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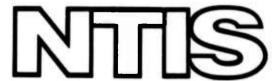
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ABSTRACT

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Copies of all TR&A Technical Reports can be secured from the Defense Documentation Center or from: Ms. Nancy Fahy, TR&A Executive Secretary, VKC 301, University of Southern California, College Park, Los Angeles, Calif. 90007.

II

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Threat Recognition and Analysis:

The Annual Report, 1973-74

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TR&A Technical Report #18
Threat Recognition and Analysis Project

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Threat Recognition and Analysis:
The Annual Report, 1973-74

Introduction

Threat Recognition and Analysis (TR&A) is an inquiry designed to broaden the national security concept to cover new international dangers which are initially nonmilitary in character. The task is to expand the "legitimate claims of national security" to encompass situations which may threaten U.S. security but which do not necessarily involve the movement of troops along our borders, or our allies. To accomplish this task, the concept "threat" must be redefined to reference more than an enemy's hardware, strategic policy, manpower, or ideological motivation. TR&A exists to explore how national security can be meaningfully reconceived to include nonmilitary conditions under a rubric of "situational threats."

Maxwell Taylor has recently called for exactly this type of expansion. He argues that the national security should be expanded to include under its aegis a wider range of potentially threatening international and national phenomena.

In the present environment, our valuables are exposed not only to the traditional threats of military power but also to many dangers of nonmilitary character and origin. At home we perceive a growing trend toward factionalism which undermines our national unity. Abroad there are ample warnings of the dire consequences to be expected from continued population growth--international rivalries over scarce resources; natural disasters from poverty, famine, drought, and flood; stalemated or declining standards of living; popular discontent with government, political turbulence, and the overthrow of weak governments. . .

To marshal our resources for this purpose (i.e., of preserving and fostering an environment for free societies to exist), we must design a national security program broad enough to include provisions for all significant dangers, foreign and domestic. (Taylor, 1974: 577-578)

Despite   Taylor's   preoccupation with   the changing
character   of the military component of an expanded national
security program, he   is "fully convinced   that the most
formidable threats to this nation are in the nonmilitary
field." Taylor, as well as many others, singles out the
present energy crisis as a prime example of a serious threat
to the national security.

Oil, a major element in the energy crisis, became a
weapon of political influence in the recent fourth Middle
East war. The Arab oil embargo policy, directed primarily at
Western Europe, Japan and the United States, was designed to
pressure the major oil-consuming states into new policies
toward the Middle East. The immediate consequences of an oil
cutback and the threat of a sustained oil embargo brought
real pressure against the Northern Hemisphere to assume a
more pro-Arab stance. The ultimate Arab objective was to
isolate diplomatically the United States' position of nearly
unconditional support of Israel. It was a bold political
strategy; it required, and for the most part received,
intra-Arab cooperation and unity of purpose during the
October War and throughout the months of political
manuevering to follow. The key element in the Arab strategy
was to force Western Europe and Japan into an energy pinch
where they could be dealt with unilaterally, where the
differences in their national energy needs would be
exaggerated, and where they would in turn press for a change
or modification in the United States' pro-Israeli stance to
accommodate Arab demands for such a change in return for
lifting the embargo. Thus, the Arab oil policy threatened
the very core of the Western post-World War II alliance, --
the political core.

The manipulation of oil for political purposes is the
classical prototype of a nonmilitary threat. It is also
representative of the recent changes in the character of the
international system which suggest the need for a new
understanding of threatening behavior under an expanded
national security program. King Faisal of Saudi Arabia
indicated his willingness to use oil as a weapon against
Israel even before the October hostilities. So it was not
surprising that shortly after the outbreak of the conflict
the Arab states announced monthly cutbacks in oil exports,
and within days Abu Dhabi, Algeria, Bahrain, Dubai, Kuwait,
Libya, Quatar and Saudi Arabia cut off oil supplies to the
United States altogether. But the real impact was felt in
Europe and Japan, and consequently the real pressure on
Washington to change its position toward the Middle East was
from Tokyo, Bonn, London and Paris. But this was a new trick
for the Arabs. Oil as an instrument of political influence
had been unsuccessful in 1956 when the Suez Canal was
blocked, and equally unprofitable in 1967. But by October,

1973 the international system had changed. The time was ripe. The nature of international interdependency had shifted significantly. Economically the oil-consuming nations had few energy alternatives of their own when the oil was denied them. The United States simply could not afford to supply Europe the oil it needed as the U.S. had successfully done in 1956, and to a lesser degree in 1967. The oil-producers held the upper hand, and enjoyed a higher degree of Arab unity than they had in the past. The Arab position was not always unanimous as the October 16th meeting of oil producers would attest. Nevertheless, they benefitted from splitting up members of the Western alliance, encouraging dissension, intra-alliance conflict and unilateral responses. Sheikh Yamani, Saudi Arabia's Petroleum Minister, frequently represented the collective interests of the oil-producing Arab states, and there was sufficient solidarity of purpose to enable him to be firm with the oil-consumers about what constituted a legitimate response to the oil embargo and warned them against any "bloc" action against the Arabs. Politically, the basic relationship between the East and the West had altered significantly, opening the way for new Arab initiatives. In this respect, some Middle East watchers have maintained that Sadat is convinced that while antagonisms between the East and the West have been good for Israel in the past, detente between the poles will be to Egypt's advantage in the future. (Sheehan, 1973; Griffith, 1974) The mixture of oil and better trained troops constituted a good enough arsenal, and changes in the international system suggested it was an opportune time to cross the Suez Canal to regain that which had been lost.

Oil and the energy crisis are dramatic examples of new situational threats, but they are in no way the only examples. The present international system appears to be in such a state of flux and transition that the old notions of what could disrupt the system seem curiously out-dated. Under the old view, the Suez Canal crisis, the Korean War, Berlin, Cuba, etc. were all expressions, in one way or the other, of Cold War antagonisms. The models of international order for the past two decades anticipated tension between the power poles and relative harmony within the camps. Today however, such a view seems terribly naive and misleading. Detente bespeaks a new relationship between the superpowers, while dissenion within the poles is more common.

The "Year of Europe, 1973" may be remember not for the reasons originally anticipated but because of the new European crisis. In the words of France's Foreign Minister Michel Jobert, a crisis brought about through humulitation;

it is a "crisis of confidence, a crisis of will and a crisis
of lucidity." (Goldsborough, 1974: 538) In a year that was
supposedly reserved to matters of real import, namely
European affairs, Europe felt snubbed by the United States
and the Soviet Union on their way to detente and SALT; she
was upstaged by the Nixon-Kissinger links with China; she
was humiliated by the Arabs over the oil shortages,-- in a
word, tough Europe was "shaken-down" by tiny Persian Gulf
sheikdoms; and perhaps most damaging of all, she discovered
that years of political conciliation and attempted
unification did not "spill-over" into an agreement on
sharing oil supplies when the region was faced with a
legitimate, universal challenge. In a time of real need it
was obvious that everyone was on his own. (Laqueur, 1974)
Chancellor Brandt called on the European Community to share
their scarce oil supplies and jointly shoulder the burden of
the hardship; President Pompidou countered with a request
for the adoption of a more pro-Arab policy, making it very
clear France was not going to share everyone else's
misfortune. U.S.-European relations became seriously
strained, indeed politically threatened; Kissinger
spelled-out the Washington response by rejecting the idea
that Europe's identity could be measured by its distance
from the United States as some Europeans had argued. At a
press conference on March 21, 1974 Kissinger elaborated the
U.S. position.

> In terms of substance, there has been, in our
> judgment, too much of a tendency to seek European
> identity in opposition to the United States. And
> there, again, let me make clear: We do not insist,
> or indeed, believe it desirable, that Europe agree
> with every American policy. We do not oppose
> --indeed, we think it is desirable-- that Europe
> can take, and does take, its own independent
> decisions, even if sometimes they disagree with
> us.

> But when the definition of European identity
> on the part of some countries is the
> differentiation from, and in some cases opposition
> to, the United States --when that becomes the
> characteristic of identity-- then the United
> States is concerned, and then the tendencies that
> we have attempted to describe become operative.

> As far as the United States is concerned, we
> still believe that the nations of the Atlantic
> area must be able to find an expression of some of
> their common purposes. In this process, they, of

course, will want to define how much unity they want, and how much diversity they can stand. There are perfectly legitimate questions to be raised.

But we have to overcome this legalistic, somewhat doctrinaire, jurisdictional dispute.

And, secondly, we believe that it is not conducive to healthy Atlantic relations to seek European identity essentially in opposition to the United States.

In addition, we have been concerned by the deliberate policy of some individual countries that seemed to us to have taken a hostile turn in various areas -- but no purpose would be served by going into those. (Kissinger, 1974: 3-4)

A serious row in the Western alliance would constitute a situational threat of major importance to the entire international system. Tremors in the various alliance structures in the world, in East-West relations, in Sino-Soviet affairs, in the Asian triangle of China, India and Japan, in the delicate Middle East truce, in Indochina, in the southern perimeter of the NATO alliance, are all concerns and constitute, potentially at any rate, threats to international security. Ambitious revolutions in Latin America, upheavels in the Philippines and Southeast Asia, and turmoil in Africa likewise are potentially disruptive. Problems over development, the world food crisis, trade policies, natural resource scarcities, currency instability, international terrorism, world poverty, and the problems posed by new technologies may be meaningfully incorporated into a rubric of potential situational threats.

Today, the very ability of governments to govern, to maintain control is being challenged. In numerous industrialized nations serious internal calamities are encountered revealing that governments are curiously incapable of providing the basic services and security demanded by the people. Governments are, with increasing regularity, accused of taking more and more from the people, and returning less and less. There are other factors besides governments' apparent inability to govern which threaten the nation-state. Regionalism and integration are probably long range challenges, but of a more immediate character, Raymond Vernon has formally raised the question of whether, in the face of gaint multinational corporations, nation states can even be expected to persist. (Vernon, 1971)

But clearly, some of these issues are more important to watch than others. Some topics command greater immediate attention today and less in the future, and vice versa. The critical question is of course how to decide which of the many potentially threatening situations should be watched closely and which should not. The need is to economize the focus and to decide on the most probable areas of danger, dislocation and disruption. Once the issue and location is settled on, the next problem is to determine how the situation can be monitored. What methods exist, or can be devised, to measure the dynamics of the situation to determine if it is leading to a state of ruin. TR&A addresses itself to these basic questions.

The essential inquiry of all TR&A research is to identify and analyze systemic, national and regional interaction processes which are, or can, erode over time. Erosion, breakdown, deterioration, decline, ruin, etc. are all assumed to be processes, rather than singular, non-recurring events, and they are traceable. Conceptually, TR&A's paramount concern is with change over time; its business is to trace change. The focus of the project is to monitor sequential interactional change which portends disruption and danger. The purpose is designed to identify change sequences of impending disorder and chaos. These change sequences are threatening whenever the anticipated consequences of a transition from one situation to another are unacceptable, disruptive of the system or dangerous to the "essential" elements of the system itself. Unacceptable, disruptive, dangerous to the essential elements of the system have no fixed definitions. They vary with the system, time, circumstance and people. And most importantly, they should be free to vary concurrently with these changing conditions. The analytic task is to give definition to the general conditions where change sequences threaten these variables.

Review of the Technical Reports

The first set of tasks for TR&A was to review the literature on threat outside of the military field, to commence a reconceptualization effort of the threat notion to accommodate an expanded national security umbrella, and to explore empirically the nature of international commitments and their relationship to an enlarged threat concept. Technical Papers Nos. 11, 12 and 13, already reviewed in the "Semi-Annual Report", cover these areas. (Beal, 1974a) These papers contribute to the overall TR&A argument that (1) threat has been underemployed as a concept

in   international relations research; (2) when it has served
to   guide research its meaning was   either too rough and
undifferentiated to make meaningful distinctions on the one
hand, or too narrowly defined to be generalizable; and, (3)
threat could be elevated to a more important status in
international research by ascribing to it an expanded,
though controlled, definition.

The   second set of tasks was to conduct a demonstration
study of a situational threat where the outcome was known to
be ruinous, to explore the possibility of using event data
in the construction of an artifical international threat
system, and to finalize the software for a high speed,
user-oriented system for bibliographic entry, storage and
retrieval. Tehnical Reports 15, 15 and 17 cover these areas.

Nigeria-Biafra: A Demonstration Test Case

This   report presents a prototype methodology for
monitoring   threat processes generated by the internal
disintegration of   national social systems. The study
emphasizes the importance of incorporating into the foreign
policy sensory apparatus systematic, continuous procedures
for monitoring and evaluating pre-violent indicators of
deterioration and dissolution within national societies. The
argument is developed that such general procedures for
recognizing serious domestic disturbance are necessary in
order to provide early warnings of potentially threatening
international situations.

The problem of developing such a technique is seen as a
twofold   one: (1) what specific type of data provide
indicators of social system states that are reliable,
informative, and minimally costly in acquisition time and
effort; and (2) what monitoring technique best affords the
analyst the opportunity to identify crucial change patterns
suggesting deterioration of the system under observation.

The Nigeria-Biafra situation was selected as a test
case   for   the development of the monitoring technique
because: (1) the mutual perception of threat by the parties
involved constituted one of the basic processes which
propelled the vital social systems within Nigerian society
toward an eventual outcome of disintegration and civil
violence; and (2) the situation provides a dramatic,
historical demonstration of the international implications
of serious domestic upheaval.

The approach to the formulation of domestic threat indicator data developed in the study is grounded in the premise that the published record of public declarations of complaint and anxiety about specific social conditions and governmental activity constitutes a valuable social barometer. Moreover, the report suggests that by applying a systematic technique for identifying fluctuation, or levels and rates of change in these indicator readings, the analyst may sharpen his eye for identifying and recognizing the early manifestations of an evolving crisis.

In order to explore this notion, several major Nigerian newspapers were content analyzed for items containing expressions of complaint, anxiety or concern over the occurrence of a threatening event, the worsening of a condition or the undesirable conduct of a major political, social or ethnic group. These items were coded in terms of: (1) their source (i.e., from what sector or group did the expression emanate); (2) whether the complaint was directed or undirected (i.e., whether a reference was made as to who was believed responsible for the undesirable condition); and 3) what issue was referenced.

The report offers the initial conclusion that the analysis of such expressive indicator data does provide a general warning of the acceleration of the processes of internal disintegration, but the caveat is offered that further examination of specific threshold levels, and of other domestic situations which may reveal similar patterns is necessary before the inference suggested by this prototype are treated with confidence. The findings of this study strongly suggest, however, that the method developed constitutes an important addition to the inventory of global monitoring techniques which contribute to the effective management of a nation's foreign affairs in an era of complexity, uncertainty, and interdependence.

A Simulated International Threat System
Principles and Procedures

"Cybernetic Analysis of a Simulated International Threat System" is a statement of the principles and procedures governing the design, construction, execution and analysis of a simulated international threat system. These principles and procedures address themselves to: (1) the application of cybernetics to threat research specifically, and international relations research generally; (2) the research utility of an expanded notion of threat, namely

"situational threat"; and, (3) the use of event data in the simulation of synthetic international futures. The approach adopted to explore these issues is to ask experimental subjects in a simulated context to monitor, and where possible, control a synthetic international threat system. The central question is to determine if subjects can recognize situational threats in an international event stream, and if so, how do they act to avert a potentially ruinous state of affairs. A description of the simulated future, known as TRASS (for Threat Recogniton and Analysis Simulated System) is provided and the relation between cybernetic notions of control and self-regulation and simulated futures is discussed. The argument is advanced that cybernetics and systems analysis techniques are particularly well suited to the analysis of complex systems which are constantly changing.

BIBLIO AND BSCAN

BIBLIO and BSCAN are the two programs utilized for the input, storage and retrieval of bibliographic reference material. In general terms these programs represent a capability for an in-house reference system which is easily learned, operates at high-speed and incorporates design features to safeguard against the proliferation of user error. In technical terms these programs feature software which is highly interactive and TSO-like (Time Sharing Option). Both programs operate on a series of commands which permit the user to request the system to perform various operations on the bibliographic data. The principal feature of these programs however, is the manner in which they facilitate the recording and tracing of resource material through the use of subfiles and a relatively unstructured input format for the bibliographic data.

Regarding the subfiles, both BIBLIO and BSCAN are designed for simultaneous operation on a number of subfiles. These subfiles may be structured on the basis of general research topics or they may be structured around individual users. This permits users to maintain a subfile for personal use reflecting special research interests while at the same time affording access to references on a wider range of research topics. This same rule applies to bibliographic entry--multiple users may enter data on both their personal subfiles and on those subfiles reserved for more general project-wide usage.

As for data entry and retrieval, these programs are essentially unstructured, the format being left to the user's discretion. The structure that does exist reflects

certain conventions adopted for standardization of the reference citations. The important point is that users may structure the format of their subfiles according to their own needs.

The purpose of this paper is to explain the use of these programs and illustrate their specific application. The paper is divided into two sections. The first section discusses the general design of the program BIBLIO and specifies the exact procedures for its use. The second section mirrors the first except that here the discussion centers on the program BSCAN.

Summary

In summary, the research accomplishments of the first year include: (1) a wide-ranging literature review of threat outside its military context; (2) a reconceptualization of the threat notion; (3) an exploration of international commitment and its relationship to the enlarged concept of threat; (4) demonstration of a pilot study of a situational threat whose outcome is already known and considered ruinous; (5) exploration of the use of event data on the construction of an artificial international threat system; (6) development of a high speed user-oriented reference system for bibliographic entry, storage and retrieval. These accomplishments undergird the research objectives of the second year -- namely to continue the examination of threat situations in international affairs particularly where those situations emerge from the expanding network of dependencies and vulnerabilities in the international system.

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