Further disorder in the Middle East and the Persian Gulf seems likely. Rolling rebellions could occur in several East European states. The North Koreans could attack the South at any time before the 1988 Olympics. The Chinese and Vietnamese could have another go at each other, and the Chinese could take military action against Taiwan if the island were to declare independence. The Vietnamese could move against Thailand. Pakistan could fall apart. And there are other possibilities. The Soviet Union, the United States, and China could become involved, separately or together, in several of these. If any one of them became serious, the 1990 outlook for all three could be severely modified.

The other set of extratriangular developments involves the emergence (or near emergence) onto the world strategic-military scene of Japan, the nuclearization of additional states (Pakistan, South Africa, South Korea), failure of the U.S. efforts to restore NATO unity, spreading political tensions in Eastern Europe unchecked by Soviet countermeasures, social breakdown in one or several African countries necessitating supportive international measures, a new oil crisis, and breakdown of the international

economic system. Any one or more of these possibilities could draw the attention of the three constituents away from more nearly exclusive concern with intratriangular events for long enough to allow the three to slide through or put aside conflicts and confrontations among themselves. Although none of these events would be desirable in itself, they do have the comparative virtue of redirecting international relations to places and issues not so centrally tied with Soviet-U.S., Sino-Soviet, and Sino-U.S. relations. The global system (including therefore the strategic-military subsystem centered around the U.S.-China-Soviet Union triangle) would be provided with added looseness, a needed quality. Things would not be so zero sum as an analysis centered on the triangle would make them seem. In particular, the Soviet leadership would be drawn into these wider arenas and not only encouraged to play a more responsible role (thus using its power for other than exclusively Soviet purposes) but also prompted to forget, or postpone, problems and opportunities within the triangle. Complexity and confusion might prove useful to the avoidance of intratriangular conflict and to U.S. interests as well.

The United States has an interest not merely in the peaceful solution of its differences with the Soviets and Chinese but in playing for time so that very long-term secular trends, most of which are in the favor of the United States, will have a chance to exert their influence. It is in Washington's interest, for instance, to bring Japan and China into a broader role in regional and global affairs—Japan militarily and China economically. It is in Washington's interest to foster the development of India as an economically advancing political democracy. It is in the interest of the United States to build a truly interdependent international economic system, especially among the advanced industrial countries. It is in the U.S. interest to promote European economic and political unity, even if it means their movement, eventually, away from the United States. It is in the U.S. interest to foster rapid economic modernization in Latin America and Africa and the completion of that process in Island Asia. In all of these instances, not only are the goals laudatory in themselves, but the accompanying complexity takes the strategic triangle power apart, submerges it in wider processes and arenas, and thus lessens the possibility and the effect of conflict within it.

So if one seeks answers to the query, Given the Soviet strategic outlook about 1990, what should the United States do? the answer is twofold: do what it has to do to deter the Soviets from concluding they can, or they must, go to war to advance or preserve their position and, seek to transform the global system so that the Soviet leadership will not even be given to opportunity to think, and act, in such dangerous manners.

25 The Chinese View of the Strategic Triangle and Appropriate U.S. Responses

William H. Gleysteen, Jr.

Given the number of variables affecting U.S.-USSR-PRC relationships, confident predictions about events over the next ten years are not only difficult but dangerous. Moreover, the shorthand concept of a triangle among the three countries does not account adequately for the potential role of Japan or the impact of other factors in bilateral U.S. dealings with the Soviet Union and the PRC. Granting these difficulties, one can nevertheless identify some of the dynamics governing U.S.-USSR-PRC interrelationships over the next decade. One can also postulate a variety of circumstances that may face U.S. policymakers and discuss appropriate U.S. policies to cope with these situations.



Likely Constants

The relative military strengths of the United States, USSR, and the PRC will not have changed dramatically within the next decade. It is hoped that the United States will have at least sustained its nuclear capacity and perhaps improved its conventional capabilities in relation the USSR, and both countries will have a far more powerful striking force than the PRC. A significant Chinese buildup will not have taken place by 1990. Chinese economic projections do not envisage rapid growth until after that time, and military improvement has been assigned the lowest priority in the PRC's modernization program.

China's basic disposition within the triangle will not have altered radically even though international perceptions and PRC tactics may occasionally suggest otherwise. Thus, although Peking may have more normal relations with the USSR, it will not have reallied itself militarily with Moscow. The PRC will still value the strategic benefit of its U.S. connection, probably as much as it does today. But the PRC will refrain from entering a formal alliance with the United States, and it will remain unwilling to run large risks in situations where its own interests are not directly involved. China will be as sensitive to slight and as nationalistic as it is today.

U.S.-Soviet rivalry and confrontation will be a major feature of the world scene—probably short of major conflict—with tensions perhaps moderated or channeled by limited agreements on strategic weapons.

Differing Circumstances

Although we cannot pin down the complex patterns of events that will face PRC leaders in 1990, we can get some sense of potential conflict areas by postulating a probable pattern as well as a possible pattern and by assuming that the reality may fall somewhere between.

Probable Pattern of Circumstances

Plausibly China and its foreign relationships in 1990 will appear much as the Chinese leaders see them today. The next stage of the leadership transition may have taken place rather smoothly with no abrupt changes in domestic or foreign orientation. China will be politically united, and its pragmatic modernization may be proceeding without overwhelming success or demoralizing failure. In foreign affairs, Peking may be pursuing roughly the same policies as now except that it may display more opportunism in dealings with the USSR and the United States. In these circumstances we could reasonably assume that Peking, while appearing more assuming about the U.S. relationship, would not wish to jeopardize a source of potential support against the USSR; Chinese leaders would nevertheless be more tempted than today to use relations with the Soviets to increase the PRC's leverage on the United States and its formal allies, particularly on the Taiwan issue; possibilities of direct Sino-Soviet conflict, such as escalating border clashes, would be under careful control on both sides; and most potential conflicts involving the U.S.-USSR-PRC would arise from problems outside the triangular relationship.

Possible Pattern of Circumstances

Conceivably Chinese leaders in 1990 may be faced with considerably less favorable circumstances. The PRC may be weakened by internal dissatisfaction and turmoil brought on by the failure or lack of success of current economic policies. Leadership disputes may be severe, and regional tensions within China may multiply. In such circumstances we could speculate

that the PRC would be preoccupied with internal affairs, adopting a relatively xenophobic foreign stance more or less equally critical of both the USSR and United States; the Soviet Union would be tempted to try to foster a pro-Soviet faction of Chinese leaders, more tempted than today although not necessarily to the point of active intervention; feelings over the Taiwan issue would be intensified because of a more emotionally charged national atmosphere in the PRC and perhaps from a leadership faction engaging in demagogic appeals; and there would be a higher potential for escalation of minor conflicts into serious ones, even though none of the governments involved will have deliberately sought a major challenge.

Japan

To complete the sketch of circumstances as seen from Peking in 1990, one must break out of the triangular concept to consider the impact of Japan. In 1990 the pattern of Japanese influence may be much as it is today, but it is conceivable that Japan might have become, or be about to become, a major factor, fundamentally affecting Chinese, Soviet, and U.S. policies. If Japan's defense buildup were to accelerate rapidly, giving it a regional military capability or nuclear weapons, the Soviet Union and China, as well as most other Asian nations, would display real concern. In balance-of-power terms the effect would be to push Peking and Moscow closer together, assuming the United States remained closely tied to Japan. A more complex and unsettling pattern would occur if Japan were to shed its post-World War II relation to the United States and adopt a foreign policy less reliant on U.S. forces. These developments might lead to limited Sino-Soviet collaboration affecting the military situation. Under the possible pattern of circumstances, Japanese rearmament might precipitate at least a limited Chinese challenge to Japan.

Potential Areas of Conflict

Unlike the superpowers with their global involvement, Chinese concerns over potential conflict in 1990 will still be essentially regional in origin. Obvious possibilities that come to mind are the Sino-Soviet border, Taiwan, Korea, Indochina, the Indian subcontinent, and disputed islands. In certain instances conflict might be inflicted on China; in others China might initiate action.

Appropriate U.S. Responses

General Posture

For almost every imaginable contingency in this speculative enterprise, U.S. interests would be best served by a general posture of military strength, political flexibility, and caution about encouraging fundamental changes in the status quo. If, for example, the United States failed to sustain its nuclear capacity and improve its conventional forces, it would lose credibility by 1990, reduce its deterrent power, and risk coming out on the short end of any real contest. If the United States were not sufficiently flexible, it might find that the Taiwan issue eroded much of the strategic advantage in its dealings with the PRC. Yet, if the United States did not seek limited improvements in its ties with the USSR—especially if the PRC were doing so—the United States would pay the price not only in U.S.-Soviet bilateral terms but also in reduced influence in dealings with China. And if the United States pushed Japan into rapid remilitarization, it might alter the basic strategic balance in Asia, resulting in Peking's moving back toward Moscow. A better policy would be one that was sufficiently flexible to allow modest and periodic shifts in interrelationships among the United States, USSR, and PRC and in their dealings with other countries.

These reflections on an appropriate U.S. posture provoke a number of generalizations about conflict contingencies. First, the United States could be faced in 1990 with conflicts ranging from those where it would be collaborating with China to those where the United States and China would be adversaries. Second, many of the conflicts would pose a severe dilemma for the United States, ranging, for example, from the consequences of failing to aid the PRC to problems of entanglement in a struggle where U.S. interests are not directly involved. Third, since a misstep could be so costly, the United States would have to proceed with great caution. And, finally, few contingencies would warrant commitment of U.S. forces to combat.

Contingencies

Sino-Soviet Border

The Sino-Soviet border is an obvious conflict point. In view of the factors that have deterred both parties so far, it is unlikely that either the Soviets or the PRC would deliberately take actions in 1990 that would result in a massive Soviet attack on China. Under the possible pattern of circumstances, however, an incident could take place and escalate, conceivably provok-

ing a major Soviet incursion into China. Furthermore, Soviet military pressure might develop to the point where the United States could not stand idly by with expressions of sympathy. In such circumstances, the degree of U.S. assistance to China could range from explicit public support to the provision of intelligence and military supplies. Although the United States might undertake actions elsewhere to remind the USSR of its other flanks, commitment of U.S. forces to a Sino-Soviet border conflict could not be justified.

Taiwan

Conflict over Taiwan could arise under either of the probable or possible sets of circumstances, and in 1990 it would pose roughly the same difficult choices for the United States as it would today. U.S. military intervention, or even the active threat of it, would erase many of the strategic advantages that have accompanied normalization of U.S.-PRC ties. Confrontation between the United States and the PRC would be militarily costly to the United States, undermine the stability of many key relationships in East Asia, and significantly benefit the USSR. Yet failure to act in the face of an attack or impending attack could be costly to U.S. credibility worldwide and set off a divisive domestic debate. In 1990, U.S. military intervention could be even more controversial than today because generational changes may bring forth a majority of Americans who may not see the point of upholding the Taiwan Relations Act of 1979.

Whatever the U.S. government's ultimate decision regarding intervention, the United States should first exhaust political restraining efforts, making clear to the PRC that an attack would undermine the current strategic framework of relations that is so beneficial to China, as well as to the United States. To maximize deterrence, the United States presumably would reverse the current trend and increase the supply of defensive arms to Taiwan, as well as undertake precautionary U.S. military deployments. If the decision were to stay clear of military involvement, if might, nevertheless, be unwise to declare such a decision too far in advance.

If the United States made the fateful decision to intervene, commitment of massive military force would not be necessary because an attack on Taiwan, or even a blockade, would still be difficult for the PRC in 1990. Whether massive or limited, however, U.S. military intervention would be costly to the U.S.-PRC relationship.

Korea

Despite the heavy concentration of troops on either side of the military demarcation line, conflict in Korea is unlikely under the probable circum-

stances and not very likely under the possible ones unless there were some accompanying upheaval in North or South Korea. The armistice line has held for twenty-nine years in the face of provocative North Korean behavior, tensions in China, and a major shift in both East Asia and on the Korean peninsula geopolitical environment. The odds are that the very apparent danger of conflict will continue to deter. Military conflict is conceivable, however, and could be caused by a combination of events such as reversal of Chinese and Soviet policies of restraint, growing fear in the North of being permanently eclipsed by a more dynamic South, and serious domestic turmoil in the South.

Were such an attack to occur, the United States could conceivably find itself at least briefly confronting both the Soviets and Chinese. The appropriate U.S. response would be immediate application of whatever was necessary to halt the North Koreans, including commitment of air or naval, but probably not ground forces beyond those already in Korea. To check the great danger of escalation, any military actions would have to be paralleled by a massive political effort to reestablish the status quo ante or a mutually acceptable substitute. In other words, the United States could afford neither to stand by and watch South Korea be overrun nor assist the South to overrun the North, an action that would greatly risk expansion of the war.

Indochina

By 1990 considerable change may mark Sino-Vietnamese-Soviet relations, possibly including some easing of tensions between Peking and Hanoi. But the potential conflict would appear high, and the United States might face delicate choices. Direct U.S. involvement would appear inappropriate. Even though the United States might have established diplomatic relations with the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, U.S. actions in a conflict presumably would not differ much from recent U.S. behavior: trying to deflect conflict from spreading to the ASEAN states, placing the value of China connection over the value of a Vietnamese connection, and deterring escalation that might provoke Soviet military action. If a direct Sino-Soviet military clash were to occur, U.S. actions would be governed by the same considerations mentioned in the first contingency.

Indian Subcontinent

One of the most complex and perplexing military contingencies would be Indian and/or Soviet actions that appeared to threaten Pakistan's continued

existence as a political entity. One cannot sensibly discuss an appropriate U.S. response without more context; much would depend on the internal strength of Pakistan's government and the state of Indo-Soviet-U.S.-PRC interrelationships. U.S. involvement through political tilt, military assistance, or even limited intervention could not, however, be ruled out. A military conflict of this scale in the subcontinent could be particularly tricky for the United States. Intervention could be extremely dangerous, while failure to act could result in a significant alteration in the geopolitics of South and Southwest Asia.

Disputed Islands

One of the most likely but less serious military contingencies would be military conflict over disputed islands. The most troublesome would involve the PRC and either Korea or Japan. If U.S. allies were not parties, the United States could probably stay on the sidelines; if allies were parties, the United States might be well placed to broker a settlement before the dispute escalated into major conflict. U.S. military actions would appear inappropriate.



TREE of LIBERTY SOCIETY

26 The Economic Dimension of Strategic Responses

Elizabeth Crook

A close examination of economic trends in a particular region can help highlight possible flashpoints of future conflict. These trends are more quantifiable and enduring than most political indicators and should be included in any analysis of future conflict. Accordingly, here I examine economic factors that could contribute to conflict in East and Southeast Asia in the 1980s, consider economic responses that the United States can make to further foreign policy objectives and prevent and/or contain conflict, and interweave these economic factors together with political and other considerations into possible scenarios detailing possible strategic responses to conflict arising from economic factors in Asia and the Pacific in the 1980s.

Economic Factors Leading to Conflict

Seven major economic trends in the Asia have conflict-producing potential for the 1980s:

1. Differing types of economic systems.
2. Differing levels of economic development.
3. Differing rates of economic growth.
4. Internal economic problems.
5. Trade vulnerability.
6. Ongoing trade problems.
7. Competition for natural resources.

Differing Types of Economic Systems

There are three important command and nine major market economies in Asia. Perhaps the most significant lesson of the past twenty years is that the type of economic system does not determine the foreign policy orientation of any particular country when other important national interests are present. This is illustrated most vividly in the contrast of continuing tensions between the two largest command economies in the world—China and the Soviet Union—and of rapprochement between China and the two largest

market economies, the United States and Japan. However, the competition of two basic economic models undoubtedly contributes to tension. As Soviet social scientist, Henry Trofimenko explained:

The continuing stormy events in the Third World generated by the objective process of development—are inevitable. This process has developed and will develop against the background of the continuing competition between the capitalist and socialist world system for influence on its course and outcome.¹

Differing Levels of Economic Development

Only one Asian power has firmly entered the ranks of the world's most advanced economies. Japan has a GNP of \$1,019 billion and a per capita income fast approaching that of the United States (\$8,800 for Japan compared with \$10,719 for the United States in 1981).²

Four Asian economies are at the midpoint in development with per capita incomes between \$2,000 and \$4,000 a year: South Korea, Taiwan, and the city-states of Singapore and Hong Kong.³ There are four largely rural, underdeveloped Asian economies with per capita income between \$380 and \$1,300 a year: Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, and the Philippines. North Korea would also be on a par with these economies, with a per capita income estimated at \$580. Finally, the two command economies, China and Vietnam, have low rates of production and development (China's per capita income is estimated at \$230 a year, Vietnam's at \$263). Any conflict scenario in Asia must be set against the background of these widely different levels of economic development.

Differing Rates of Economic Growth

Economic growth is a dynamic rather than a static phenomenon. The countries of Asia are in flux. Important ramifications can derive if one country draws ahead or lags behind the others in the development process. Nowhere is this more evident than in the case of the two Koreas, the topic of this chapter's scenarios.

Internal Economic Problems

Perhaps the most vivid recent example of internal economic problems leading to conflict is the Argentine invasion of the Falklands. In Asia almost every economy has the potential for serious internal economic difficulties

leading to conflict. China's economic reforms have possibly had a destabilizing effect.⁴ North Korea and Vietnam are spending vast amounts of their GNP on defense (estimated at 20 percent for North Korea and 50 to 60 percent for Vietnam) with enormous repercussions for their struggling economies.⁵ The Philippines and Thailand have developed a pattern of inefficient, protected, and subsidized local industries. The Philippines has a large international deficit, and Thailand is experiencing a 20 percent inflation rate. Indonesia has the greatest natural resources and the largest population base of any country in the region outside of China, but it also has the lowest per capita income except for China and Vietnam and a history of substantial corruption.⁶ Any of these economies could falter from internal factors, with important repercussions on the international scene. One of the scenarios concerns internal economic strains in China leading to external consequences.

Trade Vulnerability

Japan and the four middle economies have very much followed an export-led growth model. This model has provided very rapid growth (8 to 10 percent a year) over the past twenty years but has also left them very vulnerable to tremors in the world economy. The present international situation of high interest rates, sluggish growth, and decreased demand for imports by the Western industrialized countries, which are their major trading partners, has left these economies with a much reduced growth potential in the 1980s. A complicating fact is that the four market economies with the lowest levels of development want to follow this export-led growth model and are pushing into the labor-intensive textile and simple machinery export market of the middle four, while the middle four are trying to capture part of Japan's high-technology market.⁷

Ongoing Trade Disputes

Nowhere are the problems of trade disputes more apparent than in Japan's relations with the rest of the world. The United States and the organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries have protested Japan's huge trade surpluses and the relative impenetrability of its domestic market.⁸ A U.S. Labor Department study estimated that the U.S.-Japan trade imbalance in 1980 affected 500,000 U.S. jobs.⁹ The depth of U.S. feeling is evidenced in a House Committee bill that requires imported cars to have 85 to 90 percent of their parts manufactured in the United States.¹⁰ The explosion of these disputes into full-blown protec-

tionism is a real possibility in the 1980s, with all its ramifications for international conflict.

Competition for Natural Resources

None of the five major Asian market economies has any sizable domestic source of energy. Only China and Indonesia export energy, and only on a small scale. Japan's dependence on foreign oil is perhaps the most dramatic. The second largest market economy in the world depends for 90 percent of its oil on foreign sources, 75 percent of which now comes from the Persian Gulf.¹¹ On any given day, it is said, there is an oil tanker every 100 miles between Japan and the Middle East, either going to load or unload its vital cargo. Japan's interest in keeping the sea-lanes open is obvious, and its interest in developing energy resources in China, Indonesia, and the off-shore areas and in developing alternative sources of power can be easily understood. Another of this chapter's scenarios will deal with resource development and the tensions it can produce (see table 26-1).

Table 26-1
Financial Statistics for Asian Nations

Country	1979 Population (millions)	1979 GNP (billions \$)	1979 Per Capita (\$)	Percentage of GNP Exported (%)	Percentage of GNP Spent on Defense (%)	Percentage of Total Energy Requirements Imported (%)
China	965.3	219.0	230	8	20	
Taiwan	17.3	32.6	1,890	49	7	
Hong Kong	4.7	18.7	4,000	81	5	100
North Korea						
South Korea	37.3	55.9	1,500	27	6	77
Vietnam	52.3	7.9	150			15
Japan	115.8	1,019.5	8,800	10	1	90
Singapore	2.4	9.1	3,820		6	100
Philippines	46.8	28.1	600	16	2	100
Thailand	45.5	26.9	590	20	3	100
Indonesia	138.9	52.2	380	30		nil
Malaysia	13.6	18.0	1,320	62	5	nil

Sources: IMF, *International Financial Statistics*, 1979 Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, *World Armaments and Disarmament*, SIPRI Yearbook 1982 (Cambridge: Oeglschlager, Aunn and Hain Inc., 1982).

U.N., *World Energy Supplies, 1973-1978* (New York: UN, 1979).

Economic Instruments of U.S. Foreign Policy

The United States can use economic instruments in five major categories: trade, capital transfers, technology transfers, foreign assistance, and U.S. participation in multinational organizations.¹²

Trade

Under the trade category, U.S. economic pressure can take three forms: a complete cessation of trade, a partial cessation of trade, or the positive facilitation of trade.¹³

Complete Cessation of Trade: For a long time, the only authority the president had to bring a complete cessation of economic relations was during wartime, under the Trading with the Enemy Act dating from World War I. Because this was the only legislation available, there developed the somewhat anomalous situation of the 1960s trade sanction against North Vietnam being based on the Korean war emergency, which had occurred fifteen years previously. The situation was rectified in 1977 with the passage of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, by which the president in peacetime can declare a national emergency, freeze assets, and cut off trade. The act has been used once to date: in the case of the Iranian hostages.

Partial Cessation of Trade: Section 232 of the 1962 Trade Expansion Act allows the United States to limit imports of goods that might damage a critical U.S. industry; this is one example of the economic instrument of partial cessation of trade. Other sections of this act were used to justify the blockage of U.S. grain shipments to the Soviet Union.

Facilitation of Trade: Granting of most-favored nation (MFN) status gives a country the same preferences granted to any other country in the MFN category. Reduced tariff schedules, applied to MFN countries, allow their goods to enter the United States more easily and compete more effectively than goods from countries whose non-MFN status means they have to pay the full tariff. The generalized system of preferences grants wide variety of tariff preferences to countries designated as having developing economies. These countries must also be members of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

Capital Transfers

Two U.S. government-sponsored institutions facilitate the transfer of U.S. capital abroad. The United States Export-Import Bank (Ex-Im Bank) makes its own loans to commercially feasible projects overseas and guarantees loans of commercial banks. Its loans are designed primarily to support U.S. exports abroad. The Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) guarantees private investment overseas against expropriation and convertibility of profits. The overseas divisions of certain commercial banks also lend significant amounts to overseas private and government institutions for commercially feasible projects at current rates of interest.

Technology Transfers

Two legislative instruments can be used to limit the transfer of U.S. technology abroad: the Export Administration Act and the Arms Export Control Act. Under the Export Administration Act, the president can limit exports of certain high-technology products that might endanger the security of the United States. For example, the foreign policy provisions of this legislation were used in the 1982 Siberian pipeline dispute. Under the Arms Export Control Act, the president can limit the sale of arms to certain specified countries.

On the other hand, many means exist for facilitating the transfer of U.S. technology abroad when such services are in the interest of U.S. foreign policy; the means include normal trade relations, aid programs, visiting delegations of experts, and joint venture projects.

Foreign Assistance

Foreign assistance can come in the form of concessionary capital transfer, commodity transfer, and technical assistance (for example, sending U.S. experts overseas to train counterparts in developing countries).

U.S. Participation in Multilateral Institutions

The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) makes loans to developing countries at rates lower than those that prevail in current financial markets. The International Development Administration (IDA) is the soft loan arm of the IBRD (or World Bank) where loans are given to qualified members at low or no interest.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) provides reserves to balance temporary balance-of-payments deficiencies. All of the economies of Asia except North Korea belong to the IBRD and the IMF.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is a smaller regional version of the IBRD. Interestingly the Chinese seat on the ADB is held by Taiwan and not the PRC. UN agencies including the UN Development Program, United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), U.S. International Development Organization (UNDO), and Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE) are examples of UN agencies active in Asia.

As multilateral institutions, these are obviously less amenable for the United States to use as bilateral instruments of foreign policy. Still, because of the size of the U.S. contribution (20 percent of the World Bank's available capital, for instance), the United States can exert considerable pressure on the decision-making processes of many of these international economic institutions. And because economic sanctions often demand a multilateral approach, these institutions must be taken seriously.

Strategic Responses to Conflict in the 1980s: Three Scenarios

China-Taiwan



Scenario: Opposition to Deng's pragmatic economic policies began to escalate in the early 1980s. Deng's industrial policies were blamed for dislocations, deficit spending, and increasing unemployment. In agriculture, the policies had resulted in high levels of output, but conservative (leftist or Maoist) forces pointed with concern to the increasing capitalistic tendencies of the peasants to subvert state purchasing quotas, to invest in ever-enlarging private plots, and to sell an increasing proportion of their goods through the flourishing rural markets.

Deng, though officially semiretired, still controlled the strings of power. To protect his economic reforms and undercut his opposition, Deng decided in the autumn of 1984 to take concrete steps against Taiwan. These were made easier by trade disagreements between China and the United States, their general drifting apart, and the general Chinese perception that China's real security lay in the unencumbered position between the United States and the USSR.¹⁴ The future of Taiwan had remained an unresolved issue.¹⁵

The PRC's nine-point proposal of autumn 1981 affecting mail, visiting, and trade relations had put increasing pressure on Taiwan. The designation in the 1982 constitution of Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan as special administrative districts continued the pressure, especially as it appeared that

Hong Kong and Macao would be returned to PRC rule without major conflict.¹⁶

In 1983 Deng and his associates announced that all trade with Taiwan, while not being halted, must be approved by the PRC Ministry of Foreign Trade, in keeping with the policy that Taiwan was a province of the mainland. Taiwan's (also China's) major trading partners, the United States and Japan, complied by sending the required documents. At first all foreign trade routed through Beijing received routine approval, but in the mid-1980s, the approval of certain strategic materials began to be held up.¹⁷ By 1987, trade documents for weapons shipments or critical spare parts were being rejected by the PRC. The United States and Japan continued to comply with PRC regulations.

Although the process had been very incremental, Taiwan had begun to make subtle trade overtures to the USSR. Soon the sight of Soviet cotton and other items being unloaded from Norwegian freighters in Taiwan's Keelung harbor became common. The PRC responded with a naval blockade on all Taiwanese trade. In the winter of 1989, Taiwan's leaders issued thinly veiled threats against military targets in Fujian province across the Taiwan straits.

U.S. Economic Response: It is unlikely that the PRC will resort to military means while it has the economic tools to bring about Taiwan's submission; PRC pressure on Taiwan in the 1980s for reunification will be primarily economic, perhaps taking the form suggested in the scenario. The question is, would the United States and Japan give Beijing tacit support by complying, for instance, with possible trade restrictions against Taiwan? Would the United States use its economic muscle to steer Taiwan into reunification with the PRC rather than see it established as an independent entity with perhaps important links to the Soviet Union?

The United States has several instruments by which it could pressure the PRC to ease economic restrictions on Taiwan. First, the United States could slow down the rate of economic accommodation.¹⁸ Second, it could renege on some of the trade benefits it has extended or will extend in the future, such as MFN status or the General System of Preference. It could encourage multilateral institutions such as the World Bank and the IDA to grant China favorable loans. Finally, it could act in concert with Japan, China's largest trading partner, to limit goods and technology important to China's development process.

North-South Korea

Background: When the Koreas were first divided at the end of World War II, the North had many economic advantages. Most of the transportation

and communication infrastructure left by the Japanese was located in the North. Major mineral deposits were there, as was the skilled labor force. The South's economy was mainly agricultural and relatively underdeveloped. At the end of the Korean war, the output of the two economies was roughly equal, with per capita income higher in the North. The South had the added burden of absorbing refugees fleeing the North.

Against this background, the South Korean economic miracle of the 1960s and 1970s becomes all the more remarkable. Whereas the output of the two economies was about equal in 1955, twenty-five years later the GNP of North Korea had grown to a modest \$15 billion to \$16 billion while the South Korean GNP had climbed to \$65 billion. By the year 2000, some economists project that South Korea's GNP could reach \$100 billion, while the North's will probably remain around \$20 billion.¹⁹

Shortly after the visit of North Korean negotiators to Seoul in 1972 came a turning by North Korea to the outside world, primarily to Japan and Western Europe, for capital and technical expertise. The North Korean principle of self-reliance was modified. In the 1970–1972 period imports from Western Europe and Japan were only 16 percent of the North Korean total. In the 1973–1976 period they had jumped to 40 percent of the total.²⁰ Could their differing growth rates lead to conflict?

Scenario: This new initiative met with severe reverses in the later 1970s. The downswing in the world economy in 1982, the relatively high price of oil, and the uncompetitive nature of many North Korean exports led to severe balance-of-payment difficulties. Growing protectionism in a failing world economy led to a North Korean return to virtual autarky. In 1984, the window to the West was slammed shut.

The reunification proposal submitted by North Korea in 1981 and again in 1983 was summarily rejected by the South. Frustration mounted in North Korea. In addition, during 1984, the proposals of the late 1970s to withdraw troops from South Korea were revived. Attention to human rights violations in the South exacerbated tensions between South Korea and the United States.

The Soviet Union, as part of its forward presence in the area, gave indications that tensions in Korea would be tolerated and even welcomed.

In the mid-1980s, North Korea's leaders became fully cognizant that time was running out. The wide gap between the economic growth rates of the North and South would continue to increase. The North's military position worsened as the South spent increasing percentages of GNP on weaponry. The trade opening to the West had failed, and the economic future of the country looked bleak. Furthermore, the North Korean leader Kim Il Sung, felt by many to be the only leader capable of mobilizing national energies in a wartime effort, was aging. The North Korean govern-

ment decided that 1988 was a propitious time to attempt to finish the unification process.

U.S. Instruments: The crucial turning point in this scenario occurs in the late 1970s and early 1980s with the closing of the North Korean trade window to the West. Although the current world economy will probably preclude the rapid export-led growth of the 1960s and 1970s for many developing economies in Asia, it is important that protectionist barriers not be erected by developed nations. The carrot approach of both bilateral (such as MFN) and multilateral (such as the World Bank loans) trade instruments perhaps should be kept in reserve should the opportunity arise to encourage the participation of countries like North Korea in the world community.

PRC-Vietnam

Background: In 1887, the Ching dynasty made an agreement with the French rulers of Vietnam that the boundary between the two countries, through the South China Sea, should simply follow a longitudinal line instead of a median line. They little realized that one hundred years hence, in the context of an oil-hungry world, their decision could provide an area of dispute between the two nations.²¹

In the words of Selig Harrison, speaking at an offshore oil conference in Canton in November 1981:

The maximum possible Chinese claim line would [create a] disputed zone covering most of the area between the 18th and 20th North Latitude lines and the 107th and 108th longitudinal lines. This is the sword of Damocles hanging over the American oil companies now cooperating with China in the Tonkin area.²²

Scenario: Officials of the American Oil Company (AMOCO) and the PRC Ministry of Petroleum were delighted when, in 1985, fifteen of the fifty-four wells drilled jointly in the Gulf of Tonkin began to produce oil. It appeared that the promise of the two wells drilled in 1979 was about to be fulfilled and a sizable oil field was about to be put into production. Five of the wells, however, were located in the area under dispute between Vietnam and China.

Tensions between the two countries had been growing since the Chinese incursion in Vietnam in 1979. There had been several maritime incidents, following the pattern of the March 1982 bloody incident in which China charged that two Vietnamese gunboats had shelled eleven Chinese fishing

boats and in which Vietnam charged that two Chinese gunboats had shelled eleven Vietnamese fishing vessels. Additional tensions arose over the Parcel and Spratley islands, some of which the Chinese had seized from the Saigon government in 1974 and which Vietnam now claimed.²³ Consequently, when oil was discovered, Vietnam was intensely interested. The long occupation of Kampuchea had drained Vietnam's economy; its leaders understandably were searching for additional sources of foreign exchange.

Vietnam's Soviet friends, also feeling the drain of their unprofitable ally's shaky finances and wishing to thrust another thorn into the side of the PRC, encouraged their client to harass PRC oil tankers shuttling back and forth from the oil fields to the mainland.

China's South Sea fleet, especially equipped to protect oil exploration, took up the challenge. Exchanges of gunfire, beginning sporadically, began to intensify as the stakes of oil revenues raised the ante in the impending conflict.

U.S. Economic Response: The possibility of great power involvement in a possible offshore oil dispute between China and Vietnam is great. U.S. oil companies are actively cooperating with Chinese explorations in disputed areas of the Gulf of Tonkin and the South China Sea. At the same time, Soviet ships sailing in and out of Danang and Camh Ranh Bay are now a reality. The U.S. government must warn U.S. companies of the dangers in their present pattern of exploration and perhaps encourage either a definitive bilateral boundary settlement or an International Court of Justice decision on the matter.

Should confrontation arise in the South China Sea, U.S. economic levers on Vietnam are minimal, although Vietnam, as successor to South Vietnam, is a member of the World Bank and the IMF. Some small degree of pressure might be brought to bear through those means; however, the United States may have most effect in seeing the boundary conflict settled before oil exploration goes too far.

Notes

1. Henry Trofimenko, "The Foreign Policy of the U.S.S.R.," *Foreign Affairs* 59, no. 5 (Summer 1981):1040.

2. "Focus: Japan '82," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, June 11, 1982, pp. 45-82.

3. See data in table 26-1.

4. 'A good brief discussion of the current situation on the Chinese economy by Robert F. Dernberger can be found in Committee on Foreign

Relations and Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, *United States and China Economic Relations: A Reappraisal*, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, April 1982), pp. 3–20.

5. Interview with David C. Halsted, Vietnam desk officer, U.S. Department of State, September 8, 1982. Also interview with Robert Richmond, Korea desk officer, U.S. Department of State, September 1, 1982.

6. E.S. Browning, "East Asia: In Search of a Second Economic Miracle," *Foreign Affairs* 60, no. 1 (Fall 1981):123–147. The article has a good brief discussion of the ASEAN economies.

7. The situation of Taiwan illustrates this problem. As Wei Wau, adviser to Taiwan's Ministry of Economic Affairs said, "Taiwan no longer has the advantages of underdeveloped economies, like intensive labor, but at the same time, does not have the advantages of the developed countries, i.e., high productivity. Quoted in Leo Yueh-yun Liu, "Taiwan's Role in the Western Pacific," *Current History* 81, no. 474, (April 1982), 164–167, 176–177.

8. "Focus: Japan," p. 49.

9. C. Fred Bergsten, "What To Do about the U.S.-Japan Economic Conflict," *Foreign Affairs* 60, no. 5 (Summer 1982):1061.

10. Thomas W. Lippman, "Brock Scores Measures to Require U.S. Parts in Foreign Cars," *Washington Business*, September 13, 1982, p. 7. Also see Kathy Sawyer, "Panel Approves Auto Import Bill," *Washington Post*, September 16, 1982, p. A-24.

11. William R. Feeney, "U.S. Strategic Interests in the Pacific," *Current History* 81, no. 474 (April 1982):145–149.

12. Sidney Weintraub, *U.S. Economic Coercion and U.S. Foreign Policy: Implications of Case Studies from the Johnson Administration*, (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1982).

13. Interview with Russel Munk, U.S. Treasury Department, September 13, 1982.

14. Hu Yaobang, Chairman of Chinese Communist Party, "First Plenary Session, 12th Central Committee," *Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), Daily Reports: China*, no. 177 (1982):1–16.

15. The full text of the August 1982 joint communique can be found in *Beijing Review*, vol. 25, no. 34, August 23, 1982, pp. 14–15.

16. An interesting article delineating current Chinese thinking on the development of special economic zones can be found in Xu Xuehan, "Several problems Involving the Construction of the Special Economic Zones," *Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), Daily Reports: China*, September 20, 1982, p. 16.

17. Note must be made of the fact that two days after this scenario was written, the State Department acknowledged that it was prepared to inform

China of arms shipments to Taiwan since 1979. Once a pattern of informing about past shipments is begun, it is not difficult to project information being provided on future shipments. See "U.S. to Inform China of Taiwan Arms," *Washington Times*, September 24, 1982, p. 1.

18. An example of this kind of accommodation appeared in Philip J. Hilts, "Computer Sale to China Approved in Policy Shift," *Washington Post*, September 23, 1982, p. A-3.

19. Frederica M. Bunge, *North Korea: A Country Study* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1981), pp. 109–159.

20. Whan Kihl Young, "North Korea: A Reevaluation," *Current History* 81, no. 474, (April 1982):155–159.

21. A background discussion of these issues can be found in Harold C. Hinton, *The China Sea: The American State in Its Future*, Agenda Paper 12 (National Strategy Information Center, 1980).

22. "A New Gulf Flashpoint," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, June 11, 1982, p. 26.

23. Ibid.



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27

The Cultural Dimension of Strategic Responses in Asia and the Pacific

Gerrit W. Gong

Three conceptual elements are implied by the term *strategic response*. First is the sense that a strategic response derives from a comprehensive view of security. A strategic response is certainly not limited to strategic nuclear weapons, though it may include consideration of their use. Indeed recognizing that effective strategy must take into account as many dimensions of reality as possible, efforts to formulate effective strategic responses to conflict will encompass the widest possible interplay of political, military, economic, and cultural factors.¹

Second, although the single word *response* suggests *reaction*, the term *strategic response* argues for a more forward-looking orientation. Such an approach not only reacts to the exigencies of any conflict at hand but also attempts to forecast and anticipate such events and to prepare contingency responses within the parameters of strategy to cope with them. For this reason, the term *strategic response* is something of an oxymoron, a contradiction in the sense that properly conceived strategy is not so much a reaction to future events as a means for channeling and directing efforts according to a clear plan.

Attention to the need for carefully conceived strategic responses to anticipated events is by no means a call to increase plans for or execution of preemptive military responses. Rather, the distinction being underscored is the one between a strategic response aimed at dealing with anticipated events and a more hurried response forced by unanticipated events, perhaps of crisis proportions. The potentially most dangerous situations or conflicts are those that have not been conceptualized, let alone anticipated. Accordingly, a strategic response should not proceed from either best or worst case scenarios but instead from the likelihood that truth will be stranger than fiction and that coping with future conflicts will be more demanding than expected. This does not mean contingency planning is irrelevant—only that too-well-entrenched plans are.

The term *strategic response* has a third dimension; it reminds us that strategy depends on the coordination of disparate, perhaps divergent, interests. Such coordination of efforts necessarily involves the political and public opinion processes both within specific countries and among several countries when those countries are attempting to develop a common strategic response to a shared threat or conflict. Within each country, indigenous

factors rooted in the context of tradition and culture affect elite and popular opinion and thereby the interplay between the political process and the formulation of strategic responses to possible conflict scenarios. For example, when the United States, Japan, and Korea discuss coordinating strategic responses to possible conflicts, the interactions of the cultural complexities inherent in their individual and collective policymaking processes become all the more important. At the same time, those in positions of authority often (through little fault of their own) do not appreciate fully the cultural perspectives, values, and orientations even of friendly opposite numbers.

Cultural Dimension in Political-Military Analysis

Another point that bears notice is the inextricability of politics and culture and therefore, in those cases where conflict arises from political dispute, of conflict and culture. Two general qualities characterize the contemporary international system: it is political and it is multicultural. Few question the political character of the international system. But the multicultural dimension must be interpreted to include more than the variations throughout the world in art, dance, music, and other manifestations of aesthetic culture. More important for our purposes is to recognize that national decisions occur within a specific cultural milieu, which derives from a people's language, history, politics, national character, religion, and social structure. In turn, these cultural elements affect the communication processes, perceptions, and values of each country and thereby influence each country's definition of national interest and each country's conduct of national policy.²

Although international high politics may ultimately be power politics, it is insufficient to view them simply as geopolitics. In an age where the potential ramifications of the Iranian revolution are only the most obvious example of an increasingly important cultural dimension in international relations, it is necessary to view the domestic orientation of the various polities around the world as of more fundamental consequence than their military strength or their geopolitical positioning. In this view, the milieus in which the politics of the countries of the world are practiced, both domestically and internationally, contribute decisively to the definition of political power and to the myriad manifestations of its exercise.³

In those situations (including scenarios involving conflict) where the cultural dimension is inextricable from political concerns, there may be a cultural corollary to Clausewitz's famous dictum: to the extent that conflict involving military force is a continuation of political conflict by other means, it is also a continuation of cultural conflict by other means. This by no means

implies that all political conflicts are also cultural conflicts; however, it does imply that efforts to defuse international confrontations or crises embedded in specific cultural contexts may require discovering both the cultural and the political means to defuse the cultural and the political concerns at their roots. To the extent that such root concerns involve cultural perceptions of national interests and cultural determinations of the methods for their defense, then the cultural dimension must be considered indispensable in formulating a strategic response to conflict.

Since both conflicts of culture and conflicts exacerbated by cultural factors exist in Asia and the Pacific, it is necessary to distinguish between them. Conflicts of culture arise when the historical values, patterns of living, and other cultural expressions of two countries (or groups) are the cause of tension or potential conflict. Conflicts exacerbated by cultural factors occur when existing tensions are intensified by differences in cultural perceptions, values, or patterns of living. Indeed, many points of tension in Asia now contain both forms of conflict—the first sometimes leading to the second, as in the conflict along the Sino-Vietnamese border.

The most probable conflicts for Asia and the Pacific in the 1980s are likely to be low-intensity confrontations. For example, in parts of Southeast Asia where borders are still fluid and along the Sino-Soviet frontier, domestic or border instabilities could easily lead to insurgencies or guerrilla actions. Possible exceptions to this general prognosis are in Korea and along the Sino-Vietnamese border, where more large-scale, conventional fighting could break out.

But it may not be actual conflict that could most upset the delicate strategic situation in Asia and the Pacific. Indeed, it is projected that the most likely causes of instability, tension, or perhaps conflict in East Asia are those arising from potential domestic changes. A sudden or dramatic shift, whether a severe economic slump, a rough leadership transition, rapidly changing public sentiment, or even internal political-military rivalries could presage the reorientation of a country's direction in a region where the equilibrium is already precariously balanced. Hence, internal changes such as a surge of militarism or neutralism in Japan, Soviet meddling in North Korean domestic politics, or subtle changes of orientation within the ruling circles of China's politburo (singly or in an interacting manner) could precipitate significant shifts in the strategic situation of East Asia.⁴

Cultural Dimension in Asia and the Pacific

Of the many strategic situations affected by the cultural dimension, I will sketch three involving China, Japan, and the Soviet Union in Vietnam.

China

The first question generally asked concerning the strategic situation in Asia and the Pacific is under what conditions a Sino-Soviet rapprochement might occur. The cultural dimension involved in this kind of assessment is essential not only to understanding the Sino-Soviet dynamic but also Sino-Soviet-U.S. triangular relations, from which none of the bilateral relations among those three is ultimately separable.

It is generally accepted that the historical and cultural differences between the Soviet Union and China run divisively deep. The unhappy experiences that fueled the polemics of the late 1950s and early 1960s, including those involving technology transfer (or lack thereof), are now also part of this ongoing history of uneasy cooperation in even the best of times. Against this backdrop of previous Sino-Soviet bilateral experience, no analyst believes that the Soviet Union and China will reestablish the kinds of ties that apparently existed in the 1950s.

It is nevertheless generally agreed that a limited détente or accommodation founded on mutual political benefit could lead both sides toward less hostile relations. Two fundamental cultural parameters, however, could restrain rapprochement: the visceral and racist Russian fear of the Chinese and the primordial Chinese urge to stand, independent and strong, at the center of at least their own world and realm of influence. In Sino-Soviet relations historical familiarity has corroborated a mutual suspicion and contempt that exceeds ideological quarrels and will remain even if state-to-state relations are apparently normalized.

Despite an industrial and military position weak in many ways, China retains a certain room for maneuver between the Soviet Union and the United States. To the extent that the United States perceives that China's strategic cooperation is needed to contain the Soviet Union, China has a "Soviet card" with which to bargain with the United States. And the stronger China's case with the United States, the more of a "U.S. card" China has to play in negotiations with the Soviet Union.

It is uncertain what parallel strategic interests China now perceives itself to share with the United States. Indeed, earlier Beijing calls for a united front against hegemonism have shifted to pronouncements by Hu Yaobang at a recent Chinese Communist party congress that the Soviet Union is no longer the main or only menace to world peace.⁵ In placing the Soviet Union and the United States in the same category, China is apparently reemphasizing the kind of three worlds model that distinguished the intermediate zone (Western Europe and Japan, which China continues to court) and the Third World (where China wishes to expand its influence) from the world of the two superpowers. It is too early to predict the duration or full ramifications

of Beijing's interest in a more equidistant policy, but it appears to hold both long- and short-term advantages.

Cultural perceptions—the cultural dimension of strategic thinking—seem very much in evidence in these determinations of Chinese policy. First, there is the ongoing concern within China that it not mortgage its development through a dependence on or an overly close affiliation with any external power. Earlier that power was the Soviet Union; now there is that potential in China's relationship with the West and with the United States in particular. Some distance from the West may be important for the continuing legitimacy of the ruling regime, both in terms of domestic politics and in terms of China's history of cultural self-consciousness.

Second, historical perspective figures heavily in China's assessments of its interests. Reports from Beijing suggest an ongoing debate in China over a question of critical significance: which country, the United States or the Soviet Union, is the declining power and which is the ascending power? Even this manner of framing the question has a distinctive Chinese flavor. The final outcome of this debate is still unknown, but it is apparent that many Chinese analysts believe that the defense spending of the United States will reach a peacetime ceiling without giving the United States sufficient military strength to reverse the unfavorable balance of power with the Soviet Union that has evolved since 1945 and became apparent during the mid-1970s. Beijing may be attempting to square the circle by distancing itself somewhat from the United States while keeping its Soviet options open. In this way, China emphasizes the flexibility of its political and military choices while reducing its security risks and helping the chances for progress in socialist construction.

In the short term, China's leaders recognize that the West can provide technology, capital, and general know-how, which the Soviet Union cannot. But in the longer term, China must become, in the words of Hu Yaobang, a modern and powerful socialist country, which is prosperous, highly democratic, and culturally advanced.⁶ In the interim, points of difference with the West can be used as bargaining points by which to gain concessions, even while China uses them to move toward the independent position it ultimately desires.

Thus, many analysts presume that Sino-Soviet-U.S. relations are now in a state where at least minor changes from earlier alignments may be possible. Indeed any consideration of strategic responses to conflict in the 1980s in the Asia and Pacific region must consider the likelihood that configurations with the PRC could be quite different than they are presumed to be now and for reasons rooted in culturally influenced assessments of Beijing's long-term interests. In recent times, the general assumption has been to ask what the parameters of the U.S.-PRC strategic cooperation should be.

Hindsight may reveal that the extent of the ability of the United States to play a China card were exhausted by the early 1980s and that from 1979 on the PRC was satisfied with the degree of recognition and cooperation it had achieved with the United States. Others put it more bluntly; they say the PRC played cooperation with the United States to the limits of its utility. None of this belies the genuine importance that both the United States and China attach to the cordiality of their ongoing mutual interests. Rather, it indicates the dynamic and evolving nature of both the external strategic environment in Asia and the Pacific and of the internal domestic trends of the countries within the region.

Japan

Contemporary considerations of strategic responses involving Japan in the 1980s usually focus on the amount of Japan's GNP spent on defense, on whether Japan's self-defense forces can and should legitimately defend a 1,000-mile Japanese defense periphery, and what kind of mutual defense support Japan and Korea should offer each other. In the cultural context, however, another level of analysis comes into play. Two recent incidents—one involving Japanese textbooks, one involving Japanese nationals accused of seeking electronics information by illegal means—symbolize the cross-roads at which Japan now stands.

The textbook incident underscores the internal tension within Japan over its orientation to the military—past, present, and presumably future.⁷ The willingness in some sectors of the Japanese polity to exonerate Japanese aggressions prior to and during World War II by referring simply to Japanese advances in Asia is feared by some to indicate a possible step toward Japanese militarism. It is worth noting that the textbooks became an issue in Japan first. Ultimately, however, the response to the new Japanese textbooks in China, Korea, the Philippines, and other parts of Asia was sufficiently strong that, after policy discussions at the highest levels of the Japanese government, official apologies were offered, and the decision to withdraw the offending materials was made.

There are those in Japan who also caution that the lessons of the 1920s, 1930s, and early 1940s should not be forgotten. Nothing must compromise, such observers stress, the stringent civilian control over the military that now exists. In this view, increasing the involvement of the military even in Japan's self-defense could change the role of the military in Japanese society, beginning a process that may be difficult to control and perhaps impossible to stop. What is warned about in configurations involving conventional military weaponry is thought to apply doubly in discussions of nuclear weapons:

Japan's nuclear allergy may be real to the extent that if Japan sneezes, the rest of Asia will shudder with chills.

On the other hand, the incident involving Japanese computer companies and their alleged willingness to obtain IBM computer manuals and other trade secrets by illegal means underscores another way the cultural dimension could affect the general strategic situation in Northeast Asia.⁸ Popular Japanese sentiment rallied strongly behind the Japanese companies implicated in the electronics incident and accused the United States of setting a trap in an effort to hobble Japanese competition. There is an important and disturbing pattern in how personally and nationalistically many Japanese take international criticism (and in how personal and nationalistic many such criticisms are).

Right or wrong, this pattern of Japanese response is rooted in the Japanese sense of ethnic and cultural self-consciousness and reflected in Japan's historical and psychological perceptions of international affairs. In the nineteenth century, domestic Japanese concern that Japan be treated on an equal and balanced footing often placed the Diet and the government at odds and resulted in assassination attempts on more than one Japanese prime minister and the fall of more than one Japanese government. In the 1920s and 1930s the same phenomenon was even more evident.

Japanese fishermen still take international criticism personally, almost as an ethnic attack on themselves and their country. In an effort to defuse international accusations that Japanese fishermen are indiscriminately killing dolphins, the Japanese government has gone to great expense (thus far with only limited success) to develop mechanical dolphins to keep real dolphins away from Japanese fishing fleets. During the Silicon Valley electronics scandal, there was great sensitivity in Japan to the way accused Japanese nationals, allegedly overshadowed on each side by burly U.S. marshals, were subjected to the public humiliation of being photographed in handcuffs.

Thus, if intensified debate within Japan over trade, defense, or other policy with the United States does not contribute to Japanese rearmament, it could influence latent tendencies toward neutralism. Only very wishful thinking could give the Soviet Union cause to hope for pulling Japan entirely within its sphere of influence. More realistically, the Soviet Union must recognize that the encouragement of Japanese neutralism could dramatically influence the strategic position of Japan and, indeed, all of Asia. All that would be necessary as a first step would be for Japan to return to a more omnidirectional foreign policy, thereby increasing the scope of its relations with other countries (including, possibly, the Soviet Union). Such a policy demarché would not even require Japan to renounce its existing ties with China or the United States.

Recognizing Japanese cultural sensitivities and the potential impact they have on Japanese policy, domestic and international, does not imply that such concerns should govern U.S. policy toward Japan. However deep-seated in Japanese history and tradition, Japanese cultural perceptions are not necessarily unchangeable. And the distinction between popular and elite perceptions must be considered, particularly if there is a time lag between them. In any case, popular opinion has tremendous impact on elite thinking and activity in a democratic country such as Japan.

Clearly, however, when formulating a strategic response to possible future developments, any internal change that affects Japan's strategic orientation—whether in the direction of an independent self-defense capability or in the direction of a neutral position in regard to the other great powers in Asia—would be tantamount to a major change in the strategic configuration of the region. For this reason, the cultural dimension that influences Japan's domestic orientation so decisively must be considered an integral component in any effort to develop a strategic response to conflict involving U.S. interests in Japan and Northeast Asia in the 1980s.

Soviet Union and Vietnam

Both the West and Asia rightly attach great concern to the rise of Soviet military strength in both Northeast and Southeast Asia. Of particular significance are the expansion of the Soviet Pacific fleet, the hastened construction of Soviet military installations on the Japanese northern islands, and the access gained by the Soviet Union to the naval and air facilities at Cam Ranh Bay and Da Nang in Vietnam. The 1,000 miles of forward deployment thus gained by the Soviets has obvious ramifications for the Soviet presence in the South China Sea, the Indian Ocean, and, possibly, in the Persian Gulf.

Despite the logistical advantages that the Soviet navy now enjoys because of its alliance with Vietnam, the cultural dimensions of that relationship must be weighed in any effort to formulate an appropriate strategic response. The Soviet-Vietnamese relationship is clearly a marriage of inconvenience where no love is lost by either side. Isolated when hostilities with the United States ceased and especially so after invading Kampuchea, Vietnam turned to Moscow for needed help in rebuilding its war-torn economy and society. Not opposed to a beachhead of influence in Southeast Asia and anxious for a counterweight to China, the Soviet Union was eager to sign an agreement that presented China with the possibility of a two-front war. Furthermore, use of Vietnamese bases allows the Soviet Union to project its power into the Indian Ocean and beyond.

Vietnam's isolation continues. Its ambitions in the region are viewed with alarm by the ASEAN countries. Thus far, the United States has remained extremely cool to Vietnamese initiatives to open diplomatic or aid ties; such efforts seem motivated as much by Vietnam's policy goal of long-term independence as by a desire to up the bidding for Soviet assistance. Vietnam's use of the issue of U.S. military personnel still missing in action in its attempts to garner U.S. cooperation is a sad commentary on just how desperate it perceives the situation to be. Yet at the same time, aid from France leaves open Vietnam's hope that careful negotiations possibly could bring indirect help from even the United States.

The Soviets may be sensitive to the fact that Vietnam did not wage a war of liberation for the right to grant Soviet advisers and sailors access to its territory. It remains to be seen how much of the denigration of Soviet awareness regarding Vietnamese pride derives from Western sour grapes and how much is ultimately borne out in fact. In any case, the Soviets will continue pressing to maximize their gains in Vietnam despite extensive (and ongoing) costs. The more Moscow spends in Vietnam, the greater the need will be to show a commensurate return on its investment.

Two other aspects of the cultural dimension to the strategic situation in Southeast Asia must be mentioned. First is the Vietnamese assertion that an Indochina federation is justified on the basis of the area's historic cultural unity. Although some historical and cultural evidence may support such a claim, world attention will likely remain unswayed from its rightful concern for the ultimate fate of Kampuchea. Even Vietnam's immediate task of solidifying control over its current holdings is affected on a day-to-day basis by the cultural currents, undercurrents, and convection currents that still swirl through the societies in that region.

A second cultural interplay that merits continuous monitoring is the Sino-Vietnamese relationship, which is both cause and effect of the historical tension between China and Vietnam. Even while China was assisting Vietnam in its war against the United States, Vietnam was publishing articles decrying traditional Chinese chauvinism. These semantic attacks presaged the tensions in Sino-Vietnamese relations manifested most dramatically by the February 1979 Chinese incursion into Vietnam. China remains sensitive to any offers of Western help to Vietnam, financial or otherwise, even if they are intended to woo Vietnam from Soviet influence. Just as long-standing historical and cultural traditions influence the Chinese and Soviet perceptions of their geopolitical positions within the global strategic configuration in general and against each other in particular, so deep-seated cultural orientations will continue to influence the long-term evolution of Sino-Vietnamese and Vietnamese-Soviet relations.

Conclusion

Although perception is in fact only part of reality, cultural reality is only part perception. What I have called the cultural dimension encompasses and influences the perceptions, values, and methodological approaches of both general populations and elites. Consciously and not, deliberately and in subtle ways, the policies of national leaders and therefore of countries influence and are influenced by the cultural milieu of which they are also both producers and products. Coping with the range of issues that are emotionally intensified by the confluence of cultural and international politics will be an increasingly difficult concern for successor generations, here and abroad.⁹

Yet this only underscores the paradox with which this chapter concludes. Can genuinely anticipatory strategic responses, particularly those that account for the interplay of international politics and culture, be developed in the light of the general trend of postwar international politics (whether after World War I, World War II, or Vietnam), which conventional wisdom perceives to have put the West in a largely defensive position in regard to both the Soviets and the Third World?

Notes

1. In a working definition, Adda Bozeman describes culture as the "evidence that generations of people in a given area of human grouping have been unified by virtue of holding to certain specific modes of thought, patterns of behavior, and vocabularies of preferred norms and values." Adda Bozeman, "Do Educational and Cultural Exchange Have Political Relevance?" *International Educational and Cultural Exchange* (Fall 1969): 7.

2. These are the factors emphasized by the Department of State's Foreign Service Institute; see "Advanced Area Studies" in *School of Area Studies* explanatory pamphlet, U.S. Department of State, Washington, D.C.

3. See Michael Howard, "The Forgotten Dimension of Strategy," *Foreign Affairs* (Summer 1979) for a discussion of the need to consider social factors in the strategic calculus.

4. See Gerrit W. Gong, "The Potential for Conflict in Northeast Asia in an Era of Change," in *The Future of Conflict in the 1980s*, ed., William J. Taylor and Steve Maaranen (Lexington, Mass: Lexington Books, D.C. Heath and Company, 1983), pp. 313–334.

5. Text of Hu Yaobang's Report to the Twelfth Communist Party Congress, Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS) September 8,

1982. pp. K 19–20. See section V in general regarding China's adhering to an independent foreign policy.

6. Hu Yaobang, speech celebrating the Sixtieth anniversary of the founding of the Communist party of China; text in *Beijing Review*, July 13, 1981, p. 24.

7. Dimensions of the textbook case are covered, for example, in *Asian Wall Street Journal* August 2, 9, September 6, 27, October 4, 1982, page 11. See also *FBIS*, IV. 23 July 1982, South Korea, E3–E4; 26 July 1982, South Korea, E4–E5; 27 July 1982, South Korea, E3–E4; Japan, C1–C2; 28 July 1982, South Korea, E1–E2; Japan, C1–C2; 30 July 1982; South Korea, E1–E2; Japan, C1–C2.

8. See *Asian Wall Street Journal*, June 14, 28, July 26, August 2, 1982.

9. See "The Successor Generation," *Atlantic Council* (Washington, D.C., January 1981), pp. 14–17. What applies across the Atlantic is even more applicable in the other parts of the world where cultural diversities are even greater.



TREE of LIBERTY SOCIETY

Part VIII
Strategic Responses
to Regional Conflicts:
Latin America



TREE *of* LIBERTY SOCIETY

28 The Caribbean Basin Environment: Policy Responses in the 1980s

Georges Fauriol

Much has been said about the core geopolitical value of the Caribbean basin to the security of the United States. But if its colorful and sometimes painful historical experience in the region is any guide, the United States as a nation is likely to continue to be tempted to take the Caribbean islands, Central America, Mexico, and the northern rim of South America generally for granted. Significantly, the eventuality that Washington and a broad spectrum of U.S. society will be involved and affected by the Caribbean basin's periodic bouts with perplexing political turbulence will accelerate through the 1980s. And to that extent, a new plateau of foreign and security policy concerns will evolve in a minefield of potentially dramatic developments emanating not so much from new problems but from the continuing decay of older conditions.

As cogently noted in the Defense Department's annual *Military Posture* overview reports, U.S. interests in the Western Hemisphere focus on maintaining long-term stability, political and economic cooperation, and regional security. This alludes, however, to a comfortable situation that no longer exists. Thus beginning with the Cuban revolution, through the independence of many of the Caribbean states, and continuing into the turbulence of Central American crises and a war in the South Atlantic, the process of refocusing U.S. policy toward Latin America in general, and the Caribbean basin area in particular, has been inextricably intertwined with the general decay of U.S. dominance in hemispheric affairs. In ignoring the region in its foreign policy context, the United States is also belatedly attempting to cope with events that have begun to affect its own socioeconomic environment. Thus, sound policy responses for the 1980s will have to be forged through a strategy responsive not only to regional but also domestic U.S. realities.

Caribbean Basin Policy Setting

In the past decade strategic threats have developed outside the traditional crisis centers of Europe, the Middle East, and the Far East. The steady growth of Soviet military power has given the USSR strategic superiority. As a result, the United States has become vulnerable to new Soviet capabilities and has been less willing to project strength and influence in several

strategic theaters. Second, except for a brief interlude in the late 1960s and early 1970s, Cuban activities and U.S. interests still remain on a collision course and have in fact clashed several times in Central America, the Caribbean, and Africa. Finally, since the end of the postwar era, the terms of international resource trade and economic relations have been totally transformed. U.S. dependence on vital foreign resources and its declining economic strength have undermined U.S. capabilities for countering adverse global trends. At the same time, energy and trade problems have attained a growing strategic significance for the United States.

Through the late 1970s, the United States remained under the illusion that the Caribbean basin was well-moored to U.S. foreign policy and security interests. The area appeared stable, and the Cuban expansionism of the previous years seemed to have slackened. Furthermore, Washington was so preoccupied with events in the Persian Gulf, the eastern Mediterranean, and Western Europe that it paid little attention to geopolitical challenges closer to home. Several alarming developments, however, have affected U.S. interests in the Caribbean basin region and are most likely to shape U.S. responses to conflict in the region in the 1980s.

The steady growth of Cuban power and the confirmed patterns of ideological expansionism.

Revolutionary upheaval and cross-border tensions in Central America.

Socioeconomic pressures and political changes in the Caribbean islands.

Continuing volatility in U.S.-Mexican relations and increasing doubts about Mexico's institutionalized political system.

Dramatic inflows of refugees and illegal immigration to the United States and among the states of the region.

A broad deterioration of U.S.-Latin American relations affecting the concept of a hemispheric system and by extension the traditional tone of normal regional diplomacy.

Furthermore, regional U.S. strategic interests are becoming increasingly sensitive to diplomatic and economic assertiveness among the littoral states, specifically Mexico and Venezuela, and in South America, Brazil. The weakening political institutions of a partially Caribbean country, Colombia, are likely to intrude in a negative way in the furthering of U.S. interests in the Caribbean basin at large. A serious deterioration of Mexico's prosperity and ensuing stability is now not only a distinct possibility but could be a disastrous development for the United States. Even more broadly, potentially provocative moves by European allies can still complicate the local

scene. The British might pull out from any regional responsibility. Ideological and commercial motives may drive the French to increased involvement in Caribbean basin affairs. Finally, U.S. diplomatic posture can continue to be affected by Western European political party initiatives and linkages, a diplomatic tool that the United States does not effectively possess.

Detecting the erratic swings in previous policies and their potentially catastrophic results, the Reagan administration has sought some degree of consistency, reliability, and balance in its approach to the region. The administration's ensuing initiatives, from security and counterinsurgency efforts, to trade and investment initiatives, financial support packages, and immigration and refugee legislation, comprise a multipronged policy that more realistically reflects U.S. strategic concerns and conflict potential in the Caribbean basin. The fundamental nature of these concerns has and will continue to underscore the need to establish operational limits to Cuban and other unfriendly behavior, to protect the stability of the Western Hemisphere, and to restore U.S. leadership in the region.

These initiatives imply a variety of political, security, and economic missions for U.S. policy. The Caribbean basin—particularly Mexico, Venezuela, and Cuba—no longer operates in some idealistic isolation from the practices of international relations. To that extent, effective policy responses in the foreseeable future will have to address an array of subregional turmoil of which uncertainties about Mexico will be only one facet.

Central America will face a continuing demonstration of profound political instability—an environment emphasizing the search for new forms of institutional arrangements. From Panama to Guatemala, existing political structures will continue to represent a curious panoply of styles of governance from the archaic and the weak to the unrepresentative. The current degree of political violence and disorderly regime change will slowly taper down by the end of the 1980s as the region attains a new equilibrium. But in the interim, Central American governments will continue to operate within very narrow political margins.

On the other hand, it can be argued that the Caribbean island states and the Guianas will continue to face a problem of a different sort: how to arrest decay in existing democratic and parliamentary infrastructures created during a relatively recent colonial experience. In most of the Commonwealth Caribbean and the Dominican Republic, even Puerto Rico, the contingency at hand will remain the political and economic maintenance of these polities. There will remain two outstanding and extreme exceptions to this model: Cuba, whose sociopolitical institutionalization will most likely propel the nation generally unscathed into the 1990s, and Haiti, whose archaic and singular mode of governance could very well collapse both abruptly and accidentally, with unforeseen consequences.

As for Cuba and its regional allies, Soviet strategic, economic, and

political support will continue to alter the calculations of U.S. security initiatives in the Caribbean basin. Although Castro's foreign policy cannot be viewed as entirely subservient to that of Moscow, it would be gravely mistaken to think of Havana as an independent or even semiautonomous actor. That predicament will continue to be an occasional asset for Havana and a source of anxiety for Washington.

Contingencies

Assessments of contending futures for the Caribbean basin in the 1980s are grounded in the strategic reality that the region is not only a maritime gateway to the hemisphere but also an area of political and economic interplay and human interchange. Erosion in any of these areas cannot be underestimated if for no other reason than the geographical proximity of the basin to the U.S. mainland.

The first strain of events facing Washington will be characterized by the stresses and contrasts of those societies having accepted the challenge of modernization and industrialization. Trade, technology, and even nuclear proliferation will become part of an expanding agenda of issues. In general, the chief source of instability will be associated with the internal economic and political management process of creating a modern state. To that extent, a weakening of the financial and political structure in Mexico, Venezuela, and Colombia will remain a constant and serious current of problem areas. External sources of conflict will come into play, either in the form of Latin America's perennial free-floating dissident groups or involving the distinct possibility of an interlocking threat stimulated by radical governments. Direct military threat will not constitute a high level of probability, but the possibility of urban terrorist activity and rural insurgency will possibly increase, particularly if it can be read that the governing elites are displaying a serious lack of good judgment on both domestic and foreign policy issues.

A significant policy backdrop to this category of events will be the continuing emergence of countries of Mexico's or Colombia's magnitude as notable if wobbly local power contenders. In a process already underway, this will further politicize regional international relations, calling into action Washington's ability to pursue bilateral strategic relations simultaneously with more regional or even hemispheric diplomacy. But the politicization of regional basin relations will also represent an internal contingency for those countries themselves. In this context, the very nature of ties with the United States will surface as an indicator on which political opposition forces will judge their own governments.

A second strain of events is associated with much of the smaller states of

the Caribbean basin and characterized by the turmoil of societies undergoing the preliminary stages of modernization. It has and will continue to affect Central America in a different way than it does the English-speaking Caribbean in view of the greatly differing political traditions. The latter is indeed attempting to sustain those traditions. Yet by the late 1980s these countries will have found it hard to reconcile their aspirations toward economic and political independence with their marginally viable economies. This vexing problem will have continued to be derived from unchanging and powerful parameters: partly from the nations' small sizes, partly from economic fragmentation, and partly from the fact that regional economic cooperation (including expended bilateral support from donor countries) will by the end of the decade have only begun to alter the otherwise precarious socioeconomic environment. There are no reasons to expect that over the next ten years the regional outlook for surplus manpower and the mismatch of people, jobs, and employment expectations will have been significantly improved. The silver lining in this outlook is that any stabilization and possible upswing in the socioeconomic arena will most likely lead to a more sustained renaissance of the Caribbean basin environment later in the 1990s.

Bridging these cleavages will have been dependent on the degree to which a resolution in the political-ideological arena may have eluded the region, particularly Central America. The outcome of this crisis-laden sub-region will not be determined before the late 1980s or early 1990s.

Although Central America will most likely come out of this difficult process a more modern place, with larger middle and urbanized working classes, organized rural-peasant interests, more cosmopolitan ideas, and a diminished role for the Catholic church, the political map may well be checkered. A great deal will depend on the nature of U.S.-Cuban relations in the 1980s. Unless the outcome of the crisis is generally favorable to U.S. interests, the alternative will be continuing pressure on Panama Canal security to the south and Mexican stability to the north.

A third strain of events facing the United States in the 1980s will be represented by a continuation of long-standing territorial disputes. The Falkland crisis has focused renewed U.S. attention in an area that Latin American governments in general, and those of the Caribbean basin in particular, have long recognized has a mainstream concern. Two critical problem areas will be between Guyana and Venezuela and between Guatemala and Belize. Under present conditions, the former area is entering an uncertain phase with the expiration of the twelve-year 1970 protocol of Port-of-Spain between Georgetown and Caracas. Venezuela is almost as committed to the recovery of the Western two-thirds of Guyana as Argentina is concerning the Falklands. But the circumstances are very different, primarily because Guyana is an independent Third World state capable of generating its own diplomatic counterweight to Venezuelan actions. A similar environment

characterizes the Guatemala-Belize dispute. At this juncture and in the foreseeable future it is unlikely that these disputes will erupt unless radical politics in Guyana and Belize are perceived as threats or political opportunities by Caracas or Guatemala City. This represents a moderate level of probability.

Finally, a fourth strain of events will perhaps represent the most complex and painful challenge of all. This will relate to the domestic impact of several problem areas and acute crises in the Caribbean basin.

Fundamentally at issue is the way U.S. society perceives its own future and how these images of itself may be affected and shaped by international spillovers from the Caribbean region and Mexico. The fabric of U.S. society is of remarkably flexible construction, but its texture may be altered by the degree to which massive numbers of immigrants are assimilated. This may produce the great debate of the decade. The problem with immigration is that it will very uneasily continue to span domestic and foreign and security policy areas. The Caribbean and Central America regions constitute the second largest source of illegal immigration to the United States, the primary source being Mexico. Caribbean basin nations thus have an enormous stake in U.S. immigration (and refugee) policy. But as political and economic pressures mount, so-called immigration and refugee policy reforms may get shortchanged by being actually part of neither domestic or foreign contingency planning.

The downturn of the Mexican polity would intensify the flow of people into the United States. Today there is already a nation within a nation in areas of Texas and the Southwest. Demographers predict that California will have an Hispanic majority by 1990. Radical Chicano movements would find fertile ground among an unassimilated immigrant population. Attention could be directed both toward fomenting civil strife in the United States akin to that in Northern Ireland and toward radicalizing Chicanos and illegal immigrants returning to Mexico. The revitalized Mexican Communist party, with Cuban ties, has begun to engage in organizational activities, agitation, and propaganda in towns along the Texas border.

Few developments could be more disastrous for the United States than a serious deterioration of Mexico's prosperity and ensuing stability. The challenges currently confronting Mexican leaders are without precedent. Thus to attribute future stability to the success of the Mexican system in the past may be a major error. The central question over the coming decade will be whether the course of events will render the gap between myth and reality too wide to be sustained. One may suspect that the Mexican political leadership will have trouble in this regard.

If in response the Mexican system were to move to the right, an authoritarian regime like that in Brazil could come to the fore in the next decade. But for the 1980s this would imply a major upgrading and restructuring of

the role of the armed forces in Mexican society. On the other hand, if the Mexican system were to co-opt the radical option more by moving further to the left, the political regime would likely face a turbulent period in its relations with the United States—perhaps the nationalization of U.S. and other foreign investments, suspension of oil and gas exports, and worse, the fomenting of frictions within the United States' own Hispanic social fabric. These last points have profound implications for the nature of future conflict in the region.

Another challenge to the domestic environment emanating from the Caribbean basin, the Puerto Rican question, will begin to take shape over the coming decade. With a stalemated economic and political environment, pressure on the island is continuing to grow, pulling at extremes. This absence of effective strategy may very well provide for the slow radicalization of Puerto Rican elites. In the interim, a slow-boil conflict, characterized by civil unrest, sabotage, and terrorism, could again erupt on the mainland. At issue would be the constitutional relationship and political compact to be forged between Washington and San Juan. This would ultimately affect the nature of the U.S. strategic presence in the Caribbean basin and the latter's impact on the United States.

Policy Responses

The ultimate realization of U.S. security goals in the region will depend in the short term on an all-out effort to counteract intense ideologically inspired warfare in the circum-Caribbean. In the mid-term, through the end of the 1980s, it will imply placing a cap on the growth of conventional Cuban military capabilities, particularly naval forces and the projection of air power. In the long term, the problems to be faced will include maintaining continued control over key strategic posts: the principal maritime choke points in and out of the Caribbean and the key anchorage and basing facilities within the region itself.

By overwhelming odds, Caribbean conflict patterns will continue to be affected by the imbalance in local capabilities. At present Cuban air, sea, and land power has no match among any other single or combined Caribbean and Central American force. By sophistication, training, and numbers, Cuba's military edge has been and will continue to be countered almost solely by third-party interests, principally U.S.-Soviet force projection, with declining British and French involvement, increased Venezuelan participation, overrated Mexican capabilities, localized Central American strength, and possibly selected Brazilian presence. Thus, material development and force capabilities of the lesser states of the region will evolve from political and security relationships established with outside powers. To that extent, Ca-

Caribbean basin conflict will probably involve advanced weapons systems, with civilian nuclear capability possible for Cuba.

Simultaneously, the management of U.S. interests will stumble across various forms of low-boil strife overlapping with occasional open conflict. In these less conventional contexts, U.S. policies will depend as much on the surgical projection of U.S.-controlled or inspired force as on primary initiatives in the diplomatic arena. For example, in stemming the coming to power of governments hostile to the United States and its allies, quick-reaction diplomacy coupled with military contingencies will most effectively continue to demonstrate U.S. resolve.

To meet these multifaceted problem areas, U.S. foreign policy responses will be varied. They will need to read each of the four strains of possible events as implying a selective if overlapping package of approaches.

In an overarching way, the United States must learn to overcome the patronizing fears of some segments of public opinion and push forward a strong sense of purpose for active participation in Caribbean basin affairs. Established Marxist regimes will have to read in U.S. foreign policy, both regionally and globally, the clear message that Washington intends to place operational limits on involvement in regional affairs. Currently applicable in various ways to the Cuban and Nicaraguan models, serious consideration will have to be given to supporting any remnants of pluralistic political-economic groups, arresting or containing radical political institutionalization, and keeping open a negotiating track with adequate leverage, using it when tactically necessary.

Adequate attention will have to be given to the image the United States projects in the region. Considering the process of dramatic change the Caribbean basin is undergoing, the United States should be cognizant of the tolerable challenges, failures, and successes implied by this process. In practice, this suggests a policy approach aimed at choices of concrete economic and political support based on broad strategy rather than unstructured (if well-intentioned) commitments to responsible, progressive, and even conservative governments and associated moral causes.

In dealing with the growing assertiveness of the larger powers (Mexico, Venezuela, and Colombia), as well as with the crises they may generate, a clearer degree of pragmatism deserves to be introduced. Certainly an element of counteractive political and trade diplomacy would more accurately define the opportunities and challenges of U.S. policy to major U.S. political, trading, technological, and even ideological partners in the region.

A U.S. military presence, primarily naval, should most likely be maintained and in fact be upgraded from present levels. Presence is a symbol of the significance of U.S. interests in the basin area and also a gauge of U.S. commitments of military missions within the region and elsewhere. In a less

conventional yet overt way, the United States needs to use its security presence more effectively to arrest and then reverse sociopolitical and security erosion. With the thousands of Soviet and Eastern European advisers present in the Caribbean basin and with intermittent Soviet force projections, U.S. force deployment, basing, foreign training, and assistance programs require serious consideration. In places where insurgency has erupted, endangering politically tenable governments, a reasonable but adequate level of intelligence and military aid should be provided sooner rather than later.

A coherent policy involving positive use of transnational groups, such as U.S. and European political parties, the American Institute for Free Labor Development and U.S. trade union groups, private sector interests, and specialized interest groups should be woven into a strategy involving constructive involvement and persuasion in the region.

Because of more active recognition of the need to establish and cultivate a Latin American-Caribbean domestic constituency, Washington will have to be more effective in responding to some of the region's basic needs: Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI) kinds of financial requests in the rather small range of \$350 million are going to have to proceed through the congressional process with greater speed and political persuasion. The United States cannot avoid the massive economic and social disruptions present and likely to be maintained throughout the 1980s if it assigns second-tier political capital to U.S.-Caribbean diplomacy.

The well-being and security of these neighbors will also have to be better grounded in sound management of their own financial affairs and a congenial ethic of domestic political-economic relationships. Through bilateral programs and with the participation of the private sector, the United States has a fighting chance of responding to these challenges.

Some rationalization of U.S. immigration policy needs to be put in train, if for no other reason than to give a measurement to the Caribbean basin and Mexico by which to gauge U.S. intentions and resolve on the issue. This will most likely require reform of present U.S. immigration laws toward a strengthening of entry procedures, enforcement of effective penalties, and ultimately some form of national identification system. This will have to move in tandem with a regional approach to immigration policies to the extent that the problem affects southern Mexico, Venezuela, the Dominican Republic, and the Bahamas, among other receiving countries.

29

The South American Environment: Policy Responses in the Southern Cone and the Antarctic

Mark Falcoff

Until quite recently, South America could properly be regarded as one of the most peaceful continents in the world. Although social and political turmoil periodically unsettled the domestic scene in many republics, international conflict was rare. For this century there are only three examples: the Chaco War between Bolivia and Paraguay (1932–1935), the month-long conflict over the northern Amazon basin between Ecuador and Peru (1941), and the recent hostilities between Argentina and Great Britain in the South Atlantic. Since at least the early 1970s, the prospects for continuation of this happy state have steadily eroded. Indeed the Falklands affair may be the first in a new cycle of skirmishes and frontier wars.

What has brought about this situation? In the first place, U.S. economic and political hegemony has declined markedly in the area as the South American states have vastly diversified their sources of arms, credit, and investment. The United States no longer possesses the leverage to act as a peacemaker or guarantor of regional security. Second, at the same time—and very much related to the first proposition—the inter-American system no longer functions with the effectiveness it once did. For their part, the South American states are increasingly less inclined to recur to the procedures of peaceful settlement. And when there is no one power or coalition of power capable of imposing peace, the demons of war are free to move about. This is the prospect we face for the next twenty years.

Potential Areas of Conflict

Perhaps the most important fact about the present map of South America is that only three states can be said to favor the territorial status quo: Chile, Uruguay, and Paraguay. And among the three, Uruguay and Paraguay have such negligible military sources that they probably could not effectively challenge the existing arrangements even if they wished to. The rest of the states not only seek a revision of present boundaries (or the present balance of power) but possess some means to bring this about.

Ecuador versus Peru

At issue is 100,000 miles of territory comprehending the Amazonian territories wrested from Ecuador by Peru in 1941. The transfer was recognized internationally by the Rio Protocol of 1942, with four American states (the United States, Brazil, Argentina, and Chile) acting as guarantors. In 1960, Ecuador suddenly declared this instrument null and void, and since then oil has been discovered in the area, which has done nothing to assuage the flames of revisionist sentiment. In January 1981 a new skirmish on the frontier led to a hasty convocation of the signatories of the Rio Protocol.

Bolivia and Peru versus Chile

The present boundaries between these states were established by the War of the Pacific (1879–1883) in which Bolivia lost its access to the sea and Peru two of its richest southern provinces. Chile obtained a formal recognition of the postwar status quo in a treaty signed in 1929, but in recent years there has been a notable recrudescence of irredentism in both defeated nations. In 1962 Bolivia broke relations with Chile, ostensibly over the latter's diversion of a stream (which, however, ended in a salty Bolivian flatland). Since then anti-Chilean sentiment in that republic has remained strong, a fact not related to its economic problems and general political instability.

Peru, too, has experienced intense flashes of anti-Chilean sentiment in recent years, particularly during the early years of the experiment in military populism (1968–1979). One aspect of this regime not acutely noted by its chorus of liberal well-wishers abroad was its flamboyant acceleration of the regional arms race. As of 1979, tensions between Chile and Peru were still high, with the latter expelling Santiago's envoy on charges of espionage. The election to the presidency of Peru in 1980 of Fernando Belaunde Terry, a distinguished civilian of known moderation, led to a relaxation of tensions, although the latent possibilities remain.

Argentina versus Chile

The flashpoint here is the Beagle Channel, the most strategically significant point in Tierra del Fuego. The international interest in the peaceful resolution of this conflict feeds not only on the credible war-making capacity of both contending states but the fact that the Strait of Magellan constitutes the only full alternative to the Panama Canal. The anticipation of complete transfer of the transisthmian route by the 1990s to Panama, a republic whose domestic political life can only be described in the most generous

terms as bizarre, combined with the prospect of a catastrophic loss of U.S. influence in Central American, have caused strategic planners to focus attention on what could once again become the only direct water route between the two oceans.

Supposedly Argentina and Chile settled their territorial differences over the area a century ago. The 1881 Argentine-Chilean Treaty conceded the channel itself to Chile but failed to mention specific islands within it. It was thus left to interpretation whether in fact they fit into the framework of existing accords. A supplementary protocol in 1893 and an additional treaty in 1902 failed to clarify the issue, and that is where matters stood until 1971, when both countries submitted briefs to the International Court of Justice in The Hague. When in 1978 that body finally handed down a decision awarding the three critical island to Chile, Argentina refused to accept the judgement and mobilized its armed forces. At the end of the year, both nations were near war, an eventuality averted only by an offer of the pope to mediate the dispute. The Vatican is expected to announce its finding by the end of 1982; most observers expect Chile once again to be the favored party; the same observers also believe that even such an award from the highest authority of the Roman Catholic church will fail to convince the Argentines. The heart of the problem is whether Argentina alone or both Argentina and Chile shall have two-ocean navies. As long as Argentina refuses to countenance the latter or Chile the former, the Beagle Channel will remain the most likely place of war on the South American continent.

TREE of LIBERTY SOCIETY

Antarctica

This region of the earth, which constitutes a kind of last frontier of human exploration and settlement, is also a rich source of international litigation and therefore also of potential discord. At present seven states (Argentina, Australia, Chile, France, New Zealand, Norway, and the United Kingdom) claim portions of different sizes. The territories attributed to at least three of them—Argentina, Chile, and the United Kingdom—overlap. Even if this were not so, there would be no easy method of establishing a common regime of exploitation since there are at least four different judicial solutions before the international community: division (outright partition among claimant states, which presupposes a prior resolution of existing boundary differences), condominium (a regime of joint exploitation among claimant states), consortium (joint exploitation open to any potential investor, whether a claimant state or not), and internationalization (a solution particularly favored by nations such as India, which assert no claim to territorial authority in the region but presumably wish to enjoy the fruits of its development).

The present legal regime of Antarctica was established by the International Treaty of 1959, which must be renegotiated between now and 1991. It basically postponed resolution of existing claims in the interests of scientific cooperation but did not establish a clear authority to deal with resource exploitation. A council of claimant states—the closest that the treaty establishes as an Antarctic executive—is merely a consultative mechanism whose formal authority is limited to proposing rules. Even its recommendations must be adopted by unanimous vote. Were this present body replaced by some UN authority, as favored under the internationalist solution, the chances of effective resolution of differences would be even fewer since it would introduce into the discussion more than a hundred parties not directly involved in the issues of exploration and settlement.

Other Issues

This list by no means exhausts the possibilities, although what follows are less significant, at least in the short and middle term. The most important of these remains the question over sovereignty in the Falkland Islands (known to Argentines and others as the Malvinas). The defeat of Argentine ground forces there by a British expeditionary force in 1982 leaves the futures of the archipelago unresolved, as no government in Buenos Aires could conceivably recognize the effective transfer of what it regards as national territory. Other potential areas of conflict include existing boundary disputes between Venezuela and Guyana, Colombia and Peru, and Venezuela and Colombia, to which might be added an ancient Argentine-Brazilian rivalry over the Upper Parana-Plata river system. This last is not a territorial issue in the classic sense but a quest for spheres of influence (particularly regarding the Republic of Paraguay) and the consequent economic and strategic benefits of regional hegemony.

Present Arms Balance

To discuss international conflict in isolation from war-making potential obviously leaves the picture incomplete. Therefore, to provide some depth to the considerations, I shall briefly review the present arms balance in South America.

Ecuador-Peru

When Ecuador denounced the Rio Protocol in 1960, most publicists and chanceries took only cursory note since the tiny Andean republic was

something of a cipher in purely strategic terms. Since 1973, however, that situation has changed as a result of the cartelization of petroleum by OPEC, of which Ecuador, along with Venezuela, is a South American member. Flushed with a sudden bonanza of oil revenues, the government in Quito began to acquire expensive, sophisticated armaments for its navy and air force. Although in the short run Ecuador cannot expect to catch up with its larger neighbors, if Peru's present economic dilemma worsens and oil prices remain high, one can anticipate that in the late 1980s or early 1990s Ecuador will be in a position to challenge the territorial status quo.

Chile-Peru

One of the characteristic features of the Peruvian military regime in the late 1960s and early 1970s was a vast program of arms acquisition, the effect of which was to upset the arms balance in the area. Frustrated (partly by investment disputes) in its initial attempt to acquire new U.S. military technology, the Peruvian generals turned to France and the Soviet Union. Paris unloaded several dozen Mirages on a market that had never been particularly open to it, and the Soviets provided Peru with tanks and supersonic bombers on terms that at the time seemed extremely generous (but taking into account the quality and durability of the equipment seems in retrospect considerably less so). Padoxically, in 1976 the United States had to sell some arms to Chile in order to even the balance; existing human rights legislation no longer makes such adjustments possible.

Measuring the present balance between these two countries requires mastery of several imponderables. Insofar as air power is concerned, the present state of Peruvian ordnance is said to be very parlous indeed; much equipment is now outdated or unusable. Although the Belaunde government and its service chiefs are anxious to retool with the latest U.S. equipment, nobody knows where the money would come from. On the other hand, Peru still possesses considerable land potential, and it is precisely this that disturbs the Chileans. They point to the fact that the only place where armor could be used is along the thirty kilometers of frontier that divide the two countries. Further, Peru is a status quo power everywhere else along its frontiers (against whom, then, could its land forces be pointed?). And finally, both the offensive nature of the weapons themselves and their deployment in the southern part of the country make it impossible for Chile to ignore the possibilities of Peruvian revanchism.

Argentina-Chile

Naval armaments are the only area where Chile has perhaps maintained some parity with Argentina. Presumably that situation has been reinforced

by Argentine losses at sea during the South Atlantic war. Land forces are quite another matter. Prior to 1978 the balance in numbers was two to one in favor of the Argentines; since then, it has tipped even further, to approximately three to one. There is, however, a qualitative dimension that cannot easily be measured. Chileans are better trained than Argentines and have better officers, and there are some grounds for believing that they make better soldiers.

In the area of procurement, there can be little doubt that Argentina has bested its Andean neighbor. Although both regimes have been accused of major human rights violations since 1973 and 1976, respectively, because Argentina possesses three to four times the international weight of Chile, it has found it relatively easy to circumvent the arms embargo imposed by the United States. As a major trading partner of the Soviet Union, there has been a certain restraint on the part of comment from within the Eastern bloc. To some degree, this attitude has been reflected in the policies of Western governments as well. For example, while in 1980 both the Soviets and the British were selling arms to the Argentines, Chile found it impossible to acquire armored personnel carriers from Austria. Even if this situation were to change, there is no way that Chilean future purchases could compensate for Argentina's projected capacity to manufacture its own tanks.

Argentina-Brazil

During the past decade the balance between these two South American majors measured in terms of equipment has remained more or less even. Between 1970 and 1977 Argentina led Brazil; then for two years the pattern reversed itself; and in 1979–1980 it reversed in Argentina's favor. In terms of GNP, however, the picture is somewhat different. During the decade 1970–1980 Brazil expended only 21.3 percent on armaments, while Argentina invested a phenomenal 109.8 percent. (To some degree, this reflects the differing states of the two economies. The first half of the 1970s were boom years for Brazil, while the Argentines could keep pace only by heavy foreign borrowing.) These figures do not necessarily prefigure a direct arms race between the two countries, but they indicate a potential that cannot be ignored.

Any discussion of Argentine-Brazilian rivalries must address the issue of nuclear development. Both countries publicly insist that their atomic programs, which are the only ones worthy of the name in Latin America, are pointed exclusively to peaceful purposes. On the other hand, neither is a party to the NPT or its Latin American version, the Treaty of Tlatelolco (1968). Both have strenuously rejected attempts by the United States to

limit their acquisition of nuclear technology, and in the Argentine case, to submit important parts of its program to IAEA safeguards.

Because these atomic programs are shrouded in military secrecy, it is difficult for outsiders to assess their military significance. Because of Brazil's critical dependence on imported oil, alternative energy programs are a pressing national requirement. On the other hand, Argentina is (or could be) a net exporter of oil and natural gas, so presumably its nuclear program must either have a military dimension or respond to the quest for increased international status. The fact that the Argentine foreign ministry speaks periodically of the desirability of peaceful nuclear explosions is not totally reassuring.

Assuming that both countries wish to build a bomb, when could they be expected to do so? Because Brazil has chosen the path of acquiring expensive imported technology, it will probably be nearly fifteen years before it possesses this capacity. Argentina, whose program is older and whose expertise is more locally developed, is expected to be able to test a nuclear explosion in the mid-1980s, although it would not be able to produce a nuclear arsenal until the 1990s. Whether either country will choose to build a bomb cannot be said with certainty, but the experience of India offers little reason to doubt that capacity and actuality will be joined and that eventually both Latin American superpowers will have nuclear weapons.

Challenges to U.S. Policy

Historically the United States has not had much of a South American policy apart from some very broad frames of reference such as the Monroe Doctrine or the Rio Treaty. South America is very far geographically from the United States, whose more critical strategic concerns have laid in Western Europe and the Middle East, even Asia. There has also been a notable lack of interest in the region except at peak moments of crisis. Further, the speed with which the United States has moved from nearly complete political hegemony in 1959 to the present state, marked by a serious loss of influence, has occurred so rapidly as to obviate careful strategic assessment. Put another way, in the mid-1950s the United States was so powerful in the hemisphere that it did not need to think much about it; today the loss of influence is so great that many see it as a process so far advanced that the nation neither can nor should do anything to attempt to stem it. Hence, prescriptions for U.S. policy tend to operate within what one might call a commitment vacuum.

Nonetheless, here follow some suggestions for future policy. First, the United States must take into account the regional arms balance in weighing any decision about arms transfers. This was a fairly simple matter before the

introduction of human rights criteria; now that qualification must be balanced against others. Authoritarian government or not, Chile is still the underdog against Argentina, and Peru's democratic institutions, no matter how laudable, cannot be the only question to consider in examining its military shopping lists. Precisely how the U.S. government might balance these considerations cannot be outlined here, but assuming that the human rights qualifiers remain on the books in the foreseeable future, policymakers will have to work through them to reach some sort of arms balance. The present linking of Argentina and Chile for certification purposes is one example.

Second, the United States should resume its efforts to strengthen existing regional systems of mediation and judicial settlement of boundary disputes. The experience of both the South Atlantic war and the Beagle Channel dispute suggests the real limitations to extrahemispheric mediation. The OAS, for all its imperfections, still constitutes a credible forum for the discussion and settlement of inter-American disputes.

Third, the United States should take the initiative in the Antarctic by proposing an Antarctic development bank that would finance exploitation of both replaceable and nonreplaceable resources by a consortium of claimant nations. This would automatically give countries like Argentina and Chile a vested interest in joint and peaceful exploitation, and it would leapfrog the entire issue of territoriality. That is, in order to participate in a process for which they otherwise would lack the resources, both countries would be compelled to abandon their mutually exclusive claims.

Fourth, the United States should support a renewal of talks between Argentina and Great Britain on the status of the South Atlantic islands. This need not be done immediately since too rapid a resolution of Argentina's territorial claims would appear to validate the first use of force. But by the end of this century, there should be some sort of timetable for an arrangement by which the fiction of Argentine sovereignty, combined with a proper respect for the rights of British inhabitants, can be accomplished.

Finally, the United States must accept the fact that Argentina and Brazil are going to be members of the nuclear club and redirect its energies toward convincing them to act responsibly. There is still time to take the lead with other nonnuclear Latin American nations in the pursuit of alternative sources of energy. This is a desirable agenda, but it would require a commitment in South America that the United States has barely begun to make at home. In this sense, as in so many others, U.S. capacity to minimize conflict abroad depends to a large degree on the reconstruction of its lost foreign policy consensus at home.

30 U.S. Strategic Alternatives in Central America

Jack Child

In the Central American environment, it is unrealistic to attempt to isolate the purely military component of U.S. interests and strategic responses from their political, economic, social, cultural, and historical environment. A major lesson to be learned from U.S. involvement in Central America in the late 1970s and early 1980s is the importance of broadening the traditional definition of security to include the wider stage in which security interests are to be found and shaped. Central America's geography and history make it difficult to look at individual conflicts, interests, or threats in isolation from the warp and woof of the Central American fabric.

Many observers have predicted a high probability of continuing internal and interstate conflict in Central America for the rest of the 1980s and beyond. Short of a complete U.S. pullout or a decisive victory by the Left in Central America, the United States will continue to be deeply involved in these conflicts. These same observers have noted two different dangers that these conflicts pose for the United States: the possibility of U.S. overreaction to perceived threats to vital interests in this area and the possibility of a continuing paralysis of U.S. will and nerve caused by memories of Vietnam and the fervent desire to avoid the repetition of that experience.

The conflict panorama in Central America is complicated by the fact that its causes do not lie totally in either the East-West or the North-South dimension. The basic social, economic, and political roots of conflict in Central America are grounded in centuries of injustice, exploitation, and hegemony; just as clearly, these roots have provided the Soviet Union and its local surrogates with multiple opportunities to take advantage of the situation to the detriment of Latin American, U.S., and Western interests in the region.

For many years the Central American and Caribbean area was a strategic low-cost economy of force region for the United States, a circumstance that permitted the United States to concentrate its strategic resources in other areas. This approach has come to an end. Just as the era of cheap and easy energy disappeared in the early 1970s, so too has ended the long period of cheap and easy hemisphere security.¹

The consideration of strategic responses in this area rests on the following assumptions:

No U.S.-USSR nuclear conflict or NATO-Warsaw Pact conflict in Europe.

The fall of the government of El Salvador to Marxist-led FMLN (Faro-bundo Marti Liberation Front) guerrillas around 1984.

No political or economic collapse in Mexico.

Consolidation of the Marxist-Leninist regimes in Nicaragua and El Salvador with defense agreements with Cuba and the Soviet Union.

The covert war and the attempts to bring down the Sandinista government in 1982 and 1983 have failed, although pockets of Comandante Zero's (Eden Pastora) ARDE (Alianza Revolucionaria Democratica) continue to survive as guerrilla "focos" (centers of operation) near the Nicaraguan-Costa Rican border.

U.S. Strategic Interests in Central America

Expressions of U.S. strategic or security interests in Central America and Mexico cover a wide spectrum, ranging from assertions that the United States has no strategic interests in the area (except possibly for concern over the installation of Soviet nuclear missiles of a direct threat to the Panama Canal) to statements that any political or economic setback in the area is an attack on vital U.S. interests. One succinct definition has condensed U.S. interests in the Caribbean basin to three words: proximity, prestige, and petroleum.²

Other fundamental U.S. strategic interests in Central America can be summarized. It is in the U.S. interest to have a Central America that is at peace, secure, stable, and friendly (or at least not hostile), that is economically developing, with governments generally accepted as legitimate by their citizens, and with access to effective mechanisms for resolving or defusing interstate conflicts. It is in the U.S. interest to have reasonable access to Central America's raw materials, trade, investment opportunities, and transportation routes (the Panama Canal and the sea-lanes of communication) on mutually agreeable terms of price, availability, and volume. It is in the U.S. national interest to limit the activities and influence of the Soviet Union and its proxies in Central America and the Caribbean basin and to obtain multilateral support of the area's nations in this process. In addition, it is in the U.S. interest in Central America and the Caribbean to avoid or prevent situations that would result in massive and uncontrolled levels of migration to the United States, control terrorism, and control the flow of drugs and weapons.

Threats to U.S. Strategic Interests in Central America

In each Central American nation, U.S. interests are threatened by the social, economic, and political conditions that give rise to unrest and revolution: underdevelopment, malnutrition, unemployment, injustice, and unrepresentative political institutions. Interstate conflict or internal chaos in Central America or Mexico raises threats of another kind for U.S. interests. Conflict or chaos would generate an unmanageable and sustained flow of refugees to the southwest United States. Such flows, if large enough and protracted, would threaten to disrupt the social and economic fabric of that part of the United States and would overwhelm the capacity of the Immigration and Naturalization Service to control them, leading to the probable use of military or National Guard units to seal the border.

By the late twentieth century, citizens of Hispanic origin will be a majority in several states in the Southwest. More than one observer has taken note of this nation within a nation and has interpreted the growth of this ethnic group (along with U.S. citizens of Puerto Rican origin) in terms of their political weight in U.S. local and national elections. Some have also noted the desire for bilingualism and protection of their Hispanic heritage; the Aztlan movement toward greater political power in the Southwest has provided an outlet for these feelings.³ This group of U.S. citizens would follow events in Central America and Mexico with keen interest and would have strong feelings about the treatment of refugees from these areas. It should also be noted that the Hispanic community in the United States has a number of different factions with different views on this situation: the old Southwest Hispanics, who have lived there since colonial days; the new Southwest Hispanics, who migrated later; Puerto Ricans in Puerto Rico; Puerto Ricans in the continental United States; Cuban-Americans who came in the early 1960s; Cuban-Americans who came in early 1980 (Mariel boatlift); and Hispanics from other national origins.

The main feature of the Central American conflict panorama of the late 1980s published in *The Future of Conflict* is the strong polarization of the nations of the area into two blocs, each with important ties to external actors and with supporting links to insurgencies in the opposing bloc. The first bloc goes by the acronym of PROCASDO (Progressive Central American Self-Defense Organization) and consists of the Marxist-Leninist revolutionary states of Nicaragua and El Salvador, with close ties to Cuba, the Soviet Union, and radical Arab nations. PROCASDO exerts strong pressure on Costa Rica and Panama to become more neutral and supports insurgents in Guatemala and Honduras.

At another level, open conflict between any of the PROCASDO states and any of the old Central America Defense Council (CONDECA) states

raises the possibility of escalation through the intervention-by-consent scenario.⁴ This scenario would envision that a PROCASDO state, if losing the conflict, would invite or consent to Cuban support through volunteers. This in turn might lead to U.S. intervention by consent on the CONDECA side and further escalation.

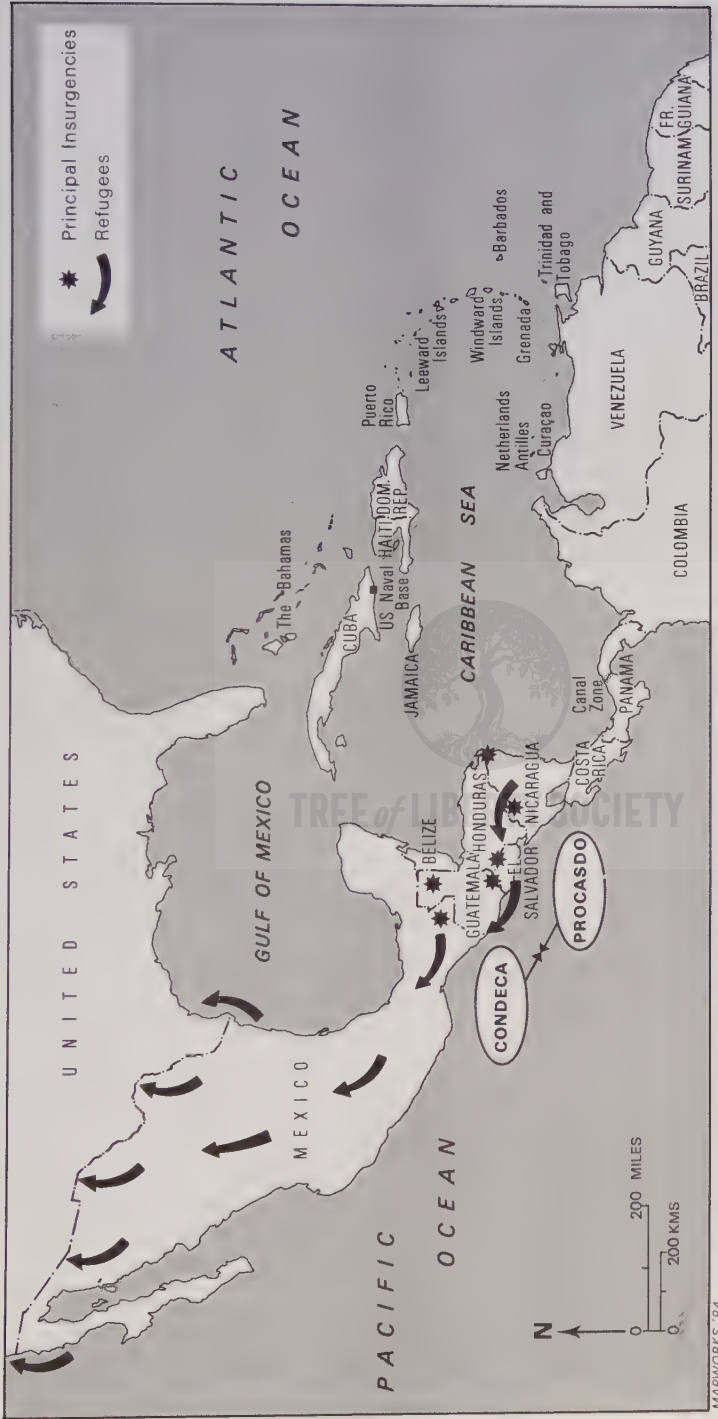
The postrevolutionary military establishments of Nicaragua (since 1979) and El Salvador (since 1985) are capable of pressuring other Central American nations and of providing support to insurgents in these countries. These two military establishments, with their links to insurgents, provide a useful test for evaluating the validity of the domino theory in the Central American context. Although there is nothing inexorable or deterministic about the domino theory, a number of factors in Central America favor it: short distances between capital cities and nations, porous and poorly marked borders frequently running through jungle-covered terrain, and a long history of smuggling, arms trafficking, and support for the activities of political exiles. These factors, valid for the Central American environment, are not applicable to Mexico and discredit the thesis that Mexico's political system would be threatened by events in Central America in a northward extension of the domino theory.

Although the Soviet Union may not need another Cuba for strategic purposes (and does not want to pay the economic price for another one), it is also true that having alternatives to Cuba in the region gives Soviet strategic planners flexibility, complicates U.S. attempts to counter the Soviets, and would divert additional U.S. military resources.

Cuba, with Soviet backing, has developed a considerable capability to project its military power in the Central American and Caribbean environment. Elements of this power projection capability, which under certain circumstances represents a threat to U.S. strategic interests in the area, include the largest military establishment in the region, an airborne brigade and the airlift and airdrop capability to deliver that brigade anywhere in the Caribbean basin and Central America, amphibious assault units, and elite special-purpose units. Although these power projection capabilities pose no direct military threat to the United States, they are impressive by regional standards and would be available for Cuban support of a beleaguered ally in Central America.

Shifts in U.S. Attitudes and the Fall of El Salvador

An important element in projecting U.S. strategic responses to future conflict in Central America is the mood of the U.S. electorate, the shifts in public and congressional attitudes toward events in Latin America, and the appropriate U.S. reaction to them. In the 1970s this mood was profoundly



Note: CONDECA (Central American Defense Council): Guatemala, Honduras. Has links to the United States, southern Cone nations, and Caribbean Falange. PROCASDO (Progressive Central American Self-Defense Organization): Nicaragua, El Salvador. Has links to Cuba and the Soviet Union.

Figure 30-1. Potential Conflict in Central America in the Late 1980s

anti-interventionist (and even isolationist) as a direct result of the experience in Vietnam and Southeast Asia. In the early 1980s, with the situation in El Salvador deteriorating, the U.S. government resorted to a policy of creeping incrementalism reminiscent of Vietnam in the early and mid-1960s, with a slow rise in security assistance, U.S. military advisers, U.S. medical, helicopter, and logistical units, and small U.S. combat units to provide protection for U.S. citizens and noncombat units already in El Salvador.

This situation would change dramatically in late 1984 and early 1985 with the collapse of the Salvadoran government and the triumph of the FMLN (Farabundo Marti Liberation Front) guerrillas. The circumstances were similar to those of the failed guerrilla final offensive of 1980–1981, except that in 1984–1985 the guerrillas won. As the wet season ended in October and November 1984, the guerrillas were able to destroy all road and rail bridges across the Lempa River and thus isolate the eastern third of El Salvador. Helicopter operations were impossible because of weather conditions. The FMLN/FDR (Democratic Revolutionary Front) proclaimed this territory “Free El Salvador,” raised their black and red flag over the port city of La Union, and requested assistance from the Marxist-Leninist FMLN regime in Nicaragua. The Nicaraguans responded rapidly by water across the gulf of Fonseca and by land across the thin strip of Honduran territory that separates El Salvador from Nicaragua.

As the divided Salvadoran army and government was paralyzed by confusion, the Salvadoran right wing, in collaboration with a number of regular military and police units, unleashed one last desperate act: a new *matanza* (“massacre”) similar to the 1932 orgy of murder by the right wing that resulted in the death of perhaps 30,000 *campesinos*. The new *matanza* only briefly delayed the guerrillas’ march into San Salvador and in turn provoked an equally brutal counter-*matanza* by the more violent elements on the left. Caught in the middle of this bloodbath was the foreign community in San Salvador, including a substantial number of U.S. citizens. Fourteen U.S. military advisers and marine embassy guards were executed when the embassy was taken, along with eight civilian U.S. embassy employees charged with being CIA officials.

Ignoring Cuban and Nicaraguan advice, the more extreme elements of the FMLN quickly consolidated their power, pushing aside the civilian leadership of the FDR (including the Social-Democratic National Revolution Movement (MNR) and the splinter Christian Democrats) and the softer-line guerrillas; there was no pretense of setting up a broad-based government of national reconstruction (with private sector, church, and middle-class representation) as had been the case in Nicaragua in 1979. Within weeks it became clear that the new regime in San Salvador was a Marxist-Leninist dictatorship on the Cuban model, complete with Nicaraguan and Cuban military and security advisers, and Soviet-Eastern European weapons.

These events caused a sudden realization in Latin America and the United States of the danger posed by the Nicaraguan-Salvadoran PROCASDO alliance and by its ties to Cuba and the Soviet Union. Within the United States the sense that U.S. security interests in the Caribbean and Central America could no longer be protected on the cheap increased dramatically. The U.S. public realized that decades of neglect of the social and economic needs of the area had contributed to the debacle; the necessary sacrifices to solve the fundamental developmental problems of the area had come too late, if at all.

The early months of 1985 saw a new U.S. administration and Congress respond to this changing U.S. mood of greater activism by launching a mini-Marshall plan for Latin America and by greatly expanding security assistance for the CONDECA nations (Guatemala, Honduras, and Belize). In contrast with other such efforts in the past, this new program for Central America (and Latin America in general) focused not only on the interlinked developmental and security needs of the area but was also conditioned on human rights performance and progress toward more representative political institutions. This combination of developmental aid and security assistance, tied to political and economic reforms, was viewed favorably by much of Latin America, the NATO partners, and the U.S. general public.

It is on this profoundly significant shift in the U.S. mood from post-Vietnam isolationism to an enlightened and realistic activism that I will base the following sections of this analysis of U.S. responses to conflict in Central America in the late 1980s.

TREE of LIBERTY SOCIETY

Broad U.S. Strategic Options

Option 1: An East-West Approach

This approach assumes that Central American conflict situations, while rooted in long-standing and profound economic, political, and social ills, have reached a critical stage because of meddling and exacerbation by the Soviet Union and its regional surrogates. There is little real concern among this approach's advocates for the internal ills of Central America, except for the fertile ground they provide for the forces of Marxism-Leninism and how they work to extend Soviet influence. This approach has a tempting corollary: if one can go to the source of unrest (the Soviet Union or Cuba or Nicaragua or El Salvador), then the external factor can be neutralized, and Central America's problems can be reduced to the manageable levels of the past.

The East-West approach to countering Central American conflict has four paths. The first is to reach a direct understanding between the United

States and the Soviet Union of permissible and nonpermissible superpower activities near the homeland of the other superpower. This is the classical spheres of influence argument and would involve a Soviet agreement to stop causing the United States problems in the Caribbean and Central America if the United States would agree to do the same in Eastern Europe, the PRC, and other sensitive border areas such as Afghanistan.

A second path is to attempt to wean the surrogates (Cuba, Nicaragua, and El Salvador) away from the Soviet Union by a combination of carrot-and-stick approaches, including perhaps the assurance that their revolutionary regimes would not be threatened if they did not attempt to export revolution and did not establish close economic, political, and military ties with the Soviet Union.

A third path is to reach an understanding with the Soviets, the surrogates, and the Central American nations that would in effect decouple the problems of Central America from East-West rivalries. This would be a form of positive abstention in which both the United States and the USSR would agree not to get involved in Central American issues and let the nations of the region work out their own solutions of accommodations.

A fourth path is to accept the challenge of the Soviet Union, confront it and its surrogates, and compete for influence in the region.

The cost (at least for paths 1 and 3) appears to be attractively low because the necessary understandings with the Soviet Union carry no economic or military price tags. They do, however, carry a political price in that they divide the world into sphere of U.S. and Soviet influence with little regard for the wishes of the other nations involved. In addition, the first path involves conceding permanent Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe, and the third path means surrendering U.S. influence in an area of immediate strategic importance.

The costs of the second path (weaning the surrogates away from the Soviets) are hard to predict but probably would be high and uncertain of success; the twenty years of attempting to isolate, threaten, or tempt Cuba away from its association with the USSR have not shown much result. The riskiest and potentially most expensive path for the East-West option is the fourth, which carries with it the distinct possibility of escalation and Soviet counteraction in other arenas of East-West confrontation.

The potential benefits of a successful East-West approach are high, but the likelihood of successful implementation is limited because of the fallacy of assuming that the USSR can fully control the actions of Cuba or that Cuba can fully control the actions of Nicaragua or revolutionary El Salvador and the error in believing that conflict in Central America in the remaining years of the twentieth century can be reduced to manageable levels if external factors are removed.

Option 2: Fortress America

Fortress America is the isolationist answer to Central American and Caribbean problems. It is based on a narrow, geopolitical definition of U.S. security interests and emphasizes the protection of U.S. borders (to the extent of sealing them, if necessary), and the protection of U.S. access to high-priority raw materials (chiefly oil) and transportation routes (chiefly the Panama Canal and the sea lines of communication (SLOCs) to NATO). The U.S. base and force structure in the region would be tied to these objectives and would have minimal links to the area's military establishments; this strongly unilateral approach is rooted in the days of U.S. hegemony in the region. Contingency plans would be prepared and forces earmarked to deal with any Soviet or surrogate threats to U.S. borders, access to vital raw materials, or SLOCs. These plans would envision the seizure of key resources and terrain if U.S. access were seriously threatened.

The short-term cost of this option would be low since it involves unilateral U.S. military assets and no developmental funds for the region. The benefits would be specific, easy to define, and easy to sell to U.S. constituencies on narrow grounds of self-interest. At the middle and longer term the price would rise steeply as U.S. isolation took its toll in terms of loss of U.S. global influence, increased opportunities for Soviet and surrogate influence in Latin America, and decline in international trade, finance, tourism, and cultural contacts.

Fortress America is a possible and even probable U.S. option if the isolationist mood prevails or if economic hardship in the United States makes options 3 and 4 impossible.

Option 3: Multilateral Coalition Building

At the other end of the spectrum from Fortress America lies the building of the broadest possible coalition of hemisphere states in order to protect jointly common strategic, political, economic, and cultural interests. In a sense this would represent going to the source, if the source were defined as the long period of neglect, misunderstanding, underdevelopment, injustice, and exploitation that much of the hemisphere has endured. The approach takes a regional perspective and would emphasize interdependence and the linkages of economic development, representative political institutions, legitimacy of governments, protection of human rights, and security. The approach would be long range and preventative rather than simply curative and crisis oriented; it would have to tolerate ideological pluralism (within limits) and be prepared to assure radical regimes that their security is not

threatened provided that they do not attempt to export their revolutions or seek close military ties to the Soviet Union.

Such multilateral coalition building would combine a realistic vision of the mix of North-South and East-West causes (and solutions) of conflict in Central America and the Caribbean. The East-West axis would acknowledge and counter the role of the Soviet Union and its surrogates, while the North-South axis would recognize and attack the underlying economic, political, and social conditions that provide grounds for Soviet and Cuban interventionism.

In searching for institutions to build this coalition, one must recognize that heavy-handed U.S. manipulation has damaged these institutions in the past. And the harm done by the U.S. siding with the United Kingdom in the Falklands conflict must be carefully assessed. To make institutions such as the OAS and the inter-American military system more credible, the United States must lower its profile, accept a greater Latin role, and make concessions to issues and interests of high priority to other member states.

Of key importance to a multilateral coalition is the need to have effective mechanisms to avoid, dampen, and resolve conflicts. In the past, the United States has dominated such mechanisms to such an extent that their credibility has been severely limited. A case in point is the idea of an Inter-American Peace Force (IAPF), which was fatally compromised when the IAPF created in the Dominican Republic crisis of 1965 turned out to be 90 percent U.S. in composition. Because of the history of U.S. manipulation of the peacekeeping function of the OAS, the U.S. role in any future peacekeeping mission would have to be kept low and perhaps limited to logistical functions (as opposed to providing combat troops). One useful approach to conflict resolution is that advocated by the International Peace Academy (an independent nonpolitical advisory and training group with Non-Governmental Organization consultant status at the United Nations and the OAS)⁵ this approach stresses the interrelated nature of peace building (the establishment of the foundations for peace through economic, social, and political development), peacekeeping (the separation of the parties in a conflict by the presence of third-party neutrals, who can be military or civilian personnel from individual nations or an international organization), and peace-making (the resolution of conflict through dialogue, negotiation, arbitration, conciliation, and compromise).

The International Peace Academy has recently been involved in attempts to find useful approaches to resolving conflicts in the Caribbean and Central America through economic development, the use of third-party neutrals, mediators such as the Contadora group (Mexico, Venezuela, Panama, and Colombia), and the application of techniques such as confidence-building measures in the Central American conflict environment.⁶

Regional coalition building will maximize possibilities for coopera-

tion among ideological and military adversaries, including functional areas such as search-and-rescue operations, hurricane tracking, and anti-hijacking measures.

The multilateral approach need not compromise vital national interests, and there should be a realistic understanding that members of the coalition have the freedom to act unilaterally (or bilaterally) if high-priority interests are threatened. In the case of the United States, such situations could include the presence of Soviet strategic weapons, challenges to Puerto Rico's free choice on the status issue, massive and uncontrolled migration, threats to the Panama Canal (within the provisions of the 1977 treaties), or attempts to cut essential sea-lanes in the case of a NATO emergency.

The cost of building a successful coalition in the Central American and Caribbean environment of the mid- and late 1980s will be very high. A major and sustained commitment of U.S. assistance (both developmental and security) is required, as well as the kind of trade liberalization and investment incentive measures envisioned in the 1982–1983 Caribbean Basin Initiative. Additional costs to the United States would include limitations on the use of U.S. covert and unilateral interventionist actions in the area, as well as the inclusion of Central America's own security concerns, which will not always coincide with those of the United States. Large U.S. developmental and security assistance grants must be carried out with imagination and caution to avoid the historic trap of supporting those forces in Central America that loudly proclaim their anticommunism but also represent an archaic oligarchic order opposed to reform and change. U.S. assistance must be conditioned on adequate performance in implementing reforms, moving toward more representative political systems and adequate protection of human rights. Some will see these conditions as intervention, and they are indeed a form of positive intervention designed to ensure that U.S. aid is used in ways that serve the long-range interests of both the United States and the nations of the area.

Because of the cost in resources and commitment, implementation of this multilateral coalition-building approach in the late 1980s will not be easy. Its success depends on a fundamental realization by the United States of the cost of continued inadequate responses in Central America, but the approach is indeed possible with the hoped-for enlightened realism in the United States in the middle and late 1980s.

Option 4: Key Countries

Somewhere between the Fortress United States isolationist approach and multilateral coalition building lies option 4: to establish special relationships on a bilateral basis with selected key countries in the area. These key

countries are selected on the basis of resources (Mexico, for its oil), geography (Guatemala, for its key location on the isthmus), or strategic assets (Panama). The emphasis is on the rather narrow definition of U.S. strategic interests in geopolitical terms and argues that the United States can achieve its security goals by concentrating its attention on those few essential countries and ignoring the others. The approach also tends to be crisis oriented, with the relative importance of each country being defined by the nature of the current crisis.

The cost of the key country approach is modest because of the manner in which it selectively focuses U.S. resources. This makes it an attractive option as an alternative solution that has neither the dangerous isolationism of Fortress United States nor the expensive multilateralism of broad coalition building.

The major drawbacks that diminish the likelihood of its implementation and success are the fact that the key nations (Mexico and Panama, in particular) may not agree to the special relationship for reasons that have to do with internal political dynamics and the international pressures against appearing to be a U.S. puppet and the way in which it abandons low-priority countries and thus makes them more vulnerable to Cuban or Nicaraguan overtures and pressures.

Option 5: Covert, Paramilitary, and Destabilizing Actions

The last option, which would probably be employed in connection with the East-West or Fortress United States approaches, would attempt to respond to threats to U.S. strategic interests through covert, paramilitary, or destabilizing actions and techniques. These techniques have a long history in Central America, and their advocates point to their successful use against the leftist regime of Jacobo Arbenz in Guatemala in 1954 (opponents of these approaches would argue that we would all be better off had the United States encouraged reformist leftist regimes like that of Arbenz in the 1950s and 1960s). The conflict panorama of Central America in the middle and late 1980s offers many tempting opportunities for these techniques: discontented Miskito Indian separatists in Nicaragua, Somocistas along the Nicaraguan-Honduran border, one-time Sandinistas now fighting against the current Sandinista regime in southern Nicaragua, and ex-Salvadoran military men and small units along the Salvador-Honduras and Salvador-Guatemala borders.

There is much incongruity about public discussion of ongoing covert, paramilitary, and destabilizing operations in the press and Congress, as happened in early 1983. Under such conditions the possibilities of plausible denial become so remote that it might be more realistic to proceed with the

same techniques on a totally overt basis. In the atmosphere of the post-Vietnam and post-Watergate years, there is little chance that any major secret operation of this type will remain secret very long. Unhappy experiences with some excesses with these techniques have led to a salutary congressional oversight procedure that has also increased the chances of compromise.

It would be naive to eschew such techniques totally; one can postulate situations in the Central American environment in which they would represent the lesser evil, and one could limit employment to small and morally acceptable circumstances in which secrecy or denial is plausible. The acid test of such employment can be posed as a question: if this operation becomes public knowledge, would it receive the general support of majority public opinion in the United States and among principal allies?

Because of the limitations, moral and pragmatic, on these operations, this is clearly not a viable primary U.S. option in Central America in the 1980s. Although the possible benefits and low short-term costs may make them attractive, the likelihood of their disclosure greatly raises their costs in the longer run.

Conclusion

Consideration of the features, costs and benefits, and likelihood of successful implementation of the five approaches leads us to conclude that the soundest option is the building of a multilateral coalition in the region, stressing the interdependence of the United States, Central America, and Mexico and the interrelationship between strategic security and economic and political development. The resources and commitment involved in such a coalition require that the United States show the will and concern adequate to the task. Such will and concern are likely to exist only if a shift in public, congressional, and governmental opinion occurs in the reasonably near future.

U.S. Strategic Requirements and Missions for the Military in Central America

Implicit in the coalition-building approach are a number of strategic requirements and military missions.

1. Battalion-size participation in the COMUS (Commonwealth plus U.S.) multilateral force in Belize.
2. Continuing logistical support (chiefly transportation, communications, medical, and supply) for the COMUS brigade in Belize.

3. A major security assistance effort in the CONDECA nations: military assistance groups of approximately 200 advisors in Guatemala, 150 in Honduras, and 30 in Belize; military assistance in the range of \$1 billion per year; and international military education and training for substantial numbers of CONDECA officers, noncommissioned officers and troops in the United States and in U.S. military schools in Latin America, U.S. Army School of the Americas, Inter-American Air Force Academy, and Navy Small Craft Instruction and Training Team. (SCIATT). This instruction should stress counter-insurgency counter-terrorist measures, and the safeguarding of human rights in an insurgency conflict.
4. Police and constabulary assistance to Costa Rica, which has no army (although a militarized police force performs some functions traditionally associated with the regular army).
5. Reinforcement of U.S. Panama Canal defense units and military assistance to Panamanian National Guard units, with emphasis on anti-sabotage and canal defense.
6. Antiterrorist operations, including training and deployment of special units for counterterrorist measures, embassy security, and hostage release operations.
7. Logistical support (transportation, communications, medical, supply) to an OAS multinational peacekeeping force of approximately brigade size.
8. Contingency planning for a U.S. rapid deployment force of division size (or elements) to enter CONDECA nations at their request if threatened by PROCASDO or Cuban military units.
9. Contingency planning for a major logistical effort in support of CONDECA forces.
10. Major disaster relief operations, which might include the possibility of coordinating efforts with Cuban, Nicaraguan and Salvadoran units.
11. Transfer of U.S. military training schools in Panama to a prepared site in Puerto Rico, the southeastern United States, or Honduras. Consideration should be given to internationalizing the schools under a multi-lateral board of directors in an arrangement similar to that in place for the Inter-American Defense College in Washington, D.C.
12. Development of U.S. military doctrine for support of peacekeeping, peacemaking, and peace-building operations and employment of confidence-building measures.
13. Training of all U.S. units in counterinsurgency and counterterrorist operations.
14. Concentration of intelligence assets on the Central American area; sharing of intelligence with CONDECA and COMUS allies.

15. Assisting U.S. Border Patrol in controlling the flow of refugees and migrants across the Mexican border, the Gulf of Mexico, and the Florida Straits.
16. Assisting the Drug Enforcement Agency in its efforts to control the flow of drugs and arms across the Mexican border and at sea using ground, air, and naval units.
17. Contingency support of local police and National Guard units in the continental United States and Puerto Rico in civil disorders.
18. Revitalization of the multilateral organs of the inter-American military system. Consideration should be given to lowering the U.S. profile in these institutions, encouraging a greater Latin American role, and possibly moving the headquarters to a Latin American nation.
19. Encouragement of Canadian participation in the OAS, the inter-American military system, and peacekeeping operations.
20. Revitalization of the Joint Mexico-U.S. Defense Commission (created in World War II and still functioning, although at a very low level). With due regard for Mexican sensitivities about close military relationships with the United States, attempts should be made to increase contracts through exchanges of military personnel and equipment purchases.
21. Expansion of the core of officer and noncommissioned officer Latin American specialists using the army's foreign area specialist program as a model. Career rewards and accelerated promotions should be established for outstanding area specialists.
22. Preparation of contingency plans and designation of units designated for quick in-and-out rescue missions to evacuate U.S. citizens and officials in potential conflict situations in the area.
23. Confidence-building measures established between PROCASDO and CONDECA to lower tensions between these two blocs and reduce the possibility of conflict through misunderstanding, accident, or misperception.

Unexpected Events and Contingencies

Because the future is rarely what we think it will be, sharp breaks in the trends explored here are always possible.

A weakening of the Cuban ties to the Soviet Union could occur without U.S. involvement through the replacement of Fidel Castro by a younger and highly nationalistic group of Cuban military veterans of the Angolan experience. Although such individuals would not necessarily be any friendlier to the United States than was Castro, they may be more amenable to

loosening their ties to the Soviets if they received reassurance and support from European socialists.

An unexpected new factor in the conflict picture would be the emergence of pan-Mayan sentiment among the Indians of southern Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, and Belize and a parallel pan-Miskito sentiment among the Caribbean populations of Nicaragua and Honduras. Politically isolated for centuries, these groups could go through a process of political consciousness raising as a result of the CONDECA-PROCASDO polarization. Both poles would attempt to gain their political and military support, with PROCASDO initially making the greater gains, especially in Guatemala. The end result of this process, however, could be a "plague on both your houses" sentiment, and in the late 1980s transnational indigenous movements could become a major political force in their own right, separate from either one of the two major contending ideological groupings.

A third possibility is that there could be a major upheaval in Mexico in the mid-1980s, splitting the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) and the military and leading to chaos and anarchy and the movement of unprecedented numbers of refugees northward to the U.S. border. The physical security and operation of the Mexican oil fields could be in jeopardy, and Mexican phobias of U.S. intervention to secure the oil fields would rise to a fever pitch. As a minimum the United States would have to mount a major relief effort and attempt to seal the border to control the flow of refugees. If the chaos continued for some time and a government hostile to the United States came to power in Mexico City, the U.S. military might have to commit significant resources to the border.

Notes

1. For a fuller treatment of the interlinked and multifaceted aspects of conflict in Central America, see the Atlantic Council's book, *Western Interests and U.S. Policy Options in the Caribbean Basin*, Richard E. Feinberg and Robert Kennedy, eds: (Boston: Oelgeschlager Aunn and Hain, 1984).
2. "U.S. Security on the Southern Flank: Interests, Challenges and Responses," by Robert Kennedy and Gabriel Marcella in *Western Interests and U.S. Policy Options in the Caribbean Basin*.
3. Joel Garreau, *The Nine Nations of North America* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1981), esp. pp. 207–244.
4. John Child, "Strategic Concepts of Latin America: An Update," *Inter-American Economic Affairs* 34, no. 1 (Summer 1980).
5. International Peace Academy, *Barbados Conference Report* (May 1983).
6. Ibid.

Part IX
Strategic Responses to
Regional Conflicts: Africa



TREE *of* LIBERTY SOCIETY

31

Strategic Responses to Escalating Conflict in Mozambique and Zimbabwe

Michael Clough

After Zimbabwe gained its independence in 1980, the focus of attention in Southern Africa shifted westward to the continuing conflict in Namibia. Most observers and Western policymakers assumed that the Zimbabwe settlement had resolved the major problems on the eastern side of this troubled region for at least a few years. As a result, most diplomatic efforts were focused on the attempt to obtain a negotiated settlement in Namibia. Although entirely understandable, this development may prove shortsighted and costly.

The Problem

Over the long term, escalating conflict between South Africa and its north-eastern neighbors, Mozambique and Zimbabwe, is almost certain to prove more dangerous and intractable than the conflict in Namibia, even assuming the worst scenarios in the latter case. One important reason is geography. The extremely sparsely populated desert of southern Namibia provides a natural buffer between this territory and South Africa. Once a settlement is finally achieved in Namibia, the likelihood of military conflict there will decline even if a regime hostile to South Africa comes to power. To the east, in contrast, geography inextricably intertwines developments in South Africa with developments in Mozambique and Zimbabwe in a way that virtually assures escalating conflict. This is true for three reasons.

First, as the level of guerrilla activity in South Africa continues to increase, which it is certain to do so long as South Africa is controlled by its white minority, it will create more and more opportunities for confrontations between South Africa, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe. Although guerrilla operations in South Africa are not likely to follow the pattern in Zimbabwe and Namibia because of differences of terrain and economic development, they will undoubtedly continue to expand. Even if the governments in Mozambique and Zimbabwe were to make a concerted effort to prevent guerrilla infiltration across their borders into South Africa, their ability to do so would remain limited. Thus, in the event of escalating conflict in South Africa, there is almost certain to be some activity originat-

ing from Mozambique and Zimbabwe. Even if that activity is very limited, the South African government will continue, as it does at present, to accuse the governments in these two countries of supporting it. The likely result will be a growing number of retaliatory raids like the ones into Mozambique in January 1981 and Lesotho in December 1982 when South Africa sent military units into those countries to destroy the political headquarters of the African National Congress (ANC).

Second, conflict in this area is likely to escalate because of the way in which South African leaders have chosen to define threats to their regime's security. Like leaders of other nations beset by domestic turmoil, they have sought to blame their problems on external sources. More specifically, South African officials have consistently linked growing internal unrest to a communist onslaught directed from Moscow and supported by the Marxist governments in Mozambique and Zimbabwe. As a result, even in the absence of guerrilla infiltration, increased unrest in South Africa almost invariably leads to accusations and threats by South Africa directed against Mozambique and Zimbabwe. This in turn serves to increase the insecurity of those governments and cause them to seek outside assistance. Since the most likely source of such assistance is the Eastern bloc, South African threats invariably serve to increase ties between its neighbors and the Soviet Union. This in turn appears to confirm the beliefs on which South African threats were originally based. Thus, a classic escalation spiral is set in motion. There is no real way to escape from this pattern as long as the internal situation in South Africa remains unchanged and Mozambique and Zimbabwe refuse to forgo efforts to improve their own military capabilities. An ominous parallel can be drawn to developments in the Middle East where quite similar forces have resulted in five major wars over three decades of almost constant conflict.

Third, conflict among South Africa, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe is unavoidable because of their conflicting conceptions of a desirable regional political and economic order. Leaving aside the security problems, South Africa's minimum regional objective—the creation of a regional order based on South African political and economic dominance that is conducive to the continuation of white rule in South Africa, albeit most likely in a reformed guise—places it in direct conflict with its neighbors whose main goal is to minimize their long-term dependence on South Africa. South African leaders clearly understand that over the long run, the success of efforts such as those undertaken by the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) to reduce the dependence of Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and other surrounding states on South Africa will inevitably decrease South African leverage in the region. Thus it is almost certainly no accident that one of the main targets of attacks by South African—backed

guerrillas operating in Mozambique has been transport links between Mozambican ports and neighboring African states.

The potential for conflict in this area is increased by the fact that in both Zimbabwe and Mozambique, the current governments face tremendous domestic challenges. Despite Prime Minister Robert Mugabe's decisive electoral victory in Zimbabwean elections in 1980 and his adroit handling of sensitive political issues such as the integration of rival forces into a national army, internal opposition to his government has increased since independence. To have expected it not to increase would have been very naive given the intense bitterness generated during the long independence struggle. Opposition to the Mugabe government is particularly strong in the Ndebele areas of southeastern Zimbabwe, the political base of Mugabe's former ally, Joshua Nkomo, and among embittered whites who have still not come to terms with the end of white rule. Incidents such as the sabotage of a government airbase and the kidnapping of foreign tourists in mid-1982 have increased awareness of the potentially explosive situation that exists in the country. As the government finds itself increasingly hard pressed to satisfy the high expectations of its population, its problems are sure to grow.

Mozambique faces equally serious problems, many of which ironically can be attributed to the fact that the the Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO), the country's ruling party, came to power faster than its leaders had anticipated. When the Portuguese handed over power to President Samora Machel in 1975, FRELIMO had a strong presence in only two of the country's nine provinces. Its efforts to penetrate into the rest of the country and carry out an extensive social transformation predictably generated resistance from peasants in the rural areas who, like peasants throughout Africa, tend to resist all government encroachments. Opposition growing out of such resistance would probably have been manageable had it not been for the escalating conflict in Zimbabwe. In an attempt to weaken Mozambican support for guerrillas in Rhodesia, the Smith government organized and armed anti-FRELIMO guerrillas during the final stages of the conflict. These guerrillas, now backed by South Africa, have been able to exploit local grievances and the absence of a strong FRELIMO presence in much of rural Mozambique to pose an increasingly serious challenge to the Machel government.

Whether these problems escalate into full-scale civil wars in these two countries will depend in large part on South African policy. The South African government has three options. First, it could seek accommodation with its radical neighbors. This is the policy that the Vorster government appeared to have adopted regarding Mozambique in 1975; however, I do not believe that South Africa is likely to return to such a policy, at least in the absence of strong Western pressure. Second, South Africa may seek to

destabilize its neighbors, a policy with two advantages: it serves to reinforce the negative image of black governments that whites in South Africa use to justify their refusal to hand over power to blacks in their own country and it keeps Mozambique and Zimbabwe in a weak and vulnerable position, thus increasing South Africa's regional leverage. A third option would be for South Africa to attempt to overthrow the Mugabe and Machel governments and replace them with more compliant leaders. Whether the Botha government believes this option is viable cannot be known for sure. In the late summer of 1982, however, there were indications that government officials were seriously contemplating this possibility in the case of Mozambique.

Regardless of which of those options is chosen, South African intervention in Mozambique and Zimbabwe is almost certain to increase. In fact, given South Africa's problems and its leaders' perceptions of the threats they face, the internal problems faced by Mozambique and Zimbabwe present a temptation so large that the South African government would have to exercise tremendous self-control not to seek to exploit them.

U.S. Objectives and Options

The United States should have two main objectives in Southern Africa: it must seek to prevent regional conflict from escalating into global crises, and it must attempt to avoid the polarization of the region into two camps, one tied to the Soviet Union and the other to the West. If it can achieve these two objectives, all of its regional interests—economic, strategic, and political—will be well served. But the problems already identified will make this increasingly difficult. Achieving these goals requires the development of a coherent and consistent strategy that can be sustained in spite of the ebb and flow of regional trends and U.S. politics. Such a strategy must be built around a carefully interrelated set of long-, medium- and short-term initiatives.

Long-Term Response: Commitment to Fundamental Change in South Africa

Because of the close connection between domestic developments in South Africa and regional trends, U.S. response to escalating conflict in Southern Africa must be built around a clear long-term commitment to fundamental change in South Africa. Only by making such a commitment and unambiguously communicating it to the white regime in Pretoria will the United States be able to limit conflict between South Africa and its neighbors. The United States must inform South Africa that it will never accept any political

arrangement in that country that fails to ensure full political participation for all South Africans. Two criteria should be used to determine the acceptability of any proposed order: whether representatives of all important political groups in South Africa—including banned organizations such as the ANC, Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC), and the like—are equal participants in the process of creating a new political dispensation for the country and whether such a dispensation can gain the approval of the South African population as a whole. These two criteria amount to a requirement that any proposed arrangement must clearly be shown to be internally acceptable.

Fundamental change will not occur in South Africa until the white community loses confidence in its ability to maintain political control over the country. Historical experience in Southern Africa and elsewhere has clearly demonstrated that embattled minorities do not give up power until they feel that they have no choice. In South Africa itself, whites were willing to consider different forms of power sharing only after their resolve had been seriously shaken by the collapse of Portuguese rule in Angola and Mozambique and by the Soweto riots. Given this reality, it would be a mistake to believe that a stable, long-term racial accommodation will occur in South Africa without growing political unrest and violence. By failing to recognize these dynamics, the constructive engagement strategy of the Reagan administration may actually damage U.S. interests in Southern Africa.

Constructive engagement rests on the assumption that the white regime in South Africa can be encouraged to institute reforms by building its confidence. There are two problems with this strategy. The first involves a credibility and confidence-building spiral. As the United States makes concessions to South Africa, as it has done since the Reagan administration took office, South Africa's leaders ask for more. Instead of building confidence, such concessions lead to more demands for reassurance. Like Israel, South Africa is unlikely ever to be led to make concessions by concessions. The second problem with constructive engagement grows out of its deliberate focus on short- and medium-term goals rather than ultimate ends. By praising South Africa for limited reforms, the United States may encourage Pretoria to search for a political arrangement that will prove minimally acceptable to the West rather than attempting to discover the grounds for an internally viable settlement.

In short, a government that believes it can gain external support and improve its bargaining position by making marginal concessions to external demands is unlikely to consider the kind of far-reaching concessions that would be necessary to satisfy its internal opponents. Consequently the concessions it is willing to make will always fall far short of what is required for a lasting settlement. In a revolutionary situation, incremental changes that come too late merely increase mutual suspicions as the conflict contin-

ues to escalate. This creates the worst of all possible worlds for U.S. policymakers: they antagonize the incumbent regime, which is constantly demanding support in exchange for the concessions it has already made, and they antagonize that regime's opponents who suspect the United States of seeking to exclude them from a final settlement. In the end, the United States loses credibility with both sides.

Any policies that encourage fundamental change in South Africa will limit the spread and intensity of regional conflict. But by making a credible commitment to support change, the United States can protect its regional interests even if change is not quickly forthcoming. The reason is the impact such a commitment would have on other states in the region like Mozambique and Zimbabwe. If those states fear that in the event of such a conflict the United States would eventually side with white South Africans, they will be forced to seek economic, political, and military support elsewhere, and the most likely source of such support would be the Soviet Union and its allies. South Africa's increasingly belligerent posture toward Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, and even Botswana has exacerbated this risk.

Conversely, were the leaders of South Africa's neighboring states confident of the U.S. commitment to political change in South Africa, they would be more likely to cooperate with Western initiatives and respect U.S. arguments regarding whether, when, and how alternative pressures, such as sanctions, should be used against South Africa. It was only on the basis of such faith in British and U.S. intentions that the leaders of the front-line states were willing to use their leverage over the Zimbabwean liberation movements to ensure the success of the Lancaster House Conference. Similar cooperation is unlikely to be forthcoming if Southern Africa's black leaders begin to believe that the real objective of U.S. policy is to create a more palatable form of white rule in South Africa.

Confidence in the U.S. commitment to genuine political change in South Africa cannot be built up quickly. African leaders, black and white, are quite adept at reading between the lines when U.S. officials declare their abhorrence of apartheid. Only by scrupulously backing up statements of principle with practical demonstrations of intentions will it be possible for the United States to establish the credibility of its commitment to ending apartheid. A failure to do so will virtually ensure that the U.S. government will be unable to play a constructive role in Southern Africa's future political development.

Medium-Term Responses: Damage Limitation

By medium term, I mean the period preceding the final resolution of the South African problem. It is impossible to predict the length of this period, but it is unlikely to be less than ten to fifteen years.

At present, most analysts agree that a final resolution of South Africa's internal problems is still a long way off. For that reason, it is essential that the United States develop a medium-term Southern Africa policy that will allow it to minimize the potential damage to U.S. interests that could result from the continuing regional instability that is likely to accompany the continuation of white rule in South Africa. Such a policy should be based on three interrelated guidelines.

First, the U.S. government must abandon the belief that a stable and prosperous regional order can be organized around the current regime in South Africa. South Africa's regional grand design—the constellation of states—cannot provide the basis for a lasting accommodation between South Africa and its neighbors. Even a reformist white regime will always be unacceptable to all but the most conservative and least influential Southern African leaders such as President Banda in Malawi. Although at present South Africa is the predominant regional power economically and militarily, it would be a serious mistake for U.S. policymakers to base short-term estimates of the regional power balance. That is exactly what the Nixon administration did in 1970 when it attempted to reformulate U.S. policy toward Southern Africa. By basing its new policy on the mistaken assumption that the white position in the region was unassailable, that administration left the United States totally unprepared to cope with the conflicts that developed in Angola and Rhodesia after the Portuguese coup in 1974. The risks of building a policy around a potentially unstable regional hegemony can be quite high. In Southern Africa, those risks would include the possibility of being forced to choose between an embarrassing defeat and intervening to protect a faltering white regime.

As an alternative to close ties to South Africa, the United States should seek to help South Africa's neighbors insulate themselves as much as possible from conflict in South Africa. This does not mean preparing those states to engage in a direct confrontation with South Africa—none of these states desires such confrontation. What it does mean is providing economic and political support to countries like Mozambique and Zimbabwe so they can focus their attentions on national development rather than worrying about the threats to their own countries that will arise if a full-scale race war breaks out in South Africa. More specifically, this means helping those states to rebuild their damaged transportation network and thus to develop more secure trade outlets, providing substantial economic support to allow them to shoulder the burdens created by a growing tide of South African refugees, and guaranteeing the integrity of their borders against South African military incursions. A failure to extend such assistance would risk turning South Africa's neighbors into Southern African "Lebanons."

Finally, the U.S. government should encourage regional and bilateral accommodation between radical, moderate, and conservative states in Southern Africa. This would require that U.S. policymakers not adopt a

policy that seeks to bolster friends (like Malawi and Botswana) and undermine enemies (like Angola and Mozambique). Such a policy would increase tension in the region. This would be a serious mistake since our potential friends are the most vulnerable states in the region. For example, were the United States to attempt to destabilize Angola, one likely result would be a resumption of pressure on Zaire.

Hostility between Angola and Zaire, growing out of Zairian President Mobutu's active opposition of the MPLA, Angola's ruling party, during the Angolan civil war in 1975 was a major cause of the attacks on Zaire's mineral-rich Shaba province by Zairian dissidents in 1977 and 1978. Although it is unlikely that the Angolan government was involved in planning these attacks, there is little doubt that they would not have occurred had better relations existed between Zaire and Angola at the time. In response to both attacks, Western governments were forced to mount risky rescue operations to prevent the collapse of the Mobutu government and the possible descent of Zaire into total chaos. After the second attack, the United States and its European allies decided to press for an accommodation between Angola and Zaire. As a result of their efforts, relations between the two countries have been normalized, and renewed attacks across their mutual border have been prevented so far. Ultimately the internal security of each country will depend on their ability to deal effectively with the domestic problems that gave rise to rebel activities. In the short run, however, the rapprochement has relieved some of the pressure on both governments, giving them time to work out longer-term solutions and averting a potential East-West conflict.

The best way to meet these three guidelines would be to attempt to encourage the Southern African Development Coordination Conference to continue to move in the pragmatic direction it has so far chosen and to restore the working relationship with Mozambique, the pivotal country in the conference transport strategy.

Short-Term Responses: Conflict Management

In the short term, the United States must focus on three tasks if it is to limit the escalation of conflict in the region. First, it must obtain a settlement in Namibia. Having devoted so much time and attention to this goal, the Reagan administration cannot afford to fail. For better or worse, the Namibian case has been made into a test of U.S. power in the region. If the United States fails to produce in Namibia, leaders in the rest of the region will be unlikely to have much confidence in U.S. ability to play a constructive role in dealing with conflicts in their own countries.

Second, the United States must move quickly and decisively to force

South Africa to halt its efforts to destabilize Mozambique. At a minimum, this means sending the South African government unambiguously worded public communications of U.S. opposition to support for the MNR. Such communications are necessary to dispel the impression that the United States opposes only guerrilla campaigns directed against pro-Western regimes. At the same time the Reagan administration needs to give serious thought to discovering ways of increasing the costs to South Africa of maintaining its current course of action in the region. Two potentially effective means of doing this would be to threaten to abstain on future Security Council votes on South Africa or to threaten to recognize the African National Congress and other exiled South African nationalist movements. Less dramatic actions could include retightening restrictions on exports to the South African government and expelling all South African military attaches in the United States.

Finally, the United States must seek to encourage France, Portugal, Great Britain, and other Western European countries to provide military and other security-supporting assistance to Mozambique and Zimbabwe. Domestic political realities will always limit U.S. activity in the area, but there are plenty of ways in which the United States could make it easier for its allies, who are less constrained, to assume this burden. The provision of such aid would send a signal to South Africa and at the same time reduce pressures on the Mugabe and Machel regimes to turn to the socialist bloc for aid.



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U.S. Strategy in the Event of a Somali Military Regime Inclined toward Rapprochement with Ethiopia and the USSR

David E. Albright

It is crucial to recognize the strong possibility that President Mohamed Siad Barre of Somalia will be deposed in the not too distant future by elements less friendly toward the United States than he has been in recent years. During the late 1970s, organized opposition to his rule began to take shape, and by the early 1980s it had reached significant proportions. Active groups included the Somali National Movement, the Somali Salvation Front, the Somali Workers party, and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Somalia. In October 1981, the last of three of these entities united to form the Democratic Front for the Salvation of Somalia (DFSS). Even the Somali National Movement has talked of joining the front, but to date the two groups have had difficulty in working out a merger agreement. With major Ethiopian help, moreover, the DFSS in the summer of 1982 succeeded in occupying Balambale and Goldogob in central Somalia, although it subsequently had to withdraw from the latter. Perhaps most critical, Siad Barre's support within the Somali army appears to be waning. There has been trouble in the Somali Eighth Army, which is stationed in the northern part of the country. In late January 1982, for example, garrisons in Hargeisa and nearby areas rose against the government after it executed eleven local officials for allowing the DFSS to seize a border town and hold it for at least a day. April brought the defection of General Adde Musa Hirsi to the DFSS, and in June Siad Barre thwarted a conspiracy said to have involved his third vice-president, Brigadier General Ismail Ali Abokar, and several present and former cabinet members. There have been well-documented surrenders of Somali units without the slightest struggle during the latest push of Ethiopian-DFSS forces into central Somalia.¹

In trying to fashion a strategy for dealing with such a change of government in Somalia, the United States needs to consider some fundamental issues. What are U.S. interests in the Horn of Africa (including Somalia), and what impact would Siad Barre's departure have on these interests?

The views expressed in this chapter are those of the author. They do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. government or the U.S. Air Force.

One can define three key U.S. interests with respect to the Horn. First, and most important, no outside power(s) should acquire a position in the area that enables it (them) to use the area as a base from which to disrupt sea-lanes leading from the Persian Gulf. About 20 percent of the oil that the United States imports passes through these sea-lanes on the way to its ultimate destination, and well over half of that which Western Europe and Japan purchase from abroad travels along them. Disruption of these sea routes would seriously weaken the Western industrial world as a whole. At present and for the foreseeable future, no regional powers possess the naval and/or air capabilities to pursue such an objective, so the potential lies basically with nonregional powers. Of these, the only serious candidate is the USSR, either by itself or in conjunction with allies like Cuba and East Germany.

Second, no outside or regional power(s) should operate from the area to pose a security threat to Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia enjoys the largest proved reserves of oil in the world and has now become one of the wealthiest countries on the globe, but its location on the Red Sea littoral and the combination of the relative vastness of its territory and the sparseness of its population makes it vulnerable to threats emanating from the Horn. The state's role, both as a major supplier of oil to the United States and the other Western industrial democracies and as Washington's oldest and closest Arab friend, gives the United States a big stake in ensuring that no challenges of this kind emerge.

Third, no outside or regional power(s) should occupy territory in the area that would enable it (them) to interfere with U.S. shipping from the Mediterranean Sea to the Indian Ocean via the Suez Canal and the Red Sea. Although this route now lacks the commercial merits it had before the advent of tankers too big for the canal to accommodate, it remains a major trade artery even today. This is particularly true for Middle Eastern countries like Israel and Egypt. The route also has considerable potential military significance should a conventional conflict involving the great powers in either the eastern Mediterranean or the western portions of the Indian Ocean arise.

The political demise of Siad Barre in Somalia would affect these interests in different ways, so each must be looked at individually. With respect to the first interest, the probable consequences would vary depending on the future state of U.S.-Soviet relations.

As long as the United States and the USSR do not become engaged in direct hostilities with each other, the ouster of Siad Barre would not significantly increase the probabilities of a Soviet attempt to interdict the sea-lanes out of the Persian Gulf. Other constraints would almost certainly deter Moscow from such a move, even if a new Somali government restored to the USSR the access that it had enjoyed to Berbera and several Somali

airfields prior to 1977. A Soviet interdiction effort would constitute a belligerent act with the United States and Western Europe. Therefore Soviet leaders probably would not launch such an undertaking unless the USSR's relations with the West had already reached a flashpoint. Even if the Soviets contemplated the outbreak of a large-scale confrontation with the West, the Persian Gulf is not the most logical place for an initial strike. Moreover, the Somalis and the other peoples of the area know that permitting the USSR to use their territory to disrupt the sea-lanes leading from the Persian Gulf could involve them in a conflict with the West. Thus they have shown no inclination to give the USSR unrestricted access to their facilities. Indeed the Somali opposition to Siad Barre has taken the stand that there will be no foreign bases or access to facilities in Somalia if it comes to power.² Theoretically Moscow could acquire enough political leverage in Somalia and/or elsewhere in the region to make it possible for the USSR to operate from local territory in any way it desired, but the Soviet record of achievements in the area thus far renders such a possibility quite far-fetched.

If one assumes that the United States and the USSR at some juncture might go to war with one another, more serious implications emerge for the United States from a change of government in Somalia. Although Siad Barre's opposition seems committed for the moment to denying all foreign powers access to Somalia's facilities, that position could alter once it gained authority. Even if it did not, a Somali-Soviet rapprochement would still put considerable pressure on Mogadishu to grant such access in the event of a superpower conflict, especially an extended conventional one. In wartime, furthermore, Moscow would probably be highly disposed to mount an interdiction of the sea-lanes leading from the Persian Gulf. To do so, it would need to take advantage of all the facilities to which it had access in Somalia and elsewhere in the region, (such as Socotra and Aden in South Yemen and the Dahlak Islands in Ethiopia). As allies, the friendly governments in the region would find it hard to resist Soviet desires in this regard. In fact, if the USSR had managed to build up a substantial presence in their countries, they might face a choice between compliance or overthrow. The ouster of Siad Barre, in short, could significantly increase the prospects for Soviet disruption of the sea-lanes out of the Persian Gulf during a conflict between the major powers.

On balance, the advent of a new regime in Somalia would not in all likelihood raise the potential for a straightforward regional threat to Saudi Arabia except in a marginal way. Siad Barre's successors would probably adopt a more radical posture than he has in recent years, and this could afford some basis for Somalia to cooperate with Ethiopia, South Yemen, and their nonregional ally Libya against the more moderate Saudi regime. Yet the outlook for effective cooperation stemming strictly from local initiative appears dim. Ethnic and religious diversities have created strife

among Somalia, Ethiopia, and South Yemen for years, and there seems little chance of any real transformation of the situation in the foreseeable future. Moreover, all three lack sufficient capabilities for power projection to pose a credible threat to Saudi Arabia on their own. Indeed Somalia's involvement in an entente with Ethiopia and South Yemen would not cause nearly as much concern in Riyadh as North Yemen's incorporation in it would.

Similarly, Siad Barre's departure would probably not in itself afford the USSR the basis for establishing itself as a major unilateral threat to Saudi Arabia. To constitute such a threat, the USSR would need access to more facilities than even reacquisition of access to Berbera and selected Somali airfields would provide. These would include facilities not only in Somalia but also in Ethiopia, North Yemen, and perhaps even South Yemen. In the light of the past performance of Ethiopia and Somalia with respect to access rights, it appears highly unlikely that they would prove forthcoming in this realm under current conditions, and North Yemen has yet to reward Soviet blandishments with concrete privileges on its territory.

There is a possibility that the emergence of a new Somali government would improve Moscow's capacity to put together a coalition of the USSR, Somalia, Ethiopia, and South Yemen against the existing Saudi regime, but the improvement would be modest at best. The replacement of Siad Barre by officers more favorably disposed toward the Soviet Union might render Somalia more amenable to joint ventures with the USSR. If Soviet leaders could induce them and the rulers of Ethiopia and South Yemen to lay aside mutual antagonism and to look on Saudi Arabia, with its close ties to the United States, as their main enemy in the region, the USSR might be able to create a potent challenge to Riyadh. To the extent that such a challenge assumed military form, it would involve a division of labor. The local countries would furnish the men, and the USSR would supply the requisite arms and equipment and military advisers.

Forging a coalition of this sort, however, would still be fraught with major difficulties. The mutual suspicions that disturb the relations of Somalia, Ethiopia, and South Yemen today have deep historical roots, and they would almost certainly not yield rapidly to even the most concerted efforts to eradicate them. Hence the three countries would not find it easy to cooperate under any conceivable circumstances. Moreover, opposition to Saudi Arabia hardly has the earmark of a compelling national interest for any of the three. Indeed it would in all probability enlarge the internal military budgets of each of them at a time when all suffer from major economic woes.

As for the third U.S. interest, a shift of government in Somalia might well lay the groundwork for cooperation on the part of Somalia, Ethiopia, and South Yemen to impede Israeli and perhaps even Western shipping through the Red Sea. As radical members of the Arab League, Somalia and

South Yemen would probably have few inhibitions about pressuring Israel in this fashion; Western support for Israel might precipitate the inclination to extend the interdiction effort to Western traffic between the Mediterranean Sea and the Indian Ocean. In view of its past links with Tel Aviv, Ethiopia undoubtedly would have greater qualms about harassing Israel than the other two countries would, but its new ally, Libya, might persuade it to go along through a judicious mixture of economic carrots and arguments stressing the need for political solidarity. Although the other obstacles to concerted action would not disappear, they would probably not loom so formidable in this particular context, particularly if the move against Israel came in the wake of some Israeli action like the invasion of Beirut.

The great danger in a Somali-Ethiopian-South Yemen attempt to disrupt Israeli shipping through the Red Sea arises from the response it could evoke from Israel. In the 1980s, Israel has adopted a policy of long-range operations to eliminate what it deems to be threats to its position. Its air strike against Iraq's nuclear reactor affords the classic illustration. Thus an interdiction venture conceivably could induce Israel to attack the initiators of the undertaking and thereby widen the arena of Middle Eastern conflict.

Were Siad Barre to lose power in Somalia, the USSR might marginally increase its capabilities to cut off Israeli shipping through the Red Sea during peacetime. (It seems quite unlikely that Moscow would try to interfere with Western shipping between the Mediterranean Sea and the Indian Ocean in the absence of at least a war in the Middle East.) Such a consequence, however, would require at a minimum that the USSR regain access to Berbera and to a number of Somali airfields. At present the opposition to Siad Barre rules out any renewed access for the Soviets, yet it could change its mind on the matter once it assumed authority.

A more substantial increase in Soviet capabilities could result from Siad Barre's ouster if this development encouraged regional states like Somalia, Ethiopia, and South Yemen to endorse a greater Soviet presence in the area, but such an outcome appears to be only a remote possibility. It would mean airlift in posture not only on the part of the current Somali opposition but also on the part of existing governments in the region. In view of the many signs of strains between Addis Ababa and Moscow at the moment, the chances that at least the Ethiopian government would balk at such a modification of policy look overwhelming.³

Far more important than the probable impact of Siad Barre's departure on the USSR's capacity to disrupt shipping through the Red Sea in peacetime is its possible effect on that capacity in wartime, especially during a war in the Middle East. The advent of a more radical Somali government favorably disposed toward the Soviet Union would substantially improve Moscow's capabilities to act under these circumstances. Not only would a radical Somali government be more likely than Siad Barre has been to

cooperate with the other radical states in the region in assisting the Arab cause, but it might grant the Soviets far greater use of Somali facilities for the same purpose than they would enjoy during peacetime. Moreover, it would be less reluctant to allow the USSR to interfere with Western shipping as it would in the absence of hostilities, especially if the United States and/or Western Europe backed Israel.

In sum, then, the toppling of Siad Barre would not do great damage to U.S. interests in an immediate sense, but it could have significant adverse consequences in the longer term. This duality of considerations should inform U.S. strategy for coping with the political demise of Siad Barre. Specifically it suggests that the United States need not panic at the prospect of a change of government in Somalia but should try to stave off the long-range consequences.

Primary attention should be directed at the achievement of a two-pronged goal. The United States should endeavor to keep the radicals and moderates in the region from polarizing along ideological lines, and it should seek to prevent the USSR from developing exclusive ties with the radical states of the area and to reduce the depth of existing Soviet-radical ties to the extent possible. In other words, the United States must deal meaningfully with the radical states and compete effectively with the Soviet Union.

Several things need to be borne in mind. First, although the United States might prefer to see moderates in power in the countries of the region, it lacks the ability to control the domestic politics of these states. Second, the mere existence of radical local governments does not challenge U.S. interests. These challenges arise only when such governments feel compelled to band together for common purposes or, worse yet, to call in the Soviet Union to help them accomplish their ends.

Opportunities for the United States to pursue a two-pronged objective abound. Ethiopia, Somalia, and South Yemen have long-standing differences of view on many issues. Each also has experienced grave economic problems and would benefit greatly from economic help from the West or even a country like Saudi Arabia. Somalia has already had one disillusioning encounter with the USSR, and Ethiopia is now becoming disgruntled with Moscow in many ways. These examples barely scratch the surface.

The real question is how to capitalize on these openings to further U.S. objectives. A brief discussion of some broad principles is in order. First, the paramount concern should be the skillful use of diplomatic, political, economic, and other nonmilitary instruments. The economic would be particularly important. Most countries in the region are in difficult economic straits, and the West has a much greater capacity to meet their needs in this regard than the USSR does. Second, military instruments should play a subsidiary

but key role. A U.S. military presence in the area should remind the local governments that the United States is a factor to be taken into account in regional politics. To achieve this purpose without being threatening, the United States would be wise to focus on offshore forces, both naval and air. Third, the United States should recognize that it need not stand at the forefront of all undertakings designed to advance its ends. In certain contexts U.S. allies can function much more effectively and efficiently than can the United States itself. As long as U.S. purposes are ultimately served, Washington should not hesitate to share the limelight with others.

Even if the United States put forth its best efforts, however, it might not succeed in forestalling at least some of the adverse consequences that could stem from Siad Barre's overthrow in Somalia. At the same time that it strove to avoid results of a negative character from the emergence of a new regime in Somalia, the United States should position itself to offset such results as much as possible if they occurred.

This imperative has largely military implications. The United States needs to ensure that it has adequate military forces to apply to the region to meet the challenges that could face it there. To do so, it would clearly have to improve its present capabilities to operate in the region. But in carrying out this task, it should take care not to preclude the fulfillment of its first-order goals. If the U.S. military presence in the area became conspicuous enough to seem threatening to local states, then the buildup could prove counterproductive. This consideration suggests that the United States should concentrate on increasing its Indian Ocean forces, to include expansion of the facilities at Diego Garcia but keep onshore involvement in the Horn and the Arabian peninsula to a minimum.

Plainly a U.S. strategy of the kind sketched in this chapter would require a great deal of flexibility and ingenuity to implement. Unexpected developments would undoubtedly take place, and some courses of action would yield unanticipated and unwanted results. Yet the basics of the strategy seem to constitute a viable and coherent approach to a thorny problem.

Notes

1. See, for instance, *Africa Confidential*, March 11, 1981, September 8, 1982; Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report: Middle East and Africa*, October 21, 1981, pp. R/1-6; *Washington Post*, February 12, 1982; *Defense and Foreign Affairs Daily*, February 22, 1982; Gerald A. Funk, "Some Observations on Strategic Realities and Ideological Red Herrings on the Horn of Africa," *CSIS Africa Notes*, July 1, 1982; *New York Times*, October 8, 1982.

2. See *Africa Confidential*, September 8, 1982.

3. See *ibid*, March 11, September 8, 1982; Paul B. Henze, "Communism and Ethiopia," *Problems of Communism* (May–June 1981):55–74; *Economist*, November 28, 1981, pp. 34, 37; the reports of Jay Ross in *Washington Post*, December 31, 1981, and Pranay B. Gupte in *New York Times*, September 25, 1981.



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Urban Uprisings in Morocco

I. William Zartman

At the end of April in some unknown year in the near future, there were riots in a number of Moroccan cities. This was not the first that urban riots occurred in Morocco, and the last times they took place were important events to the Moroccan political system. In 1953 and 1955 riots took place in Casablanca that were trigger events in the nationalist struggle for independence. In 1965 when riots occurred in Casablanca and other cities, the parliamentary experiment was aborted, and Morocco went through a state of emergency for five years. In the summer of 1981, riots also took place in Casablanca, and rather important repercussions occurred on the relations between the king and the semiloyal opposition party. So when the riots took place again in the future that we are examining, they were seen as potentially important events. The fact that they took place in a number of cities rather than just Casablanca was also seen as a larger event than some smaller urban disturbances.

The army was called out to back up the police, and the riots were repressed with a good deal of activity and bloodshed and effectiveness, but the effectiveness was not complete. After an initial victory of the forces of order in the battle with the urban rioters, the riots spread to other cities and perhaps even to the countryside. Clearly this was an internal crisis in an important region that required a strategic response.

There are four major directions in which these events could turn. One thing that would be extremely important would be whether military defections would take place. As the riots renewed, as has happened very often with civil disturbances of this kind but not in Morocco, would members of the military see their friends on the other side of the barricade and refuse to fight or fire against them? As it now stands today, it is very unlikely that the military would reason this way in Morocco. There is a separateness inculcated into the military and a mission on behalf of order and the monarchy as the Royal Armed Forces that has been overriding in the past and still seems to be there. Other events in history and other places in the world show that this attitude can always be broken, and so we ask what would be the kind of events that would break military solidarity and the differentiation between the army and the people that it is shooting at. One would be a feeling that the king was selling out in the current Saharan war. The king is playing a tricky game, and has to, in his search for a political solution to the Saharan war

against the Polisario, the Saharan national liberation front, and for Moroccan control of the territory. He is not doing it frivolously and is a very skillful player of tricky games in Moroccan politics. On one hand, he has to end the war politically because the war cannot be won militarily by any side. Each can hold the other in check militarily for a political victory or settlement. But making a political settlement means some kind of compromise with somebody—Algeria or Polisario. The king has to make his political arrangement on favorable terms, not giving the army the impression that it has been fighting for a lost cause. If they feel that he has bargained away what they have fought for, then one might see the military saying, "Those are my people on the other side of the barricades," and the urban riots would take a particular direction in which the military role would be preponderant in the outcome and preponderant in the successor government.

The second way in which the road could turn would be if the organization that is posited in the title of the scenario is provided by a coalition of labor unions and political parties. If the organization is provided simply by the Democratic Confederation of Labor (CDT), the left-wing but noncommunist labor movement, or by the Socialist Union of Popular Forces, the left-wing but noncommunist opposition party, that is not enough in the Moroccan political spectrum to provide either direction or coherence or weight for the urban riots. This is what happened in 1981, and the riots were easily put down. But if the coalition comprised a number of labor unions including the semi-independent one, the Moroccan Labor Union, or other political parties including, above all, the Istiglal party, the main inheritor of the nationalist movement, then the country would find itself in a serious situation. The king has said that he will not be placed in a situation where it is he the king against the parties as an organizer of his people. If that occurs, then political events will head in a slightly different direction in which the likelihood is of a constitutional monarchy.

A third direction would be an Islamic mass uprising, a kind of spontaneous-looking riot of popular feeling. This is unlikely in Morocco. Morocco is Sunni; it does not have an organization of a clergy that can mobilize the population. Moroccan Muslims are at best mobilized by saintly figures, and the monarchy has not hesitated to jail them in the past when they have risen out of control. Only if the army would join them would this kind of event take a serious turn. In that case, it is hard to tell what its outcome would be because the organizational framework for an Islamic revolt in Morocco is currently unknown and generally rather unlikely.

The fourth direction that the riots could take would result from the king's being killed. All of the scenarios so far suggest that the king has been able to hide away somewhere or at least has not been gunned down. But if there were no longer a king about whom to rally, no longer a commander of

the faithful, no longer a skilled politician in control of the system—that is, no more central focus—the situation would be very open.

What kinds of variables in this spread of activities would go into the U.S. response to these situations? One variable of importance would be the position of the king (assuming that he is still alive) in political negotiations that would go on as the riots continued. Would he be included in a council? Would he be pushed aside? Could we see the beginnings of a Haile Selassie type of evolution?

Second, what kind of government would be discussed? What kind of successor institutions would be considered? Would the army come in as a caretaker in a regent for Prince Sidi Muhammad and the monarchy maintained? Would there be a kind of constitutional convention? Who would be involved in the leadership of the social contract building that would take place?

Third, would there be a call for the U.S. intervention? Probably not. U.S. intervention is not something that the Moroccans are used to considering as a possibility.

Fourth, would there be foreign intervention? It seems rather unlikely in the sense that it is very unlikely that Soviet troops would be called into Morocco. Scarcely smaller is the unlikelihood that someone among the revoltors might call on the Libyans or that the Libyans might try to intervene. But certainly if there were foreign intervention on one side, it would increase the pressure for U.S. intervention into the area even though both are highly unlikely.

Fifth, what would be the relation of the riots to regional conflict? A conflict scenario that is probably more likely to occur than coordinated uprisings of an international significance is an accidental and frustrated outbreak of that long-feared war between Morocco and Algeria. The Saharan conflict could fall over into a series of escalated conflicts and finally involve the two armies. If that took place, the situation would be very different. The international response would be to try to mediate, limit, and freeze the conflict before there would be any clear winning side. Any clear or unclear loser would call for revenge the next time. It would take a serious escalation of Moroccan-Algerian tension, but short of war, to create a situation where Algeria would intervene politically or militarily on behalf of the Moroccan rioters.

Sixth, what would be the needs of the Moroccan government? Would the king seek refuge in the U.S. facility and Moroccan base in Kenitra? Would the king be holed up in a palace? Would the Moroccans need arms? Advisers? Troops? The progression becomes decreasingly likely. Arms are very easy to supply, advisers much less so because of the feelings of both Moroccan and Americans, and troops all the less so. What would be the size

of the challenge? Are we talking about a coordinated uprising or a lucky group? A saint, for example, in an Islamic uprising that happened to catch people's attention as a rather charismatic presence? Are we talking about mass uprisings that would continue? Mass demonstrations in Morocco tend to be symbolic or demonstrative violence rather than instrumental violence. A sustained revolt and an organized mass would be a new phenomenon. Obvious evidence of organization from city to city rather than simply apparent coincidence would be a different type of challenge than even the 1981 riots, triggered by the CDT and then running out of hand. And finally what would be the allies' reactions? More specifically what would be the position of France? Would France and the United States work together? Would there be support? There certainly would have to be coordination for any U.S. response. This is an area of stronger French responsibility or interests than the United States, even though both countries are concerned by Moroccan stability.

Finally, as a result of these possible variations in the course of events on the Moroccan side, different policy elements would be considered on the U.S. side. First, the United States has an interest in a stable and friendly regime in Morocco. That is not the same as an interest in the monarchy, but Moroccan stability is related to the presence of the king. The king is a rather effective guarantor of some kind of stability compared with any alternative. The most likely alternative would not be a Moroccan Khomeini. The king's position in the political system is so strong that there is no presumption of an alternative. There is no likely focus of authority to take over, and therefore if the army did move in, it would be bowed under the burden of illegitimacy until something took place to legitimize it. Second, the United States has an interest in the balance of power in the region—that is, a relation between Morocco and Algeria (and Libya) in which neither becomes the predominant power. The reasons can be stated most succinctly as an eggs-in-the-basket situation: it is better to have two states with fluid relations than one state that predominates. And this, I maintain, means no predominant Moroccan power, although it is less a question of that, as well as no predominant Algerian power. Third, I think that it is important that a country show support for its supporters. This is not a blind guideline; the United States cannot support all the goals of all its allies. But it is important for a power like the United States to evince support for a country that shows the willingness and ability to defend causes similar to its own in the world arena, specifically in Morocco's case in Africa and the Middle East, especially when that country shows a degree of democratic accountability and socioeconomic improvement.

Fourth, it is in U.S. interests to prevent Soviet bases in the area. There is a much less strong U.S. interest in maintaining the current facilities that the United States has negotiated and that are not of a vital interest. There is a

strong interest in not allowing Soviet bases to be established, although the likelihood of that at the present is very small. A quick look at the map shows why Morocco is important from that point of view.

To what kind of policy do these considerations lead? Three alternatives are open to the United States in schematic terms: intervention, support, or disengagement or sitting it out. Intervention would be likely to be counter-productive in this kind of situation. The Moroccan people, the Moroccan body politic, and Moroccan politicians do not look toward U.S. intervention to hold a monarch in place. On the other hand, support would be expected, either as military supplies, a statement of support, or use of the UN to support the government or to calm the conflict, particularly if it became internationalized. Disengagement would be the wisest course only if the game were already lost. The situation would require the best attentions of an active embassy to monitor events and see when the game was up. It would be important for the United States to maintain contacts with the opposition; in the Moroccan context, the opposition for the most part is a loyal one operating within the political system. This is not Iran, where the opposition was beyond the pale and hard to maintain contact with. If it came to the point where the king was overthrown, it would be too late for the United States to engage in an operation that would put him back in contrast to giving him support during this confrontation. And so the most important lesson is that it is more important in dealing with Morocco to be supportive and understanding, supportive within our own limitations and understanding of Moroccan concerns, including the need of the king to draw the political forces more closely around him through greater participation in the governing process, than it is to rush in last minute and try to put him back in the throne if he should fall down.

Part X
Strategies to Secure
Scarce Resources



TREE *of* LIBERTY SOCIETY

34 The Strategic Petroleum Reserve: Missions in Conflicts Involving Oil Resources

Edward N. Krapels

National security has often been used as the prime justification for investing \$40 billion in a strategic petroleum reserve (SPR). In terms of defining when and how the SPR should be drawn down, national security can be defined narrowly, reserving the SPR for wartime situations, or it can be defined broadly, allowing the SPR to be used in oil contingencies that have no direct or immediate military ramifications.

Department of Defense officials admitted in 1980 congressional testimony that wartime readiness was not mentioned as an SPR objective in the authorizing legislation (the Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975) and that no specific segment of the SPR has been reserved for military use.¹ Thus it is not necessary to take the most restrictive view of the SPR as a military asset only. This nevertheless does not resolve the underlying issue about the SPR's mission regarding U.S. national security. When and how should the oil in the reserve be used?

Background

Oil is the most valuable item in international trade, and it is a quintessential strategic good; one cannot wage conventional modern warfare without it. As all who concern themselves with security and economics know, most NATO members and Japan depend on imports for virtually all of their oil supply. The United States and Canada import a substantial fraction of their needs. Only the United Kingdom and Norway are self-sufficient. The other familiar, yet disturbing, fact is that the principal source of NATO's imported oil is the Persian Gulf (table 34-1).

The Persian Gulf is the center of the allies' security concerns over oil. The Gulf provides 47 percent of total OECD imports and about 30 percent of total OECD oil supplies. Moreover, the Gulf is also where most of the world's spare oil production capacity is concentrated. Thus, a serious disruption in Gulf supplies cannot be substantially offset by increased output from other oil provinces.

Although economists argue endlessly about the future paths of oil supply and demand, for security analysis purposes it is safe to say that the

Table 34-1
NATO and Japan Oil Dependence

	<i>Volume (millions b/d)</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Total crude imports	19.8	100
From OPEC	14.2	72
From Persian Gulf	9.4	47

Source: *OECD, Quarterly Oil Statistics, Fourth Quarter 1981*

allies' dependence on the Gulf will not deviate substantially from the 30 percent level and that large amounts of spare production capacity will not be found in areas outside the Gulf.

An Organizing Framework: Strategic versus Tactical Threats to Oil Resources

The allies have experienced a variety of threats to their oil supplies: Mossadeq's and Khomeini's revolutions in Iran, deliberate curtailments in exports in association with Arab-Israeli wars in 1967 and 1973, a more sophisticated attempt at a selective embargo in 1973-1974, and war between oil producers from 1980 to the present. Some of the allies' worst fears have not been realized. There has been no successful coup in Saudi Arabia. Terrorists have yet to sink a supertanker in the Strait of Hormuz. The Soviets have not gained political control over a major producer or threatened the Gulf countries directly, although they have moved into the neighborhood.

This survey suggests that threats to the allies' imported oil can originate within oil-producing countries as they strive for economic or political advantages or undergo domestic political turmoil. Threats also can originate from outside parties, either neighboring countries or from a superpower. These threats can have a range of manifestations. At one end of a spectrum, they can simply have a nuisance effect on oil prices; at the other end a threat can be devastating to the political and social structures of the oil-importing countries.

There is a large variety of threats to oil resources. An additional concern is the existence of a hard-to-define threshold between threats that affect only oil prices and those that affect national security. It does seem reasonable to assert that costs stemming from oil price increases are usually just inconvenient. But at some point they impair economies so fundamentally that the survival of key manufacturing industries, and hence a nation's ability to mobilize for war, are threatened.

Somewhere between strictly oil (tactical) and strictly military (strategic) responses lies a set of economic actions. On the tactical end of that range are monetary and fiscal policy adjustments aimed at offsetting the recessionary effects of oil price increases; at the strategic end are the instruments of economic warfare (seizure of foreign assets, counterembargoes) and the mobilization of the economy for war. These response options are shown in figure 34-1.

Figure 34-1 is a gross simplification. It serves a limited purpose, however, by providing a framework for discussion of the role of the SPR in U.S. planning to secure its most valuable imported resource.

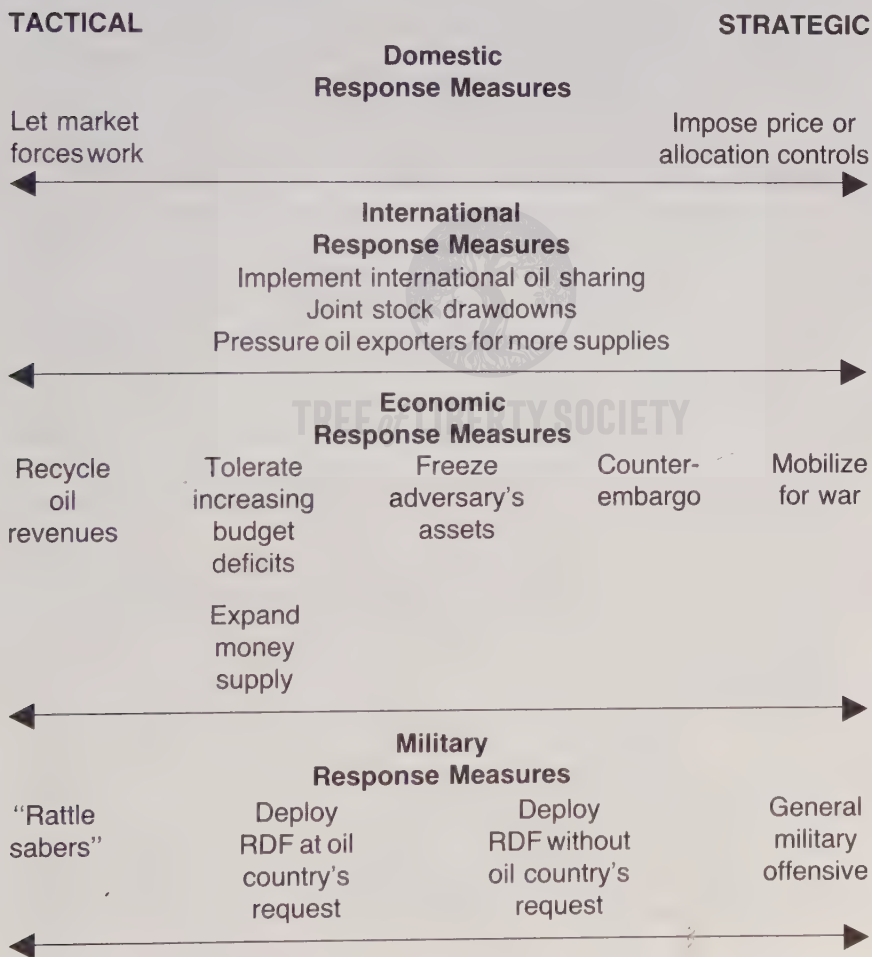


Figure 34-1. Response Measures

Missions of the SPR

The SPR currently contains about 270 million barrels of crude oil. By 1985, it should contain about 500 million barrels and by 1990 about 750 million barrels. Its present drawdown capacity is about 2 million barrels per day (b/d); by 1990 it may be as much as 5 million b/d. The SPR is already one of the largest potential sources of oil in the world. By 1990, only Saudi Arabia, the USSR, and the rest of the United States will be capable of putting more oil into the market. Of course, the duration of SPR's ability to pump out oil is strictly limited; at 2 billion b/d, it would at its present size be empty in 135 days.

Analysis of this reserve's mission in U.S. security planning will be organized in terms of the range of response measures indicated in figure 34-1. The argument presented here is that the SPR should be assigned *both* tactical and strategic missions. The argument rests on four points:

1. It is practically impossible to determine in advance when oil supply curtailments and price increases encroach on national security.
2. To be a credible deterrent against deliberate embargoes (arguably a strategic situation but only one of many threats to oil supplies), the adversary must perceive that the U.S. government knows how to use the SPR and must be unsure of how and when it will use the SPR. To this end, tactical use of the SPR will establish its credibility and add to its deterrence value.
3. Neither the United States, the allies, nor Third World countries can afford another oil price explosion in the 1980s. The recessionary impacts of large oil price increases greatly contribute to the deterioration in alliance relations and U.S. willingness to maintain defense spending at projected levels.
4. The most severe strategic crises are those in which the political support for truly auspicious oil-saving measures will exist. Even if the SPR is somewhat smaller because it had previously been used in tactical situations, there exists greater scope for incrementally decreasing demand for oil in a truly major crisis.

National Security Threshold

Richard Cooper wrote in 1974 that an energy disruption should be considered a security threat when it hinders "the capacity of a society to cultivate its culture and values."² A year later the Treasury Department submitted to

President Gerald Ford an assessment of the relationship between dependence on oil imports and the national security:

Any sudden disruption in excess (of 1 million b/d) would have a prompt and substantial effect upon our economic well-being, and, considering the close relation between this nation's economic welfare and our national security, would clearly threaten to impair our national security.

The Department of Defense stated in the same report:

The degree of our energy self-sufficiency must be such that any potential supply denial will be sustainable for an extended period without degradation of military readiness or operations, and without significant impact on industrial output or the welfare of the populace.³

These quotations create an impression of extreme sensitivity to oil disruptions. Many believe that the U.S. economy and society are more robust.

Yet these Treasury and Defense Department estimates about the fragility of the economy are sound because they err on the side of caution. Once an analyst, one sensitive to political nuances, has been asked where the national security threshold lies, it would be unnatural of him or her to identify just that point on the microeconomic margins where defense-related industries go broke. It is better to avoid this kind of domestic industrial brinksmanship. In other words, it is better to board up the windows of one's house before the hurricane arrives than to wait until the first window panes shatter. The same reasoning applies to the SPR. It is better to be prepared to use a well before a national security threat presents itself.

Deterrence

One of the prime initial justifications for investing in an SPR was to deter deliberate oil embargoes. As far back as 1944, Interior Secretary Harold Ickes wrote, "We should buy and buy and buy (foreign oil), and store and store and store, until we are able to face the whole world, if necessary, with calm assurance."⁴ Thirty years later, the president proposed and the Congress authorized the SPR in the wake of the Arab oil embargo. The confrontation model in the minds of the SPR's developers probably resembled this: if an oil-exporting country embargoed the United States, SPR oil would simply be substituted in the U.S. import pipeline. Eventually the United States would either find alternative sources of crude or learn to do with less, and the SPR input into the pipeline could be tapered down. Given such a

response, the embargoing country would be sufficiently discouraged to be deterred from imposing an embargo in the first place.

Since those early postembargo days, the threat of a targeted cutoff like the one imposed by the Arab countries has diminished, although it certainly should not be dismissed. More salient threats to oil supplies include a revolution in a major Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) country, as in Iran in 1979, and wars between or involving OPEC countries, as in the Iran-Iraq war.

The SPR's role as a deterrent in these situations is extremely limited. One cannot discount the ability and willingness of a revolutionary regime to embargo the United States, but such an action would be so firmly rooted in domestic political feelings that rational notions like SPR deterrence are unlikely to make much of an impression.

The point made here is simple: the SPR may indeed have some deterrence value in a small subset of potential disruptions. But that does not lead logically to a prescription that the SPR must be saved for such confrontations only. To the contrary, the SPR's deterrence value will be increased if the adversary has witnessed effective deployment of the reserve in other situations. To this end, it will be useful to abandon the belief that the SPR is a remedy of last resort. Instead the government should foster a flexible and credible drawdown program, which should include drawdowns in situations that fall short of being major crises.

Price Mitigation

The price of oil has had a major impact on the alliance. Supply and price disruptions always induce tension in relations. In future disruptions, the fact that the United States is one of few allied countries (along with West Germany and the United Kingdom) not controlling domestic product prices is likely to create feeling that it is trying to buy its way out of trouble at the expense of its friends.

In addition to this intradisruption tension, the lack of confidence of U.S. allies in the security of their oil supplies has motivated them to deepen their energy trade with the Soviet Union. From an East-West strategic perspective, this dependence makes little sense; from an energy security standpoint, it looks like useful diversification of risks. Although it appears to be too late to stop the present 40 billion cubic meter deal, Europe's desire to expand gas trade with the Soviets is likely to grow if there is another upward ratchet in oil prices and another disruption of oil supplies.

Perhaps the most insidious effect of the cost of oil on the alliance is its effect on defense spending. There can be little doubt that the recessionary

effects of the oil price increases of 1979–1980 contributed to many allies' inability or unwillingness to increase defense spending. Even more troubling is a similar potential effect on the United States. Congress has shown it is unwilling to tolerate further deep cuts in nondefense programs. Hence the United States faces potentially enormous budget deficits in the years ahead. It is likely that in the next session Congress will go after the defense budget. Earl Ravenal has pointed out the implications:

What would be involved . . . would be a revolutionary reappraisal of the American role in the world, of U.S. obligations to allies, of the very definition of what is required for our security. . . . "To be serious about cutting defense spending you must talk about America's major alliances—particularly NATO, which is costing us \$129 billion a year, half of our entire defense budget."⁵

Recognition of the adverse effects of the 1979–1980 oil price hikes on the allies' ability and willingness to apply sufficient resources to national and international security leads to a conclusion that is critical in shaping SPR drawdown policy: the western industrialized democracies cannot afford another major jump in oil prices. That is not a prescription for reimposing domestic price controls, it is a prescription for mobilizing the principal oil crisis-management resource—the SPR—in an effort to mitigate international oil price increases. It will not be easy to accomplish this mission. Among the requirements are multilateral efforts with U.S. allies to use emergency oil stocks in a way that maximizes downward pressure on spot prices and applying pressure on oil producers to be moderate in their pricing decisions.

SPR's Mission in a Major Crisis

In the subset of oil threats labeled as meriting strategic responses, one can identify three particularly chilling scenarios:

1. Persian Gulf oil flows are drastically reduced as a result of military actions by one or more Gulf countries.
2. Persian Gulf oil flows are drastically reduced as a result of Soviet action.
3. Oil exports from major producers are drastically reduced as a result of their deliberate imposition of a specific embargo or general curtailment aimed at coercing a change in importers' foreign policies.

The role of SPR in these cases is to buy time to launch diplomatic or military efforts. In these circumstances, the role of the SPR must be assessed

in the context that is qualitatively different from that which exists in less obviously strategic situations. There are two major differences:

1. The United States will be extremely concerned about the immediate danger posed to the allies, whereas in price-oriented situations the United States may well view the well-being of allies as secondary in importance to maintaining the principle of market economics.
2. Within the United States, the government is most likely to invoke the Defense Production Act, thus suspending the free market in oil for the duration of the crisis. Allocation and price controls are likely to follow.⁶

Thus the need for the SPR in the domestic economy has to be assessed in the context of the government's ability to restrict the quantity of petroleum to the civilian economy. While a close examination of such re-regulation is beyond my scope here, the essential point is that the strength of domestic political demand for SPR oil will have to be managed by, and will be blunted by, the government's emergency management institutions.

Thus the SPR's main missions in this situation are related to defense and international needs. Defense industries will receive priority access to domestic and imported oil by the Defense Production Act. The armed forces' fuel requirements will have to be met first out of their own inventories. The inventories of forces in the field must be replenished by refiners in the proximity. The SPR need play no role here.⁷

Probably the gravest source of concern about petroleum in these situations will be the oil reserves of allied countries. Comparisons of allied emergency stocks show that the U.S. SPR will be substantially larger in terms of imports than the strategic reserves of many allied countries.⁸ Thus, there is a danger that allied countries will deplete their reserves long before the United States depletes the SPR. In an embargo situation, this will create pressure on the governments of these countries to give in to the producers' demands. In principle, the possibility exists that the United States could forestall such capitulation by drawing down the SPR at a faster rate, diverting U.S.-bound imports to the hard-pressed countries. But one wonders whether this is worth the effort in a political confrontation, such as an Arab embargo protesting U.S. Middle East policy, in which the allies have virtually no role.

In a confrontation that has a military aspect, the greater vulnerability of the allies is a more substantial problem. It is possible to describe this problem in rough quantitative terms. Using a 1985 scenario in which all Persian Gulf supplies are cut off, one estimate shows that the allies would deplete forty-five days' worth of oil imports (equivalent to consumption in most countries) in stock in only ninety-three days.⁹ This forty-five days' worth of imports in emergency stocks is roughly all that many NATO

countries could use before oil shortages of major proportion would begin to arise.

Thus the length of the oil fuse is determined in the first instance by the stocks of many of the allies. One could argue that the SPR ought to be reserved to compensate for the vulnerability of some of the allies. Indeed, if this is to be regarded as a prime SPR mission, not only should all its oil be reserved for such situations, but the billion-barrel ultimate size should be reconsidered because it will be too small. It is more reasonable, and more equitable to U.S. taxpayers, to acknowledge that this is not a prime SPR mission.

This line of argument suggests that prohibiting the use of SPR in tactical situations for the sake of subsidizing allies in these scenarios is unreasonable. Tactical use of the SPR may save tens of billions of dollars; reserving all SPR oil for major strategic situations not only denies any prospect of realizing such savings but reserves an amount of SPR oil that is simply not significant in the strategic situation.

Conclusions

The U.S. SPR should be regarded as a multimission policy tool rather than be reserved exclusively for severe national security situations. Instead, price mitigation in international oil market disruptions should be regarded as one of the SPR's prime missions. Thus the task in the years ahead of U.S. agencies responsible for domestic and international contingency planning is to develop a set of practical drawdown strategies. A master plan, as Department of Energy officials have repeatedly stressed, is not what is needed. Needed is a varied set of drawdown strategies, aimed at fulfilling variable missions in different threat scenarios.

Notes

1. Cited by David Lockwood, "Strategic Petroleum Reserve: Implications for U.S. Foreign and Defense Policy," Congressional Research Service publication HD 9560 U.S. D1 (Washington, D.C., June 15, 1982), p. 21.
2. "National Resources and National Security," by Richard Cooper in *The Middle East and the International System: Part II: Security and the Energy Crisis*, Adelphi Paper 115 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1974), p. 8.
3. David R. McDonald, "Report of Investigation of the Effects of Petroleum Imports and Petroleum Products on the National Security pur-

suant to sec. 232 of the Trade Expansion Act, as amended," January 13, 1975.

4. Harold Ickes, "We're Running Out of Oil," *American* (January 1944).

5. Philip Geyelin, "Affordable Foreign Policies," *Washington Post*, September 14, 1982, p. A19.

6. The Defense Production Act allows the Defense Department to place a priority order for fuel with a major refinery, which in turn could demand and receive priority access to crude oil from firms without similarly priority-rated orders. Arguably DPA priorities could also be given to a wide range of industries providing defense-related goods.

7. If allies are unwilling to supply U.S. forces, products will have to be shipped from U.S. or Caribbean refiners; however, there is no reason why such product must be refined from SPR feedstock.

8. E.N. Krapels, *Oil Crisis Management: Strategic Stockpiling for International Security* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), pp. 123–153.

9. This is based on assumptions that the disruption cuts OECD supplies by 40 percent, that the IEA emergency oil-sharing program is in effect, and that member countries curtail demand by 10 percent. If they curtail demand by 20 percent, the 45 days' worth of stocks would be depleted in 142 days. E.N. Krapels, *SPR Drawdown Guidebook* (Prepared for U.S. Departments of State and Energy, 1982), p. 56.

35 Strategies for Dealing with International Oil Vulnerability

G. Henry M. Schuler

Concerns arising out of U.S. reliance—and free world dependence—on oil imports are as real today as they were before the world was mesmerized by the so-called oil glut. To be sure, oil consumption was down in 1981. Nevertheless, there is little solace in figures showing that in 1982 the United States imported 38 percent of its oil requirements; Western Europe, 79 percent; and Japan, 95 percent. Who can take comfort in the fact that Middle Eastern oil production was down 15 percent in 1981 when the Middle East provided 51 percent of the total oil moving in world trade instead of the 54 percent that it provided in 1980?

What is the significance of aggregating statistics for the Middle East? Clearly that generalized region does not encompass all of the oil-exporting nations with an abiding interest in Arab or Islamic causes. Adding the exports of Libya, Algeria, Egypt, and Tunisia to those of the Middle East shows that the Arab countries (plus Iran) exported 68 percent of the total oil in world trade in 1981. Adding other oil-exporting countries that are predominantly Islamic—Nigeria, Indonesia, and Brunei—shows that countries with at least some interest in the status of Jerusalem accounted for over 80 percent of the world's oil exports.

Finally, why should we think that we can identify or isolate the issues, therefore the sites, of future supply disruptions? It is possible that nations completely outside the area of anticipated dispute will reduce their exports either to take advantage of the tightened supply situation or even as the result of unplanned coincidence.

A widely respected analyst has cited the reasons for his confidence that the oil weapon has been permanently blunted: areas outside the Middle East, especially Africa, have become major exporters; the Arab states are more concerned about losing their export markets than they are about politics; and the non-Arab exporters will be quick to fill any supply shortfall.¹ Most would agree that this analysis fairly represents the prevailing view of the international oil situation, but it was written in May 23, 1967, in response to the tensions then coming to a head in the Middle East. Less than two weeks later, the Six Day War erupted, and the Arabs not only confounded their erstwhile counselors of commercial caution by imposing the world's second oil embargo but gave it considerably more bite than the first embargo of 1956. Within a month, Great Britain was on the edge of petrol

rationing and prices had shot up by the then unprecedented amount of 30 percent. Where had the analyst gone wrong?

First, he had divided oil exporters geographically into the Middle East and Africa, thereby ignoring the ethnopolitical pressures that would force Libya, the most significant African producer, to join the Arab boycott. Second, in suggesting that Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and the sheikhdoms might put long-term commercial concerns ahead of immediate political objectives, he failed to distinguish between the motivations of companies and governments, and he relied on market projections that are generally less persuasive to politicians than they are to economists. Third, in focusing solely on the Arab-Israeli dispute, he ignored the growing Nigerian civil war, which a few weeks later led to a federal blockade of Biafra's oil terminals, thereby compounding the disruptions of the Arab embargo. Finally, he had not recognized that the shah would take advantage of the tightened market to increase the price of oil instead of increasing the volume of Iran's exports.

We are, to be sure, a little smarter today but not much. Colonel Qaddafi may have convinced us that Libya is Arab, but econometricians still love those spurious aggregations. They talk of OPEC production as if formal membership is required to charge OPEC prices and about OPEC exports as if Iran's nonmembership precludes interest in the Palestinian cause. Worst of all, economists are still suggesting that governments are motivated solely by revenue optimization and that they will shave price rather than reduce supply. Perhaps they are merely trying to bluff producing governments into worrying about the oil glut, but they succeed only in deceiving consuming governments.

U.S. reliance on oil imports still poses the threat of conflict, and a strategic response must be developed to that threat. Doing so without overextending its finite financial, diplomatic, and military resources requires pinning down the most significant threat by identifying the greatest potential for disruptive impact, as well as the most likely form of its occurrence. In suggesting this, I am mindful of having just criticized an analyst for preoccupation with only one threat to oil supplies; we must retain our peripheral vision even while we focus on the principal problem. Still, I have little hesitation in identifying Saudi exports as offering the greatest potential for impact. Without passing judgment on the likelihood of occurrence, it seems almost tautological to say that the risk of disruption is directly proportional to the degree of reliance. With approximately one-third of the total installed production capacity and total proved reserves for noncommunist oil exporters, there can be no doubt that Saudi oil exports now present, and are likely to continue to present, the most vulnerable link in the adequacy and price of world oil exports.

If the sheer magnitude of Saudi capacity presents the greatest potential for disruptive impact, what is the most likely form that disruption could

take? Although Saudi Arabian oil supplies are threatened from many directions, we might catalog those threats in four categories: aggression by the Soviet Union, aggression by powers within the region, revolution, coup d'état, or sabotage by elements within the kingdom, and changes in leadership and/or policy of the Saud family.

I believe the United States can deal with the possibility of Soviet or regional attack together because the dilemma presented for the United States is essentially the same regardless of whether the aggressors are Soviet, Iranian, or Iraqi. It seems clear that the task of defending and preserving Saudi oil facilities is enormous. As indicated in CSIS's recent study, *The Critical Link: Energy and National Security*, Saudi Arabia covers an area about the size of the United States east of the Mississippi. The oil fields and facilities along the Persian Gulf are spread over an area of 70,000 square miles, and the important new facilities on the Red Sea present an additional defense responsibility. There are 14 Saudi oil fields, half lying offshore; 775 active wells; 2,800 miles of pipeline; 4 oil terminals and 7 offshore loading platforms; and 3 refineries. The gas-oil separation plants and water treatment equipment present especially vulnerable facilities, which serve a multiplicity of wells.

I cite the following passage from *The Critical Link* in this regard:

The necessary conclusion is that going to war over oil would be far more perilous to the West than undergoing the economic disruption that would be created by a suspension of Saudi oil exports to Europe and Japan. While helping Saudi Arabia to build up its military defenses and increasing the allies' capability to reach the Middle East rapidly, the United States must regard such measures as solely deterrent. Under no circumstances would an open battle between the United States and the Soviet Union or the United States and any regional forces help to preserve the flow of oil. It would immediately halt exports and probably do enough damage to the logistical network to halt production for several years thereafter. In short, there is no military solution to the problem of securing oil supplies.

Ultimately the security of the oil fields' must be treated as a political, not a military problem. The external and internal threats to oil operations are a function of the political instability of the entire Persian Gulf. Thus the United States must assume that while military actions, both preventive and reactive, help defend the territory or the regimes of the Persian Gulf against external threats, conventional defenses may not be able to keep the logistical system intact or restore exports to the West.²

The development and commitment of U.S. forces to the defense of Saudi Arabia against outside aggression must be justified as a deterrent strategy, for those forces are incapable of fulfilling a preemptive or reactive strategy against a determined aggressor except at the cost of the very facilities they are designed to protect. Nonetheless, the perception of U.S. obligations and

interests beyond oil is sufficiently strong among the U.S. electorate (as well as among unfriendly governments) that the prospect of U.S. intervention to defend the kingdom's borders is credible. Therefore, barring irrational Iranian attack, this credibility lowers the risk of outside aggression from any direction considerably below the threat of a revolution or military coup from within the kingdom.

In making this distinction, I would not deny the likelihood that foreign powers will provide aid and comfort for conspirators within the kingdom, but its covert nature will greatly compound the dilemma encountered in dealing with overt aggression. In other words the perception of U.S. obligations and interests that made military intervention a difficult but credible choice in the case of external attack is much less prevalent in the case of internal upheaval. Its viability as either a preemptive or reactive strategy is reduced by an interaction of problems of operational timing with problems of political will. Except in the unlikely event of a long drawn-out revolution by elements of the civilian population, the possibility of mounting a preemptive strike to secure the oil facilities runs afoul of inadequate intelligence about the internal security situation in a tightly closed society, inadequate deployment capability in a region hostile to foreign bases, and inadequate domestic political support for military intervention except in the most clear-cut cases. Therefore the policy options will have bypassed the preemptive stage before a decision can be made.

At the reactive stage, the operational and political problems become even more difficult because the continuing need for U.S. intervention means that the forces of insurrection will have probably gained control over some oil facilities and personnel, received some foreign recognition, and flooded the foreign media with accusations of corruption and venality of the old regime. Just imagine the pressures on a U.S. president to avoid intervention: the friends and relatives of 50,000 potentially hostage Americans now residing in the kingdom; the chief executive officers of U.S. banks and companies with massive investments or claims on the kingdom; the leaders of allies dependent on Saudi oil supplies; the leaders of Third World countries whose solvency lies at the end of a financial chain originating in the kingdom; and, perhaps most important, the parents of millions of draft-age children. At this point it seems inevitable that policymakers will start searching for signs that the United States could live with a new regime. Some will detect anticommunism in Islamic commitment. Many will find the prospect of reform in the midst of alleged corruption. Others will argue that a more broadly based regime will be more willing to exercise its financial clout to facilitate a peaceful resolution of the Palestinian problem. And perhaps most will fall back on the conventional wisdom that it does not matter who controls the oil because any government must rely on the West to turn black gold into yellow gold. If you doubt this pessimistic forecast, ask why neither

the United States nor Britain intervened in Libya in 1969. It was not the strength of the coup makers, a captain and a handful of lieutenants with their pockets stuffed with sand to simulate ammunition. It was not a lack of intervention capability, for Britain had enough troops and equipment prepositioned at El Adem to take quick control of Dyrenaica, and the United States had the largest air base outside the continental United States at Tripoli, which could have rapidly received men and equipment from Germany. Nor was it a lack of treaty obligation, for both the United States and Britain had defense treaties, and Britain's even contained a secret commitment to preservation of the kingdom. No; it was a lack of political will in a situation where the potential costs of intervention were far less than those surrounding Saudi oil relationships thirteen years later.

If military intervention is not a credible guarantee of internal political stability, we must look at the viability of other strategies. The United States is helping to build the Saudi's own internal security and defense capabilities; however, the presence of U.S. forces, the development of an infrastructure to receive U.S. support, the raising of professional military expectations, and the sale of U.S. equipment may add to the internal security pressures within the kingdom. Recall that Britain entered into an agreement with King Idris to sell Libya a comprehensive air defense system in 1968. Like a more recent sale to Saudi Arabia, it was in its day the most expensive arms transaction ever, involving the transfer of state-of-the-art radar and communications capabilities. It had all the right justifications: substitution of technology for unavailable manpower, avoidance of coup-prone ground forces, and co-optation of senior officers who enjoyed sales commissions. But the junior officers saw it as the very embodiment of their country's ills: an effort to sow dissension within the Arab and Moslem world, a diversion of military funds from the battle to liberate Palestine, a dragging of Libya into super-power conflicts, an effort to recycle petroleum payments, a contribution to corruption, an underpinning of incompetent senior officers, and a perpetuation of foreign military presence. This arms transaction brought their grievances to a head and may even have set the date for the coup because Qaddafi, learning that a group of junior officers who supported the conspiracy were scheduled to leave September 2 for a year's training in Britain, moved on September 1.

In my judgment, there is little that the United States can do to contribute to Saudi internal security. Therefore I believe it has no choice but to rely on the shrewd leaders of the House of Saud to pursue policies that will perpetuate their own rule and thus Saudi stability. The corollary of this policy choice is that the United States must stop pressuring the Saudis with respect to oil policy, diplomatic initiatives, and military links. At a minimum, it must establish priorities instead of seeking too much in the name of cooperation. In other words, it must establish a coordinated policy

instead of allowing each government department and private interest group to pursue its parochial interests. In doing this, however, we must recognize that this stance does not bode well for a continued oil glut and declining prices.

Like every other prominent nation in the world, Saudi Arabia is faced with a plethora of threats, challenges, and opportunities that require response. Unlike any other prominent nation, the kingdom has only one visible or meaningful instrument for response: its oil policy. Therefore the monarchy is faced with extraordinarily difficult choices between long-term, global considerations and often-conflicting immediate or specific concerns.

Many U.S. econometricians and global strategists urge Saudi decision makers to maintain high production and allow prices to fall in order to preserve long-term demand for its enormous oil reserves from fuel switching, synthetics, and conservation, protect its overseas investments against excessive inflation and monetary instability, and ensure U.S. support against possible future Soviet designs. But many Arab politicians and regional strategists urge those same decision makers to reduce production and allow prices to increase with the goals of stemming the rising tide of Islamic militancy and Shiite assertiveness, which seek to subvert Arab regimes in the Gulf; walking a delicate tightrope in supporting once-threatening Iraq without incurring retaliatory attack by now threatening Iran; avoiding the radicalization of the Palestinians, which could lead to terrorism, sabotage, and subversion; disputing the contention that the monarchy is overly responsive to U.S. oil, economic, and strategic interests and insufficiently demanding of support for Arab interests; and offering the Soviets some prospect of accommodation so that they curb the subversion to the Arab clients.

Although no outsider has access to the deliberations of Saudi Arabia's Supreme Petroleum Council, we know that skilled, Western-trained Saudi technocrats are able to provide a complete range of economic, financial, and technical inputs: state-of-the-art econometric projections of world oil demand, highly sophisticated models of reservoir performance, a complete range of budget forecasts, and all of the other trappings of a computerized world. But although these mechanical inputs undoubtedly play some role, we are mistaken to assume that they will dictate the results as they might in too many Western economies, which are governed by computers rather than by people.

There is no doubt that Saudi decisions are made by men: the senior princes of the royal family who fully recognize that all of the kingdom's opportunities and challenges stem from its oil wealth. They may weigh the econometric data, but by instinct, training, and shrewd ability, the princes are inclined to give greater weight to political—even family or personal—considerations. Moreover, as leaders of a country thrust onto the center of the world stage before there was time to establish legitimacy, to evolve new

institutions, to develop skilled manpower, or to create a sense of nationhood, they appreciate that they must give priority to the kingdom's immediate problems before they concern themselves with a hypothetical future world when oil runs out or consumers accomplish a complete switch to other forms of energy.

An analysis of the principal Saudi oil policy decisions over the past decade indicates that these immediate, Saudi-specific political pressures are a much more instructive guide to Saudi thinking than the long-term, global economic considerations—protecting dollar investments, limiting world inflation, undermining fuel switching, and so on—on which it is currently fashionable for Western analysts to focus. In fact, with consistent economic perversity, the Saudis have been just as willing to raise prices when demand was weak due to global inflation and recession as they have been willing—albeit only temporarily—to hold prices when demand was stronger and the world economy relatively more healthy as long as the moves were necessary to stave off political pressures.

Even the more recent past provides no different signals. In fact, contrary to Western speculation, Saudi willingness to maintain high production rates and relatively stable prices through 1981 was not the start of a new long-term orientation toward econometrics but rather reflected a continuation of the traditional preoccupation with politics during a unique and transient situation when high Saudi rates and stable prices served to fend off regional pressures. It rose directly out of the Iraq-Iran war, which initially terminated Iraqi oil exports and later limited them to what could be moved by pipelines to the Mediterranean. Long fearful of Iraq's revolutionary philosophy and vastly more powerful military capability, the Saudis promptly moved to earn some indebtedness from Baghdad. They increased production and effectively turned the additional revenues over to the Iraqi war efforts, perhaps to be repaid in oil at some future date. Although the total amount of these loans is a closely held secret, it is thought to be at least \$15 billion, which represents the annual income on about 1.5 million b/d, almost precisely the amount by which 1981 Saudi production (9.8 million b/d average) exceeded the usual target ceiling of 8.5 million b/d. But Saudi oil policy did more than strengthen Iraq, for its willingness to price oil at below the price of competitors served to gain market share and limit price increases at the expense of the OPEC superhawks, Iran and Libya, which are openly committed to the overthrow of the House of Saud and are now vulnerable because their alliance against Iraq has isolated them from the Arab states of the Gulf.

Nor is this ordering of priorities likely to change in the foreseeable future, especially when the young technocrats are fully aware of the abandonment of synthetic fuel projects, the decline of exploration efforts, the growing hostility to nuclear power, the revival of interest in large cars, the

barriers to world coal trade, and all of the problems that guarantee for oil a long and profitable future. In fact, the technocrats know better that to try, and it was precisely their preference for reduced production that prompted Sahikh Yamani to present the much-cited, if unsupported, argument for taking the long-term view at the University of Petroleum and Minerals in Dhahran in January 1981. Faced with accusations that high production rates served only the interest of the United States, he simply had to concoct some argument as to why that policy was in Saudi self-interest. He almost certainly did not succeed in convincing the Saudi technocrats, but he provided American wishful thinkers with just what they wanted to hear.

Moreover, the recent weakening of the econometric considerations has been accompanied by a strengthening of the petropolitical considerations as the Saudis observe increasingly aggressive and intransigent neighbors on two fronts. The Saudi monarchy would indeed be unique in the history of world governments if it could bar immediate and specific demands from superseding longterm or global goals. No government can avoid the demands of crisis management. Therefore, it is inconceivable that the Saud family will not place these security threats to their own immediate survival far ahead of somewhat dubious economic threats to the country's long-term well-being.

In facing these domestic, regional, and international threats, the Saudis probably will resume the cautious policies that have served them so well in the past. Domestically, they will seek economic development without social disruption; regionally, they will seek recognition without resentment; and internationally, they will seek superpower influence without identification or involvement. From the Saudi perspective, their recent oil policies have not struck those difficult balances very well. The attackers on the Great Mosque complained that rapid economic development was corrupting the social, religious, and cultural identity of the Saudi people. Iran, the most powerful regional nation, has vociferously protested Saudi pricing policies and expansion of market share, calling for a reduction of Saudi exports to 4 million b/d. In the international context, high production and stable prices have identified the kingdom with the United States but produced insufficient influence to restrain Israel.

As a result of these perceived failures of Saudi oil policy, the number of voices within the kingdom calling for a different balance in oil policies is growing. Indeed it must be exceedingly difficult for a Saudi to fault the contention that change might help to mollify the most immediate threats. Most assuredly the Iranians do not want to perpetuate price cutting and will almost certainly seize the first opportunity to overcompensate themselves for past discounts. For their part, the Palestinians would applaud anything that discomforts the United States. Even the Soviets would welcome an

increase in world oil prices, which would raise desperately needed hard currency revenues from their oil exports.

In summary, it seems highly likely that the Saudis will gradually reduce oil production and allow prices to increase. If that prospect is alarming, oil consumers might well remind themselves that such use of oil policy may well be the only way to defuse political pressures before they explode in disruptive fashion. Such an explosion would also reduce production and raise prices, but in a far less gradual fashion.

This change in oil policy—whether gradual or through abrupt change of family leadership—seems to me the most likely threat to oil supplies in the 1980s. If so, the only strategy for assuring access to energy supplies is for the United States to rededicate itself to development of domestic energy resources, especially its immense natural gas reserves, which can provide an immediate and price competitive alternative to imported oil. The politics of deregulating natural gas will not be easy, but if there is a critical link between energy and national security, then duty requires that the nation face the challenge.

Notes

1. Christopher Tugenhat, "Why Threats to Oil No Longer Cause Alarm," *Financial Times*, May 23, 1967.
2. Charles K. Ebinger, *The Critical Link: Energy and National Security in the 1980s* (Cambridge, Mass.: Ballinger Publishing Co., 1982), p. 170.

Part XI
Strategic Responses: Oceans
and Space



TREE *of* LIBERTY SOCIETY

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U.S. Maritime Responses in the 1980s

Alvin J. Cottrell

The United States must tailor its ocean naval strategy for various oceans according to their particular political development and the threats to the U.S. interests that emanate from them. Accordingly, this chapter examines ocean strategies in the five Third World oceans.

Northwest Quadrant of the Indian Ocean

Although the Soviets have large air and naval forces close to the Middle East and have shown an inclination to use them in their invasion of Afghanistan, it is unlikely that they will soon risk a direct military invasion of the Gulf region. They are fully aware that the West has vital interests in the Persian Gulf area and cannot predict the exact nature of a Western response to overt aggression. Thus they have traditionally opted for more indirect and ambiguous methods of operation; they would certainly prefer to manipulate their way to the Gulf and the Indian Ocean rather than march there. The main threat is thus not one of a Soviet direct thrust to the South but one of political instability or erosion of pro-Western political stability. When the shah ruled in Tehran, the problem for U.S. naval forces was one of undergirding political stability, but with the fall of the shah it became one of reversing erosion of political stability, a much more difficult task than just signaling support for political stability.

The United States now talks of a rapid deployment force (RDF) to support its naval deployments. Quite possibly the United States needs such a force because U.S. presence is often inadequate in the first place. The RDF must be, at a minimum, large enough to prevent the United States from confronting a *fait accompli* in the Persian Gulf–Arabian Peninsula area. The force must be sizable enough to raise the cost to the Soviets or their clients of adventurism in the area. Most of all, the RDF should serve as a peacetime deterrent to potential enemies, reassuring U.S. friends on the Arabian Peninsula. It is also essential that U.S. forces, whatever their size, be capable of moving into position before Soviet or other hostile forces arrive. These troops must be able to get there first and force, if necessary, on the Soviets the risks of ousting them rather than always finding themselves where the United States must remove hostile forces. The forces first in

position will almost always have an advantage because the opposite side will have to assume the risks associated with escalating the conflict. The RDF is certainly the right concept because the danger to U.S. interests here is political instability and the RDF will help the United States to aid allies during crises.

The United States needs to rebuild its naval forces and basing infrastructure in this area as it is doing in Kenya, Somalia, and Oman. It is still some distance from these goals. But it can deter the threat of political deterioration only by a widely acknowledged and determined effort to show that it is serious about grappling with the problem. Only in that way will U.S. credibility, as it is perceived by both friends and adversaries in the Persian Gulf area, improve. The diminished U.S. credibility on the Arabian Peninsula has improved due largely to its large naval deployment, logistics acquisitions, basing infrastructure, and the RDF concept.

The United States is not yet fully capable of defeating the unlikely eventuality of a Soviet thrust in the Gulf, but this is not the most likely contingency. The improvement of U.S. military credibility in areas has helped to promote local political stability and inhibit disorder, which could lead to the loss of access to the area's vital petroleum resources. At present the United States has thirteen prepositioned ships at Diego Garcia. By 1985 this force will be enlarged to sustain three marine brigades for a period of thirty days. This prepositioning will permit the United States to contend with local sensitivities because it does not have to deploy military capabilities on foreign soil. For this purpose it is particularly congenial to the extremely sensitive political environment of the Persian Gulf—Arabian Sea area, particularly while the United States is in the opening stages of establishing a permanent presence in that area. Until the revolution in Iran, the appropriate military presence in the Persian Gulf was what it had been under the British: a maritime presence designed to undergird the political stability of friendly, pro-Western traditional rulers.

The political scene has now changed dramatically, and the U.S. naval response has had to be enlarged drastically in terms of basing infrastructure, prepositioning of supplies, an RDF, and military airfields or U.S. aircraft in order to appear credible to local regimes. This situation has been necessary because of the failure of the United States to provide a more stabilizing naval presence during the 1970s. Now the problem is one of halting political erosion among the Gulf states rather than reinforcing existing political stability by maintaining a permanent adequate naval presence in the area as an indication of strategic commitment. Larger efforts are always required to reverse momentum than to support a relatively stable situation. Further, the shift in the geopolitical environment has been such that a permanent U.S. naval presence will be required simply to offset the political-military changes that have taken place on the littoral regardless of the balance at sea.

Caribbean Basin

The U.S. position regarding the Caribbean basin became a responsibility in a way similar to the way in which the Persian Gulf became a British responsibility.¹ The security aspects of the area, however, were heightened by the revolution which saw Castro forces take over in the basin during 1959. Today the Caribbean basin has become an unstable area. Although this area may be in less immediate danger than the Persian Gulf area, the potential in the region's unstable conditions for external interference and widescale violence makes the region a focal point of attention for U.S. policymakers.

What has changed is not so much the region's geography as its politics. The case of Grenada shows how changes on land could have an impact on the requirements for naval forces. Grenada's location alongside a key maritime transit route raised little concern. The change in political leadership on the island brought an anti-U.S. regime to power. Only then did U.S. policymakers see a potential threat to vital U.S. shipping. Given the possibilities for broad violence throughout the Caribbean, there is adequate evidence for the United States to apply the lessons learned from the Grenada experience. Many of the problems stem from the domestic situation, characterized by poverty, underemployment, and corruption.

The domestic situation in many Caribbean countries is ripe for exploitation. It would most likely be only as a result of such a serious contingency as a conflict in Europe that hostile forces might confront the United States in the Caribbean.

Today and in the foreseeable future, the region remains in turmoil. Central America faces a continuing demonstration of profound political instability, an environment emphasizing the search for new forms of institutional arrangements. With perhaps the exception of Costa Rica, existing political structures are not so much weak as they are archaic. With the current degree of political violence and the trends toward violent regime change, Central American governments and institutions appear to operate within very narrow political margins.

On the other hand, it can be argued that the Caribbean islands as a whole are facing a problem of a different sort: how to try to arrest decay in established democratic and parliamentary infrastructures created during a recent colonial experience. In most of the Commonwealth Caribbean and the Dominican Republic, even Puerto Rico, the issue is the maintenance or even the strengthening of these polities. There are two major exceptions to this model: Cuba and Haiti.

In the case of Cuba, Soviet strategic, economic, and political support greatly alters the calculations of U.S. security initiatives in the Caribbean. Although Castro's foreign policy cannot be viewed as entirely subservient to that of Moscow, it would be gravely mistaken to think of Havana as an

independent or even semiautonomous actor. Furthermore, Cuba's emergence as a major actor in Third World politics in the 1970s and 1980s has had and will continue to have continued ramifications for the development of appropriate U.S. defense strategies.

Within this context, the U.S. Navy has been assigned the nebulous task of ensuring an effective U.S. presence, in conjunction with U.S. defense objectives, to support and in fact enforce an environment of stability and to arrest and in fact reverse a process of both sociopolitical *and* security erosion throughout the region. For the naval mission to be effective, the relationship between power and sea- and land-based developments is critical. There can be no doubt about the psychological effect of naval *presence* as a symbol of U.S. *interests* and the military and political effects of the direct use of naval *power* as a gauge of U.S. commitment in the region. But these effects reflect greatly differing, albeit interacting, naval-political missions.

There are some nagging questions about whether intermittent naval presence can enforce an environment of stability in both the Caribbean islands and the littoral states. There are also some concerns regarding the flexibility of Caribbean naval force deployment. And there are major doubts that a policy of naval presence is a secure tool to achieve the objectives implied by a diplomacy that not only seeks to reverse the erosion of U.S. security but also the erosion of political-economic stability throughout the region. In addressing the actual mission of U.S. naval power in the Caribbean basin, these broad political components cannot be ignored.

The littoral of the Caribbean is vital because the Caribbean sea-lanes are very important oil routes. Most of the oil coming into the United States transits the Caribbean, and the Panama-Cuba-Soviet axis running through there places the Soviet Union in a position to interdict the commerce inbound into the United States. The Soviets have established a large embassy in Panama and have added more fishing craft to those already deployed there. They are flying supplies direct from Moscow to Nicaragua, which will enable them to infiltrate El Salvador and Guatemala, areas where heavily laden supertankers, whose cargo of crude is destined for the United States, must halt and unload to smaller vessels because no U.S. ports can handle the large oil transports. According to the Caribbean Joint Task Force in Key West, this transshipment of oil accounts for 30 percent of the petroleum transiting the Caribbean.

Oil shipment is not the only important facet of this problem. Some Caribbean nations and littoral states are large oil producers. The United States currently receives 11 percent of its oil imports from them. In the Caribbean, the United States is now trying to react to Soviet-promoted instability. A U.S. naval presence is as important as it is in the Persian Gulf. The United States must not abandon its two Caribbean naval bases at Roosevelt Roads and Guantanamo. Although these bases are primarily

training sites, withdrawal would signal abandonment to local leaders. The navy's responsibility must be largely one of supporting U.S. political, economic, and diplomatic efforts in the region. The nature of the threat to U.S. interests in the region is not a military one but one of domestic violence resulting from deep economic problems that threaten the political stability of states of the littoral of the basin. Thus, the U.S. Navy can have only a secondary or supporting role.

The present commander of the Atlantic Fleet has perhaps done all he can with the navy. He has made a concerted effort to give the U.S. Navy a prominent presence in the area; for example, he has held two major exercises in the Caribbean basin region. U.S. ships had made 125 visits to 29 islands in 27 Caribbean countries by the end of 1980. In August 1981 he held the large Ocean Venture Exercise there. Admiral Henry Train's policy has been to bring every vessel near the area into the basin to maintain a strong local perception of the U.S. naval presence there.

Since the turn of the century, the United States has dominated the Caribbean area politically, economically, and militarily—to the point where most people have considered the region a nearly exclusive U.S. preserve. Thus far, the military predominance has been primarily naval power. This perception must not change, else there may be shifts in the political balance of the Caribbean littoral.

Mediterranean Basin

The Mediterranean Sea links three continents and two oceans and consequently represents one of the most strategic waterways in the world. More than 2,500 ships ply its million square miles or rest in one of its countless ports almost daily. It is surrounded by about 7,000 miles of littoral controlled by a great diversity of nations. It is, perhaps, one of the most heavily militarized maritime areas on the globe. The navies of at least fifteen countries, including the United States and the Soviet Union operate in it.

Perhaps the first real use of a U.S. naval presence in the Mediterranean was when it was initiated with the projection of U.S. power as symbolized by the mission of the battleship *Missouri*. The Turkish ambassador died in November 1944 in the United States, and two years later, in March 1946, when the cold war had already begun, it was decided to send his remains home on what was then the greatest symbol of U.S. naval power, the battleship *Missouri*, which shortly before had seen General MacArthur sign the peace treaty with Japan on its deck.² At the time, the Turks were in confrontation with the Soviets who were trying to gain back the provinces of Kars and Ardahan and also a right to fortify the Dardanelles. The mission of the *Missouri* was designed to show the Soviets that the United States stood

behind the Turks in their dispute with the Soviets and was willing to project its power a great distance to prove it. The *Missouri's* trip to Turkey was the genesis of the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean.

The U.S. naval presence in the Mediterranean actually antedates that of the Soviet Union. Although the presence was drastically reduced after World War II, U.S. naval activities assumed a major role after the enunciation of the Truman Doctrine in 1947. In fact, the aid bill for Greece and Turkey in the spring of 1947 was closely related to a fairly large-scale U.S. naval visit to Greek ports. Mediterranean operations in 1948 were formally assigned to the Sixth Task Force Fleet, which subsequently became the Sixth Fleet. Over the years, the Sixth Fleet has been maintained at a relatively steady level of some forty ships, which include two attack aircraft carriers and escorting units, Polaris-armed nuclear submarines, an amphibious task force with some 1,800 marines (currently dispatched to Lebanese waters), and a supporting service force. In other words, the force has consisted of two carrier battle groups or about forty ships in all.

The force has worked rather well. It has carried out the mission of undergirding stability throughout the area. In the eastern Mediterranean, it put a marine force ashore in 1958 to stabilize the situation in Lebanon ravaged by civil strife and again in 1982 to deal with overseeing the withdrawal of PLO guerrillas from their long-time haven in that country. Still, there is no denying that the U.S. position has rapidly worsened over the years. Chances that the United States will ever regain anything resembling its former predominance are unlikely. The United States still has varying degrees of influence in Spain, Morocco, and Tunisia, and it retains a close tie with some NATO and southern flank allies, although its position will hardly ever be the same again either politically or militarily with Greece. Another indication of the changing political environment around the Mediterranean can be seen in the sharp drop in the number of ports of call available to U.S. vessels. The Soviet Union has already achieved superpower status in the Mediterranean. It has banked heavily on the political utility of its naval forces and has achieved considerable success in neutralizing the military image and thus the political influence of the Sixth Fleet in the eyes of a number of riparian states.

A prudent military planner contemplating the Mediterranean environment for U.S. strategy and policy in the future must consider the contingency of a likely operation context that will call for the exercise of naval presence—but a naval presence that may be increasingly independent of a hard regional base structure. The Mediterranean has become a two-power sea. Since the mid-1960s, the Soviet Union has been consistently increasing its presence in the region, particularly in the sea's eastern basin. In recent years, the Soviets have usually kept about forty ships in the region, most of which came from the Black Sea fleet. Soviet naval forces show the flag in

numerous ports along the Mediterranean littoral, and the number of anchorages available to Soviet vessels has increased considerably.

The number of Soviet vessels increased from about eight in 1964 to a peak of some seventy in 1967 after the Arab-Israeli conflict in June of that year.³ The period of operational deployment of Soviet vessels was considerably expanded as well. From some 3,000 ship-days that the USSR spent in the Mediterranean in 1964, the number of ship-days of operation rose rapidly to some 18,000 in the 1970s. The Six Day War marked a definite turning point in the Soviet naval presence in the Mediterranean, which is usually composed of ten to fifteen principal combatants such as cruisers and destroyers, approximately ten submarines, a variety of amphibious ships, ancillary craft, and intelligence gatherers. In addition, at least one of the two helicopter carriers, the *Moskva* and the *Leningrad*, spends half its time in the Mediterranean. Although the Soviet Union deploys generally forty to forty-five ships in the Middle East area, as large a number of U.S. ships in that region, numbers alone do not convey an accurate picture. The U.S. Sixth Fleet normally consists of some forty to forty-five ships, including two aircraft carriers with eighty-five to ninety-five aircraft each and one helicopter carrier with an 1,800-man marine force.⁴

Western Pacific Basin

Currently the United States is confronted in the Western Pacific with a situation in which the major characteristics have been described as fragility and fluidity.⁵ The stakes for the United States and its allies in East Asia are high; the United States can ignore problems in the area only at its own risk. From the point of view of the U.S. Navy, geopolitical developments in the western Pacific region are vital because they will have much influence on the mission of the Seventh Fleet. The nature of U.S. interests in the western Pacific and East Asia is not dissimilar from U.S. interests elsewhere. The interests include political stability and nonviolent change in the region. Certainly U.S. facilities in the Philippines will play a key role as they have in the past securing for the United States and its allies free access to raw material, sea-lane security and peaceful change in the region, unrestricted trade, and the promotion of democratic principles.

During the 1970s, many believed that the United States would be able to reduce its need for bases, especially among those questioning the U.S. global role. There was a decline in the size of the U.S. surface navy precisely at the time when the political problems of the United States in dealing with East were increasing. The diminished level of naval forces will complicate relations with foreign governments from whom we must seek enhanced or additional facilities to compensate for the inadequacies of our naval budget.

Without the requisite ships for deployment, the United States must gain forward basing facilities to maintain the desired forward development.

Nowhere else in the world is the U.S. naval policy of force projection more important than it is in Subic Bay, the Philippines. The United States would not be able to carry out its role in the Western Pacific without the Philippines bases. Nowhere else in the world does the United States have a more important basing facility than in the Philippines. It is vital because of the vast distances involved in projecting military force in both the Pacific Ocean and the Indian Ocean regions.

The Pacific security picture has been changing. The United States has portrayed vacillation on the retention of troops in South Korea, has moved from inconsistency in the use of a carrier task force for the Persian Gulf in 1979 to an apparent commitment of use naval forces in the Indian Ocean by 1980, and has abrogated its treaty commitments to Taiwan. Soviet expansion into the area has been symbolized by the use of the naval facilities at Cam Ranh Bay in Vietnam and the expansion of Soviet diplomatic activities in the area. The Philippine bases must be a major part of U.S. naval policy in the Western Pacific. They are vital because of their central location and because they represent the farthest forward outpost of U.S. military power. With its sheltered harbor and wonderful climate, Subic Bay has been a dream base for admirals for a long time. It is not an exaggeration to say that this is the most important naval base the United States has in the world. Without Subic Bay, the United States would have to increase its fleet development. The normal classic ratio of ships is three to one deployed. The Philippine basing facilities allow a one to one ratio in ships deployed. Thus U.S. naval costs would increase tremendously without Subic Bay. In many respects, it is the U.S. Indian Ocean base.

If the U.S. Navy were forced to leave the Philippines, it would be difficult to find a comparable alternative to contingencies in the region. How the U.S. balances its need for continued access to Subic Bay with other foreign policy guidelines in the Philippines will be a very difficult problem. Without that facility, the United States would be effectively out of Asia as far as influence is concerned.

South Atlantic and Cape Route

The location of Southern Africa at the juncture of two oceans has linked political and strategic developments of that area to events elsewhere.⁶ However, few of the issues in this region lend themselves readily to the influence of naval power. This is especially true of the growing conflict over South Africa.

The Republic of South Africa has been referred to as a "Persian Gulf of Minerals." Still, although the region's stakes are high, they are not immedi-

ately threatened. Thus the geopolitical issues of the region argue against a large U.S. naval presence in the area at this time.

Some of the tasks of U.S. naval forces in this area would be protection of U.S. property, evacuation of U.S. personnel, resupply of friendly governments, patrol and escort for Western shipping or shore bombardment, or the interpositioning of ships to prevent intervention by another external power.

The Soviets have been seeking the economic and political penetration of Africa extensively since 1967. The pattern of Soviet naval expansion is obviously following the principal sea routes from the Persian Gulf to the Cape of Good Hope to Western ports. These are routes over which transit 80 percent of the world's oil supplies and 70 percent of the nonfuel minerals of NATO countries. Changes in the political ways at the inception of the Cape Sea route in the Persian Gulf–Arabian Sea area are already beginning to threaten what has heretofore been an uncontested Western control and domination of the sea-lanes of this critical region. The Soviet fleet has been very active in this, promoting Moscow's political and economic policies through port visits showing the Soviet flag. The United States must continue to do the same.

The increasing Soviet political and military presence in the region is changing the perception of credibility so long enjoyed by first Britain and, more recently, the United States. Increasingly along the Cape sea route, the United States is having to react to the erosion of political stability rather than providing the foundations for undergirding a regional stability that has existed over the last century and a half. Great conflicts such as the one looming over South Africa would disrupt the maritime traffic around the Cape route and are not susceptible to naval power at this time, but over a period of time, they could lead to superpower confrontation at sea.

Despite a fairly low profile, however, significant advances have been made by the Soviet Union around the Cape route. The strategy has a twin objective: denial of the sea to Western nations in order to deny raw materials and energy fuels and thus a weakening of the Western economic fabric and, consequently, political resolve. The motive behind the Soviets' low profile in the area is that they are operating far from traditional areas in the Pacific, Baltic, Black Sea, and the Northern Fleet where they are fully extended. At this stage, they do not want to push other rivals to the point where they would have to increase their presence to the detriment of their fleet in other areas.

Conclusion

The Soviet Union's accelerating offensive in Southern Africa mirrors sharply Moscow's appreciation of the economic and strategic factors that indicate the lines of conflict for the 1990s. The major conflict in this area is likely to be

a resource war, which is going on now. This war involves an increasing political erosion of what had once been a predominantly pro-Western littoral around Africa. This pro-Western littoral has been broken at many points by the Soviet naval activity around it. The major thrusts of the Soviet drive have emerged in bolder relief with Moscow's heavy investment in Angola. Moscow's initiatives and activities in Southern Africa as well as its broader political views and concepts trace the following objectives.

1. To implant Soviet political and economic influence in key countries in Southern Africa. Here Moscow's objectives are to encourage anti-Western policies and gain operation footholds for the expansion of its influence into neighboring countries and territories, largely through supporting specific liberation movements and guerrilla forces.
2. To encourage the establishment of Marxist-oriented regimes in countries commanding major terminal points of Southern Africa's internal lines of communication, notably in Angola and Mozambique. These countries not only are profitable targets themselves but also represent key vantage points for pressures on nations that are landlocked or dependent on neighboring states' transportation links, such as Zambia and Zaire, to fall in line with the militant nations that are emerging as proxies, willing or not, of Soviet designs in Southern Africa.
3. To expand the Soviet military presence along the rimlands of the continent through gaining access to key port facilities and air bases.
4. By dint of such access to ports and the potential dominance of adjacent sea-lanes, to put the Soviet Union eventually into the position of being able to dominate the lifelines of raw materials supplies from and around Africa to the independent industrialized nations. Soviet strategic aims are clearly manifested in its instigation of unrest throughout the world in countries rich in energy and mineral resources and where geographic choke points are located on key routes.

The projection of the world situation of the 1980s and 1990s argues in general for the future primacy of a naval policy in U.S. strategy. This is particularly true since the United States is an island power and must project itself primarily with naval power, given the political constraints that greatly inhibit the projection of other types of military power. It argues in particular for a U.S. maritime strategy in an era of continued détente with the Soviets and for the effective instruments of such a strategy that can be flexibly applied in regions of the world where the issues of power and political influence will hang in the balance.

The hard facts of global geography will make naval forces increasingly the key service capable of projecting U.S. influence abroad, given the political environment for the future. This will have to be achieved largely

from bases or facilities on the coasts of the United States, with recourse to only a limited number of facilities abroad. The future of conflict will be trying to shift the political balance of the littoral away from the West. The future of conflict could be brought about by a shift in the political balance of the littoral, which could make U.S. access difficult to maintain. This shift has taken place subtly over the last decade.

Notes

1. Michael Moodie and Alvin J. Cottrell, *Geopolitics and Maritime Power* (Berkeley: Sage, 1981), p. 47.

2. Barry M. Blechman and Stephen S. Kaplan, *The Use of Armed Force as a Political Instrument: An Executive Summary*, (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1978), p. 1.

3. Alvin J. Cottrell and Wynfred Joshua, "United States-Soviet Strategic Balance" in *Defense Year Book, 1974* (London: Brassey's Defense Publishers, 1974), p. 91.

4. Edward N. Luttwak and Robert G. Weinland, *Sea Power in the Mediterranean: Political Utility and Military Constraints* (Berkeley: Sage, 1979), p. 68.

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6. *Ibid.*, p. 33.

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U.S. Naval Strategy: Geopolitical Needs and the Soviet Maritime Challenge

Michael Vlahos

The naval leaders who emerged to direct the interwar U.S. navy have been called "the true sons of Mahan." Today's admirals have again reasserted the larger geopolitical imperatives articulated by Mahan, reinforced and underscored by the political vision of the secretary of the navy. The world dynamics of Mahan, stripped of their pseudo-Darwinian complexion and fin-de-siècle romance, remain the central definition of U.S. Navy role and rationale. The U.S. Navy is the sinew of the system we have called the free world. Its ships and battle groups defend and extend the U.S. sphere.

Although U.S. strategic thought since 1945 has enshrined nuclear weapons and their systems as the foundation of world security, this assumption could never be measured. Theoretically U.S. strategic clout, arrayed within an untested and untestable doctrinal equation of deterrence, seemed the essential basis of systemic survival. But in the constant wrestling, jockeying, and buffeting of international confrontation, classic, conventional military and naval force, in application or in threat, has been the key ingredient. The security of the U.S. sphere has been sustained by the demonstrable and inarguable conventional capability of U.S. arms. The recent testimony of those involved in the Cuban missile crisis has reinforced the judgment that superior U.S. conventional capability, particularly naval strength, was the critical, final weight that tipped the balance.

Because the United States is a continental power surrounded by ocean, its earliest strategists, beginning with Alexander Hamilton, recognized credible naval strength as the essential fulcrum of defense policy. In harnessing the limits of an expanding technology, the United States has been able, throughout its history, to create the means of concentrating and projecting power in pursuit of U.S. interests. The most effective vessel for this translation has been naval.

The intense and effective air force campaign for the strategic bomber tended to distract U.S. strategists from the utility of naval force after 1945. In the postwar environment, the navy was forced to create its own competing atomic system: the supercarrier.

The Korean conflict again underscored the efficiency of conventional carrier airpower in strikes against the shore. Although the evolution of the CVA (nuclear-powered carrier) in the late 1950s focused on strategic nu-

clear strike, the dual capability of navy air was demonstrated forcefully in Vietnam. The CVA was proved to be a superb instrument of conventional force application.

In Vietnam, however, the image of the CVA battle group was transmogrified into a Victorian gunboat caricature. If the Polaris-Poseidon SSBNs sustained the navy's strategic nuclear mission, then what possible purpose could the big CVAs serve save that of intervention and imperialism in the Third World?

The navy responded to these accusations by projecting a new image. Like the army, even more damaged in Vietnam association, the navy sought a safe haven for its institutional role and an operational mission consonant with current domestic political consensus. Between 1975 and 1980, Europe and the tradition of the U.S. NATO commitment was the only overriding national interest able to sustain conventional defense spending. The navy was forced to cast about for justification not only for the Carrier Battle Group (CVBG) but for its centrality in a renewing U.S. strategic focus linked not to the littoral margins but to the heart of Europe.

In a war scenario driven by visions of armies and tactical air locked in deadly embrace, the navy's potential wartime role might be relegated to rear-area logistic patrol. The transport and convoy of critical reinforcement might be essential to victory but hardly memorable in its aftermath. There could be significant contribution at the margins, along what all agreed were vulnerable NATO flanks. But the big battles were expected in the air; the navy could take no part in these. Gone was the consensus for global mission. With the free world reduced to a parochial Atlantic, the navy was in danger of relegation to a patrol and escort force.

It was in this context that Bing West, among others, gave birth to institutional kennings—indirect metaphorical substitutions—to keep the navy politically alive. In the navy's Sea Plan 2000, which he helped author, the key kennings of the navy mission were to maintain stability, contain crisis, and deter global war. These code words argued for maintaining the navy's role: the defense of a transoceanic system not confined to single area lines of communication. Global stability might be maintained through credible yet superior naval presence. Crises might be brought to heel by the discreet yet superior application of this force. Finally, the capability of the navy to bring superior force to bear all along the rim of Eurasia, through airpower or amphibious lift, at times and with means of its choosing, would create the the sense of dissuasion among primary antagonists that is the essence of deterrence.

The navy in 1976 felt forced to make its message indirectly. Unable to buck the spirit of the age, in spite of careful kennings, Sea Plan 2000 was filed and forgotten. To add to its doctrinal woes, the navy of the 1970s confronted an accelerating materiel problem: block obsolescence of ships. By the hun-

dreds, ships dating back to World War II were sent down to scrap, and in the face of spiraling shipbuilding costs, replacement could not keep pace with retirement. To cap the navy's beleaguered state, the centerpiece of navy force planning, the large-deck carrier, became a target of attack in press and policy forum. The appearance of the cruise missile seemed to spell the death of the big carrier; it had made large surface ships irrelevant.

On three levels, then—policy, procurement, and potential performance—the navy in the mid-1970s was faced with institutional threats. It is ironic that an operational threat arrived to save it.

Admiral Sergei Gorshkov's fleet defined at last a real threat to U.S. interests at sea. U.S. naval leaders quickly realized that, faced with a measurable enemy, U.S. naval posture could be linked to the mirror capabilities of a potential threat. In order to justify increased appropriations, the navy could detach itself from a traditional Mahanian, or semi-imperial, linkage of geopolitical systems and naval power.

Gorshkov's concept of seapower produced both ships and operational doctrines that U.S. strategists could use to justify increased U.S. naval capability. Gorshkov served another purpose too. His manifesto, *The Seapower of the State*, described the political basis for Soviet oceanic means. Gorshov, by making a modernized socialist case for seapower as an agent of a state's world politics, reintroduced the geopolitical connection. He subtly recoupled the links of the Mahanian mission.

On the surface, the visible emergence of Soviet oceanic capability renewed the U.S. naval wartime mission as well. To counter increasing Soviet fleet and naval aviation reach on both the northern and southern flanks of NATO and in Northwest Asia, the offensive role of big U.S. carriers was rehabilitated. They were needed once again to contain the Soviet fleet. As new classes of Soviet submarines appeared, the submarine menace to the NATO SLOCs added drama to the navy's Atlantic antisubmarine warfare (ASW) role. Faced by the prospect of scores of Soviet ships moving into the convoy lanes beyond Newfoundland, the navy encouraged yet another rationale for increasing shipbuilding appropriations for frigates and fast escorts.

The navy might not have been satisfied solely with the new role offered by the growing Soviet fleet, but it could be sold to Congress. For in spite of the image of post-Vietnam contraction on the geopolitical stage, the navy's share of annual defense appropriations did not decline during the Carter years. By 1979, the navy had come to tie its programs, posture, and doctrine to the Soviet threat. Has the service limited its future role in national policy by cementing this association?

One limitation that has become increasingly apparent in public debate is the definition of the Soviet threat. The navy's success in securing its programs each year is contingent on a sufficiently frightening presentation of

the Soviet menace at sea. Assessment of Soviet capabilities and intentions is not simply a navy prerogative. By making its annual appropriation dependent on a convincing assessment of growing Soviet naval strength, the sincerity of the analysts and its varying assumption becomes suspect. This fuels the navy's congressional critics and makes the navy yet more vulnerable to a convincing counterassessment of the Soviet navy. This critique of the threat operates on three levels.

First, the Soviet fleet is not an offensive arms of Soviet strategy at all. On the contrary, its recent buildup is in large part a defensive-reactive response to the NATO-Western threat to the vulnerable flanks of the Soviet maritime periphery. The real and limited wartime missions of the Soviet navy will continue to be focused on protection of the SSBN force in the Barents-Greenland seas and the Sea of Okhotsk, support of combined operations on the flanks of Soviet continental (TVDs) theater of military operation in the Baltic and Black seas in a NATO war, and the Sea of Japan in a Sino-allied war, defense of Soviet littoral and critical coastal SLOCs the repulse of allied carrier battle groups operating near Soviet maritime margins, and maintenance of the Indian Ocean-China Seas SLOC to the Maritime Provinces in the face of a potential PRC submarine threat.

Second, the organization and training of the Soviet fleet, combined with inferior materiel and logistics support, has produced an armada that is impressive on paper but unready for sustained operations. Soviet naval readiness is at such a low level that only 5 to 10 percent of all Soviet warships are at sea. The figure for the U.S. Navy is around 30 percent. In the U.S. Navy, *command operationally ready* (COR) means that a ship can get underway, fully manned and equipped, within ninety-six hours. Today nearly 70 percent of the U.S. fleet is COR. For the Soviets, the percentage is several times smaller. It is argued beyond this that in wartime the Soviet fleet might be capable of a large prepared surge and yet be incapable of sustaining comparable groupings on distant stations. This is part of the CIA argument that the Northern Fleet, in spite of impressive numbers of submarines, does not have the capability to conduct a world war—style battle of the Atlantic.

Third, a defensive Soviet naval predisposition is reinforced by both a confining maritime geography and a potentially confining set of hostile maritime neighbors. The Soviet navy is divided into four basic groupings. Two of these fleets, in the Baltic and Black seas, are at the mercy of two straits and the attitudes of the states that hold them. The Northern and Pacific fleets are less constricted. Even there, however, Soviet battle groups must negotiate allied surveillance nets. The naval potential of NATO maritime states and Japan should not be underestimated. In seeking to break out into the open oceans, Soviet ships and submarines would run a terrible gauntlet. Antisubmarine patrolaircraft, diesel barrier subs, and land-based

strike aircraft based in Britain and Japan, if present in sufficient numbers, might well contain the Soviet fleet all alone.

These have been the arguments. The navy has responded with spirit. To counter critics of the Soviet threat thesis, it has been forced to inflate Soviet oceanic aspirations beyond Gorshkov's limited political objectives to a challenge of the U.S. fleet on the high seas.

World developments in 1979 helped to pull the navy away from such a narrow construction of its role. World security is under increasing strategic strain, and the navy represents the most efficient means of developing a global defense. There are three components to the displacement in world dynamics, and each constitutes an accelerating threat to the future of allied democracies.

First, the West has sustained both a relative and an absolute decline in military strength, especially since Vietnam. The resources and the sophistication of Third world arsenals, by contrast, have burgeoned. Not only is the West less capable; it is less deployable as well. The cold war mesh of over 150 allied bases worldwide has shrunk today to around 30. Some of the greatest of those projection nodes remaining, like Subic, are held on the sufferance of shaky local regimes. Others, like those in Spain, may soon be snatched away on the crest of an anti-U.S. electoral swell. Beyond this, allied contribution to Western defense outside the NATO-Japan treaty areas is becoming almost impossible to secure. U.S. intervention in defense of the free world is increasingly unilateral.

Second, the alliance structures that mirrored NATO and buttressed Western stability along the arc of containment have collapsed. The South-east Asia Treaty Organization went with Vietnam, and Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) with the fall of the shah. The United States now must seek bilateral, regional accommodations with local states and hope that some small likeness of mutual security might be arranged. In this context, Kenya, Oman, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia are momentary allies and might permit the United States to offer military support in a crisis. These arrangements illuminate the definition of alliance by their stark contrast. There are no regional treaties, no common defense pacts, no real commitments, and no real U.S. bases. To underscore this gathering insecurity, as U.S. ability to orchestrate regional security along the rimlands of Eurasia has declined, so the economic dependence of Europe and Japan on Persian Gulf petroleum has grown.

Third, if U.S. power projection and regional management abilities have decayed, the independent behavior and combativeness of Third World states has flourished. Some of these societies are becoming regional powers in both economic and military terms, and their national behavior is coming to reflect a search for international status and influence commensurate with

their sense of importance. One part of this quest for badges of rank is focused on nuclear weapons. Another concentrates on Third World collective action against the West in the delineation of a global politico-social agenda. The former threatens U.S. policies and forces directly. The latter may lead to coercive international blocs that may pose a deeper danger to the world. Already they speak of the New International Economic Order and employ exculpations such as the "Common Heritage of Mankind" and world income redistribution to justify the tributary policies they would impose on the United States and its allies. In recent history, OPEC proved its ransom leverage over the West. The Group of 77 may represent the embryo of future international groups inimical to the United States and U.S. interests.

In this fragmented future, the security, even the survival, of the West will be in jeopardy. The United States and Canada, European NATO, Japan and the Republic of Korea, Australia, Israel, and perhaps some scattered friendly states in the Third World, will be all that is left of that federation of associated states once called the free world. Of these, only the United States may be willing to undertake the common defense beyond the parochial horizons of allies. Without bases, without reserves, facing new enemies and hostile blocs possessed of the best and biggest of weapons, the practice of Western defense may come to resemble sleight of hand.

In this somber strategic context, usable, demonstrable global mobility forces are the keys to the West's survival. For the U.S. Navy, it is critical that this awareness penetrate service thinking. The navy is beginning to grope for an expanded global role borne not of political expediency but of pressing need. For the navy to succeed in structuring itself to become once again the shield of U.S. and allied defense, then it must break its mirror association to the Soviet threat. The Soviet navy is just part of the many strategic problems faced by the democratic league. The navy must not only recognize this; it must affirm the alternative recognition. The navy is the only service that can bring strike forces and mobile armies to bear in times of crisis, especially when local bases are either denied or destroyed. In other words, it is time for the navy to detach itself, as well as its role, from the simple mission of destroying the Soviet fleet. That alone is not enough; it can be only part of the navy's global task.

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High Frontier: A New National Strategy

Daniel O. Graham

The United States is faced with an opportunity to take its destiny into its own hands. Ominous military and economic trends throughout the world can be reversed, and confidence in the future of free political and economic systems can be restored. To accomplish this, the United States must take maximum advantage of its superiority in space technology. It can escape the brooding menace of balance of terror doctrines by deploying defensive systems in space.

The High Frontier objective is to formulate a national strategy option that would make maximum use of U.S. space technology to accomplish the following goals:

1. Nullify the present and growing threat to the United States and its allies posed by Soviet military power.
2. Replace the dangerous doctrine of mutual assured destruction (MAD) with a strategy of assured survival.
3. Provide both security and incentive for realizing the enormous industrial and commercial potential of space.

This objective must be met with recommendations that are militarily sound, technologically feasible, fiscally responsible, and politically practical.

Threat Imperative

The High Frontier effort has focused primarily on countering the determined efforts by the Soviet Union to establish global military dominance. The Soviet military buildup, coupled with U.S. military neglect, has created a number of alarming conditions. There is a serious and growing Soviet advantage in strategic nuclear power than an undefended United States cannot counter except by threat of retaliation. The preponderance of Soviet conventional power can no longer be counterbalanced as it has been in the past by a credible threat to bring higher-technology U.S. weaponry to bear. The Soviet Union is increasingly successful in the use of propaganda and the application of direct or indirect military power to disrupt alliances and to force the conversion of underdeveloped nations to Marxism. This Soviet success now threatens the continuing availability of raw materials critical to

the industrialized West. Moreover, the West is dangerously dependent on diminishing crude oil supplies located in areas threatened by Soviet military or manipulative political power. Finally, the U.S. alliance system is in serious disarray. It suffers a lost sense of purpose and a perception of a decline in U.S. power and leadership. The Soviet propaganda offensive against U.S. nuclear weapons designed to persuade Europeans to become neutral is increasingly effective.

The Soviets are engaged in a costly but successful effort to cap their current strategic advantages—in their terms “a favorable correlation of forces”—with Soviet domination of near-earth space. The Soviets have the only tested space weapon on either side, an antisatellite system. They have orbited nuclear reactors. They have a manned space station in orbit and are expanding it. Almost all Soviet space activity has a distinct military flavor.

The Soviets consider space a perfect environment in which to exercise their long-standing doctrinal and operational preferences in war fighting: unconventional first moves, preemptive attacks against vital targets such as strategic communications, combined-arms moves (as are possible with ship-tracking satellites), and other elements of their well-stocked repertoire. The Soviets integrate military space operations into their strategic thinking. They see space as an operational or combatant theater; the United States views it as a sanctuary where support forces for terrestrial military forces can operate permissively.

If Moscow is successful, there will begin a new era in which Soviet space power dictates behavior among the rest of the world. The High Frontier of space provides an opportunity to frustrate Soviet power ambitions and at the same time open up a new era of hope and prosperity for the world as a whole.

Strategic Defense Option

When we look to space, all factors call for an emphasis on strategic defense. First, defensive systems hold the only promise to break out of the MAD doctrine. Second, defense is the only sound alternative to costly racetrack-type options to protect deterrent systems. Third, the current and crucial U.S. military investment in space is also vulnerable to attack. Fourth, available technology favors defensive space systems. Last, there are severe political constraints and some technical-military reasons inhibiting the deployment of offensive weapons in space.

For these reasons, the military side of High Frontier emphasizes the resurrection of a long-neglected aspect of security: protective strategic defense. High Frontier would provide a layered strategic defense. The first layer would be a space-borne defense that would effectively filter a Soviet missile attack in the early stages of flight. The second layer would be a

broader space protection system, perhaps using advanced beam weaponry to reduce the effectiveness of a missile attack and to defend other space assets from a variety of attacks. The third layer would be a ground-based point defense system capable of removing any Soviet assurance of success of a first strike against U.S. missile silos—even *before* a space system is deployed—and in intercepting Soviet missiles that later might leak through the space defenses. A passive fourth layer would be civil defense, which becomes a valuable aspect of strategy in conjunction with these active defense layers.

A point defense can be achieved within two or three years, adequate to protect ICBMs in silos and avoid the high-cost deployment modes for the MX missile. An initial space-borne global ballistic missile defense (GBMD) can be acquired in five or six years given adequate priority. A second-generation general space defense using more advanced technology can probably be achieved in the early 1990s.

Given the drastic consequences of a failed nuclear attack on an opponent, the critical military task is to keep a potential aggressor uncertain of success, if not certain of failure. Such uncertainties are the essence of deterrence.

Strategic defenses are practicable and by no means impossibly expensive if the programs are not required to meet unrealistic standards of perfection or incredible postulated threats. A cursory review of combinations of space-borne defenses, land-based ABMs, and civil defense, while by no means definitive as to cost, indicates that a defense system of decisive strategic importance can be devised that is relatively inexpensive when compared with some previously proposed offensive systems.

Survivability

One issue that must be carefully addressed is that of space system survivability. Although space systems are nearly invulnerable to a large array of threats with which terrestrial systems must cope (such as bombs and bullets), they have some unique vulnerabilities to threats that can be posed by a technologically advanced adversary. An examination of this problem leads to several conclusions. As with all other systems, no space-based system can be envisaged that is invulnerable to all postulated threats. Vulnerability of current U.S. space assets (intelligence and communications satellites and the space shuttle) sharply increases the imperative for an effective space-borne defensive system that can defend itself and reduce the threat to other space systems, as well as defend ground targets against hostile objects transiting space, such as ICBMs. Defensive systems employing large numbers of less sophisticated satellites are far less vulnerable than those employing small

numbers of more sophisticated satellites. An ability to provide mutual warning and protection among satellites in a ballistic missile defense is very important to survivability. The sooner a space-borne ballistic missile defense system can be deployed, the better is its survivability (long-lead-time systems are susceptible to long-lead-time Soviet countermeasures, real or postulated). And future U.S. deployment of more sophisticated beam weapon military satellites may be dependent for survivability on protection provided by a lower technology defensive system already deployed.

Probably the most important factors in the survivability problem are military rather than technical. Survivability is sharply increased by the ability of space vehicles to destroy threatening objects launched at them or at other U.S. space vehicles. The Soviets could not expect, after an attack in space, that the U.S. president would hesitate to respond to sensor warnings that a missile attack had been launched from the USSR. This fact alone would make a space-borne defense of great strategic value.

Urgent Requirements

In order to fulfill the objectives of the High Frontier concept, there are a number of urgent requirements for military systems to implement:

1. A point defense for U.S. ICBM silos which, within two or three years, at a cost less than that of superhardening, can destroy any confidence the Soviets might have in a successful first strike against a U.S. deterrent.
2. A first-generation space-borne ballistic missile defense deployable in five or six years at a cost not exceeding that of the original MX-MPS system and capable of significant attrition of a Soviet strategic missile attack in the early part of trajectory.
3. A second-generation space defense system, deployable within ten or twelve years and capable of attacking hostile objects anywhere in near-Earth space with advanced technology weaponry.
4. A utilitarian manned military space control vehicle, deployable within the next six to eight years and capable of inspection, orbit maintenance, and space tug missions wherever satellites go.
5. A civil defense program of sufficient scope and funding to take advantage of the proposed active strategic defenses and thus add to U.S. deterrent strength.

The primary urgent requirements in core space technology and nonmilitary applications are these:

1. Improved space transportation designed to lower the cost per pound in orbit to under \$100.

2. A manned space station in low-earth orbit as soon as practicable. It would allow low-cost, efficient development and testing of both civilian and military system elements and constitute a first step toward a similar manned station at geosynchronous orbit.
3. Development work on reliable, high-capacity energy systems in space, initially to power other space activities and eventually to provide electrical power to any spot on earth.
4. Preparatory development of a selected number of promising commercial business opportunities. Government efforts should focus on encouraging the transformation of these seed efforts into independently viable commercial operations as soon as possible.

All of these requirements can be met, some of them with technology already on hand, with components already tested. None of these requirements demands technological breakthroughs or a commitment to mere scientific theories. There are in fact a variety of options available to meet each of the requirements of high frontier.

Costs

The total costs of the High Frontier concept over the next five or six years in outlays of constant dollars might be on the order of \$24 billion. Through 1990 the total costs in constant dollars would probably be about \$40 billion, a figure that compares favorably with what would have been the total cost of MX-MPS in its original configuration. It also compares favorably with the Apollo moon-landing program, and strikingly so if the inflation rate of the past twelve years is considered.

If one considers possible trade-offs in programs no longer needed or lowered in priority by the existence of an effective strategic defense, the real costs of the high frontier programs are even lower. The billions now earmarked for superhardening of existing missile silos and for deploying more complex point defenses need not be expended. There are other possible trade-offs, such as repositioning of strategic air command airfields, reducing the urgency of theater nuclear force upgrade in Europe, C³ improvements, and so forth.

Finally, there is a reasonable chance for sizable cost offsets from industry and allied participation in the most expensive aspects of the high frontier effort: nonmilitary applications. This is especially true if a vigorous effort to tap solar energy is emphasized. Several nations have already stated their willingness to assist in such an effort. Such nongovernment support would reduce further the real costs of the concept.

Costs to the U.S. taxpayer of implementing High Frontier will certainly be lower than those in other approaches to solving urgent security issues,

such as MX-MPS. The High Frontier approach therefore cannot be characterized as unrealistically expensive.

Impacts

The announcement of a bold U.S. initiative along the lines of the High Frontier concept would have beneficial impacts at home and abroad. The fulfillment of the urgent requirements would have even more far-reaching impacts.

Military Impacts

On the purely military-strategy side, we would be moving away from the unstable world of terror balance to one of assured survival, a much more stable condition. By creating a proper balance between strategic offense and strategic defense, the options for strategic retaliatory systems are broadened. Perhaps most important to U.S. military efforts as a whole, the High Frontier concept would restore the traditional U.S. military ethic. The military's role as defender of the country has always been the tie that has bound it to the supporting citizenry. A commitment to a new strategy consistent with the military rationale of the average U.S. citizen could greatly ease problems in all facets of U.S. security efforts.

Political Impacts

If the military and nonmilitary aspects of High Frontier are effectively harnessed, broad segments of the U.S. body politic are likely to rally in support. Recent elections have demonstrated the widespread desire for improved defenses. There is a remarkably large support base, primarily among younger people, in the form of space enthusiasts. And there is general public disillusionment with the doctrines and strategies of the past.

A U.S. commitment to the High Frontier concept does not necessitate rejection of arms negotiations with the Soviets. It does, however, mean that future negotiations would proceed on a different philosophical basis. Rather than continue to pursue agreements that attempt to perpetuate a balance of terror and MAD, negotiating efforts would be dedicated to achieving a stable world of mutual assured survival.

Economic Impacts

There can be little doubt that a strong commitment by the United States would have highly beneficial economic impacts. An increase of 200,000 jobs

in the near term as a result of a strong commitment to space has been estimated. Longer-term impacts will depend on the rate at which industrial applications are realized and on unpredictable technological spin-offs from the space effort. The demand for highly skilled workers is certain to have an impact on the education system and on the labor market. New products, tools, and services will be required by an expanding space effort. Research efforts will intensify.

One area of commercial space applications is already paying its way very well. Space communications is a \$500 million per year enterprise and is growing rapidly. By 1990 it should become a multibillion dollar per year industry. As other industrial applications in space are realized, the total revenues from space industries might reach levels of several tens of billions dollars per year by the year 2000.

Foreign Impacts

The positive political effects in the United States will probably be reflected overseas among allies. The announcement of a commitment to High Frontier concepts could have a strong countereffect on the current highly disruptive antinuclear movement in Europe. A bold U.S. strategic initiative would certainly bolster the morale of pro-U.S. elements.

A shared U.S.-allied commitment to the harnessing of solar power from space could reduce the overdependence of the industrialized West on oil- and gas-producing countries. The prospects for overcoming the intractable problems of the underdeveloped nations could have a beneficial impact on the attitudes of the Third World.

The Soviet reaction is easily predictable as hostile. They have already moved to counter the U.S. potential to adopt available military space options. They have introduced in the UN (and garnered some support for it among U.S. allies) a new treaty that would ban all (not just nuclear) weapons in space. Moscow will find, however, for substantive reasons, an attack on the High Frontier concept much more difficult to conduct than past anti-U.S. campaigns.

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Project High Frontier: Nontechnical Considerations

William H. Kincade

The formulators and collaborators involved in Project High Frontier merit congratulation for the boldness of their approach. It is abundantly clear, as their documentation suggests, that a strategic, technological, and procurement departure of this magnitude and scope cannot be realized through an incremental approach.¹ It requires instead a dedication and a level of energy and resources similar to or greater than that involved in the original space program. The point is amply made in Paul R. Schulman's recent book, *Large-Scale Policy Making*.²

The authors of this new national strategy of assured survival through the exploitation of space are surely correct in asserting the U.S. lead in space-oriented technologies. There are doubtless areas of space exploration where the Soviets have an edge, such as long-term manned missions; yet when all of the variables are aggregated, and in particular the advanced technology variables, the United States has a prominent net lead.³

Although one can quibble with the short- or long-term significance of this lead, Americans do themselves a grave injustice when they downgrade U.S. space-relevant accomplishments. The secular decline of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration budget is by no means the only or best index of performance, achievement, or potential. Proponents of greater funding for space programs are here following a dangerous example set by advocates of higher defense budgets, creating an unnecessary crisis of confidence as a by-product of their efforts to goad the executive and legislative branches to allocate more to space exploration.

Additionally there is considerable political realism and wisdom in the assumption apparently underlying Project High Frontier that U.S., and indeed Western, publics will not indefinitely support high levels of defense expenditure. Opinion polls show that public preference for significantly expanded defense budgets lasts only about two years. This was true in the early 1950s at the outset of the Korean war and again in the early 1960s around the time of the Berlin crisis of 1961. Shifting public and congressional attitudes suggest that the current window of opportunity for high defense spending may be ready to close. Moreover, the increased support for enlarged defense budgets that began to appear in 1980 following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, though it reversed a long-term opinion trend and became a majority view, did not reach the levels attained in 1950 and 1961

when war was in progress or seemed imminent.⁴ Thus, any defense strategy that is economically well leveraged and technologically credible has a good chance of gaining sustained popular favor.

Finally, there is no reason in principle that U.S. or Western strategy should not be based on a defensive orientation, including active or passive defenses of strategic forces. At a minimum, the line of reasoning that holds that defenses in the nuclear era are intrinsically destabilizing is as speculative and based on unknowables about the psychology of adversary leaderships as is the contention that strategic defense would be wholly or largely benign in its impact on crisis decision making.

The authors of the High Frontier study may have reached too far in ascribing to the proponents of arms limitation an immoral, bloodthirsty addiction to offensive forces and a horror of ballistic missile defenses (BMD)—too far in the sense of ascribing distortions in U.S. force posture and strategic doctrine to the baleful influence of arms control. In fact, any such distortions, if they exist at all, resulted from the continuing lead of offensive weapons technology over defensive technology and from the air force's understandable preference for systems it is assigned, coupled with the army's relative lack of enthusiasm for its BMD mission.

Project High Frontier is thus aimed at a straw man, or perhaps at two straw men. First, it posits that U.S. nuclear strategy has served the goal of MAD. Second, it assumes that arms-control considerations have been the determinant of U.S. disinterest in BMD. An examination of the literature in the public domain, as well as classified sources, shows that since the first single integrated operations plan for targeting U.S. nuclear forces was developed in 1961, U.S. strategy has been some variant of flexible response, with Soviet strategic forces accorded the highest priority on U.S. target allocations. Moreover, assured destruction was a crude metric for sizing U.S. strategic forces in the absence of any other criteria for determining how much is enough. It was not a targeting doctrine and has long since ceased being a factor in force sizing. Finally, MAD was merely a catchphrase for highlighting the seemingly suicidal condition that came into existence in the 1960s when both superpowers obtained reasonable large and secure second-strike forces.⁵ It was never intended to describe U.S. strategy or targeting doctrine.

Regarding the influence of arms-control considerations on attitudes toward missile defense, there is no fundamental arms-control argument against antiballistic missile systems. All that is asked of BMD is that it meet two commonsense requirements: that it be cost-effective against the offense's attack and that it not lead to unrestrained competition in offensive weapons with each side trying to overcome the other's defensive systems (or at least not lead to an offensive competition that is worse than the historical one). If these conditions could be met, many arms-control advocates could

be won to the proposition, so long enunciated by the late Donald Brennan, that a defense-dominated world is a more stable world and one more suitable for negotiating arms limitation.⁶ Since neither condition appears susceptible of fulfillment, arms-control specialists continue to find fault with BMD and to believe that the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty of 1972 merits continued support.

These errors of interpretation do not, however, vitiate the strategic and technical thrust of the High Frontier proposal nor relieve its critics from the necessity of addressing the proposal on its merits. Whether assured destruction was ever U.S. strategy, the formulators of Project High Frontier have proposed that U.S. strategy henceforth be based on assured survival and it is to the technical, political, institutional, and economic features of that recommendation that attention must turn.

Institutional and Political Barriers

High Frontier proponents acknowledge that adoption would require shifting from an incremental approach to a synoptic approach in terms of policy-making with regard to strategy and strategic forces. Implementation would also require a substantial revision of long-standing service roles and missions. It is implied, if not openly stated, that these changes could take place if only enough political will, presumably in the right places like the White House, were devoted to accomplishing them.

The problem with this line of reasoning, a problem shared by the advocates of disarmament and world government, is that it involves a tautology. In brief, both disarmers or one-worlders and proponents of the High Frontier strategy argue that people and institutions can be different if only we will change them. If only a radical change could be achieved in people and their organizations, if only enough political will were dedicated to achieving such change, then everything else will come along easily.

This reasoning overlooks the historical reality that people and institutions are enormously impervious to change, a reality that cannot be easily ignored whether the aim is disarmament or a military space strategy and capability. Cases of radical approaches being adopted for persistent problems are infrequent exceptions to the norm of incremental decision making, of slow and cautious change rather than sweeping change. Similarly, organizations do not readily give up their known values and turf for an uncertain future. And the regularity in human affairs of prudent decision making or well-worn institutional repertoires cannot be waved away by the wand of political will.

High Frontier advocates have likened the impulse required to realize their proposal to the U.S. commitment to put a man on the moon in the early

1960s, just as proponents of radical approaches to security, such as disarmament and world government, have likened the attitude change that would be needed to the impulse to abolish slavery in the early and mid-nineteenth century. Both of these seductive analogies miss important points. When President Kennedy took up the cry of a commitment to space, he was calling basically for a new and additive commitment, not one that required an exhausting redirection of existing commitments and institutions. Where space was concerned, there was a virtually blank page on which to write.

This is not the case when it comes to redirecting the U.S. armed forces away from their accustomed roles and missions and budget locations toward a high-risk venture. Nor, moreover, is the economy enjoying the secular boom that it experienced in the 1950s and 1960s. Similarly, the abolition analogy of the disarmers overlooks the fact that sentiment against slavery was the product of uneven attitude change that spanned generations, if not the centuries that marked Europe's growth to a highly civilized community.

A quite different political barrier is involved in allusion to civil defense in Project High Frontier as part of the interim solution to the alleged strategic vulnerability problem of the United States. Politically, passive defense or civil defense has proved a consistent nonstarter in the United States. Perhaps it should not be so, but this is nevertheless an enduring political reality. Throughout the postwar history of civil defense, each time the public has registered high levels of support for improving U.S. civil defense programs, it has simultaneously and just as consistently registered its adamant refusal to pay the price tag and make the other sacrifices implied by even a modest civil defense effort.

More important, every civil defense budget submitted to the president in the postwar period (with the arguable exception of the year when John F. Kennedy flirted briefly with civil defense) has been reduced, not to say slashed, in the White House before being sent to the Congress. Similarly, every civil defense budget forwarded to the Congress by the president between fiscal years 1951 and 1981 was substantially cut, except in five years when the president's request was appropriated and one year (fiscal year 1977) when the Congress raised the appropriation.⁷ Given opposition of this character and consistency—and without examining the reasons behind the persistent public and political opposition—one can say with some assurance that civil defense sells well in principle but not in program terms.

Space Industrialization

In terms of Project High Frontier's proposals for industrializing outer space, such recommendations imply at a minimum a level of risk taking and entrepreneurialism on the part of U.S. finance and industry that under

present conditions does not seem warranted. The evidence of industry's desire to pursue this course, however great its theoretical attractions, is hard to see. The capital costs of space-based industry will certainly have to be greater initially than for equivalent terrestrial facilities. The recent history of U.S. business and its current record in terms of capital investment suggest anything but a group of bold, farsighted innovators. So radically present oriented have U.S. business leaders become, so dominated in their thinking by the bottom line of the quarterly or annual report, so concerned with near-term investment opportunities promising higher or quicker profit margins, that their willingness or ability to take the plunge into space operations must be in serious question.

The normal mode of operation for industrialists facing a project as bold as relocating to space is to ensure that the government protects them against any risk at all with loan guarantees or assured markets for their products, however uneconomic. There is, to be sure, a justification for such government intervention, especially in connection with capital investment for national defense or for undertakings that open up new frontiers. Yet it is a path that both industry and government should pursue with considerable wariness.

The uses and abuses of the Defense Production Act of 1950 (DPA) provide a cautionary tale. Several titles of the act, especially Titles I and III, were designed to facilitate and expedite defense production through loan and market guarantees and a system of priorities and allocations for defense industry.⁸ These provisions have often been abused by dragging the mantle of national security over virtually every aspect of national economic life but perhaps at no time more so than a few years ago when the Synthetic Fuels Corporation was established and the act was amended to provide a means for protecting investments in the area of synthetic fuels. One of the few benefits of the continuing economic downturn is that it curbed the appetite for this kind of investment, even when armor plated with government guarantees.

Nevertheless, this and similar uses of the DPA suggest that the willingness of industry and finance to resort to the crutch of government assistance is far greater than the conventional tough talk about free enterprise would suggest. And this willingness to let the government—that is, the taxpayers—shoulder the burden of high-risk ventures should breed skepticism about the methodology of industrializing space. At a minimum, it raises the specter of heavy government incentives and controls, with all the costs and inefficiencies that such an approach typically entails. One would be more comfortable about the prospect of space industrialization if the authors of Project High Frontier would provide more details on how to finance and implement this endeavor through a cost-effective partnership of the private and public sectors, as well as provide some evidence that business, financiers,

and industrialists in reasonable numbers are applauding the project with risk capital.

An additional question is whether industrial facilities in space would be more or less vulnerable to hostile attack than those on earth. One factor that distinguishes U.S. from Soviet economic assets or infrastructure is that in the United States they are disaggregated by market forces, while in the Soviet Union the central planning approach seeks economies of scale that often prove to be diseconomies. Certainly the Soviet approach creates plump, inviting targets for modern intercontinental weapons. To move certain U.S. industries into space seems inevitably to follow the Soviet model of large, vertically intergrated production facilities in key areas like energy, facilities that would be tempting targets for Soviet gunners. Even if defensive systems operate better than anyone can now predict with certainty, a target as lucrative as a solar power plant capable of energizing all of New York City will make an adversary salivate, as well as bend all resources to finding a chink in the defensive armor.

In this and other aspects, the High Frontier proposal appears to reflect the fallacy of the last move. On what ground, at what cost, and with what risks (to say nothing of with what weapons) can the United States deny the USSR, or, if they desire, the Japanese, Europeans, or, in time, the Brazilians, a role in exploiting space when they become capable of carrying out similar projects? At the Unispace Conference in 1982, Third World countries asked the superpowers to step aside and allow others greater use of the desirable twenty-four-hour synchronous orbits for communications satellites. Space is increasingly viewed as the common heritage of humanity; although there may be more than a trace of arrogance in that view, one cannot gainsay the fact that the United States will face opposition from quarters other than the USSR as regards staking an exclusive claim to outer space. It is to be doubted whether even U.S. allies will want to join a space condominium under U.S. control. And if U.S. control of space is not hegemonic or exclusive, then how viable will the Global Ballistic Missile Defense (GBMD) system that is based there be?

These are not insignificant questions, though they tend to become lost in the American fascination with questions of technological feasibility. Nor can they be dismissed by facile references to the era of British maritime supremacy. The world is a very different place from the time when Britain ruled the high seas. It is important to remember as well that during its heyday, Britain also ruled large and crucial parts of the adjacent land masses. Much of the rest of the land masses simply did not figure in international politics.

Such is not the case in the world inhabited by the United States, either on earth or in space. And there is considerable reason for doubting that it could ever be the case in either realm, notwithstanding leads in space technologies. In an age of rapid technological development across a more

comprehensive front, leads have a way of evaporating more quickly than when Britain held maritime hegemony. The U.S. experience with the implications of the multiple independently targetted re-entry vehicle (MIRV) is a case in point; the edge it was supposed to give rather suddenly became what some regard as a window of vulnerability, to the closing of which Project High Frontier is largely aimed.

There may be some lessons in the British experience. Increasingly the benefits that Britain derived from its maritime mastery and mercantile colonial system have come into question. First, many specialists contend that the metropole paid out more in costs in maintaining its far-flung network than it took back in benefits. Second, sustaining its global position absorbed the attention of Britons in such a way that advancing industrial and economic practices were ignored in the birthplace of the Industrial Revolution, while the availability of trade within the empire masked the underlying deterioration of British industrial strength. Thus, British industrial productivity began to decline well before the end of the nineteenth century and has stayed on a generally downward slope ever since, partly owing to the direct and indirect costs of maintaining a dominant global role while other nations busied themselves with upgrading their industrial capacity and their lucrative industrial competition.⁹ It is certainly not self-evident, then, that exploiting and gaining supremacy in new frontiers such as space will produce guaranteed, long-term benefits. It could instead lead to endless costs and even a technological dead-end, while earth-oriented countries reap the benefits of terrestrial innovation.

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Strategic Considerations

Proponents of the high frontier strategy of assured survival claim that it is a new strategy for the West in that it represents a radical shift from an offensive orientation to a defensive focus. Yet the distinction between the offense and the defense, always arbitrary, is often overrated. If we think of the high frontier approach instead as damage limiting, then it does not appear to be so very different in its effects from other damage-limiting systems that pretend to the name of strategic defense, including the low-attitude defense system, the dense pack or racetrack schemes for basing the MX missile, or the superhardening of missile silos. Whether one tries interceptors based in space, low-attitude interception, proliferation of silos, deceptive tactics, hardening, or mobility, the goal in each case is essentially damage limitation. On that index, the High Frontier Global Ballistic Missile Defense System does not seem to offer much that would recommend it over other proposals.

About the best it can do, if it works perfectly, is to skim off the incoming

Soviet land-based ICBMs. It will not do much, if anything, against bombers, low-trajectory ballistic missiles launched from the sea, or, in a few more years, advanced Soviet cruise missiles. Although the ICBMs constitute the bulk of Soviet forces today, the effect of the Global Ballistic Missile Defense system (and perhaps of any other ballistic missile defense) could well be to accelerate Soviet development of advanced cruise missiles.

If the Soviets adopt this course, the comparative U.S. advantage in a long, open coastline could become a liability. Armed with future-generation, terminally supersonic cruise missiles, gunners on Soviet bombers, submarines, and even surface ships could render BMD the wrong solution for the wrong threat at the wrong time. And it should be obvious that the problems of defending against high numbers of accurate, speedy cruise missiles coming from unpredictable azimuths are even greater than the problem of defending against ballistic missiles. Indeed the strategy of the Reagan administration has been summed up as maximizing the capacity of the so-called low observables or low visibles (cruise missiles and bombers incorporating stealth technology) to underfly and tax Soviet air and ballistic missile defense systems. What is to prevent the Soviet Union from adopting a parallel technical strategy to undercut the value of either space-based or earth-based ballistic missile defenses?

Or the Soviet may elect to pursue a GBMD system of their own. In that event, will the United States be obliged to strike the Soviet GBMD while it is being deployed, perhaps with space mines or with rocket interceptors targeted against Soviet space vehicles? Simply framing the question highlights future complexities that the High Frontier proposal tends to ignore.

Whatever the technical merits of the proposed systems, therefore, assured survival falls considerably short of the claim of representing a new national strategy. More important, it leaves unanswered major questions flowing from the interactive nature of the military-technological competition, to which it purports to provide a quick fix. This particular fix, however, bears implications that seem worse, or at least no better, than the problem it addresses.

Mobilizing Support

Opinion polls throughout the 1970s reflected a general diminution in public enthusiasm for space exploration. Sometimes public skepticism reached the point of calling into question the value of the space program's accomplishments during its heyday in the 1960s, when the goal of placing a man on the moon sustained favorable popular sentiment and, presumably, relatively high levels of expenditure.

This experience suggests a cautious attitude about the capacity of the

High Frontier strategy to continue mobilizing public support after the initial novelty of the concept wears off. Although the High Frontier proposal promises a quick solution, there are reasons for being skeptical about how rapidly it can be implemented. And even if strong political leadership and unconventional approaches to implementation overcome delay, the scheme will require continuing public support for pursuit of the space industrialization component of the plan and for the upgrading of the military component that will likely be required.

U.S. and other Western publics constitute a fickle beast and a plural beast. Bringing together all the disparate elements of U.S. society behind a project with so many technical, military, political, and economic risks and uncertainties is extraordinarily difficult, especially if the period for implementation bridges two presidencies. Americans are very good at accepting audacious challenges but, with few exceptions, not very good on follow-through, particularly if quick and evident results are not forthcoming. Assuming that public support could be galvanized to back a High Frontier program and strategy, what will be the consequences if, as with the space program, public support wanes after five to ten years? Will halfway to the High Frontier be good enough?

More fundamentally, despite the real and symbolic significance of a space program to U.S. interests, the important military and political objectives remain here on earth. There is no reason to doubt that this will be the case for several generations to come, notwithstanding premature talk of colonies in space. International influence is the key to achieving those terrestrial objectives. The principle of international influence is a constant, but the elements that contribute to it can fluctuate. While in the past, first Soviet and then U.S. space spectacles gained a measure of influence for each country in its turn, space exploits lack the same power to turn people's heads when economic and other difficulties are directing attention toward earth-bound problems. In a similar way, additional increments of strategic weaponry may weigh less and less in the balance of influence, especially as compared to the costs of those additional increments of strategic forces.

Implicit in the High Frontier proposal is the notion that it may prove to be the royal road to terrestrial influence, both economic and military. This implication, however, may be based on a mind-set of the 1950s and 1960s when the world economy was booming, global economic and political development seemed realizable possibilities, and space loomed as the next great frontier of humanity. Today world attention focuses on the persistent problems here on earth, optimism about the global future is harder to find, and, in this context, the High Frontier proposal may prove the high road to terrestrial irrelevance, rather than influence.

Quick fixes always hold great allure for Americans, who are strongly engineering oriented and persuaded that problems can be solved rather than

merely managed. Yet it is hard to find instances where quick fixes of the kind represented by the High Frontier proposal have produced the long-term benefits claimed for them. Counterexamples abound, however. Thus, searching for the quick fix may be a form of problem evasion rather than real problem solving, a means of avoiding the persistent dilemmas that are insoluble and can be treated only by equally persistent and thoughtful management.

Should it prove possible to overcome the technical problems that have been identified in Project High Frontier, it will still face a number of political, economic, institutional, and strategic barriers that could be even less tractable than the technological issues.¹⁰ The formulators of the proposal have acknowledged these additional hurdles to an extent that absolves them of the charge of merely proposing a technological quick fix. Yet they have sufficiently simplified their assumptions about these nontechnical barriers that the entire enterprise must remain a matter of profound doubt.

Notes

1. Daniel O. Graham et al., *High Frontier: A New National Strategy* (Washington: Heritage Foundation, 1982). The discussion in this chapter presumes at least a cursory knowledge of the major theses in this book.

2. Paul R. Schulman, *Large-Scale Policy Making* (New York: Elsevier, North Holland, 1980).

3. See, for example, William Perry, "The Nature of the Defense Problem in the 1980s and the role of Defense Technology in Meeting that Challenge," in the *The Role of Technology in Meeting the Defense Challenges of the 1980s*, Special Report of the Arms Control and Disarmament Program (Palo Alto, Calif.: Stanford University, 1981), and William Perry and Cynthia A. Roberts, "Winning through Sophistication: How to Meet the Soviet Military Challenge," *Technology Review* (July 1982).

4. Author's unpublished analysis of Gallup Polls on security issues between 1950 and 1980.

5. For U.S. strategic targeting doctrine, see, among many sources, Barry M. Blechman, ed., *Rethinking the U.S. Strategic Posture* (Cambridge, Mass.: Ballinger Publishing, 1981), especially the essay by Walter B. Slocombe; Desmond Ball, "Counterforce Targeting: How New? How Viable?" *Arms Control Today* 11 (February 1981); William W. Kaufmann, *The McNamara Strategy* (New York: Harper & Row, 1964); and Henry S. Rowen, "Formulating Strategic Doctrine," in Commission of the Organization of the Government for the Conduct of Foreign Policy, *Adequacy of Current Organization: Defense and Arms Control* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, June 1975), vol. 4, app. k.

6. Freeman J. Dyson, "Arms Control and Technological Change," in Morton A. Kaplan, ed., *SALT: Problems and Prospects* (Morristown, N.J.: General Learning Press, 1973).

7. William H. Kincade, "U.S. Civil Defense Decision-Making: The Ford and Carter Administrations" (Ph.D. diss. American University, 1980), pp. 285, 652–653.

8. See the hearings and annual reports of the Joint Committee on Defense Production, U.S. Congress, for the period 1975–1977.

9. Examples of literature stressing these themes are Martin J. Wiener, *English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit, 1850–1980* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); Anthony Sampson, *The New Anatomy of Britain* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1971); and W.B. Walker, "Britain's Industrial Performance, 1850–1950: A Failure to Adjust," in Keith Pavitt, ed., *Technical Innovation and British Economic Performance* (London: Macmillan for Science Policy Research Unit, 1980).

10. Donald S. Harlacher, "High Frontier: A Strategy Based on Illusion" (paper delivered at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., September 23, 1982).



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40 High Frontier: A Strategy Based on Illusion

Donald S. Harlacher

President Reagan's announced goal of a margin of safety and the Republican party's 1980 platform for a return to peace through strength prompted a group of conservative Republicans to formulate a new national strategy option that promises to render obsolete the present Soviet advantage in strategic weaponry, to free the industrialized world from dependence on fossil-based fuels, to provide the incentive for realizing the enormous industrial and commercial potential of outer space, and, though unstated, to serve as a rallying flag for conservative political candidates in the 1984 and 1988 national elections. This strategy, known as assured survival, is the product of High Frontier, a study effort funded by the Washington-based Heritage Foundation and headed by retired Army Lt. Gen. Daniel O. Graham, former director of the Defense Intelligence Agency and military adviser to Ronald Reagan during the 1980 presidential campaign.¹

Assured survival is basically a defense-oriented strategy that relies on an assumed U.S. technological lead in space system capabilities. As such it represents a fundamental change from the all offense, no defense philosophy that the proponents of High Frontier assert has characterized U.S. strategic thinking for the past ten years or so, a philosophy they call "militarily bankrupt" and "immoral" and the root cause of many current U.S. security problems.²

Assured survival has both a military and a nonmilitary dimension. The military dimension calls for deployment of a layered antiballistic missile system consisting of multiple space-based systems capable of attacking hostile missiles or space objects during any phase of their trajectory or orbit and a ground-based point defense system that provides nonnuclear terminal defense of ICBM silos. In addition, the military dimension includes increased spending for civil defense and development of a high-performance space plane to perform a wide variety of military space missions.

The nonmilitary dimension is no less ambitious. It calls for an improved space transportation system with a much heavier lift capability than the present shuttle; deployment of a manned space station in low earth orbit;

The views expressed in this chapter are solely those of the author and do not reflect the positions or policy of the Department of Defense or any other agencies within the U.S. government.

development of reliable high-capacity space-based energy systems capable of beaming power to any point on the earth; and the preparatory development of a selected number of promising commercial business ventures with the ultimate goal of industrializing outer space.

By using currently available technology and implementing special management and procedural arrangements for rapid system acquisition and deployment, High Frontier advocates maintain that this very ambitious program will "close the window of vulnerability in two or three years . . . negate the brooding menace of Mutual Assured Destruction in five or six years . . . lower the costs of men and material in space . . . [and] open the door to enormous economic advantages in 10 years"—all at a total system cost to the taxpayer, spread across a ten-year period, of approximately \$50 billion, which is less than 25 percent of what is being asked for national defense alone during the coming fiscal year.³

The concept has great appeal. It is difficult to argue against a strategy that promises to protect people from the horrors of nuclear war. But is it realistic? Are the systems that are meant to underwrite the strategy technologically feasible with available components or attainable within the time frames and cost parameters claimed? Or is it an illusion, based on good intentions but undeliverable for any one of many reasons?

I maintain that the latter is true; the value of High Frontier lies not in the specific system proposals, which in fact have been suggested by others before, or even in the desirability of the strategy itself, but in the fact that it causes a serious reevaluation of the strategy on which deterrence currently is based. Recent events—the nuclear freeze movement and the number of local and state ballots that contain nuclear-weapons-related votes of confidence—clearly indicate public unrest. The NATO no-first-use proposal put forward recently by a group of distinguished former U.S. leaders is another example. These are not the idealistic, youthful leftists who typified past nuclear movements; rather they are respected individuals from across the spectrum of U.S. society.

A defense-oriented strategy that promises eternal security at reasonable cost is emotionally attractive, and it is easy to understand why the concept has been favorably received by many. But if it can be demonstrated that the near-term technological feasibility of implementing the proposed strategy is suspect or that the philosophical assumptions that underpin the strategy are questionable, then regardless of how attractive the concepts may be, they will not hold up under critical examination and therefore should not be the basis for a fundamental change in U.S. strategy.

This review of the High Frontier proposals begins by looking at some of the associated technological problems. First, the space-based Global Ballistic Missile Defense (GBMD) system is the heart of the High Frontier proposed multilayered defense system. It is a multiple, initially unmanned

satellite system that optically acquires ICBM booster and bus signatures during the early phases of trajectory and then employs kill vehicles to intercept and destroy the missiles prior to reentry vehicle or warhead deployment. Destruction is by nonnuclear impact at relatively high velocities. System success depends on the ability of integral sensors to detect and then track the missile booster or bus until destruction.

Because of optical phenomenology and the current sensor state of the art, however, this may be easier said than accomplished. For example, a fairly large hot target is presented to a sensor system during the missile boost phase, or approximately the first four minutes of trajectory. During this time, the first stages of an ICBM ignite and propel the warhead (or clustered warheads) on its ballistic flight. Shortwave infrared (SWIR) sensor technology exists and could theoretically be integrated into a GBMD system to detect and track such targets. It is questionable, however, if an SWIR sensor could detect and track the progressively smaller and colder targets as the missile transitions into post-boost phase and then finally its reentry phase of flight. It is more likely that a long-wave infrared sensor would be required, which in turn necessitates storing liquid helium or other cryogenics in orbit for long periods of time (years) and developing a methodology for cooling the sensor to operating temperatures literally within seconds.

A related problem concerns the velocity requirements of the kill vehicle. Velocity is critical in terms of kill probabilities, as well as system cost and weight. The High Frontier concept calls for, and weight and cost estimates are based on, a kill vehicle velocity of 3,000 feet per second. Careful analysis of the concept, however, shows that the required velocity must be at least several times that estimated. Although the technology exists to achieve the required higher velocity, there are substantial tradeoffs in both cost and weight.

A third common technological criticism of the GBMD concept is its apparent dismissal of the very real C^3 problems associated with a system comprised of over 400 satellites and 20,000 kill vehicles. Jack Ruina, a noted professor of electrical engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and personally involved with ABM technology for over twenty-two years, has written, "There never have been technical questions about whether or not individual ballistic missile warheads could be detected, tracked, or intercepted . . . [but rather] whether the highly complex system required to cope with the real and massive attacks that we might expect can in fact be designed and made operational."⁴ The C^3 system inherent in a GBMD concept must be capable not only of detecting missile launches and discriminating friendly launches from hostile, test firings from space launches, and reentry vehicles from cleverly designed decoys and space junk but must also assign kill vehicles to targets, launch and track the kill vehicles through intercept, do postbattle damage assessment, and if necessary, make

new target assignments, all within a few hundred seconds.⁵ The short reaction times mandate that execution decisions be automated based on preapproved criteria, which effectively removes national command authorities or any other human beings for that matter from the decision process. It would be interesting to speculate on the political ramifications of the automated but inadvertent destruction of a manned Soviet space launch. Clearly the C³ system must be far more sophisticated than anything heretofore encountered.

Perhaps the most important technological problem associated with any space-based ballistic missile defense system without a self-generating refire capability is its vulnerability to the simple addition of hostile missile launchers. Orbital mechanics are such that almost all of the defensive capability is always absent from the battlefield. Therefore, by concentrating launchers and by launching the missiles within a relatively short time frame or window, the offense can overwhelm the defense. Each added booster theoretically causes the defense to add one interceptor to each of the satellites comprising the space-based system. Analysis suggests that is much cheaper to deploy launchers without multiple independently targeted reentry vehicles (MIRVs) than for the defense to deploy several hundred additional interceptor vehicles.

For ICBM silo defense, High Frontier recommends a point defense system comprised of low-cost unhardened radars that use a trilateration scheme to detect, track, and calculate the optimum intercept point for the incoming reentry vehicle and a hardened launcher system that aims and launches a swarm of ballistic rockets (approximately 10,000 in number) that fly to the predetermined intercept point and destroy the incoming warhead by the kinetic energy of impact. This concept is not new; it is one of several concepts studied and restudied by the Department of Defense during the late 1970s and ultimately rejected. For example, as recognized by High Frontier, a highly structured, multiple reentry vehicle attack could penetrate the system and destroy both it and the silo it was defending. A second limitation is the relatively short range of the Swarmjet projectiles. Assuming that the projectiles successfully intercept an incoming warhead at maximum range, the resulting nuclear detonation would either destroy or at least render inoperable all unhardened support systems, and here we are primarily concerned about the radar—the critical component of the concept, within approximately four kilometers of the detonation point. Therefore, theoretically a small number of detonations could destroy all the radars defending one hundred closely spaced MX silos. Technology exists to harden the radars; however, here again there is a considerable trade-off in costs. A third limitation of the Swarmjet concept is that the proposed radars are highly susceptible to countermeasures. The Soviets could launch an exo-atmospheric standoff jammer to preclude the radars from acquiring the

warhead in sufficient time to permit destruction prior to detonation. Or they could employ stealth-type low radar cross-section technology on the warheads or use maneuvering reentry vehicles—any one of which would provide significantly higher probabilities of penetration.

From a technological standpoint, it is perhaps the High Frontier recommendation that a solar power satellite could be placed in geosynchronous orbit by the year 1995 at a cost of about \$13 billion that best illustrates the overoptimism and zealotry that seems to characterize High Frontier proposals. Few will question the desirability of long-term independence from fossil-based fuels; however, we cannot permit the desirability of an objective to obscure its near-term technological achievability. The High Frontier recommendation is similar to a joint NASA and Department of Energy proposal that envisions satellites in geosynchronous orbit collecting solar radiation, converting that radiation to microwaves, and then beaming the microwaves to ground stations where they would be converted to electricity and distributed by conventional power transmission systems. It all sounds logical and relatively simple until one considers that the banks of solar cells needed to collect the solar radiation could range in size up to six miles long and three miles wide or that the receiving antenna on the ground would have to be eight miles long and six miles wide. A panel of nongovernment scientists and engineers was convened under the auspices of the National Academy of Sciences to study the proposal. They concluded that solar power satellites are "without parallel in human experience with systems design, construction, and operation," that costs would far exceed estimates, that technological problems would be encountered, and that such a project would represent by far the largest, most costly, and most complex undertaking, civilian or military, ever undertaken.⁶ In a similar vein, the National Research Council concluded that the satellite system would cost \$3 trillion over fifty years and that, once completed, the cost per kilowatt would be \$10,000 as compared with \$1,000 from conventional sources, bringing into serious question the commercial utility of such a project. The Congressional Office of Technology Assessment completed its own study of solar power satellites and concluded that of all possible future electricity sources, solar power satellites had among the highest capital costs and levels of uncertainty and that demonstration costs alone were likely to exceed \$40 billion.⁷

Are the High Frontier proposals technologically feasible? Probably, given sufficient time and presuming that enough money is thrown at the various problems. Are they achievable within the cost and time frames estimated? It is highly unlikely. George A. Keyworth II, the president's science and technology adviser and reportedly the individual within the administration who has overall responsibility for evaluating High Frontier, recently implied that he had a variety of concerns regarding the strength and feasibility of specific proposals.⁸

Even by optimizing the acquisition process as recommended, it is highly unlikely that the proposed systems can be deployed as advertised. Unanticipated technological problems could cause significant schedule slippages with attendant cost overruns and/or that early production models may require extensive and costly modifications once fielded. Maximum concurrency may be achievable for systems with little or no technological risk. However, there is a considerable body of opinion that believes that the High Frontier systems carry substantial risk in the near-term.

Assuming that the proposed systems are deployable at some point in the future, the question then becomes whether a change in strategy to that of assured survival is in the long-term national interest. To answer that question, let us turn to the philosophical underpinnings of the proposed strategy itself.

The fact that a defensive strategy can be viewed as destabilizing is difficult for some to comprehend. Nevertheless, it can, and the reason it can is based on a paradox: by reducing, for example, U.S. vulnerability to Soviet strategic forces, the defensive systems that serve to lessen that vulnerability also serve to weaken Soviet confidence in the deterrent capability of their strategic forces. In other words, looking at the issue through Soviet eyes, by being less vulnerable to nuclear attack, the United States may resort to the threat or actual use of nuclear force more quickly than would otherwise be the case. Soviet planners are thus confronted with one of four options: do nothing, which seems unlikely given past precedent of extreme Soviet paranoia; implement a similar defense-oriented strategy; build compensatory offensive systems; or, at the extreme and presuming that initiation of nuclear war was indeed the objective all along, launch a first strike before the window of opportunity closes, possibly forever. In any case, crisis instability is likely to result, and a new element of uncertainty is added to the strategic equation. And the very thing that an assured survival strategy seeks most to prevent may well be hastened.

Another argument against a defense-oriented strategy is the prospect that space-based defensive systems will merely transfer into yet another environment the same stalemate of forces that has characterized military competition on earth. Implicit in High Frontier is the notion that the Soviets will accept their inferiority in space-related technology and will relinquish to the United States uncontested strategic superiority or at worst will merely seek to achieve a comparable defensive capability.

It is unrealistic to expect that the Soviets will not exert every conceivable effort to overcome whatever deficiencies they may have in order to field comparable or better systems. Time after time we have underestimated the Soviet ability to make tremendous strides in weapon system technology. Although basic research is not a Soviet strength, nevertheless, once their efforts are focused on a basic objective, the Soviets do exceedingly well. For

example, the United States tested the world's first hydrogen bomb in 1952; the Soviets detonated theirs in 1953. The Soviets developed and deployed MIRVs far earlier than anticipated. And press reports suggest they may be rapidly closing the gap in cruise missile technology.⁹

If the study of Soviet strategic thinking has taught us anything, it is that the security of the Soviet homeland is supreme. A history of repeated invasions, tremendous loss of life—20 million during World War II alone by most estimates—and extreme deprivation have left the Soviets a heritage of paranoia and a willingness to defend the homeland at all cost. Whether we agree or disagree with a particular Soviet concern is immaterial. What is important is that if the Soviets believe, and if they perceive a diminishing of their recently acquired superpower status diminishing or that the United States has acquired a first-strike capability through the deployment of ballistic missile defense systems, they will devote whatever resources may be required to rectify the perceived imbalance. Major General Viktor Starodubov, member of the Soviet general staff and Soviet START delegation, recently said as much when he asserted that “it is dangerous if the United States is superior in some types of arms.”¹⁰ The Soviets believe that the United States would exploit its advantage for political gain. While the focus of General Starodubov's comments was the U.S. cruise missile, it is clear that the Soviets will not accept inferiority in any class of weapon systems.

A final argument against the High Frontier proposal is the potential adverse impact on national security interests should the United States abrogate or seek to amend the ABM Treaty in order to implement the proposed strategy. Article V of the ABM Treaty clearly prohibits the development, testing, and deployment of space-based ABM systems or components. In addition, there are sufficient ambiguities with regard to permitted land-based systems that a Swarmjet concept, if not clearly prohibited by the treaty, is at least subject to the requirement that discussions be held for the purpose of limiting ABM systems based on physical principles other than the traditional radar, launcher, and missile interceptor system covered by the treaty.¹¹

Abrogation of the treaty, even though legitimized based on the supreme interests clause (article XV), carries with it an enormous political liability and will likely adversely influence ongoing and future bilateral and multilateral negotiations. The good faith of the United States as a negotiating partner will undoubtedly be called into question. The door will be opened to the wholesale repudiation of treaties that countries, for whatever reason, now find to be constraining. Moreover, as the last vestige of agreed and functioning nuclear arms-control measures, abrogation of the ABM Treaty is likely to have a significant and detrimental effect on a wide range of issues with the Soviets.

Perhaps most important is the fact that abrogation or even amendment

of the treaty may well serve to undermine rather than add to U.S. security. The Soviets have had more than ten years of experience with an operational ABM system and have reportedly been spending far more than the United States on ballistic missile defense in recent years.¹² Therefore it is conceivable that the Soviets have a significant breakout potential and that abrogation or amendment of the treaty will be rapidly followed by the widespread deployment of sophisticated Soviet ABM systems, which in turn will severely complicate U.S. targeting strategy.

In summary, will a defense-dominated strategy, such as that advocated by High Frontier, ultimately add to U.S. security? Probably not. Some skepticism about the near-term technological feasibility of at least some of the component systems seems clearly in order. The cost to implement the strategy is likely to be enormous, far in excess of that anticipated. But perhaps more important, the fundamental question that needs to be addressed is whether the current strategy has failed. In the absolute sense, the answer to that question has to be no. Humanity has in fact been spared the horrors of nuclear war for more than three decades. The moral aspects of such a strategy can indeed be questioned, and there are aspects about it that from time to time have required and will continue to require rethinking or adjustment. But in the main, deterrence as currently constructed has succeeded amazingly well.

The question then becomes whether we risk this record of success on a strategy that at best promises to be somewhat destabilizing, at least initially as each side reacts to the developments of the other, that will extend the search for military superiority to yet another environment, and that could conceivably bring down the entire international legal order on which most of our present national security depends.

The ultimate defensive weapon has been the quest of military planners since time immemorial. The Great Wall of China and the Maginot Line of France are but two classic products of those pursuits. However, a defense-dominated strategy that promises survival is as unlikely to find attainability in the high frontiers of outer space as it was in these relics of an age gone by.

Notes

1. Daniel O. Graham, *High Frontier—A New National Strategy* (Washington, D.C.: Heritage Foundation, 1982).

2. Ibid., p. 14

3. Ibid., p. 12

4. Jack Ruina, "ABM Revisited: Promise or Peril?" *Washington Quarterly* (Autumn 1981):63–64.

5. Discrimination between targets is extremely critical since the Soviets, British, French, Chinese, and/or Americans may all be launching submarine launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) or intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) out of the same general geographic area.

6. "Science Panel Opposes Space Power Stations," *New York Times*, July 3, 1981, p. A11. Panel conclusions are contained in National Academy of Sciences, *Electric Power from Orbit: A Critique of a Satellite Power System* (July 2, 1981).

7. "New Solar Power Satellite Study," *Space World* (January 1982): 34-35; *Solar Power Satellites* (Washington, D.C.: Office of Technology Assessment, 1981) p. 8.

8. Dr. Keyworth's statement was in response to a question concerning the attainability of high frontier objectives. The dialogue occurred on September 16, 1982, at the Air Force Association National Symposium "Space: Military Challenges and Opportunities." The symposium was held in Washington, D.C. See also Walter Andrews, "Keyworth Questions 'High Frontier' Plan," *Air Force Times*, September 27, 1982, p. 23.

9. Leslie H. Gelb, "The Cruise Missile," *New York Times*, September 2, 1982, p. 3.

10. Flora Lewis, "Soviet Arms-Control Expert Asks Nuclear Balance," *New York Times*, September 2, 1982, p. 3.

11. For example, article V of the ABM Treaty prohibits the deployment of ABM launchers for launching more than one ABM interceptor missile at a time per launcher, and article III limits ABM systems defending ICBM silos to two large phased array radars and not more than eighteen smaller radars. The Swarmjet concept calls for launching up to 10,000 projectiles per launcher and for deploying as many as eight radars per silo.

12. Testimony of Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee as reported by *Aviation Week & Space Technology*, November 16, 1981, p. 18.

Part XII
Security Assistance Strategies
in the 1980s



TREE *of* LIBERTY SOCIETY

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Making Security Assistance a More Effective Instrument of National Policy

Ernest Graves

Since World War II the United States has sought to deter and limit conflict through a strategy of collective security. A key instrument for implementing defense cooperation with allied and friendly governments has been security assistance: the supply of arms, training, and support. Collective security and the security assistance program enjoyed strong bipartisan support in the 1950s. This is no longer the case. The experience of the last three decades and the significant changes that have occurred on the international and domestic scene have eroded support for both the strategic concept and the implementation of programs.

Under these circumstances we must ask whether collective security and security assistance constitute the appropriate strategic response to the conflict projected for the 1980s. If they do, what improvements are needed to make them more effective instruments of national policy? If not, what alternative strategy should be pursued?

The advantages of collective security have been demonstrated often. But the latent isolationist tendencies in the United States and the centrifugal forces affecting any alliance of nations over time require a continual rethinking of the rationale for the U.S. international role. Further, the United States no longer enjoys the military and economic dominance that it did following World War II. Collective security must be viewed in the light of the diffusion of power over the last three decades.

This diffusion of power has brought about an even more dangerous world. Rather than alleviating international tensions, technological, economic, and social progress has intensified competition among nations. The result is growing turbulence and conflict. In the 1980s, vital U.S. interests overseas will be threatened continually by conflict. The situation will be all the more dangerous to the United States because the Soviet Union will seek to exploit turbulence to extend its influence and hegemony. If the United States wishes to preserve its way of life, it must improve its strategy for deterring and limiting international conflict.

Three major advantages of collective security make it an appropriate strategic response to the turbulence of the 1980s. First, and possibly most important, it enables the United States to confront the Soviet Union, its allies, and its surrogates from forward positions in virtually every area of the

world, providing defense in depth and avoiding defeat in detail. Such forward positions protect vital U.S. interests: access to raw materials and markets, freedom of movement by sea and air in pursuit of trade and security, and the ability to move quickly to the aid of friendly governments when they are threatened or attacked. In the long-range competition between the contrasting ideologies and different political, economic, and social systems of the United States and the Soviet Union, it is important to resist the extension of Soviet influence wherever it may occur.

Second, collective security enables the United States to bring a preponderance of resources against the Soviet Union, much more than the United States alone possesses. It would cost the United States far more to counter the Soviet Union by itself, if indeed such were possible. Unfortunately, the debate over whether the United States is bearing more than its fair share tends to obscure the tremendous advantage of being able to share the burden among so many countries.

A third advantage of collective security is that it improves the chances of deterring or dealing effectively with conflict at its lowest level. It provides the means to prevent costly escalation and the ability to cope with the problem of Soviet intervention and expansion of influence at the least overall cost to the economies of the United States and other affected countries. Here again, the debate over the cost of defense seems to miss the point that the cost of preparedness and effective deterrence is far less than the cost of conflict—much less in dollars and infinitely less in human lives and suffering.

The ongoing debate over collective security and the security assistance program focuses on their efficacy in deterring and limiting conflict, particularly local and regional conflict. The problem has three aspects. First, progress in other countries has led to a divergence of interests so there is no longer the same community of purpose guiding collective security efforts. Second, the diffusion of power has diminished the ability of the United States to influence the conduct of its collective security partners. Third, the security assistance programs employed to implement collective security arrangements have increased military capabilities, raising expectations that the recipients could engage successfully in conflict. Many examples can be cited both to demonstrate these problems and to argue that the beneficial results of the U.S. strategy of collective security have outweighed their drawbacks.

From the beginning, the supply of arms, training, and support has been a key ingredient in implementing defense cooperation. First and foremost, it has increased the means for defense partners to provide for their own security, the goal every country seeks in joining in collective security arrangements with the United States. Second, security assistance has provided the means for the recipient to cooperate more closely with the United

States in combined operations for mutual defense. Third, it has served as a tangible quid pro quo for base, access, and transit rights needed for the operation of U.S. forces, extending the umbrella of U.S. military capabilities as a means of deterring and limiting conflict in the region. Beyond these primarily military purposes, security assistance has served as a symbol of support for the recipient government, given the recipient an added sense of security (which contributes to regional stability), and provided a quid pro quo for political cooperation.

Debate on the purposes and utility of security assistance consistently contrasts the practical and symbolic significance of various programs. The experience of the last thirty years is filled with examples of both practical and symbolic successes and failures. Regardless of liberal or conservative proclivities, however, every administration has found security assistance to be an indispensable tool in pursuing U.S. defense and foreign policy objectives.

This raises the paradox of security assistance. Every administration has found it to be an essential instrument of defense and foreign policy, notwithstanding the Carter administration's initial declaration that it would be an exceptional tool. Yet the bipartisan support of the 1950s has given way to a condition in which military assistance is one of the most controversial and divisive issues addressed annually by Congress. What underlies this dichotomy, and what are the most significant problems affecting the program?

Several factors contribute to the challenges presented by security assistance planning, decision making, and execution. First is the size and complexity of the program. In fiscal year 1982 grants and credits will exceed \$6 billion, and new arms sales agreements will exceed \$20 billion. The current backlog of undelivered orders is \$60 billion. One hundred fifteen foreign countries and international organizations are recipients of grants, credits, and sales. Programs range from advanced fighter aircraft to antitank and anti-aircraft missiles to an aircraft carrier to construction of a military city for three mechanized brigades and 75,000 inhabitants. Every military service including the coast guard is involved in providing security assistance.

A second major factor is the multiplicity and diversity of political, security, and economic interests that must be served by the various country assistance programs. Although there are common threads, the interplay of interests gives the relations between the United States and each security assistance recipient a unique quality. One cannot successfully apply a standard formula in devising and executing country programs; rather each must be skillfully tailored to local and regional conditions and the particular interests being served.

A third factor is the competition for resources, both in the U.S. budget and within the Department of Defense. This is intense even in prosperous times but poses severe problems in times of domestic economic difficulty like the present. Despite the rhetoric about the contribution of security

assistance to U.S. national security, there is little enthusiasm for trade-offs that would increase the security assistance program at the expense of the size, modernization, or readiness of U.S. forces.

When it comes to decision making, the security assistance program faces all the complexities of an interagency environment, the political nature of most of its decisions, and the lack of a domestic constituency that is a direct beneficiary of the program. At the same time a broad spectrum of domestic constituencies has significant if not vital interests in program decisions.

As a result of all these factors, there is both continual controversy about the content of the program and dissatisfaction with the results achieved. These manifestations reflect the lack of an objective standard for measuring the success of foreign relations and the inherent limitations of any endeavor aimed at concerting the efforts of many sovereign states. In retrospect one is both amazed at what has been achieved and disappointed at what has not.

What can be done more nearly to realize the potential of security assistance as an instrument for deterring and limiting conflict in the 1980s and to avoid future repetition of the most serious shortcomings to date? Do such measures have sufficient promise that we can rely on security assistance in the future as we have in the past?

At the head of the list of corrective measures must be put a much greater effort to achieve consensus and continuity in substantive security assistance policy. The last two changes of administration have seen a deliberate effort to accentuate policy differences, to repudiate the predecessor's approach, and to declare a fundamentally different policy. This has had several adverse consequences. One is to cause an hiatus in implementing important programs. Another is to create uncertainty and to undermine confidence on the part of allied and friendly governments. A third is to stimulate controversy that further erodes congressional support for the program. Careful examination reveals that, measured in practical terms such as the dollar value of the program and the number and sophistication of weapons systems supplied, declared policy differences have had far less effect on the security assistance program than economic conditions and the U.S. government's need to respond to international developments.

The recent radical swings in declared security assistance policy are part of a general pattern of growing discontinuity between successive administrations. Presidents Carter and Reagan campaigned on the platform that one of the principal problems of the United States is its government, and they continued such criticism for much of their terms in office. Admittedly such attacks are directed primarily at the role of government in domestic affairs; however, they seem to ignore that defense and foreign relations are both the first purpose and the special province of government and that belittling government weakens it in these functions as well.

With all the controversy over government programs and the lack of bipartisan collaboration in most areas, it is little wonder that the executive branch and Congress have often differed sharply on the security assistance program.

Is there any hope for overcoming the U.S. preoccupation with domestic affairs and narrow partisan advantage in order to provide more effective support in vital foreign policy matters, such as the security assistance program? The cynical answer is no. I prefer to believe that the president can move toward compromise with his opposition in Congress and that such a move in the national interest will be reciprocated. Further, a political campaign based on the importance of bipartisan consensus in defense and foreign affairs could dampen the policy oscillations. It is time to decry and reduce the harm that is done to U.S. national security from narrow partisanship respecting foreign assistance.

A second major area requiring corrective emphasis is the planning of security assistance. The program is a miniature version of the U.S. defense program spread among one hundred countries; however, there is a great contrast between the elaborate planning, programming, and budgeting that supports the formulation of the U.S. defense program and the limited consultation and planning that go into formulating the security assistance program. There was a time when security assistance planning was more closely integrated with defense planning and when an effort was made to prepare equally elaborate plans for security assistance. Despite the advantage of better integration, such elaborate planning was neither desirable nor effective when the focus of the program moved from NATO to the Third World. At the other extreme, when the Carter administration stigmatized security assistance as an exceptional tool of foreign policy, planning was discouraged. Today one sees significant shortcomings in responsiveness and timely, efficient execution that would be improved by more adequate planning. Progress is being made, but it takes time to establish and refine the planning process when so many countries and U.S. departments and agencies are involved. Moreover, no amount of planning can put the Department of Defense in a position to respond immediately to all the security assistance requirements that flow from developments in foreign relations. The United States can and will do better than it has in the recent past as it improves its consultation and combined planning with recipients.

The third major area for corrective action is program execution. Heading the agenda in this area is the need for more flexible authority under the law to do quickly and efficiently what is ultimately done now after much red tape and delay. The present inefficient state of affairs results largely from the lack of bipartisan consensus and from past confrontations between the executive branch and Congress over various security assistance actions. The

broad authorities of the program's early years have been whittled away as Congress has narrowed, restricted, or revoked provisions under which the executive branch took actions to which Congress objected. The plethora of restrictions evidences both congressional opposition to various aspects of the security assistance program and the minimal expectations many members have of the program's contribution to U.S. defense and foreign policy objectives. This can be reversed.

Progress was made with a number of amendments in the fiscal year 1980, 1981, and 1982 authorization bills, but new restrictions were also imposed. In this area real progress is made through steady effort with top-level support. In the Carter administration, support for reform increased as top officials experienced the frustrations of trying to implement security assistance under the restrictive regime imposed by law and policy.

One final area of improvement deserves mention as important to the future effectiveness of security assistance as an instrument of defense and foreign policy. The national decision-making apparatus, the interagency coordination process, and Department of Defense program management need to be scrubbed continually to improve their performance and counteract the tendency to build up bureaucratic impediments. I am not suggesting radical reorganizations or changes of personnel, either of which would do more to disrupt the program than to increase output. Rather, I contend that every organization needs a periodic checkup to look at what it can do better. Further, the entire decision-making process needs well-trained, experienced, highly motivated professional staff who are responsive to policy direction but able to provide continuity in program formulation and execution.

These improvements are urgently needed to improve the contribution of the security assistance program to collective security and other U.S. defense and foreign policy objectives. No one could realistically argue that this contribution alone will solve the extraordinary international economic, nation security, and foreign relations problems that will confront the United States and allies in the 1980s. However, there is also no realistic alternative to international collaboration as the means by which the United States can alleviate these problems and gradually revive world order. Considering the important role that security assistance can play in that effort, it would be very shortsighted not to try to improve the program as an instrument of national policy.

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Third World Perspectives on Arms Transfers and Production

Bruce E. Arlinghaus

As an instrument of foreign policy, arms transfers must be conducted intelligently both to maximize their effectiveness and to prevent their causing the opposite outcomes for which they were intended.

Many of the reasons Third World nations increasingly demand arms are misunderstood by the industrialized supplier nations. Much of this misunderstanding comes because the industrialized countries are, for the most part, at a very different stage of their political evolution than are their developing counterparts. Much of what the industrial countries take for granted are seen by the developing countries as fragile, valuable commodities, recently won through independence. Thus, immediate priorities may be different, though goals may ultimately be similar.

Factors Influencing Arms Transfers

Sovereignty and Security



Since the time of Adam Smith, the sovereignty of the nation-state has been considered congruent with the security (both physical and symbolic) of that political entity.¹ While the industrial nations place great importance on security concerns (as evidenced by their military expenditures), they take sovereignty more or less for granted. Although the Falklands incident arose from disputes over sovereignty, the existence of Britain and Argentina as independent nation-states was never at question. For Britain, Argentine claims on the islands were a challenge to its status as a major power; for Argentina, the islands were a symbolic vestige of neocolonialism and a means of asserting and reinforcing its sovereignty and status as an emerging regional power.

Such considerations are radically different for newly independent Third World nations. Their recently won sovereignty could easily be lost—to a superpower, former colonial power, or one of several emerging regional

The views expressed in this chapter are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of Defense or any other agency of the U.S. government.

powers with historical or irredentist claims on their territories or peoples. To use the Falklands incident again, where there was doubt and speculation was whether either or both governments would survive the crisis. In the end, the British were successful and the Galteri regime fell. This is another significant factor for developing nations: the fragility of existing political leadership and the process of its change. British loss of the Falklands might have caused the Thatcher government to fall, but it certainly would not have created a political crisis comparable to that experienced in Argentina after its defeat.

For many Third World leaders, having brought their countries to independence, they are the nation; their downfall would threaten both the sovereignty and the existence of the state. In this sense, certain elements of independence are more symbolic than essential. The loss of these elements of independence may bring about chaos and the disintegration of a nation.

Defense and Development

Preventing the chaos of overturned governments demands expenditures for defense. In the industrialized countries, debates concerning guns and butter create a great deal of political friction. In developing countries, these debates are even more heated because the resource base from which defense expenditures must come are even more constrained.

Most definitions of national security include two elements: the physical protection of territory and its population and the importance of the broad economic base that underlies the existence of the state, thus making defense of its territory and population both feasible and worthwhile.²

This understanding of national security confronts the leaders of Third World countries with a pointed dilemma; they must provide for both defense and development in order to be secure. While for industrialized nations the requirement for security simultaneous with economic growth appears self-evident, for developing nations it appears impossible. Third World leaders must choose between immediate demands for security in the form of national defense and the long-term requirements for national security through economic development. Although lack of economic development often exacerbates the immediate security problem, most leaders opt for defense over development. A failure to provide for immediate security may preclude the stay in office necessary to enjoy the benefits of eventual economic success.

It is easy for these in the industrialized world to criticize mortgaging the future for short-term benefit. But not only is immediate security a precondition for economic development, it is also seen as prerequisite for the continued existence of many Third World countries.³ Leaders in these

countries recognize that defense expenditure might be better spent on development, but only in a perfect world in which defense is unnecessary.⁴

Nor do Third World countries accept the argument that the industrialized countries would or could provide for their protection and thus obviate the need for military expenditures. Not only are military forces a symbol of sovereignty and independence, they are also thought to be more reliable in defending the interests defined by the national leadership. Umbrella defense agreements not only carry with them the potential for uninvited external intervention but also imply that the national interests of both protector and protected are the same. This may have been true during the colonial era; it is no longer valid today. Often these interests may be similar or related but will be interpreted and articulated differently, if only to reiterate the independence of the states involved.

Arms Transfers and Production

Because the perception of threats differs with the interests being threatened, the developing countries seek not only the transfer of arms but also the transfer of the technology needed to support and produce those arms locally. Although part of an overall program of industrialization, such efforts have an important security dimension, which goes beyond the production and substitution of various military consumables and durables to include the research, development, production, and fielding of indigenous weapons systems.⁵

Here again economic development is a prerequisite in order to remove the sources of internal instability that threaten national security and the overall development process and also to create the industrial base necessary for the development of indigenous defense industries. Those states that have enjoyed some success in this area have not tried to create defense industries from the ground up. Rather, they have capitalized on existing industries and put them to military use.

The arms trade with developing nations also represents an important source of technology transfer at two levels. First, the weapons themselves require the transfer of operational, technical, logistic, and management skills for their maintenance and employment. Second, through repair, modification, and coproduction facilities developed within recipient nations, these transfers represent an additional increment of indigenous industrial capacity and infrastructure.⁶

These developments have particular political significance for both supplier and recipient nations and weigh heavily in their measurements of the potential costs and benefits of arms transfers. The technology transferred as

part of the arms trade and the impact of these transfers on economic development in recipient countries affects the development of indigenous defense industries and the growing demand for such capacities in developing countries.

Arms Transfer Trends

A number of dominant trends have emerged in the international arms trade over the past decade. First the total dollar value of arms transferred and the number of weapons systems supplied have shown definite increases. Second, developing nations, including some of the poorest countries, are rapidly becoming the major consumers of arms. Third and as a result, virtually all arms suppliers sell weapons either on a cash basis or on credit with concessionary terms. Military grant-aid, even by the Soviets, is becoming a thing of the past. Fourth, state-of-the-art weapons systems as sophisticated as those used by front-line NATO and Warsaw Pact units are often transferred. Finally, especially the newly industrialized developing countries have sought as part of the arms transfer process to enter into coproduction agreements that would allow them to develop their own arms industries.⁷

These trends have great political significance for both supplier and recipient nations and represent much more than the sale of equipment. In fact, they constitute a wholesale transfer of modern military technology (in its broadest sense) that may cause a major reorganization of global and regional relationships.

Recipient nations traditionally have sought weapons to increase their own security and to further their own political ends. Their concerns have included the maintenance of internal stability, the deterrence of regional rivals with irredentist or other goals, the symbolic representation of national sovereignty, or support for aspirations to become a regional power.⁸

Supplier countries have used arms transfers to further their own political and economic goals, recognizing that arms transfers are an essential instrument of foreign policy in assessing local or regional demand factors. Supplier countries seldom take the perspective of the recipient countries into account; rather they usually see these local or regional factors as possible constraints on the ability to transfer to gain regional political influence.⁹

As potential arms buyers have multiplied, competition among potential arms suppliers has also increased. As a result, not only has the arms market become a buyer's market, but in many ways recipient nations have been able to manipulate arms transfers to their own advantage. For example, recipient nations have been able to demand arms on generous and concessionary

terms and in quantities far exceeding those desired by the suppliers themselves.

Factors Influencing Military Technology Transfers

Perhaps more important than the direct political consequences of arms transfers are their significance as technology transfers. While military technology transfers may be viewed as part of the overall process of technology transfer to the developing world, several facets distinguish them from non-military technology transfers.¹⁰

First, most military technology is nonproductive; it contributes relatively little, and that indirectly, to the overall national economy of recipient nations. Most military forces and equipment cannot be adapted to civilian, civic-action, or nation-building uses. Growing military forces and accompanying increases in domestic military expenditures may stimulate growth through increased demand but may also add to inflation. The added external foreign debt and annual debt service, which arms purchases represent in scarce hard currencies, add to balance-of-payments and other financial problems.

Second, military technology is designed for military uses. Even if intended only for its stabilizing, deterrent value, such technology may lead to regional arms races, increased conflict (both in frequency and intensity), and employment against the country that originally supplied it.

Third, indigenous defense industries must seek export markets to subsidize high initial costs and to lower the individual end item cost for their own forces. This suggests a proliferation of arms suppliers, further eroding the usefulness of arms transfers as an instrument of political influence.

Fourth, because of technology absorption problems, recipient countries may become dependent on either large numbers of foreigners to maintain (and even operate) weapons systems or on sending large numbers of trainees to supplier nations. These are expensive, short-term solutions that add to domestic political and economic difficulties, the brain drain, inappropriate training, and neocolonialism.

Finally, the transfers of state-of-the-art military technology and equipment risk their compromise and speed the loss of proprietary information. Coproduction or large stocks of spares and ammunition permit recipient nations to circumvent end-use agreements and retransfer military technology to embargoed nations. The usefulness of arms transfers and "spare parts diplomacy" is thereby reduced as a foreign policy tool.¹¹

With regard to trends in the international arms trade and the factors

affecting military technology as a special instance of technology transfer, the developing world can be readily segmented into two parts: continuing consumer nations and incipient producer nations. Both continue to seek arms transfers from the industrialized nations, but the latter are increasingly interested in coproduction agreements based on the transfer of components rather than completed systems.

Continuing Consumers

The principal problem for the continuing consumers of military technology is that of military technology absorption, which can be distinguished from general questions of technology absorption.¹²

Military technology and the skills associated with its use are related somewhat paradoxically to the civilian sector. While some military technical skills transfer readily to the civilian economy, many do not. The skills that require the most expense, longest training, and greatest experience are often most transferable. In such cases, developing countries are unable to hold on to military personnel so trained. At the same time, skills essential to proper military technology absorption are not transferable.

This situation confronts many developing countries with a very difficult problem: increase military pay (meaning an increase in domestic military expenditures) to hold on to skilled personnel or lose them. But these countries very often cannot afford or justify having a large military training establishment because the economy can absorb only so many highly skilled individuals and other skilled individuals not at all.

One solution to this problem is to hire technical representatives as part of the credit-based arms transfer agreement. But this only delays the problem a few years and makes no contribution to the national economy, labor force, or military infrastructure. Such visible signs of foreign dependency can also create political problems and disruptions of import flows as the domestic and support needs of those technicians are met.

There is the question of the overall appropriateness of the weapons themselves. Do they add military capability, or are they just prestige items? Are five F-5 fighter aircraft properly absorbed, operational, and fully employed more effective in the end than one F-15 state-of-the-art-jet fighter grounded for lack of necessary parts or flown by only a marginally competent pilot?

Finally, does appropriate military technology actually exist? There is little to make one believe that such equipment exists currently or that there would be much demand for it; however, with the increase of incipient

producers in the world arms market, such equipment may become more available at prices affordable to the poorer nations.

Incipient Producers

The newly industrialized countries—including Brazil, Argentina, India, South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, Israel, and South Africa—have developed indigenous defense industries. These countries are currently emerging as significant suppliers of arms to developing (and some developed) countries, primarily because they will sell military technology with few if any foreign policy stipulations. These countries are able to exploit the competition among the major suppliers and provide arms to recipient nations whose political goals, financial situation, or human rights record may deny them access to the principal suppliers.¹³

There is little indication, however, that recipient nations seek the products of these countries as a matter of preference. Many countries view particularly U.S. technology as superior but expensive. Further, the vagaries of the political decision making in the United States, long lead times, and the stringent end-use requirements and openness of U.S. arms purchases can also be daunting.

These opportunities for success for incipient producers that currently exist in the international arms market may not persist. Just as theoretical limits exist as to the number and type of arms an individual nation can absorb, so there exists the possibility that a global or regional market can be saturated.

Yet many countries continue to develop indigenous arms production capacities, not so much to add a dimension to their industrial output as to satisfy cogent national security motives. The development of arms industries often detracts from general industrialization by diverting investment, skilled personnel, and other resources. Once committed, these resources may create excess capacity and may not be transferable to the civilian sector. The opportunity costs—retooling, retraining, and so on—may remain as excessive as when the defense industries were originally created.

Although many Third World arms producers achieved a degree of industrialization prior to building defense industries, or at least built them simultaneously and in coordination with one another, many countries seek defense industries in the absence of such a base. The oil-producing countries in particular are capable of buying complete factories for assembly or coproduction of defense equipment. Certain production facilities, such as those needed for ammunition, would be practical, but wholesale purchases

of defense industrial capacity without a firm industrial base simply wastes money. The funds would be better spent buying large quantities of spares, building facilities to store them, and training personnel to use them.

Conclusion

If present trends continue, the international trade in arms will take on a life of its own. Increased competition among present suppliers, proliferation of new suppliers, and continuing demand for arms in a conflict-ridden developing world will exacerbate this tendency. Policy interests and domestic defense industries within the United States make it difficult for the United States to disengage itself unilaterally from the market.

But arms transfers require a more informed and pragmatic approach. Transfer of state-of-the-art equipment to continuing consumers is probably ill advised because of technology absorption problems. Encouraging and financing purchases from new allied suppliers may be one solution. Transfer of production technology should also be limited, if only to slow the growth of production capacity worldwide. Repair, modification, and training facilities should be encouraged, as should the production of supplies and spares, to channel the urge for Third World defense industrialization in ways that are productive and cost-effective.

Finally, U.S. arms transfer policy needs to be better informed regarding recipient perspectives on their security needs. If, in addition to furthering U.S. interests, the United States is concerned with increasing security and stability in the developing world, such perspectives are essential to making arms transfers work as an effective tool of foreign policy. Decisions regarding them cannot be taken quickly or in a vacuum; they are part of the overall economic, political, strategic, and technological relationship between the United States and the developing world.

Notes

1. Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations* (New York: Menthén, 1950), 2:186.
2. See, for example, the introduction to Amos A. Jordan et al., *American National Security: Policy and Process* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980).
3. For a recent example, see Avi Plascov, *Security in the Persian Gulf: Modernization, Political Development and Stability*, (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1982), pp. 100–109. See also Ernest

W. Lefever, *Spear and Scepter: Army, Police and Politics in Tropical Africa*, (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1970).

4. See Francis M. Deng, "Security Problems: An African Predicament" (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1981). Also see Bruce E. Arlinghaus, ed., *African Security Issues: Sovereignty, Stability, Solidarity* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1983).

5. Balder Raj Nayar, "Political Mainsprings of Economic Planning and in the New Nations," *Comparative Politics* 6, no. 3 (Fall 1974); Michael Moodie, "Sovereignty, Security and Arms" *Washington Papers*, no. 67 (1979).

6. U.S. Congress, House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Changing Perspective on U.S. Arms Transfer Policy*, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1981); U.S. Army War College, *Effectiveness of U.S. Security Assistance in Acquiring and Retaining Friends and Allies*, Publication ACN 79016 (Carlisle Barracks, Pa.: Strategic Studies Institute, 1980).

7. U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, *World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers, 1970-1979* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1982).

8. William P. Avery and Louis A. Picard, "Pull Factors in the Transfer of Conventional Armaments to Africa," *Journal of Political and Military Sociology* 8, no. 1 (Spring 1980):55-70.

9. Andrew J. Perre, "Arms Sales: The New Diplomacy," *Foreign Affairs* 60, no. 2 (Winter 1981-1982):266-286. See also his *The Global Politics of Arms Sales* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982).

10. K. Perkins, "Winning Friends: A Military Strategy in the Third World," *Royal United Services Institute* (June 1981):39-41.

11. Anthony Sampson, *The Arms Bazaar* (New York: Viking, 1978).

12. David K. Whynes, *The Economics of Third World Military Expenditure* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1979); Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, *The Arms Trade with the Third World*, rev. and abridged ed. (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1975).

13. This summary is based in part on that in the introduction to Andrew J. Pierre, ed., *Arms Transfers and American Foreign Policy* (New York: New York University Press, 1979), pp.4-5. See also Introduction to Bruce E. Arlinghuas, ed., *Arms of Africa* (Lexington Mass.: Lexington Books, D.C. Heath and Company, 1983).

Part XIII

Conclusion



TREE *of* LIBERTY SOCIETY

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U.S. Strategic Responses to Conflict in the 1980s

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General Conclusions

As Alexis de Tocqueville wrote over 150 years ago, "There are two things that a democratic people will always find very difficult, to begin a war and to end it." In general, democratic societies are conservative of the material and institutional gains they have made under conditions of peace and freedom. They maintain establishments but do not wish them aggressively deployed. The military may be granted a big stick but must walk softly with it. Tranquillity and the status quo are the popular goals. Violence and confrontation are seen as inimical to those goals.

Dictatorships, by contrast, are conservative of the political system by which their elite acquired and hold power. Democracy anywhere, particularly where it produces higher living standards, is considered a communicable disease. To prevent infection at home, the dictator feels he must attack the disease abroad, either indirectly by playing on its internal contradictions or more directly by severing the external economic and political lifelines essential to its survival. If he dared, he would cauterize it by direct attack on its nucleus. To the dictator, successful democracy, even in a militarily impotent nation, is a constant threat, and a status quo that permits democracy to flourish is uncomfortable. If he has the power to project his will abroad, he will use it actively and in concert with other dictators to upset the status quo and to contain and diminish the democratic disease.

The stronger democracies, by and large, are prepared to coexist with absolutism. Some of the stronger dictatorships (such as North Korea, Vietnam, Cuba, and countries in Eastern Europe), led by the Soviet Union, appear to find protracted coexistence unpalatable. Frustrated in direct assault on the major democracies by the deterrent power of NATO, they are nibbling away at the weaker democracies (and at hostile dictatorships) in the Third World using a panoply of pressure tools from the mere display of power, through psychological warfare, terrorism, and subversion to actual military attack, as in Afghanistan and Kampuchea. Their presumed grand strategy is to weaken the West by discrediting democracy as a workable political system, installing procommunist regimes in Third World countries

of geostrategic or raw material significance, badgering U.S. attention and resources from Southwest and Northeast Asia to the Caribbean basin, sub-Saharan Africa, and Southeast Asia, and weakening the Western alliance structure in Europe and the Americas through exploitation of its inherent and growing centrifugal tendencies.

Even this limited and oblique Soviet agenda may seem ambitious for a country under severe domestic political and economic strain and whose European allies are so beset by similar strains that they have limited capacity to project power in the Third World. Yet it is not unrealistic. The Third World, battered successively by escalated energy costs and global recession, is ripe for new messiahs. Dissatisfaction over Western responses to their problems deepens their vulnerability to alternative relationships. The potential is high in the Third World for intrastate or regional conflict that, though usually peripheral to the East-West confrontation, can be manipulated at low cost to the advantage of the Soviet Union and its proxies. The fragmentation of Western alliances need not be even a line item in the Soviet budget; it has its own dynamics and can be accelerated as much by Soviet forbearance as by Soviet pressure. A balanced arms reduction agreement, for example, might contribute to global peace but in the process could erode the rationale for the existence of NATO.

What countervailing strategy does the West have to counteract the kinds of threats and conflicts projected in the future? NATO fills a vital deterrent role but is inoperative in the projected conflict arenas of the 1980s. Some U.S. allies, notably France, Britain, Israel, and South Korea, have the power and will to resist provocations in their respective spheres of interest (and the Chinese fill a similar role on their perimeters), but these spheres of influence are narrowly defined and leave much of the Third World untended. If countries have the will to resist Soviet imperialism but lack the power, they may ultimately turn to the United States for some measure of support, as will established Third World allies in Asia and Latin America. The United States needs a coherent, preconceived strategic framework to guide its response to these requests.

Even more, it needs a strategy that lays down a course of positive action to deter Soviet meddling in the Third World. If the current goal is containment (and that seems the best way to describe it) then it is better to pursue it with positive initiatives than by simple reaction. U.S. NATO strategy, grounded in part on nuclear deterrence, does not help the United States in the Third World. It needs a new and different array of diplomatic, economic, and military tools to meet the emerging Soviet challenge in that arena and a systematic plan for the long term. The strategy should be broad enough to anticipate and deter conflict unrelated to the East-West confrontation but nonetheless inimical to national interest if only because it is susceptible to Soviet exploitation.

Elements of U.S. Strategy for the 1980s

U.S. global strategy for the 1980s must ensure the deterrence of strategic war and high-intensity war in key theaters such as Europe, the Pacific, and on the seas. It must also further U.S. and Western interests in the face of low-intensity conflict in the Third World. While defining such a global strategy is beyond the scope of this book several of the essential prerequisites of such a strategy can be gleaned from the analysis and observations presented at the the "Strategic Responses to Conflict in the 1980s" conference.

An effective global strategy should endow all agencies of the government, both civil and military, with a common vision of overall U.S. policy and assign each its appropriate share in overseas peace building and peace-keeping. In the absence of a consistent grand strategy bestowed from the political level, it is understandable that each foreign policy agency and each military service will impute its own strategy to justify its mission and budget. Diplomatic, economic, and military initiatives, undisciplined by a common global concept, tend to work at cross-purposes.

Grand strategy does not come easy to a democracy, particularly U.S. democracy. The Constitution confers admirable continuity in government but perversely frustrates continuity in policy. As Dr. Brzezinski emphasized in his address to the September 1982 CSIS conference of this study, the electoral process puts a premium on change. Each succeeding administration, thrust into office by the perceived inadequacies of its predecessor, seeks its own unique place in history and feels, with some justification, that it has a mandate for change. The traditional honeymoon period is too short to be wasted on reflection, so the old is scrapped and the new introduced before the new administration fully grasps the nuances of the problem. Allies, cynical of the episodic rhythm of U.S. government, mark time until policy gets back into synch with reality. Focusing economic aid on the most needy countries with the best civil rights record will not necessarily best serve immediate strategic requirements. New weapons systems and an overwhelming service orientation to deter an already unlikely threat in Central Europe diverts resources from more kinetic contingencies in the Third World, where a different kind of hardware and a different force structure and doctrine is required. Ideally the proponents of every new weapons system should be required to answer the question, What gap in our strategic requirements does this system fill?

Another perceived impediment to strategy formulation is the reactive posture that containment ostensibly imposes. How does one plan to confront unpredictable hostile initiatives? This problem is real but not insurmountable. By identifying more vulnerable vital interests, the United States can establish priorities. By coordinating positive multiagency programs, it

can strengthen areas against political, economic, or military penetration (existing National Security Council country program directives provide a tool for this but are not binding on the Congress). By designing specialized forces in modular units with improved mobility, it can construct appropriate joint task forces to meet a wide spectrum of conflict contingencies of varying intensity. By strengthening interservice coordination and maintaining state-of-the-art C³I, it can deploy forces more flexibly and economically in unfamiliar terrain. By developing cadres with carefully selected area and language expertise, it can improve liaison with key allies and clients for combined operations. Through constant updating of its global air and sea routes and contingency overflight and basing arrangements and by pre-positioning and forward basing where feasible, it can shorten reaction times and pare down airlift requirements.

The optimal U.S. global strategy for the 1980s will embrace both strategic deterrence to high-intensity communist attack in Central Europe and Korea and tailored reaction to low-intensity conflict with the Third World. It will engage all agencies of the government, both military and civilian, with an overseas peace-building and peacekeeping potential. It will emphasize anticipation and prevention of conflict over reactive response. It will be positive rather than passive and incorporate the concept of preemptive initiative to deter hostile provocation by adversaries. It will feature alliance building and invoke alliance consensus in addressing common threats. It will seek to build on the strength of allies and clients to contain their own conflicts under a U.S. mantle of strategic and tactical deterrence and with U.S. logistical and intelligence support. It will encourage friendly governments to eliminate the underlying causes of intrastate and interstate tensions that could lead to conflict. It will be overt in the clarification of its fundamental peacekeeping goal to friend and foe alike but usually covert and ambiguous in planned responses to specific contingencies. It will emphasize the rapid termination of conflict to minimize casualties and the dangers of horizontal and vertical escalation. It will seek a consensus among the U.S. political leadership sufficiently strong to obviate confusing and expensive shifts in direction as administrations change.

It was not within the scope and intent of this study to produce a grand strategy for the 1980s. Such a strategy must be based on goals, priorities, constraints, and philosophy, which only an elected government can define. It was our purpose, however, to identify and elaborate on some of the major components that belong in any strategy developed for the 1980s. A review of the chapters in this book yields a number of insights and conclusions that we believe will prove of considerable value to U.S. strategists in addressing current and future challenges.

Regional Conclusions

It is commonplace to observe that U.S. strategists have focused since World War II almost exclusively on the threat of a high-intensity Soviet attack against Central Europe. The doctrine, force design, and technology of all three services have been geared to that threat.

We now realize that the nature of the war in Vietnam was not an aberration but an example of the future. The threat of high-intensity conventional and nuclear warfare must continue to be addressed, but the United States must now divert some forces and management attention to new and more imminent contingencies in the Third World, some of which may not be directly related to the superpower confrontation.

These new contingencies will be globally dispersed and cover a wide spectrum of conflict, largely in the low-intensity range we understand least and for which we are least prepared; virtually the whole spectrum was encountered in one form or another in Vietnam. An essential first step in planning for conflict in the 1980s will be to reexamine the lessons learned from that war.



Europe

There will almost certainly be some low-intensity conflict in Europe in the 1980s, such as continued strife in Northern Ireland, demonstrations, rioting, and terrorism in the rest of Western Europe over a variety of issues, and popular unrest in Eastern Europe. The primary emphasis in the chapters that addressed this area was the declining capability of NATO to deter, and ultimately to defend against, a high-intensity Warsaw Pact attack in Central Europe. Although such an attack is unlikely in the 1980s, there was agreement that the deterioration in the superpower strategic nuclear balance, the declining credibility of the theater nuclear deterrent, and above all the dangerous and growing imbalance in both the quality and numbers of the opposing conventional forces will, if not redressed, invite such an attack in the decades to come. Yet it was agreed that the defense of Europe is a vital U.S. interest and can be guaranteed only by a strong NATO.

Some of the key points for restrengthening NATO, as advanced by Robert W. Komer, include the following:

Theater-strategic nuclear deterrence, though an outdated doctrine, should be maintained at a credible standoff level.

The rebuilding of NATO's conventional deterrent must be a coalition effort, both to forestall growing domestic pressures for a reduction in U.S. commitments to Europe and to permit the United States to address threats in Korea and the Third World.

A strategy of maritime envelopment will not contain the Soviet threat to Europe.

Emphasis should continue to be on NATO's center rather than on its flanks. The forward defense of Germany is crucial to the whole exercise and important to effective French participation in continental defense.

A continued commitment of ten U.S. divisions to NATO is essential and would still leave the United States as much force as it could effectively deploy in other regions.

In return the Europeans must substantially increase their contribution to the common defense in both money and manpower. This could take the form of more air and sealift; more dual-use infrastructure; more of the heavy, outsized hardware such as main battle tanks; additional light reserve units to thicken the forward defense line and to permit regular units to exploit their mobility and/or European manning of U.S. funded systems. In particular, France must be persuaded to participate in the air defense mission within the central region, in substance if not in form.

The emerging NATO capability to interdict second- and third-wave Warsaw Pact reinforcements should be developed but not to the detriment of defense against the initial assault. The Warsaw Pact strategy seeks a D-day breakthrough.

A soft point in this agenda is its reliance on a substantially expanded European contribution. Some deem this so unrealistic in the present political atmosphere as to require NATO to look for alternative to a conventional buildup, such as a recommitment to nuclear first use.

Southwest Asia and the Middle East

The main threats to peace in this region and to vital U.S. interests in Israel and the Persian Gulf are internal instability in several geostrategically important countries such as Iran, Lebanon, and some of the Gulf states, regional political and cultural rivalries, and Soviet ambitions in the area. With one major war (Iran-Iraq) now in progress and with lower-intensity

conflict seemingly endemic to Afghanistan, South Yemen, Lebanon, and to Israel's frontiers, continued warfare in the region through the 1980s can be taken as a given for U.S. planners. The contingencies that matter most, however, are those that might threaten Israel or the Persian Gulf. Israel, though surrounded by actual and potential enemies and under severe economic strain, can almost certainly defend itself through the decade with U.S. support assistance, particularly if Lebanon can be stabilized and the Palestinian issue at least partially resolved. Thus the main U.S. focus should be on the Persian Gulf.

Iran is the key to Persian Gulf defense on two counts. First, Shiite Islamic fundamentalism, propagated in Qum, assails the legitimacy of every secular government in the Moslem world and is now aimed directly at the Arabian sheikhdoms. Although this threat does not challenge the survival of national governments during the 1980s, it could encourage palace coups, student rioting, disloyalty in military establishments, and terrorist attacks against key installations, including oil fields, refineries, and terminals. A U.S. military presence would not deter such violence—indeed it might encourage it—but U.S. military assistance could harden host government counterinsurgency and counterterrorist capabilities.

Because of its location, Iran is also the key to Persian Gulf security from a possible Soviet attack. A direct Soviet invasion through Iran to the Gulf seems highly unlikely in the 1980s despite the presence of twenty-five Soviet divisions in the Caucasus and Turkestan. It would be resisted by the present Irani regime and would risk superpower confrontation. But the gradual subversion of an economically prostrate Iran by Tudeh (the Iranian communist faction) cadres using Soviet aid offers as a carrot could, over time, increase Moscow's influence over Khomeini's successors. At that point, a Soviet-financed and logistically supported Shiite holy war against the sheikhdoms might become a possibility and would at least pose a threat to the free use of the Strait of Hormuz. There was some consensus at the conference that in preparing for such a contingency the United States should seek to develop a coalition of NATO, Japan, and selected regional states to share the burden of Persian Gulf defense and reduce the need for an obtrusive Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force (RDJTF) presence in the area, obtain contingency access to additional forward bases in the area, and encourage selective overprocurement by the Saudis of hardware that might be used by the RDJTF or by host government forces in combined operations. It would also seem desirable that the United States move toward a normalization of relations with Iran as opportunities present themselves. It would be shortsighted to force Iran to turn to Moscow as the single possible solution to its economic problems.

East Asia

East Asia is of vital economic, political, and strategic importance to the United States and its friends. It is a major source of key strategic raw materials, the locus of substantial U.S. fixed investment, and an important and growing customer for U.S. exports. Freedom of movement through its airplanes and waterways is essential both to U.S. economic well-being and to its strategic outreach (for example, into the Indian Ocean). The United States has Pacific island dependencies to defend, alliance commitments to South Korea, Japan, the Philippines, Australia, and New Zealand, and less well-defined but important obligations to Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand. Its relationship with the PRC affects the global balance of power in the so-called strategic triangle and could influence the containment of Soviet and Soviet-proxy ambitions in the region. The United States has over 30,000 troops in Korea and valuable bases in Japan and the Philippines.

The balance of power in Korea, favorable to the North, is a matter of deep concern. With time seemingly on the side of the South (with its much higher GNP), it is arguable that Pyongyang must make any forcible moves to unification soon or not at all. In the meantime, the Soviet Pacific Fleet is building up rapidly and projecting power in Oceania and through to South Asia. Vietnam now has its own "Vietnam" in Kampuchea. Vietnam's capacity to pacify that country and to use it as a secure base for a serious attack on Thailand is open to increasing question, particularly with PRC troops on their northern frontier. Vietnam remains a volatile and destabilizing influence. There are also potentially bellicose succession scenarios in South Korea, the Philippines, and Indonesia.

U.S. military options for East Asian peacekeeping are few, except in Korea. Realistically, the United States has only the Seventh Fleet with its marines and some logistical support capability out of Japan, Guam, and the Philippines. South and west of Okinawa it has no ground force bases short of Diego Garcia. That is risky but probably tenable for the 1980s. Indigenous defense forces in the ASEAN countries are being steadily upgraded and should certainly be capable of containing any low-intensity insurgencies. There is also a small Australia, New Zealand, United States (ANZUS) force in Singapore.

Thus the U.S. strategy for non-Korean Asia can and must rely primarily on diplomatic, political, economic, and cultural tools. In this context, the CSIS conference produced a number of suggestions:

Continue stressing to Japan the importance of increasing the percentage of their GNP devoted to defense and how that investment can best complement U.S. military capabilities in the region.

Consider the possibility of a tripartite alliance among Japan, South Korea, and the United States as a means of strengthening the array of deterrence to a North Korean attack.

Encourage Japan in its program of economic and technological co-operation in the ASEAN area.

Develop a more sophisticated recognition of Japanese cultural sensitivities. Crude polemics with Japan over commercial matters will be counterproductive to U.S. security interests in Asia.

Perhaps in concert with the PRC and OECD partners, begin the process of cautious rapprochement with Vietnam. Hanoi is not a happy proxy of Moscow and is militarily isolated and economically vulnerable.

Africa

The United States has three crucial strategic concerns in Africa: free U.S. access through African airspace and sea-lanes to the Persian Gulf and beyond and contingent access to air and naval base facilities in North and East Africa, continued access to Central African strategic minerals, and the elimination of the destabilizing Soviet-Cuba presence in Angola and Ethiopia.

If the Persian Gulf sheikhdoms should come under imminent threat from the northeast, a likely U.S. response would be to deploy RDJTF elements forward to the Horn of Africa. From both a political and geographical perspective, Somalia would be the logical forward base. It would put the U.S. force roughly 1,500 miles from Riyadh, threaten Soviet elements in Socotra, the Dahlak Archipelago, and South Yemen, and provide a suitable staging area for further forward deployment to Oman if an invasion is launched. In this scenario, the United States would almost certainly wish to invoke its contingent base rights in Morocco for rearward staging on the assumption that NATO bases would not be available for that purpose.

The rub is that the current pro-U.S. leadership in both Somalia (Siad Barre) and Morocco (King Hassan) is under severe internal pressure backed by anti-U.S. external powers (Ethiopia and Libya, respectively). To keep this deployment corridor open, the United States must therefore either find ways of keeping these leaders in power or, failing that, of reaching accommodation with their successors. Both are difficult tasks and are mutually inconsistent. The best course at this stage might be to help both countries—and help them generously—to overcome some of their severe economic and social problems. The AID infrastructure for this is already in

place. Perhaps what is needed is a heavier investment of resources and management attention. In the meantime, the United States should develop alternative corridors; possibilities are Tunisia-Egypt, Tunisia-Sudan, or Turkey-Jordan.

Elsewhere in Africa, there is a high probability of continued low-intensity intrastate and interstate violence in all subregions. This should concern the White House but not the Pentagon. Response options there are limited to diplomatic and economic initiatives and perhaps to a more judicious implementation of the U.S. military sales program. France, Belgium and the United Kingdom share U.S. concerns there, and the United States should work closely with them.

Latin America

Vital U.S. interests in this region—among them, free access to air routes and waterways (including the Panama Canal), access to Venezuelan and Mexican oil, defense of island dependencies, and the containment or reversal of Soviet-Cuban ideological expansionism—are concentrated in the Caribbean basin. The United States has important problems and objectives farther south, but they are fundamentally economic and political rather than military.

The Soviet-Cuban strategy in the Caribbean basin appears to be to engineer Marxist revolution or at least a swing to the left in countries where the democratic political infrastructure has seriously eroded. They are doing this through substantially increased naval power projection (both Soviet and Cuban), covert support in money and arms to left-wing parties and insurgency groups, and the development of trade and aid ties. Nicaragua is now a client state, and others—Surinam, Guyana, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Belize, Haiti, and Trinidad-Tobago—are potential targets. The immediate strategic objective would appear to be to erode U.S. leadership (such as it is) in the region, interdict raw material supplies, threaten the Lines of Communication (LOCs), and divert U.S. resources and attention from higher-priority Soviet targets in Europe and Asia.

These activities, superimposed on existing political and economic stresses throughout Latin America, have greatly exacerbated the U.S. problem of massive illegal immigration. This creates an abrasive new issue in hemispheric relations and installs a needy and unstable minority that could become a major source of internal conflict in the years ahead.

The most likely locus of military violence in the region during the 1980s is undoubtedly in Central America, where Cuba, working through Nicaragua, will be pursuing its program of ideological expansionism. One credible scenario would feature a strong Nicaraguan incursion into southern

Honduras to mop up Samocista guerrilla bases there. This could bring on a full-scale war between the two countries, possibly involving El Salvador as well. If Honduras gets into difficulty, it could ask for OAS and/or U.S. military support. The United States has forces in Panama and at home that could be inserted, but direct U.S. military intervention would not be well received by either U.S. or Latin American public opinion. The extensive U.S. military exercises in that region in the summer of 1983, though an impressive display, will not be the most effective method for introducing U.S. military forces into the region. A better course would be to initiate contingency planning now with selected countries in the subregion, perhaps Mexico, Venezuela, and Colombia, for a Latin American multilateral force to address outbreaks of violence of this magnitude, backed up by U.S. logistical and intelligence support.

In the meantime, the president's Caribbean Basin Initiative should be vigorously pursued. If this region is to be stabilized, it can be only on the basis of balanced and steady economic growth. It is not wishful thinking to envisage at some future date a rapprochement with Cuba that will deprive the Soviets of their expensive but useful proxy in the U.S. backyard.

Outer Space

The panels devoted to outer space issued focused on Project High Frontier, which proposes the unique concept of achieving assured survival rather than mutual assured destruction by deploying high-technology missile-killing systems in space rather than relying on deterrence through retaliation. In this discussion, the weight of argument came down against the concept on the following rationale:

The technology is not fully in hand and may not work.

The cost will be far higher than the \$50 billion projected.

The system would not work against warheads delivered by bombers, cruise missiles, some submarines, or other low-altitude systems.

The system would violate, and thus render ineffective, the ABM Treaty of 1972.

The U.S. military and public are incapable of adjusting to such a radical shift in national security philosophy.

The 'exploration of space-based, missile-killing technology will continue, but it should not divert us from today's world. Deterrence is flawed and expensive, but it is in place and has made another world war unthinkable

as a viable option for both superpowers. Still, the overall challenge remains to lower the threshold of tension and suspicion between East and West and to facilitate the development of stable prosperity in the third World, all the while recognizing that sound strategic responses to conflict in the 1980s will almost certainly have to take carefully calibrated account of both East-West and North-South issues and concerns.

Functional Conclusions

The pursuit or defense of U.S. interests always takes place within some specific geographical setting, and the application of U.S. strategies must accordingly be fashioned to meet particular local imperatives. There are, however, several functional issues that deserve analysis in isolation from specific local concerns, either because they offer cross-cutting opportunities or tools to U.S. policymakers or because they work as constraints on policy choices in most or all geographic settings. The functional studies in this book addressed oil and minerals, nuclear proliferation and nuclear thresholds, chemical and biological war, security assistance, and the features unique to low-intensity conflict. Our purpose here is not to summarize the studies and conference discussions but to isolate those ideas that we think could contribute most importantly to a U.S. global strategy for the 1980s.

Oil and Minerals

The U.S. Strategic Petroleum Reserve, expected to reach 750 million barrels by 1990, should not be reserved exclusively for use in a major national security crisis. It should be regarded instead as a multipurpose policy tool that can mitigate short-term oil disruptions, discourage the use of oil as a weapon, and aid nations friendly to the United States when they are under embargo or attack. Needed is a varied set of drawdown strategies, coupled with a standby mechanism for consumption that would enable the United States to use the SPR both tactically and strategically in meeting the wide spectrum of conflict contingencies foreseen for the 1980s.

In minerals, the United States is dependent on such countries as South Africa and the USSR for critical nonferrous ores such as cobalt and chrome. It should retain and strengthen its strategic stockpile (perhaps stocking metal rather than ore in some cases to reduce sudden demands on troubled U.S. smelting industries) and strive for a national consensus on the use of public land, at least until we gain more knowledge on what minerals exist for potential exploitation.

Nuclear Proliferation and Thresholds

The nonproliferation regime, defined by the nuclear NPT and the related structure of safeguard, test ban, and nuclear-free zone agreements, is less than ideal from the U.S. standpoint, in terms of both scope and implementation. France and the PRC, plus most of the states of immediate proliferation concern (India, Pakistan, Israel, South Africa, Argentina, and Brazil), are not parties to the NPT. In all probability Israel and South Africa have crossed the nuclear weapons threshold. This could trigger reactive programs in hostile countries of their respective regions. The United States might find it appropriate to launch a careful but determined effort to preserve and reinforce this international system, even at the sacrifice of some of its own freedom of maneuver.

Threshold theory is a functional blend of disciplines by which strategists seek to define, both for themselves and for their adversaries, the level of threat, provocation, or anxiety that will trigger escalation by the opposing party to higher plateaus of violence. Although the accuracy, versatility, and lethality of new weapons systems has somewhat blurred the distinction among conventional and strategic nuclear weapons, superpower planners must still deal in the 1980s with essentially three thresholds of violence: those between diplomacy and conventional violence, between conventional and theater nuclear, and between theater nuclear and strategic nuclear. All three thresholds can be raised (escalation can be made less likely) by deterrence, but the deterrent system must tread a fine line between credibility and provocation. A deterrent system that is inadequately credible and appears to suggest a first-strike capability could invite a preemptive nuclear strike that would short-circuit the whole threshold chain. Another problem is that European allies have adamantly rejected any consideration of theater nuclear exchanges on European soil. The elimination of that plateau might raise the strategic nuclear threshold but could lower the threshold of diplomacy-conventional violence in Europe unless accompanied by a significant improvement in NATO conventional strength.

Chemical and Biological Warfare

The United States must clearly rethink its thirteen-year policy of self-imposed restraint in the chemical and biological warfare (CBW) field. Existing international treaties in this field have not restrained the Soviets, and there is little ground for confidence that additional unverifiable agreements will help. The Soviets have strengthened their commitment to CBW technology and have shown little hesitation to demonstrate their

capabilities or let it be used by proxies, even in low-intensity conflicts. In the biological field, the United States must find ways to enforce the ban on production and uses of biological agents and increase research in defensive measures. For chemical warfare threats, the studies argue that troop protection systems are not enough. They are expensive and fallible, and they degrade combat effectiveness. The United States needs a credible deterrent in the form of a retaliatory strike capability. Nuclear retaliation, often said to be the proper response to a chemical attack, would be extreme, particularly in a Third World conflict, and thus not credible. In some cases it would not obviously improve the prospects of a successful outcome of the war. Binary weapons might be the most promising answer, but the problem should be studied thoroughly from both the technical and political standpoint before settling on an ultimate strategic response.

Security Assistance and Collective Security

The proliferation of arms deliveries to the Third World in recent years, rising to \$118 billion in 1979 alone, has contributed to a more dangerous world. The public consensus and legislative support for security assistance as a traditional instrument of foreign policy has been deeply eroded. There is a growing feeling that there are too many sophisticated weapons, too easily available; that through arms exports the United States is contributing to regional instability; that resources could be better utilized for domestic purposes; and that U.S. commitments to export arms might also lead to direct U.S. involvement. Yet this instrument remains a vital component of U.S. foreign policy and national security strategy. How can the United States revive popular support and prove to the public and their elected representatives that security assistance can be a viable element of a national strategy?

In the part on security assistance strategies, this book presents some suggestions: reestablish congressional support by demonstrating that collective security is cheaper and more effective than a total reliance on the defense establishment, incorporate security assistance planning into a broader framework of national strategy, and alleviate the bureaucratic and legislative constraints that complicate and delay a process that is often time critical and highly specific.

Peculiarities of Low-Intensity Warfare

Low-intensity warfare is the most common form of conflict, but few Americans, whether in or out of the armed services, have much experience

with it. Few indeed could define it in contemporary terms. Our definition, which will serve to encompass what we foresee for the 1980s, includes any conflict between states and/or coherent political, economic, or ethnic groups that falls short of large unit engagement on a battlefield. Violence is implied but not essential; coercive diplomacy or psychological warfare between states or even jailing dissident leaders could be considered forms of low-intensity warfare. Any definition certainly includes organized terrorism, insurgency, mass riots, and border raids. The threshold to medium-intensity warfare is probably best delineated by unit size, weapon lethality, and the degree of territorial encroachment. Thus the Israeli air attack on the Iraqi nuclear power installation was of low intensity, but the Israeli incursion into Lebanon, like the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, was of medium intensity. Duration does not seem a valid criterion since conflict at a low level of violence can continue indefinitely, as in Northern Ireland.

Low-intensity conflict in the 1980s will not necessarily be the product of purely local tensions. In the past it has been tactically initiated by outside powers, typically through proxies, to effect or deter change in third countries; this will continue. Indirect, low-intensity conflict initiatives can fan the embers of change without risking the fire of superpower confrontation. In this context, the United States must master the exploitation of conflict as well as its containment.

Perhaps the overriding feature of low-intensity conflict initiatives in recent years has been their conscious exploitation of the world media, not only by the Soviets and their proxies but also by relatively small extremist groups. The antinuclear weapon demonstrations in Europe are a prime example of the accelerator effect of media coverage, nudged by trained provocateurs.

It is a generally accepted proposition that most terrorism is motivated more by a thirst for publicity and the atmosphere of fear it invokes than by the specific damage inflicted. It would be helpful if the media could develop a self-enforced standard of restraint to deprive terrorists of some of these benefits.

Terrorism and insurgency are likely to be the most prevalent and serious forms of low-intensity conflict to face U.S. planners in the 1980s. As the deputy secretary of transportation pointed out, terrorism alone has claimed over 20,000 victims since 1968, and 40 percent of the 7,000 incidents were directed against U.S. citizens and property. In the 1980s, terrorists and insurgents (often the same people) will have more devastating weaponry, perhaps including nuclear and CBW devices, they will be better trained and financed, and they will be more ambitious in their selection of targets. To combat this menace, the Reagan administration has taken steps to improve domestic intelligence-gathering capabilities, strengthen intergovernmental cooperation against terrorism, improve the physical security of U.S. build-

ings and installations, and centralize the management of counterterrorist programs.

Although insurgents may use terrorism as a tactic, its purpose transcends the creation of fear and anarchy. Insurgents, as a rule, seek eventually to govern. Thus they must attempt to gain popular support and to take and hold ground. Eventually they must operate more overtly and in larger units. This makes them more dangerous but also more vulnerable to attack and to psychological warfare and infiltration. Since the containment of insurgency is primarily a host government responsibility, U.S. activities in the counterinsurgency field in the 1980s will probably be limited to training and equipping friendly government forces and providing intelligence and logistical support. But even for this limited role, it needs a cadre of trained specialists and an inventory of weapons and tactical mobility assets especially adapted for the detection and interdiction of small movements over rough tropical or desert terrain.

Grand Strategy: Its Context

A well-known concern, especially voiced on Capitol Hill, is that the United States is developing military forces without a clear scheme for their employment. The fear is that near-term defense budgets will determine long-range defense strategy, clearly the reverse of rational decision making. U.S. military leaders will state in private that it is close to impossible to develop capabilities without political-military guidance and that such guidance is woefully lacking. The generals and admirals want to know what kind of missions will be required of the U.S. armed forces under their command. To have capability without a strategy that envisions meaningful use of that capability is to break the fundamental link between war and policy. There is a basic truth in Clausewitz' dictum. "[War's] grammar, indeed may be its own, but not its logic." To raise issues of capability in the abstract is to establish a basic argument with no foundation. On the one hand, there will be those who advocate acquisition of capability to provide increased flexibility and to broaden the scope of options. On the other hand, there will be those who object that the acquisition of capability will encourage its use. Tragically, both are right, if irrelevant.

The role of strategy is to transform the total capabilities of a state into instruments of policy. In its simplest form, it is strategy that dictates to military planners what they must create capabilities for and how they should plan to use those capabilities once they are in hand. Strategy is the vital link in the transformation of national policy into objectives that may be stated in sufficient concrete detail to provide purpose. Thus, strategy is not abstract; rather, at the highest level it may start with the abstract statement of policy,

but it must apply the policy in the real environment as it is today and as it is envisioned for the 1990s. Strategy must be redefined and stated with increasing specificity at each planning level, starting at the very highest and working down successively until it is stated most explicitly in the mission assigned force.

In the absence of strategy and the guidelines it supplies, planners must turn to ad hoc substitutes. Practically this is the preparation of contingency plans based on assumptions as to what the implementation of the plans might be expected to accomplish. In the absence of strategy, the assumed strategy will be inferred from tactics—that is, from the specific uses of capabilities. Strategy at the highest level then becomes a restatement of successive aggregations of tactical goals. In the extreme, national decision makers responsible for setting policy will become prisoners of events.

This book does not develop a U.S. grand strategy. Rather, it provides the political-military variables that must be considered in constructing one. We have not considered here the crucial dimension of international economics without which a grand strategy would not be viable in our interdependent world. Those considerations await treatment in another study to be undertaken by the Georgetown Center for Strategic and International Studies.



TREE *of* LIBERTY SOCIETY

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