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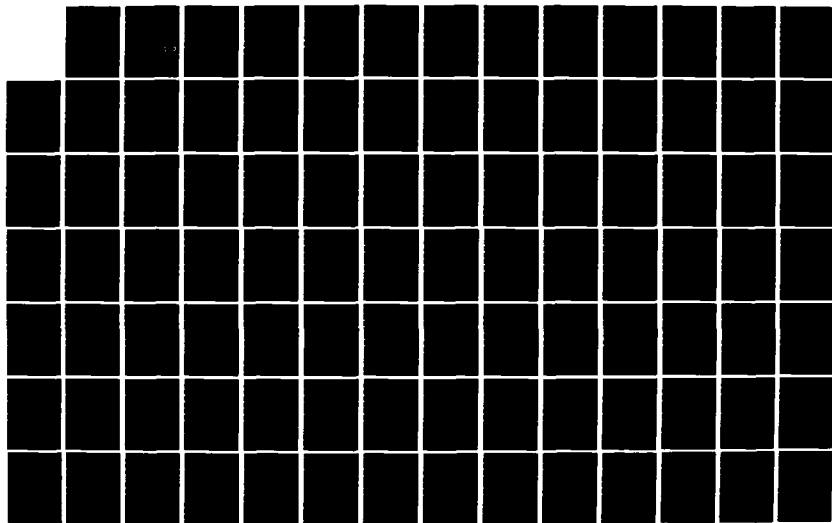
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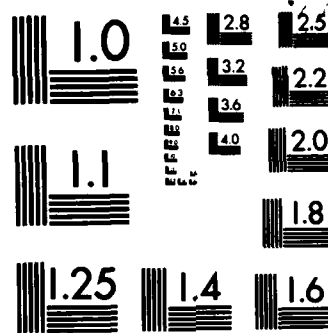
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NUCLEAR STRATEGY AND NATIONAL STYLE

Volume I—Main Report

Colin S. Gray

Hudson Institute, Inc.

Quaker Ridge Road

Croton-on-Hudson, New York 10520

31 July 1981

Final Report for Period 1 February 1980—31 July 1981

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20. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number) This study represents the first detailed examination of strategic culture and national style with particular focus upon the distinctive and divergent nuclear strategic ideas and doctrines of the United States and the Soviet Union. The report reviews theories that have underpinned U.S. nuclear weapon policy and doctrine, and seeks to identify an American nuclear weapon policy which would be both compatible with American cultural values and political interests, and																	

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responsive to American security requirements. Volume II supplements this report with strategic style studies of the Soviet Union, France, Great Britain and China.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report argues that there are distinctive American and Soviet "national styles" in nuclear strategy, that they are comprehensible on the basis of historical and sociological understanding, and that they may interact in actual conflict with possibly fatal consequences for the United States.

The centerpiece of this report is the analysis of five classes of options for U.S. nuclear posture and doctrine. These are (1) mutual assured vulnerability; (2) mutual assured vulnerability with (targeting) flexibility; (3) counterforce and counter-(political) control preeminence with recovery denial; (4) damage limitation for deterrence and coercion; and (5) damage limitation with defense dominant. The pros and cons of each class of options are analyzed in detail. The report recommends that the United States adopt a strategic nuclear policy that is genuinely balanced between offensive and defensive capabilities. In short, option (4)--damage limitation for deterrence and coercion--is recommended.

The strongest single recommendation of this report is that U.S. strategic nuclear planning should be as attentive to the protection of the U.S. homeland as it is to the destruction of Soviet assets.

This report finds that U.S. incomprehension of its own, and of Soviet, strategic culture and national style has misled U.S. policy-makers into the making of poor policy. This report documents in detail how the United States developed a strategic force posture, endorsed strategic doctrinal concepts, and pursued strategic arms control agreements vis à vis a substantially fictional Soviet Union. It is demonstrated here how the Soviet Union, for reasons of its own, did not (and does not) share the U.S. approach to deterrence; has no vision of "strategic stability" that is even remotely congruent with that dominant in the United States; is dismissive of our traditional, doctrinally authoritative theory of escalation control and crisis management, and views arms control negotiations as an opportunity to secure unilateral advantage. These claims are all debated and supported, in detail, in the report.

Contrary to general assumption, the permanent advent of nuclear weapons has not effected a revolution in statecraft. Commentators on statecraft from Periclean Athens, Renaissance Italy, or "Concert Europe," would have no difficulty comprehending statecraft today. The historical discontinuity of recent times has not been technological in nature, but political, and dates from 1917 rather than from 1945. Since that time the U.S.S.R. has rejected the legitimacy of the imperia of the other major states. This is a revolutionary change.

The report offers a detailed contrasting analysis of Soviet and American national styles in nuclear strategy. Although the major part of this report focuses on the roots and the detail of nuclear policy thinking in the two super-powers, one political fact dominates the

enterprise--the U.S.S.R., by self-definition, is a true revolutionary actor in world politics (no matter how conservative it often may appear in its diplomatic activity). Pending fundamental political change "at home," the U.S.S.R. should be viewed as a permanent adversary. For the foreseeable future, the need to compete with the U.S.S.R. is permanent. But, the cumulative improvement on the Soviet end of "the correlation of forces" has changed the basis on which foreign policy engagement can be designed--greatly to the U.S. disadvantage. The central problem for the U.S. is not so much to understand Soviet power, as to contain it. Although Soviet leaders are acknowledged to be cautious and pragmatic (and not "gangsters in a hurry" à la Third Reich), Russian history and culture is found to weigh heavily in their world view. The Soviets--notwithstanding propagandistic denunciation of the possibility of the achievement of strategic superiority--have an intensely traditional professional-military view of (nuclear) war. The Soviets have waged war, on their own territory (a critical distinction vis à vis the U.S.) against a first-class adversary within living memory--and they very nearly lost. This recent experience, added to the continental land-power tradition, produces a genuine "seriousness" about the actual conduct of war which is notably lacking in an insular power such as the United States. The Soviet attitude towards military power stems from Russian tradition combined with a creed which has universal pretensions and which is the very rationale for the legitimacy of Soviet rule in the U.S.S.R. Above all else, the Soviet Union should be thought of as an "insecure empire" that defines its security in terms of the insecurity of others. The "conservative" Western view of Soviet strategic doctrine--stressing its war-waging/war-survival aspects--is now, belatedly, the conventional wisdom.

American nuclear-weapon policy thinking is analyzed, and contrasted with Soviet thinking (and actions), systematically in chapters which address the major categories of Western nuclear-doctrinal thinking (deterrence, strategic stability, escalation control and crisis management, arms competition and arms control, and strategic superiority). Because of its traditional geographical insularity, and the military history that flowed therefrom, the United States is not well equipped culturally to cope with the probable damage of a nuclear war. American policy-making and influencing elites tend to be dominated by skill groups (lawyers/elected politicians) whose real expertise--the manipulation of U.S. domestic democratic procedures--does not equip them well to deal appropriately with the successful survivors of Stalin's Great Purge.

Americans, traditionally, have tended to believe that:

- "good" causes triumph.
- the United States can succeed in anything it pursues energetically.
- Americans cannot fail (as God's chosen people).
- the United States can out-produce any enemy in the materiel needed for victory.

The world of the 1980s is more complex than this. This report explores the reasons behind the progressive diminution in American self-

confidence vis à vis nuclear strategy of the 1960s and 1970s. The following American beliefs were important:

- that nuclear war cannot be "won."
- that other cultures soon will come to share American ideas.
- that strategic defenses are likely not merely to be ineffective, but also dangerous.
- that Soviet leaders can be "educated" into more constructive paths of thought and policy.
- that the American defense establishment is as much the enemy as are the Soviets.
- that, for structural societal reasons, the United States is, and would remain, superior in defense ideas and in defense technology.

It is found that much of the content of our "received wisdom" on deterrence, stability, escalation, arms control, and so forth, reflects little more than the character (strengths and weaknesses) of our own culture. To take but one critical example, Western officials and theorists envisage "a process of escalation" (itself a highly Western culture-bound concept) essentially as a process of (political) "bargaining." On the evidence of culture and style, the Soviets would approach nuclear war as war pure and simple--not as a bargaining process.

In these areas of central importance to Western policy thinking the U.S. has been driven by a vision of systematic stability which has not been shared by the Soviet adversary. Stated directly, U.S. strategic doctrine and policy have been wrong with reference to their provisions for deterrent adequacy, stability, escalation control and control of strategic arms competition. Among other deficiencies, the bedrock of NATO strategy (as in MC-14/3 of 1967) and of American strategic-warfare thinking--if not potential practice--continues to assume a favorable U.S.-Soviet strategic nuclear balance of a kind that has not existed since the early 1970s.

Most fundamentally of all, for the better part of twenty years (the 1960s and 1970s), the United States neglected to consider the U.S.S.R. adequately on its own terms. Deterrence, basically, is a psychological phenomenon, and deterrent effect must be active in Soviet minds and obviously, on Soviet criteria. This report stresses the imperative need for U.S. nuclear-weapon policy to be relevant to the Soviet world view. Strategic-policy truth is not abstract; it is culture specific--what do Soviet leaders fear most? It is judged here that Soviet leaders fear most for the survival of the essential assets of the Soviet state--not for the survival of Soviet citizens.

This report concludes that although the United States must be true to its own unique culture in its defense preparation, many policy errors can and should be avoided if the cultural/stylistic engines of American and Soviet strategic nuclear preparation are understood on their own terms.

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INTRODUCTION

It is almost a cliché to claim that this is a period of transition. Every period is one of transition: today always hovers uncomfortably between yesterday (history) and tomorrow (the future--in which hopes and dreams may be assumed to be made manifest). However, with respect to nuclear weapons policy at least, today happens to have an unusually strong claim to be a period of transition. The early 1980s may see a historical turning point in U.S. nuclear weapon policy, or, it is possible that this period will constitute a turning point where history (in the form of U.S. policy determination) does not turn. (By way of analogy, Russian history from the accession of Czar Alexander II, in 1855, until the eve of World War I saw several potential turning points--where turns were not made.)¹

With respect both to the political setting for, and the military factors contributing directly to, U.S. nuclear strategy and posture, it is reasonably well understood, by opinion on the left, the center, and the right, that the strategic ideas, the doctrines, and the postures that were deemed adequate for the 1970s, may not serve at all well for the 1980s and beyond.

The contemporary ferment in U.S. nuclear-weapon, and nuclear-weapon related, policy may be illustrated by a few "signs of the times." Harold Brown, the former Secretary of Defense, offered the opinion that:

Though we made some significant advances in the 1970s, especially in MIRVed warheads, our investment in strategic programs in that decade was less than one-third of what the Soviets spent on their strategic programs. If we had let that trend continue, we would have faced, by the mid-1980s, at best a perception of inferiority, at worst a real possibility of nuclear coercion.

This statement implied that the danger was real, but that appropriate corrective action has been taken (a subject to which this report will return). It is useful to augment Dr. Brown's August 20, 1980 statement (above) with his words of January 1980. Then he said that

"[c]ritical turning points in the histories of nations are difficult to recognize at the time. Usually they become clear only in retrospect. Nonetheless, the United States may well be at such a turning point today. We face a decision that we have been deferring for too long; we can defer it no longer. We must decide now whether we intend to remain the strongest nation in the world. The alternative is to let ourselves slip into inferiority..."³

This was a remarkable admission from an administration which already had held office for three years at the time the statement was issued.

Scarcely less startling than Harold Brown's acknowledgement of the seriousness of U.S. military competitive problems, have been statements from the heartland of the U.S. arms control community to the very plain effect that all is not well with their cause. For example, Leslie Gelb, one of the principal official architects of SALT II (and, reportedly, the major author of the Protocol to the SALT II Treaty), has written that

[a]rms control has essentially failed. Three decades of U.S.-Soviet negotiations to limit arms competition have done little more than to codify the arms race."⁴

In addition, the Director of the Arms Control Association, William Kincade, has felt moved to write a careful analysis with the title, "A Farewell to Arms Control?"⁵ Similar sentiments abound among strong proponents of negotiated arms control. For example, Deborah Shapley argues that "clearly, at many levels, some crisis of arms control is upon us."⁶

Moving from the general to the fairly specific, changing times were well-heralded by the national security affairs correspondent of The New York Times, when he told his readers that "After Almost a Decade, the ABM Dispute Resumes."⁷ ABM is not "just another weapon system." It was, and to some extent remains, a symbolic issue to rival schools of thought on strategy and defense policy. Because of significant evolution in the technologies both of offense and defense, the concept of a strategic stability resting vitally upon the mutual vulnerability of super-power societies as the leitmotiv for U.S. defense planning, has come under increasing critical scrutiny.⁸ The 1980s should see not only the maturing of effective ballistic-missile defense technologies, but also the emergence of the age of "absolute accuracy"⁹--figuratively speaking. Zero circular error probable (CEP) is unlikely with all-inertial missile guidance,¹⁰ but--for all intents and purposes--we must assume that all fixed facilities of precisely known locations are fatally vulnerable. The fifth-generation U.S./ICBM, MX, or--just possibly--Minuteman IV,¹¹ could have a single shot kill probability against a Soviet ICBM silo hardened to withstand 2,500 pounds per square inch blast overpressure (psi) of close to 0.98.¹²

This report attempts to effect a near zero-base critical review both of the theories that have underpinned U.S. nuclear weapons policy and doctrine, and of the policies that have given expression to those theories. This critical review is undertaken not in order to seek to indict particular individuals or administrations for error, but rather in order to assist the U.S. defense community to learn from past mistakes. Many of the apparent

mistakes committed over the past twenty years were committed for entirely commendable reasons--judged in American, and indeed general Western, terms.

The report seeks to identify an American nuclear weapon policy--strategy and posture--which is both compatible with American cultural values and political interests, and is prospectively responsive to putative American deterrent and warfighting requirements vis-à-vis a culturally distinctive, if not alien, Soviet Union. Although this report does identify a preferred policy (strategy and matching posture), it is organized in such a way that readers should find value in the analysis, whether or not they endorse the policy preference of the author. A somewhat unusual feature of the U.S. defense debate of the past several years has been the gradual emergence of a great deal of common ground among policy protagonists with respect to identification of many important features of the nuclear-weapon policy problem--even though the protagonists have proceeded from problem diagnosis to conflicting theories for effective treatment.

Today, U.S. nuclear weapons policy reflects a partial recognition of the "new consensus" that has emerged over the threat. Declaratory policy, as always, is more easily changed than is action (or operational) policy, which--in its turn--is more easily manipulable than are capabilities. In the summer of 1980, three Presidential Directives (PDs), PD 53, PD 58, and PD 59, provided much of the basis for Harold Brown's claims that "in our analysis and planning, we are necessarily giving greater attention to how a nuclear war would actually be fought by both sides if deterrence fails."¹³ This was quite a startling statement from an Administration long known to harbor the belief that a nuclear war would mean an uncontrollable

catastrophe for both sides.¹⁴ However, not content with announcing a near-revolution in official U.S. thinking on the possible character of nuclear war, the Secretary proceeded to inter the better part of fifteen years' worth of mainstream American doctrine on strategic deterrence. He said,

[t]here is no contradiction between this focus on how a war would be fought and what its results would be, and our purpose of insuring continued peace through mutual deterrence. Indeed, this focus helps us achieve deterrence and peace, by ensuring that an ability to retaliate is fully credible. (Emphasis in the original.)¹⁵

Official disclaimers notwithstanding, those sentences constitute a U.S. doctrinal revolution. For many years in the late 1960s and early 1970s, Western commentators nurtured the forlorn hope that the Soviet defense community would come to converge in its strategic thinking upon the orthodox Western theory of strategic stability.¹⁶ Instead, with one very notable exception, the United States has now converged its official strategic thinking upon that of the Soviet Union. Both super-powers now profess to believe that deterrent effect is a function of anticipated war-waging prowess.

The notable exception mentioned above is the continuing disregard for the physical protection of homeland assets (beyond continuation of government and essential communications) which characterizes U.S. policy.¹⁷

It is far too soon to assess whether or not PDs 53, 58, and 59,¹⁸ will have any very noteworthy impact on plans and programs. However, their production and public discussion (in the case of PD 59 on nuclear weapons employment policy)¹⁹ provides a very useful point of reference

for this report--summarizing, as they certainly did, a great deal of the strategic thinking of recent years.

Necessarily, the analysis and conclusions in this report are strictly personal to the author. However, there is a large, and growing, area of consensus among defense and arms-control professionals over the nature of U.S. nuclear policy problems, and even over the character of desirable solutions. It has always been a rule at Hudson Institute that a necessary qualification for entering into debate is an ability to state the position of the other side to the satisfaction of that side (and, preferably, to state the other side's position better than they can). Unfortunately, a hardy perennial feature of U.S. debate over nuclear weapons policy (strategies and weapons) has been the erection, by all the contending parties, of straw targets--which have been duly demolished. In practice, a good fraction of the time and energy of competent strategists, of all doctrinal persuasions, has been spent attacking positions which no one has sought to defend. This report is, in the first instance, a theoretical exploration, leading, in the second instance, to policy exploration and recommendation. Readers will find no villainous MADvocates (advocates of a doctrine of mutual assured destruction in a reasonably pure form²⁰) in these pages, nor will they find functionally treasonable SALTaholics²¹-- such creatures may exist, but they are not of policy significance today.

Notwithstanding the reference already made to there being a very substantial amount of common ground among strategic analysts today, it is sensible to categorize the elements driving this report, respectively,

into facts and opinions (termed propositions--to be discussed, tested, insofar as possible, accepted as fact, plausibly candidate fact, or to be discarded as probably false). What follows is a terse summary of the facts and propositions which underlie all of the discussion in this report.

Fact: The Soviet Union has been outspending the United States on strategic forces in the ratio of 3:1 (averaged over a decade).²²

Fact: To the present day (pending evidence concerning U.S. program actions to implement PDs 53, 58, and 59) the super-powers have had noticeably distinctive strategic doctrines--with the United States, alone, distinguishing between the functions of deterrence and defense.²³

Fact: Although the super-powers have competed with a degree of reciprocated "enemy" identification that has to qualify for arms race status, neither has reacted to the initiatives of the other as would be predictable were they waging an arms race with a dominant view to preserving the putative "stability" of mutual assured destruction capabilities.²⁴

Fact: Arms control agreements between the super-powers have proved to be negotiable solely on the basis of registering "a photograph of the existing balance."²⁵

Proposition: Soviet pursuit of an efficient war-waging/war-surviving strategic posture does not reflect merely the opinion of hawkish military, and some Party, opinion. Instead, such pursuit is mandated by the Marxist-Leninist theoretical basis for the legitimacy of Soviet rule in the U.S.S.R. (However,

the U.S.S.R., although committed to believing in victory over the capitalist West, is not committed to the achievement of military victory. Whether or not victory will come by acknowledged to be very painful direct military means is said to be a function of Western policy determination).

Proposition: Both the United States and the Soviet Union have distinctive "strategic cultures"--which reflect their separate political cultures.²⁶ These cultures give evidence both of the unique histories of the countries in question, and of the ways in which American and Soviet citizens perceive their unique histories.²⁷

Proposition: In addition to the contemporary issues which divide them, conflict between the super-powers has been greatly exacerbated by the mutual miscomprehension of two very different strategic (and political) cultures. Mutual cultural empathy would not have precluded what has been misnamed "the Cold War,"²⁸ any more than it would have precluded the arms competition that flowed inevitably from political conflict, but it might have obviated gross, and many dangerous, misassessments of intent.

Proposition: Some critically important American nuclear policy decisions rested upon either a plain misreading of Soviet strategic culture, or perhaps more likely--a naive unawareness of the distinctions between the Soviet and American "ways" in defense preparation.²⁹

Fact: For reason of its democratic political structure and/or the

naivete of its political opinion leaders, the United States has been unable to confront squarely the problem of nuclear war.³⁰

Fact: For reason of its democratic political structure the United States has yet to see elected an administration which would "come clean" to the general public on the subject of its nuclear weapons policy.³¹

Fact: To the extent to which U.S. defense problems can be attributed to a real, or anticipated, absence of domestic political support, that lack of support refers to elite, and particularly mass-media spokesmen, opinions, not to the general public. Opinion-poll data, year after year, portrays an American general public willing to compete very vigorously with the U.S.S.R.³²

The principal purposes of this report are to outline the range of strategic choices open to the United States in the 1980s and beyond; to identify the arguments pro and con each alternative; and to specify a preferred solution. In addition, and perhaps for many readers even more important, this report rests that choice of strategy upon a rigorous and critical analysis of the ideas and doctrines that have guided U.S. nuclear-weapons policy over the past fifteen years. Part II of this report examines U.S. theories of deterrence, stability, crisis management, escalation control, arms competition, arms control, and superiority, with a view to assessing how well they have fared in competitive practice with the Soviet Union.

Central to every major element in this report is the idea that both the United States and the Soviet Union have a distinctive national style,

a strategic culture, which impacts significantly upon their separate ways in strategic deliberation and defense preparations. This idea, of cultural distinctiveness, has come to be familiar of recent years.³³ But--nonetheless--it has yet to be applied systematically to nuclear policy issues. This report does not seek to argue either that one particular culture is inherently superior to another, or that the United States should seek to emulate a strategic culture which it finds fundamentally alien. However, this report is grounded in the beliefs that the United States: can improve its nuclear-policy performance as a consequence of much more accurate appreciation of Soviet strategic culture; might be able to alter its nuclear-weapons policy so as to thwart more directly critical elements in Soviet policy; may be willing to consider very different lines of strategic reasoning to see what merit they might have--of potential value for inclusion in U.S. policy; and that the United States might be better placed to convey convincing deterrent messages were it able, more accurately, to divine those threats which Soviet leaders tend to view with particular abhorrence.

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1. See Edward Crankshaw, The Shadow of the Winter Palace: The Drift to Revolution, 1825-1917 (London: Macmillan, 1976).
2. Harold Brown, speech at the U.S. Naval War College, Newport, R.I., August 20, 1980 (mimeo), p.2.
3. Harold Brown, Department of Defense Annual Report, Fiscal Year 1981 (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, January 29, 1980), p.14.
4. Leslie Gelb, "A Glass Half Full," Foreign Policy, No.36 (Fall 1979), p.21.
5. William Kincade, "A Farewell to Arms Control?", Arms Control Today, Vol. 10, No. 1 (January 1980), pp.1-5.
6. Deborah Shapley, "Arms Control as a Regulator of Military Technology," Daedalus, Vol. 109, No.1 (Winter 1980), p.145.
7. Richard Burt, "After Almost a Decade, the ABM Dispute Resumes," The New York Times, August 30, 1980, p.5
8. See Chapter 5.
9. See Deborah Shapley, "Technology Creep and the Arms Race: A World of Absolute Accuracy," Science 29 (September 1978), pp.1192-96.
10. The asymptotic range probably is reached in the vicinity of 300-400 feet.
11. Fitted with the Advanced Initial Reference Sphere (AIRS), a guidance technology currently allocated to the MX ICBM.
12. Source: Boeing Vulnerability Assessment Calculator.
13. Brown, speech at the U.S. Naval War College, p.6.
14. See Desmond Ball, Developments in U.S. Strategic Nuclear Policy Under the Carter Administration, ACIS Working Paper No.21 (Los

Angeles: Center for International and Strategic Affairs, UCLA, February 1980).

15. Brown, Speech at the U.S. Naval War College, p.6.
16. See Thomas Wolfe, "The Convergence Issue and Soviet Strategic Policy," in Rand 25th Anniversary Volume (Santa Monica, Cal.: RAND, 1973), particularly p.24.
17. On the significance of this exception, see Colin S. Gray and Keith Payne, "Victory Is Possible," Foreign Policy, No.39 (Summer 1980), pp.14-27.
18. See "It has to deter," The Economist, Vol.276, No.7146 (August 16, 1980), pp.9-10.
19. See Richard Burt: "Carter Said to Back a Plan for Limiting Any Nuclear War," The New York Times, August 6, 1980, pp.A1, A6; and "Better Protection of Leaders in War Ordered by Carter," The New York Times, August 12, 1980, pp.A1, A9.
20. Meaning analysts who contend that deterrence is assured if some "magic fraction" of the enemy's population and industrial base can be destroyed under all circumstances.
21. Meaning people addicted to the SALT process.
22. This is the "official" figure, issued by the Carter Administration. To the best of my knowledge, it is not controversial. On Soviet defense expenditures more generally, see William T. Lee, Soviet Defense Expenditures in an Era of SALT, U.S.S.I. Report 79-1 (Washington, D.C.: United States Strategic Institute, 1979).

23. This "fact" is explained in Chapter 4.
24. See Chapter 7.
25. Prepared statement of Henry Kissinger in U.S. Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, The SALT II Treaty, Hearings, Part 3, 96th Cong., 1st sess. (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1979), p.166.
26. See Ken Booth, Strategy and Ethnocentrism (London: Croom, Helm, 1979), passim. This book is severely flawed by its often perverse judgments on U.S. strategic policy, but--nonetheless--"warts and all", it is one of the most important works to appear over the past twenty years.
27. American and Soviet "strategic culture" is explored in detail in Chapters 2 and 3.
28. In the opinion of this author, the Soviet Union has been at "war" with the West since its birth. Political protagonists, in their statecraft, tend to mix competition and cooperation in pursuit of net advantage. To periodize post-1945 history in terms of "cold war," "detente," etc. is to do violence to the very nature of international politics.
29. The American public in 1972 may have hoped for an "era of peace," but it was certainly willing to be persuaded concerning the possibility of inimical Soviet program actions. U.S. strategic nuclear-weapon policies in the 1970s simply did not take proper account of the Soviet commitment to achievement of an early hard-target counterforce capability.

30. Every competently conducted study of U.S. civil defense problems has shown that a major shelter plus evacuation program made a dramatic difference to U.S. societal survival and recovery.
31. From the time of Robert McNamara, annual Defense Department reports have told Americans that they are "hostages" to Soviet and U.S. good behavior. However, these reports have not been read by very many Americans. This author is willing to wager a considerable sum on the proposition that most Americans would reject the stability-via mutual-vulnerability thesis, were it put to them plainly.
32. An impressive datum is to the effect that at the time of "the great ABM debate," in 1969-70, most Americans believed that the U.S. already had an ABM defense in place.
33. For example, see Jack Snyder, Soviet Strategic Culture: Implications for Limited Nuclear Options, R-2154-AF (Santa Monica, Cal.: RAND, September 1977).

Chapter 1

NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND WORLD POLITICS

Nuclear Strategy and History

In the minds of many people there is a deep uncertainty over the validity of the concept of nuclear strategy. If strategy is intended, in some purposeful way, to translate military power (latent force) into an instrument for the prospectively efficient accomplishment of political ends, does not the very destructiveness of nuclear weapons negate their value in any operational sense? Together with the late Bernard Brodie one may endorse the idea of "utility in non-use,"¹ but can one identify any likely utility in actual use?--and how might "utility in non-use" relate to "utility in use"? In other words, can one design a plausible strategy of (prewar) deterrence if one cannot also design a plausible operational strategy? These are important questions and they continue to lurk behind the more specific debating issues of the day (on particular weapon systems, targeting schemes, and arms control proposals).

It is probably useful for the author to declare his basic position at the outset, so that readers may be appropriately forewarned. This report is written from the following perspective:

- Even the best-laid schemes of officials and strategic theorists may fail "on the night" of historical necessity, there is an absence of reality testing about any and all nuclear strategies.² However....
- Nuclear weapons exist, there is no way in which the United States can effect their total--and permanent--abolition, and any unilateral move by the United States down the path of nuclear disarmament virtually

would invite attempts at coercion by other powers moved differently in their statecraft.

-- Unfortunately, the decision for or against the initiation of nuclear war may not always be exclusively in the hands of an American President.³ Nuclear use may be begun by another power, or the United States may find itself in a situation where vital foreign policy interests can be defended only through the initiation of nuclear operations.

-- For the reasons cited immediately above, the United States, clearly, must have a nuclear strategy--the question is which one. This is not to imply the necessity for any rigid, rigorously exclusive, choice of strategy--flexibility, options, are strongly desirable, just as a heavy focus upon operational strategy, on occasion in this report, should not cause readers to forget that the principal purpose of nuclear-armed forces is deterrence (pre- and intra-war), it is not the efficient conduct of military operations. (As noted above, the United States defense community remains somewhat uncertain as to the prudent relationship between deterrence and defense.)⁴

Strategists, as a general rule, do not spend their days debating moral issues. This author, with reference to the alternative postures and doctrines discussed in this report, cannot identify any operational nuclear strategy which would not, in its implications, shock the moral sensibilities of any thinking person (belonging to any culture with which he is tolerably familiar). All that a strategist can say is that first,

the debate over nuclear strategy is really about the prevention of war; second, debate over efficient ways to fight a war rests on the belief that prospective prowess in war-waging will contribute vitally to success in deterrence; and third, that nuclear war may happen for reasons quite beyond our control--meaning that our real choice may lie between fighting the war which we did not, or could not, deter, either well thereby possibly preserving American lives and vital interests, or badly.⁵ Finally, contrary to the apparent sense in some of the rhetoric of the ongoing nuclear arms debate, the United States (and the Soviet Union) does not have the prevention, or avoidance, of nuclear war as an absolute goal of policy. If that were the case, the American nuclear deterrent would soon lose all foreign policy utility. Barring some dramatic restructuring of world politics, American military nuclear power, as (generally) latent threat, is essential to the maintenance of what passes for international peace and security.⁶

Most of this study is devoted to the discussion of the key concepts pertaining to nuclear strategy, and to a range of strategies (and postures) that are, or should be, candidates for American official consideration. Although this author believes strongly both that the concept of nuclear strategy has integrity and that some strategies are preferable to others (judged on explicit criteria)--beliefs which have to pervade this text--he sees this study as an exploration where, for many readers, the journey may be of more value than is the attainment of the specific ("preferred policy") destination. Critically important to the assessment of alternative doctrines and postures are one's understanding of the roles of force, and particularly latent force, and--above all else--nuclear force, in

the world politics of the last quarter of the twentieth century. Expressed in the simplest and crudest of terms, "what use are nuclear weapons?" The remainder of this chapter attempts to provide a political context for discussion of what McGeorge Bundy has termed, pejoratively, "the refined calculations of the nuclear gamemen."⁷

Whatever sense one may make of his policy advice,⁸ McGeorge Bundy's strictures against "nuclear gamemen" do contain a distressingly substantial grain of truth. A great deal of what passes for the strategic analysis of nuclear-weapon issues is really nothing of the kind. In truth, the American defense community tends to be both apolitical and astrategic in orientation. All too often the hypothetical central (U.S.-U.S.S.R. homeland-to-homeland) wars of the "nuclear gamemen" begin with such words as "let us assume a large-scale Soviet attack upon the U.S. silo-housed ICBM force." Such a war has no political context, indeed--innocent of context--it has no political meaning.⁹ Debate over major weapon systems, like the B-1, the proposed MX ICBM, and the ABM, tends to be impoverished because the debaters, on all sides of the argument, all too often are not equipped, or even motivated, to think strategically. This thesis will recur many times in the argument which follows.

One of the most intriguing questions that can be posed by a strategist looking backwards, or by an international historian attuned to contemporary policy debate, is the following: "what difference have nuclear weapons, and their means of delivery, made to world politics?" To rephrase, of all the differences that may be detected between the world politics, say, of 1980, and the world politics of 1939, 1900, or 1850, how may--and to

what degree--can one attribute change to nuclear-weapons technology and to the means of long-range delivery of that technology?

This question is of more than mere academic interest. One is inquiring into the historical domain of the evidential base behind policy advice.¹⁰ For example, can the United States government learn anything of value from Munich in 1938, the July crisis of 1914, or the imperial statecraft of Rome¹¹ or Athens? Argument by historical analogy is endemic--but which, if any, analogies have integrity as a part of the relevant evidential base? Above all else, bypassing the potential pitfalls of focusing upon one, rather than another, preferred analogy (e.g., is today more like 1914 or 1938-39?)¹², is there a general body of knowledge about statecraft, deriving from appreciation of all recorded history, which can be understood at a suitably non-specific (since particular conditions change) level? This apparently academic question is designed to direct readers to an understanding of what may be called "the rules of the road" of world politics today--with a particular view to preparing American officials to consider nuclear policy problems in the light of a comprehension of statecraft that transcends American political culture. Much of the American understanding of world politics in the nuclear age, to have to resort to a very tired cliché, is parochial and ahistorical to the point where judicious nuclear-weapon policy deliberation is unlikely. For example, only of very recent years has the United States' defense community considered its principal overseas adversary in the light of the distinctive history, and hence culture, which must pervade Soviet policy determination.¹³

There is an acute problem of historical evidence: there is but a single stream of world political activity since 1945. In essence one is asking, "how could the world politics of 1945 to the present have been different had nuclear weapons not been invented?" No case, or argument can be proved--to repeat, there is only one stream of historical evidence.

It seems useful to begin at the level of the structure of world politics. The familiar pre-nuclear concept of a Great Power--a power essential to the functioning of the international order of the day--has retained some fraction of its meaning.¹⁴ Through most of modern (i.e., post-Renaissance) history, it has been well understood that a handful of (dynastic--later national) states had extraordinary duties and responsibilities for "international order."¹⁵ From time to time one or more states joined or left the (exclusive) category of Great Powers, and from time to time one or more of these states pursued foreign-policy objectives which were incompatible with the very idea of a society of states, or a community of Great Powers, but the concept of Great Power endured.

Probably the single most important element in the Great Power catechism was that every Great Power had a right to exist, was essential to the system of international security of the day, and had legitimate interests. Each Great Power would, and was expected to, seek unilateral advantage where it could--but the integrity of the balance of power system, considered as a whole, was expected, ultimately, to take precedence over individual parochial interests, while the hidden hand of a near-automatically operating balancing system would soon restrain any power which neglected its obligations to the integrity of the system as a whole.¹⁶

After all, the Great Power which we humiliate today, may be the Great Power whose "balancing" assistance we need tomorrow.

It may be objected that the above thumbnail description of the Great Power balance of power system has been overly attentive to some nineteenth century practices, while ignoring a great deal of contrary evidence, and presents what may be characterized as a historical anomaly as the norm. A European (effectively synonymous with global, for most of the period) balance of power system was fairly explicitly recognized to exist, and was valued for its contribution to order and security (though not always peace), from the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, marking the end of the Thirty Years War, until 1939.¹⁷ That system, notwithstanding periodic hiccups, did operate, at its best, according to a code of behavior intended to preserve not peace, but rather order and general security. It was destroyed by a malign combination of rampant nationalisms, rigid countervailing alliance structures, the rise of a Germany too powerful to be contained, and a new technology of war and a new feasibility of economic mobilization for war, which ensured that quick victory would evade the clutches of both sides.

Behaving sensibly, which was not always the case by any means, the Great Powers of the nineteenth century (Great Britain, France, Prussia/Germany [after 1866], Austria-Hungary, and Russia) recognized a community of concern for international security, embraced no ambitions for a universal imperium, and--as may be surmized--shared a common code of statecraft just as they shared a common language of diplomacy (French). This author is acutely aware of the exceptions that should be noted to the generalizations

just offered. The Imperial Russia of the Romanovs was viewed, particularly in liberal Britain, as something of an international outcast for reasons of the "barbarism" of her domestic autocratic structure;¹⁸ Germany foreign policy after the fall of Bismarck in 1890 was as inept as it was often indeterminate...and so forth. Nonetheless, at the time of the Boer War (1899-1902) Great Britain was willing to consider seriously a limited colonial settlement with Germany, which might have blossomed into a deeper political relationship,¹⁹ while--in 1907--Great Britain and Russia did achieve a reconciliation of their respective, and formerly antagonistic interests with reference to South Asia.²⁰ In short, this European balance of power system, though vulnerable to incompetent statecraft (witness the Crimean War), was sufficiently flexible that very few alliance or entente combinations were prohibited.

What is of particular interest to this study is the fact that the international system as it emerged out of the ashes (in Europe and Asia) and prosperous industries (in the United States) in 1945 was essentially set on its course, in its structure, and perhaps even substantially in its civilities and incivilities, before the nuclear age had any noteworthy physical military reality. The old order of the European balance of power system lingered on in the machinations of European diplomats in the 1920s and 1930s, but the world already had changed.

Nuclear weapons were developed in the 1940s by what came to be termed the superpowers, but the superpowers were considered superpowers before the world had assimilated the fact of the explosive release of nuclear energy for military purposes. Quite unaware of the existence of the

Manhattan Project, William T.R. Fox wrote his book entitled The Super Powers during the course of World War II.²¹ Even had the atom never been split, the United States and the Soviet Union would have emerged from the Second World War as they did, preeminent (if heavily damaged, in the Soviet case) and eventually condemned to an enduring antagonism--even though the Soviet union threatened no very specific and long-standing American interest in any very direct fashion. Soviet-American hostility was a geopolitical inevitability. The United States was compelled to assume the duty of the principal defender of the Eurasian "Rimland" against the outward pressure of the Heartland power, the U.S.S.R.²²

The two world wars, born most immediately out of the inability of the old European balance of power system to contain the ambitions of an overly powerful and newly united Germany, effectively destroyed the international system as one might depict it, as of, say, 1900. The First World War totally eliminated one of the five "essential" actors in the system, Austria-Hungary; pushed another actor virtually out of European politics for more than ten years (Russia/the U.S.S.R.); fatally weakened the two democratic actors (Britain and France); and left the remaining actor (Germany) first a victim of one of the victor's (France) ill-judged determination to achieve revenge and recompense, and later as a pariah state directed by criminal, if not psychopathic, adventurers who could recognize no concept of "international order" save that imposed by the jackboot.

The near-total, though non-lethal, hostility between East and West that is implied by the concept of cold war has to be traced to causes

far more substantial than the cycle of mutual misperception that one can trace in the 1940s. This study is uninterested in the question of "who started the Cold War," not merely because that hoary issue has absorbed considerable historical research talent for too long already, but also--and, particularly--because the mere posing of that question shows a profound misunderstanding both of the character of the Soviet Union and of the enduring nature of world politics.

Although the European balance of power system limped on through the 1920s and 1930s, (as France sought with increasing desperation to contain a resurgent German Third Reich via alliance connections with Czechoslovakia and Poland), the largely excluded semi-European factor of the new Russia/Soviet Union posed a part-traditional, part-novel threat to the integrity of the international politics of the day. By political definition, the new Soviet Republic, in what was Imperial Russia, has been "at war" with the political and imperial system of capitalism from the day of its birth. There is a rigidity in the structure of world politics flowing from this fact which has no close analogue in modern history (though some scholars of Bonapartist imperialism may disagree).

As American nuclear strategists discovered, very belatedly, in the 1970s, the character of the U.S.S.R. was not solely a matter of scholarly interest. Indeed, as some strategic theorists were to acknowledge, again very belatedly, a signal weakness in American strategic nuclear doctrine, as developed in the 1950s and 1960s, was that it was virtually totally innocent of any recognition of Soviet, qua Soviet reality.²³

The period 1914-45 saw not only the emergence of three states whose political (and hence strategic) cultures were fundamentally challenging to the previously established rules of the Europe-oriented balance of power system (the Soviet Union, the German Third Reich, and the United States), it also saw the destruction of the theory of limited war. As Clausewitz explained, with some overstatement, limited war was a rational product of a states' system wherein only limited political objectives were sought.²⁴ The idea of nationality inevitably was erosive of the practice of waging war for limited territorial objectives. For example, the loss of Alsace-Lorraine in 1870-71 functioned as a canker in the French body politic for a generation--nurturing an enduring demand for revanche. In the Fifteenth, Sixteenth, and even Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries, such an idea would have been ridiculous. However, what the idea and even the fact of mass national identification implied for the freedom of action of statesmen, the military technology of the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries made inevitable.²⁵

For reasons of national identification (and the social cohesion that occurs in war--for a time, at least),²⁶ industrial strength, and political and military intellectual ineptitude, the military regulator of the European balance of power system could not function effectively in 1914.²⁷ A protracted military struggle, engaging all of the assets of the participants, was an eventuality which none, save for a handful of unheeded theorists, had anticipated. The brutality implicit in the scenarios of the "nuclear gamesmen" of the nuclear age has already been practiced in the total wars of this century.

Without seeking to downplay the potential harm of nuclear war, this author would remind American readers that "unthinkable" casualty lists were the facts of life of 1914-18 and 1939-45 for many countries in continental Europe.²⁸ Although every individual war casualty is a tragedy, it is a fact of history that only in the Civil War, more than a century ago, has the United States/Confederate States of America taken casualties at all close, in percentage terms, to those suffered by France, Germany, Russia, Serbia, and Great Britain in the First World War. The purpose of this line of argument is not to suggest that large casualty lists are commonplace in the Twentieth Century (though they are), only that some of the features of "the nuclear age" that have struck American officials and theorists as unique may benefit from a little historical perspective. It is, perhaps, unfortunate that the only power after 1945 able to counterbalance Soviet influence around the periphery of Eurasia (the United States) should be a power unused to waging war "at home" or to paying a major price for military victory.

In short, some of the novel features of the nuclear age were novel only in the American context. The nuclear age, which came to mean both very high potential casualty lists and total vulnerability of society, was an extension, though admittedly a significant extension, of the Twentieth-Century experience of the European Powers. The idea of one warhead killing hundreds of thousands of people was novel--but, the Royal Air Force already had effected its functional equivalent in single air-raids over Hamburg and Dresden.

Brutality in war, alas, tends to be a simple function of military utility. The nuclear age, one may seek to argue, has seen new heights of planned barbarism--perhaps made all the more repulsive for the pseudo-scientific strategic jargon with which prospective mass murder is explained²⁹--but it is not obvious that nuclear weapons constitute, in moral terms at least, a step-level jump in man's inhumanity to man.³⁰ The world wars of this century have seen the use of poison gas, resort to unrestricted submarine warfare, the attempted starvation of whole populations through economic blockade, the attempted genocide of the Jewish (and Gypsy) people, and indiscriminate aerial bombardment of civilian "targets." Nuclear employment probably would be worse, but it is well to contemplate all aspects of military practice in the first half of the Twentieth Century.³¹ Clearly, the international system of the Twentieth Century, for reasons of national sentiment (and, hence, association with the goals of government in war), the economic resilience of states, and the sheer convenience of military usage, accepted the waging of total war against societies.

Nuclear Statecraft

This author has difficulties drawing a meaningful distinction in ethical terms between a United States willing to create a fire-storm in Tokyo in 1944-45, and a United States willing to employ nuclear weapons on Soviet cities in the 1980s. Lest there be any misunderstanding, this author believes both that the air war against Japan was conducted properly (up to, and including, the atomic-weapon attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki), and that a nuclear threat to Soviet civilians may be justifiable.³² The point of this argument is not to seek to justify either event, or atrocity,

rather is it to point to the kind of counter-civilian action which was effected (not merely threatened) prior to the nuclear age.

It is, perhaps, easy to be blasé about events which have long been contemplated yet which have failed to occur. Nuclear war is no more "acceptable" or less horrible, for the fact that American society has lived in its shadow for thirty years. The cliché of "the nuclear age" seems to have dulled what otherwise might be perceptive commentary. What has the nuclear age meant for world politics?

Prior to the nuclear age, Great Powers competed for influence, engaged in arms competitions (reflecting their competing political aspirations), signed up allies and generally avowed their faith in a somewhat locally-oriented definition of the good life. Also, from time to time, though with increasingly catastrophic results, the Great Powers had to resort to war one with another. (Germany, defeated in World War I, suffered only a very limited occupation and the imposition of an indemnity--albeit a crushing one--whereas defeat in World War II resulted in total military occupation and a division of the national territory [which may or may not prove to be permanent].)

The principal fact of postwar (1945) international politics, the countervailing alliance, or satellite, structures organized by the United States and the Soviet Union, would have occurred if nuclear weapons had not been invented. The super-power qualities of the United States and the Soviet Union have been enhanced by their unevenly evolving military nuclear capabilities, but their preeminent stature in the league table of international authority was preordained by reason of economic strength

(in the American case), and the way in which economic assets ruthlessly were applied to military problems (in the Soviet case).

It is tempting to suggest that neither World War I nor World War II would have occurred had the crisis-principals of 1914 and 1939 been armed with nuclear weapons, and--ab extensio--that one of the post-1945 crises would have exploded into a general East-West war had nuclear weapons not been invented; but, this author remains unconvinced. Nuclear weapons should, indeed, promote an unusual measure of caution in statecraft, but it is difficult to see how a military invention could, for long, have damped the fires that were burning in the Balkans of 1914, or, again for long, have impressed a cautionary wisdom upon a desperate Vienna, a frivolous Berlin, and a vacillating, divinely inspired St. Petersburg.³³ Similarly, one cannot resist the thought that a nuclear-armed Germany in the late 1930s would have been a Germany even more boldly bent upon conquest through blackmail and bluff than was in fact the case.³⁴

With respect to the United States after 1945, it is easy to accept an unduly expansive thesis for the role of nuclear weapons in support of American diplomacy. In a major speech in 1979, commenting upon the foreign policy implications of strategic nuclear parity, Henry Kissinger said that "our strategic doctrine has relied extraordinarily, perhaps exclusively, on our superior strategic nuclear power."³⁵ There is much to recommend Dr. Kissinger's view, as later Chapters explain, but his thesis encourages a narrowly military view of the sources of American authority in world order which certainly is alien to what is known concerning the Soviet perspective.³⁶

The Soviet concept of "the correlation of forces" is far broader than is the Western idea of the "strategic balance."³⁷ Indeed, as Keith Payne has suggested, "the correlation of forces" bears a marked resemblance to Hans Morgenthau's concept of national power.³⁸ Although nuclear weapons are acknowledged to be the "primary" element in the correlation, other significant elements include national will or morale, economic strength and technological prowess. The concept of the correlation of forces is really as obvious as it tends to be alien to an American defense community which is all too prone to think in unduly narrow military ways.

The structure of countervailing alliances in Eurasia has not been the product of changes in military technology. NATO came to depend very heavily upon a contingent American nuclear guarantee after "the Lisbon goals" of 1952 for conventional rearmament lost their authority--which was very rapidly indeed--and nuclear policy issues repeatedly have engaged the attention of intra-NATO diplomacy. However, the basic structure of the alliance, and particularly the leading role of the United States, has been the result of the overall strength of the United States, and the relative weakness of a politically much-fractionated Western Europe.

East-West relations since 1945, as this author has explained in detail elsewhere,³⁹ is but the latest phase in a continuing struggle for control of what geopoliticians have called the World-Island of Eurasia--Africa (and "Who rules the World-Island commands the World").⁴⁰ Nuclear weapons almost certainly have encouraged the major alliance-leading protagonists in world politics to take only the minimum of risks of a direct military clash between them, and may well have rendered the defense of

forward positions easier than would have been the case in a world where there was no potential audit trail from frontier clash to nuclear holocaust. However, one can make geopolitical sense of East-West conflict (and limited cooperation) either with, or without, reference to nuclear weapons. In addition, one should recognize that the impact of nuclear weapons technology on American political consciousness, and strategic planning, was particularly severe because of the near simultaneous development of the means of long-range (in particular trans-Arctic) weapon delivery. Any country wishing to pose a credible nuclear threat to the United States, in, say, 1900, would have had a very serious (though not insuperable) delivery problem.

Since 1945, notwithstanding the nuclear fact, world politics has been conducted very much on the basis of "business as usual." The rigidities in the major alliance pattern have flowed not from the evolution of military, let alone military-nuclear, technology, but rather from the basic characters of the two principal alliance organizers, and the historically extraordinary, though not unprecedented, degree of their international preponderance in terms of the factors that make for "national power." Consider, in summary form, the major changes that distinguish late Twentieth-Century, from, say, late Nineteenth-Century, world politics.

- (1) The international political system, is truly global for the first time in history.
- (2) Although Europe remains the principal "prize" in East-West competition, one superpower is totally non-European in its

geography, while the other has most of its territory outside of Europe.

- (3) The only colonial empire remaining in the world is the Great Russian/Soviet one.⁴¹
- (4) The "coming" Great Powers, each of which will have a military mobilization potential of, or close to, the first rank, are all non-European: they are Japan, the Chinese People's Republic, and Brazil.
- (5) The global character of the international political system is both matched and fueled by a global economic system and, effectively, a global system of very rapid communications.... and so on.

Where do nuclear weapons fit in the global political structure today? It is unclear whether or not the possession of an overt nuclear-weapon capability, conveys, ipso facto, the contemporary equivalent of Great Power status (bearing in mind the fact that there are very few precedents for the superpower phenomenon--particularly in modern European history [perhaps Spain for most of the Sixteenth Century, and the France of Louis XIV, for a while, and of Napoleon Bonaparte--though even in these cases the precedents are very imperfect]). As Soviet writers are fond of saying, "it is no accident" (probably--for an un-Soviet qualification) that the Permanent Members of the United Nations' Security Council are all nuclear weapon states. To have any very serious pretensions to play an international "ordering" function, a state today must possess nuclear weapons. The

reason is as obvious as the logic is inescapable. Major challenges to international order are likely to stem from, and be encouraged by, other Great Power "guardians"--and those states are nuclear-armed. A state cannot pretend to cut a significant and independent figure in the guarding of international order if it has no like answer of its own to nuclear threats. However, it does not follow that every nuclear-weapon state aspires to contribute in a noticeable way to international order on the global stage. Today, and it is to be expected increasingly in the future, the international order to be guarded by national nuclear-weapon capabilities will largely be local and parochial. For example, Israel and South Africa, two states probably in possession of nuclear weapons today, have little interest in accomplishing anything more than keeping regional enemies at bay.

Notwithstanding the French theory of proportional nuclear deterrence,⁴² the fact of the enduring Western alliance structure illustrates the truth that the traditional definition of a Great Power is no longer valid. That definition held that a Great Power was a Power capable, alone, of standing up to any one of the other Great Powers. The emergence of two super-states has meant the demise of that definition. A nuclear-weapon capability per se, regardless of quantity and quality, does not serve as an effective equalizer in "the correlation of forces"--save, just possibly, with respect to a very narrow range of admittedly truly vital interests.⁴³

In good part, perhaps, because of the historical facts of an initial American nuclear-weapon monopoly (1945-49), a long period of unquestionable American nuclear superiority (1950-69), and then a decade of rough parity

(1970-80), one should hesitate before offering any confident-sounding, broad-brush characterizations either of the rules of nuclear statecraft or, perhaps of greater relevance, of the rules of statecraft conducted in the shadow of nuclear weapons. There is no evidence as to how the Soviet Union will in fact choose to conduct its foreign relations in an era of marginal or perhaps clear nuclear superiority, in a context where other elements in the correlation of forces may be so unsatisfactory as to incline Soviet leaders towards caution or perhaps even cooperation. Through the late 1940s, the 1950s, and the 1960s, Soviet adventures, actual and potential, in nuclear statecraft were checked by the fact of American nuclear superiority, while Soviet advantages in non-nuclear projection forces in Europe were offset convincingly by the escalation dominance implicit in the healthy (for the West) imbalance in so-called strategic forces.⁴⁴ The 1970s should be seen as a decade of transition, as the Soviet Union laid the basis for a potential across-the-board military superiority in the 1980s.⁴⁵ Relative Western relaxation in its defense efforts in that decade has provided the Soviet Union with a unique historical opportunity to engage in a forward diplomacy with sound military backing.⁴⁶

Whether or not the Soviet Union will seek to reap some very tangible rewards for its unmatched, steady, and steadily increasing defense effort has to be a subject of speculation. However, there are grounds for believing that Soviet statecraft in the years ahead could have some features which will surprise those Western commentators who adhere to the view that there are some reasonably fixed "rules of the road" for the guidance of prudent

superpower behavior. The point is not that the Soviet Union may be more likely to adopt risky or dangerous policies that has been the case in the past (that might constitute adventurism). Rather is it that the Soviet assessment of risk and danger should be expected to change as the correlation of forces moves further to the Soviet advantage (in Soviet estimation). In other words, the problem probably is not so much the question of the willingness of a particular group of Soviet leaders to take risks, but rather of the way in which it calculates risks.⁴⁷

The Soviet Union is not committed to a guardianship role vis-à-vis the current international order--on the contrary she is committed, for excellent Russian and Soviet reasons, to guarding the process of transition from the present order to a future wherein socialism (i.e., the U.S.S.R.) will be triumphant. The "external role" of the Soviet armed forces, as stated quite unambiguously by Soviet authorities, is to protect and forward the transition to socialism. Whether one ascribes this viewpoint to Great Russian imperialism, to Marxist-Leninist ideology, or to a malign combination of the two, is quite unimportant in the context of this study.⁴⁸

Soviet nuclear weapons, unlike American nuclear weapons, are not developed and deployed for the purpose of defending an international order that is deemed legitimate. Looking to the 1980s, one cannot affirm, without qualification, that:

- Neither superpower will seek to change the allegiance of a country long understood to be either within the sphere of influence of the other, or to have a neutral, perhaps "buffer," status.⁴⁹

- Neither superpower will risk direct military action in cases where there is a strong probability that the other superpower also will commit forces.
- Very generally, neither superpower will take actions long-understood to carry the risk of igniting an escalation chain to massive central nuclear use.⁵⁰

The qualification, as suggested already, is that the great cumulative improvement in the Soviet end of the correlation of forces almost certainly has changed the basis on which the rules of foreign policy engagement are designed. Western commentators, in the hubris of the period, indulged in the definition and promotion of a set of so-called "rules of crisis-management" in the aftermath of the Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962.⁵¹ What those commentators neglected to observe, was that--in Soviet eyes at least--rules of the road, up to and including the question of who concedes most obviously, are matters for objective, scientific, determination. Soviet intervention policy in Angola, Ethiopia, South Yemen and Afghanistan should warn us that the rules of the road for nuclear-backed statecraft are deemed by Soviet leaders to change with the correlation of forces. In the words of a Soviet observer:

The nuclear and missile potential of the Soviet Union and of the entire socialist community cancels out imperialism's opportunity to use its war machine to obtain any political advantages, thus explaining the apparent paradox that imperialism's military arsenal grows by the year, while the power factor of its foreign policy is increasingly depreciated. In fact, the imperialist powers have not succeeded in employing the threat or use of arms to achieve any of their aims, whether in Vietnam, in Cuba, or Angola or in scores of other "flashpoints" over the last few decades. Moreover, the power conflicts of modern times end more

and more often in the aggressor's defeat with respect to⁵² the overall balance of power between reaction and progress.

Conflict and Cooperation in World Politics

Unlike the states-system that was reconfirmed at the Congress of Vienna in 1814-15, the international system today contains an actor which has, since its birth in revolution and civil war, been committed to the destruction of the Western idea, and practice, of international order. Nuclear weapons, as accommodated in "the [Soviet] revolution in military affairs,"⁵³ do not pose a challenge to the historical necessity of the transformation of world politics. On the contrary, Soviet nuclear weapons serve as an effective counterdeterrent, "holding the ring square" for the conduct of "just" wars in the Third World;⁵⁴ while, if need be, the proper employment of nuclear weapons in war will bring decisive results. Western officials, in their conduct of statecraft, should never forget that in the Soviet Union they have an adversary who holds essentially to a "battlefield" philosophy concerning nuclear planning.⁵⁵ Western policy may, from time to time, be paralyzed by the effect of the believed fact that nuclear weapons are really only weapons of threat (i.e., bluff), they are not weapons which could be used for the achievement of political goals, but Soviet policy--though not in any (Soviet) sense adventurous--is informed by the apparent belief that nuclear weapons are the heavy artillery of this age: more destructive than other weapons, and certainly not to be used casually, but the very destructiveness of these weapons holds the promise of truly decisive, rapid, military results.

The weighting of the correlation of forces in the favor of the West through most of the nuclear era has helped, thus far, to render moot the

foreign policy implications of Soviet strategic doctrine. The transition from rough strategic parity, to marginal and then to clear superiority as the 1980s proceed, could well mean that Soviet strategic doctrine will have considerable influence on Soviet foreign policy behavior. In years past, when the United States believed that Soviet leaders shrank from the brink of catastrophe--those leaders may have shrunk not from the idea of a generalized catastrophe, but rather from the uncomplicated conviction that the Soviet Union would lose a nuclear war. Should Soviet leaders come to believe not only that victory is possible, which is an ideological requirement (as well as being sensible for sustaining morale), but also that victory is likely, then Soviet foreign policy, quite responsibly (in Soviet perspective), could assume a course fundamentally challenging of those rules of the road for nuclear peace which American governments believe to have been long-established.

Perhaps the single most distressing fact of contemporary world politics for a country traditionally as optimistic in its outlook as the United States, is the idea of permanence of competition with the Soviet Union. It is unpopular to remind people that the Soviet Union is obliged because of its very raison d'être, to define the United States objectively as an enemy. However slow the present transition to a fully socialist (and Soviet dominated) world, the Soviet commitment to conflict and struggle with the West is quite inalienable. The U.S.S.R. is a state based upon a highly dubious interpretation of an extremely fragile theory of inevitable historical change. The U.S.S.R., in its own terms, only makes sense as way-station en route to socialism worldwide. This does not mean that

the Soviet Union is committed to the waging of eventual (military) war with the West--Marxism-Leninism, as interpreted, offers several alternative paths to socialism. But, it does mean that the Soviet Union, of necessity, is fully committed to the prospect of war with the West.

Western governments persist in believing that policies of cooperation are as important, if not more important, than are policies of conflict.⁵⁶ At most, Western Governments appear to believe that a permanent modus vivendi, based on mutually tolerable rules of the diplomatic road, can be encouraged to emerge. Given the basic character, and sense of legitimacy, of the Soviet state, these beliefs are simply wrong. Tactical cooperation with the Soviet Union is both desirable and, from time to time, essential. But, for the long-term, the predominant theme in East West relations must be one of conflict. The West has an elementary choice: to compete effectively or ineffectively.

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3. The point is argued forcefully in Herman Kahn, U.S. Strategic Security in the 1980s, Hudson Perspective Series, Paper No. 3, HI-3212-P (Croton-on-Hudson, New York: Hudson Institute, August 1980), particularly pp.24-5.
4. Harold Brown appeared to state that deterrence and defense are one and the same (in his Speech at the Naval War College, Newport, R.I., August 20, 1980, p.6), but that position was so contrary to his, and President Carter's entire record of nuclear policy beliefs, that one hesitates to proclaim a revolution in U.S. strategic doctrine. The Reagan Administration, while generally disapproving of Carter's defense programs, has given no evidence, to date, of disapproval of the nuclear strategy that it inherited.
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6. It has long been charged by radical critics of nuclear strategy that debates over nuclear strategy tend to embrace only people who have establishment values (e.g., a question such as "should the United

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7. In McGeorge Bundy, "To Cap the Volcano," Foreign Affairs, Vol.48, No.1 (October 1969), p.13.
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19. See Gordon A. Craig, Germany, 1866-1945 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), particularly pp.310-14.
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maneuverings behind the 1908 Bosnian crisis were at least as idiosyncratic as were the details of July 1914, and Europe survived that crisis in peace. The moral of this story may be to the effect that the crisis-management skills of each historical international system, although considerable, are finite. Few, if any, international systems can long be proof against near-determinedly frivolous and incompetent policy-making in several capitals.

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Chapter 2

NATIONAL STYLE IN STRATEGY: (1) THE UNITED STATES

The Idea of National Style

Discovery of the obvious can be important. Courtesy of the rise of the idea, and political organization, of "the nation," it has long been appreciated (if not infrequently overappreciated) that Frenchmen, Englishmen and Americans (etc.) had important qualities qua Frenchmen, Englishmen and Americans (etc.) far more important than their social roles. Notwithstanding its multi-national, and certainly multi-ethnic, foundations, the United States, paradoxically, has had--and has--a very clear sense of national identity, a sense that there exists a distinct "us" and that all others are "them" (more or less carefully differentiated), while at the same time American strategic thinkers, have been curiously insensitive to possible national differences in modes of strategic thought and behavior.¹

American strategists have always known, deep down, that Soviet, French, British et al. approaches to security issues differed from their own in good part because Soviet, French and British policy-makers were heirs to distinctive perspectives that were, at root, comprehensible through an appropriate combination of historical, geographical, anthropological, psychological and sociological study. However, the recognition of national differences has only very rarely moved the U.S. Government to take explicit account of the impact of those differences upon policy goals and methods in its conduct of affairs.²

In the later 1970s, American defense commentators discovered what they really had known all along--that the Soviet Union did not appear to share many of the more important beliefs and practices beneficial to the American idea of international order. This should have come as no surprise, but it did. Although the Western strategic literature of the past quarter-century is replete with warnings against the practice of mirror-imaging and projecting American desires and perspectives unself-critically upon Moscow, those warnings by and large proceeded unheeded until the late 1970s. At the present time, in the early 1980s, the U.S. defense community is in a situation where it acknowledges the apparent fact of national cultural and stylistic differences--a great advance--but it has yet to determine what those differences should mean for U.S. policy.

Two works, in particular, merit identification as path-breaking studies in this field: Jack Snyder's RAND Report on The Soviet Strategic Culture: Implications for Limited Nuclear Operations (September 1977), and Ken Booth's somewhat eccentric,³ though brilliant, book Strategy and Ethnocentrism (1979). Neither of these were works of original scholarship--but, like Alfred Thayer Mahan's The Influence of Sea Power Upon History, 1660-1783,⁴ they dignified and elevated insight to the level of principle.

The concept of strategic culture is a direct descendant from the concept of political culture--which has been debated, developed, variously employed and even more variously defined by political scientists since the early 1950s.⁵ The idea of national style is logically derivative from the concept of political culture: a particular culture should encourage a particular style in thought and action. However, it is worth noting

that this study, notwithstanding its culture/style theme, fundamentally is inductive-empirical. The author observes that, for example, the Soviet Union:

- frames, intellectually, its defense tasks in ways generally unfamiliar to the United States.
- behaves in defense related matters in a fashion inexplicable in standard American terms.

These differences in observable thought and practice have so enduring a character that, even when idiosyncratic decision possibilities are factored out, it is plausible to hypothesize that the Soviet Union has approached, and continues to approach, defense issues in a fairly distinctive Soviet manner--comprehensible only in those terms. In order to understand why the Soviet Union thinks and behaves as she does, it should be useful to seek to trace that thought and behavior to the fundamentally influencing factors. While fully accepting the possible dangers of crude reductionism (if one or more allegedly "determining factors" are identified),⁶ of insensitivity to change (even culture and style may alter over time), and of finding undue cultural distinctiveness (if one looks for the culturally bizarre, in American terms, one is very likely to find it), the potential benefit for the quality of defense prediction and understanding of extant performance seems to be overwhelming.

It is a contemporary fact that the discovery of cultural distinctiveness in strategic thought and practice has been attended, probably inevitably, by an unduly simple appreciation of this dimension to strategic affairs. As preliminary caveats, it should be noted that:

- some strategic-cultural traits are common to many supposedly and even truly distinct cultures.
- a strategic culture may accommodate several quite distinctive strategic sub-cultures (which may have more in common with some foreign strategic cultures than they have with their dominant national culture).
- many, and probably most, alleged strategic cultural traits are fully rational, in strict realpolitik terms, given the perceived historical experience of the nations in question. The strategic cultural thought processes and (derived) behavior of interest to this study do not, noticeably, rest upon individual psycho-cultural phenomena (e.g., the child-rearing practice of Great Russian mothers and the like).
- from time to time a state may act in ways that represent, in toto, a break from the traditional, dominant, strategic culture.

The strategic cultural theme of this study has its roots in a concern flagged informatively by Jack Snyder. He has written as follows:

It is useful to look at the Soviet approach to strategic thinking as a unique 'strategic culture.' Individuals are socialized into a distinctively Soviet mode of strategic thinking. As a result of this socialization process, a set of general beliefs, attitudes and behavioral patterns with regard to nuclear strategy has achieved a state of semipermanence that places them on the level of 'culture' rather than mere 'policy.' Of course, attitudes may change as a result of changes in technology and the international environment. However, new problems are not assessed objectively. Rather, they are seen through the perceptual lens provided by the strategic culture.

As often as not, alas, the intriguing and potentially enlightening idea of strategic culture becomes a distorting idea when defense commentators research too assiduously, and too uncritically, for the cultural roots of contemporary defense practice. Hence, although one can compare and contrast Soviet with American cultures, the comparison and contrast would often be a lot less stark were the full range of American (and Soviet) attitudes to be assessed--as opposed only to the policy-dominant ones. As with sound geopolitical, so with strategic-cultural, analysis, one is discerning tendencies not rigid (pre-) determinants. Nevertheless, contemporary American, Soviet, et al. strategic commentators have to be very much the products of their particular, unique, milieux.

It is hypothesized here that there is a discernible American strategic culture: that culture, referring to modes of thought and action with respect to force, derives from perception of the national historical experience, aspiration for self-characterization (e.g., as an American, what am I?, how should I feel, think, and behave?), and from all of the many distinctively American experiences (of geography, political philosophy and practice [i.e., civic culture], and way of life) that determine an American citizen. The idea of an American national style is derivative from the idea of American strategic culture, suggesting that there is a distinctively American way in strategic matters.

Notwithstanding the necessary indeterminacy of some of the evidence, this Chapter presents a complex hypothesis. First, it is suggested that there is an American (and, ab extensio, other) strategic culture--which flows from geopolitical, historical, economic and other unique influences.

Second, that American strategic culture provides the milieu within which strategic ideas and defense policy decisions are debated and decided. Third, it is suggested here that an understanding of American strategic culture (and, by extension, style) can help explain why American policy-makers have made the decisions they have. Moreover, if the past and present can thus be explained, it may be possible to employ the concept of strategic culture (and style) to predict decisions in the future.

It has to be admitted that it is, as yet, unclear just how helpful studies of strategic culture may prove to be. However, it does not seem unduly optimistic to assert at least the following potential benefits:

- an improved understanding of our own, and other, cultures on their own terms.
- an improved ability to discern enduring policy motivations and to predict.
- an improved ability to communicate what we wish to communicate (whatever that may be).⁸
- an improved ability to comprehend the meaning of events in the assessment of others.

A rather obvious danger in this theme lies in the realm of cultural relativism. Soviet drives for further influence abroad need be no less menacing because we think we understand much better what lies behind them. Our central problem is not so much to understand Soviet power as it is to contain it (which is not to demean the virtue of understanding). Moreover, it is not argued here--implicitly or explicitly--that American policy

necessarily should be changed solely because its frame of conceptual reference fits poorly with that identified for the U.S.S.R.

Virtually by definition, strategic culture and national style have very deep roots within a particular stream of historical experience--as locally interpreted. While it is not assumed here that culture and style are immutable, such would be absurd, it is assumed that rational patterns of thought and action--the "preferred" way of coping with problems and opportunities--are likely to alter only very gradually, short of a new historical experience which few can deny warrants a historically discontinuous response. It is not argued that there is a Russian/Soviet strategic culture and national style that is fixed for all time. Clearly, the Soviet Union of 1981 is different from the Soviet Union of 1937-38. But, pending some major system shocks, the weight of the past, and the way the past is interpreted as a (largely implicit) guide to the present, far outweighs in enduring importance the marginal changes in culture discernible year by year.

It is my contention that major streams of policy decisions in the United States and the Soviet Union cannot simply be explained in terms of the characteristics of particular people, their unique assessment of policy options, and the bureaucratic-political milieu in which they find themselves (though, very often, they could, and did, help shape the mix of contending bureaucratic-political forces). In addition, it is necessary to consider the strategic culture of the various policy-makers. While aberrant, culturally innovative, or just plain eccentric decision-making is always possible, there is a tendency for policy-makers of a

particular strategic culture to make policy in ways, and substantively, congruent with the parameters of that culture. A national style, to endure and attain that status, is a style that "works," well enough, for a particular nation. A national style is not the random product of imaginative thinking by policy-makers, instead it is a pattern of national response to challenge which has worked, adequately, in the past.

Although it was stated above that strategic-cultural analysis should not incline one, reflexively almost, to judge that identified American proclivities necessarily are inappropriate, simply because they are incongruent with the known proclivities of probable adversaries, neither should one be content to assert, complacently, that each party is what it is. Strategy, in good part, is a matter of adaptation to perceived reality, and some societies have adapted more effectively than have others. It is not enough just to note the details of "the American way" and "the Soviet way"; more important is the question of how those ways would likely fare if they were ever tested in direct conflict. To date, at least, the very few studies of comparative strategic culture and style that have appeared have not ventured into the realm of the implications for United States policy. The inherent merit of American strategic thinking is not the issue--this is not a contest in intellectual aesthetics--the real issue is how appropriate American ideas (and ideas-made-into-policy) are in a conflict process with a particular adversary.

Much that a country does, or attempts to do, is done for reason of apparent force of circumstance. A central problem with cultural/stylistic explanations of American, et al. thought and behavior is that alternative

hypotheses may each serve to explain the phenomena in question. It is true that, as John Shy has argued,

...the idea that there are national patterns of international behavior retains an impressive degree of plausibility.⁹

But, nonetheless, the determined deductivist usually can find impressive ex post facto empirical support for his deductions. Fortunately, this study does not rest, for its validation, upon the prior establishment of unambiguous evidence concerning the historical reality of what Shy has termed "national peculiarities."¹⁰ Instead, this study notes, with reference to the key concepts pertinent to thinking about nuclear strategy, the differences between the United States and the Soviet Union, and is content to proceed inductively, and cautiously, back to possible cultural influences.

It is worth noting that this study takes a broad view of "national peculiarities." By "peculiarities," I refer not so much to (ethnocentrically perceived) eccentricities or colorfully bizarre "foreign" habits, but rather to different mind-sets and behavior patterns that flow, as responses, from a very distinctive historical-geographic (and hence cultural) context. The potential problem of multiple-causation may easily be over-stressed. Assessed in isolation, quite a wide range of theories may be invoked to explain American and Soviet defense behavior. To sift these theories for their plausibility, and then their explanatory power, one needs to engage in cross-cultural analysis. For example, if one has a structural theory of U.S. defense policy behavior which identifies some mix of a Military-Industrial Complex and bureaucratic politics as the collective determinant (or villain) of defense policy output, how does

one account for the fact that a Soviet Military-Industrial Complex, and Soviet bureaucratic politics, produces a very different policy output. The answer, presumably, has to be that the industrial-bureaucratic-political forces in the two superpowers are differently configured. But, even if this is true--as seems likely--one then has to ask why those forces are configured differently. In short, even the 'structural-determinist' cannot evade the issue of possible cultural impact upon the analysis.

It is important to restate, at this juncture, the fact that this study rests upon a basically agnostic stance vis à vis national differences in approaches to national and international security. While one has no difficulty identifying apparent American, Soviet, British, et al. approaches to national security, it is less obvious that those different approaches reflect anything more peculiar than a uniqueness of historical-geographic circumstance. In other words, Americans and Russians may be different as individuals in psycho-cultural "thoughtways,"¹¹ but such putative differences are not important here. Of interest is state, not individual, behavior, and what is required is an open mind as to the possibility that very different national experiences tend to produce different policy responses.

In asserting, as a hypothesis, that Great Russians think differently about national security issues than do Americans, one need not imply anything about the "curious" psychology of individual Great Russians or Americans. Instead, one may simply imply that the geopolitical inheritance of the two peoples is very different and that that inheritance has quite

(locally) natural consequences for contemporary assessment of security problems.

It is important that the cultural/stylistic theme not be muddled in appraisal by views on the merits, or otherwise, of national character analysis. This author will confine himself to asserting that

- each state has a unique, distinctive, history.
- each state learns (or mislearns) from its assessment of that unique, distinctive, history.
- and that each state, having a unique, distinctive, history, is very likely to learn and mislearn dicta significantly different from those of other states.

It is not too difficult to find in the history of each state experiences quite closely analogous (at least superficially) to those of many others. For example, as Ken Booth has done, one can show that the American military experience is sufficiently rich and varied as to cast doubt upon all simple assertions concerning "the American way in war."¹² Booth's successful foray into the realm of myth-destruction, though quite impressive as a scholarly exercise, is reminiscent of the old conundrum of the necessity for deciding whether a tumbler of water is half-empty or half-full. Many, if not most, allegedly American cultural traits in warfare, and approaches to warfare, can be found elsewhere. Booth is correct. However, in his worthy determination to slay the dragon of myths concerning the convenient metaphor of American Strategic Man, Ken Booth neglects to address the still-valid question, "what, if any, are the implications for defense and international security of the unique American geopolitical

experience?" To be truly useful, the exercise of destruction requires a follow-up, constructive, phase. Nonetheless, essentially nihilistic or not, Booth's assault upon the concept of the uniqueness of American Strategic Man should serve as a very useful corrective to those anxious to offer simple cultural-determinant, or "essentialist," explanations of state behavior.

It is almost as easy to debunk theories of "national peculiarities" as it is to advance them. The most that may be accomplished is the acquisition of new, or the rediscovery of forgotten, insights into apparent American, Soviet, et al. tendencies that may warrant identification as national styles in strategy. As with many potentially enlightening concepts, national strategic culture and style is useful provided it is approached with a healthily skeptical eye. One should be prepared for discovery, but should not assume that recognition of the concept alone constitutes genuine discovery. The concept of strategic culture and national style is as easily understood as is the concept of strategic superiority, but does historical reality, actual or potential, match the concept?

American Experience, Practice, and Style

Notwithstanding Ken Booth's assault on the myth of American Strategic Man, this author believes, with John Shy, that

...whenever Americans before the end of the nineteenth century thought about questions of war or military force, their perception of those questions was strongly affected by certain peculiar attitudes and beliefs that, through the conditioning effect of long historical experience, had become almost reflexive. A dichotomous idea of national security, an unthinking optimism about the national American aptitude for warfare, and an ambivalent attitude toward those Americans who specialized in the use of force...

It would be an elementary exercise to demonstrate why Americans should be different--how their attitudes and behavior should betray unique tendencies. The American military experience, as John Shy illustrated,¹⁴ has indeed been extraordinary (a succession of victories from the Seven Years War of 1756-1763 through to 1945). Similarly, one could, and perhaps should, dwell upon the strategic-cultural legacy of continental insularity and isolation from truly serious security dangers, upon the conditioning effect of living with weak non-threatening neighbors on one's frontiers, upon the experience of taming an expanding frontier, upon the enduring impact of fundamentalist religious beliefs, and upon the strategic meaning of constituting a nation of immigrants--and so on and so forth. Although Bernard Brodie was correct in his assertion that "...good strategy presumes good anthropology and sociology,"¹⁵ the starting point for the professional strategist should be with the subject that he understands best, strategy, not with cultural anthropology. It is important to begin with the facts. What are the facts? Facts tend to be historically bounded--the historical mandate assumed here are the facts of the period 1960-1981. The United States:

-- acquiesced in a style of defense leadership that was "managerial" rather than "strategic."¹⁶ (The McNamara revolution in the Pentagon effected, for the first time, genuine central civilian domination, in detail, of the military establishment, and a domination of quantitatively expressible analysis over "mere military judgment.")

- has been unable, to date, to come to grips with the prospect of viewing, and planning for, nuclear war as war. (American, and more generally Western-democratic, values are deemed to be so incompatible with the actual conduct and consequences of nuclear war, that the vast bulk of American nuclear-age so-called strategic thinking has been confined to the problem of deterrence).
- while not positively intending to surrender a condition of strategic nuclear superiority, nonetheless acquiesced in the loss of that condition (by virtue of program inaction); welcomed the loss for reason of its anticipated reassuring effect upon Soviet leaders; and was willing publicly to register the loss through the mechanism of manifestly equitable strategic arms limitation agreements.
- endorsed theories of strategic stability which rationalized the loss of strategic superiority.
- pursued an arms control process which, by its very nature and structure, was erosive of the foreign-policy reasoning which underpinned the U.S. strategic nuclear force posture.¹⁷
- declined to recognize the character (motives are another matter) of the Soviet strategic-forces' program until the prudential required U.S. response time had elapsed (the condition today).¹⁸
- declined to appreciate the Soviet Union as a culturally, historically unique adversary unlikely to prove responsive

to American political-military desiderata--no matter how eloquently, or persistently, expressed.

Strategy and Management

As Edward Luttwak has argued, until quite recent years the United States really had scant need of strategy¹⁹ beyond, that is, the often highly technical functions associated with "war planning." War planning and strategy are different concepts. War plans may or may not allocate scarce resources for the achievement of judiciously selected political goals: whether they do or not cannot comprise the basis for judgment as to their quality. War planning essentially is a technical exercise conducted by uniformed staff officers guided by agreed strategy. There is, of course, a case to be made for the point of view that in the absence of explicit strategy formulation, war planners will make strategy by default. However, in principle at least, the distinction is clear between strategy and contingency planning for its implementation.

It is the American style to devote far more attention to the management of large defense programs than to operational issues. Indeed, there is a startling historical contrast between the selection process, and subsequent course of study of German and American staff officers prior to World War II.²⁰ As a somewhat gross generalization, while American officers were taught how to be good at the management of men and the provision of material, German officers were taught, near-exclusively, how to handle military assets in combat. The management bias in American higher military education has survived to the present day--with predictable

results. The United States, in the Twentieth Century, has been a resource-rich country. Questions pertaining to the actual employment of force, and particularly of limited force, have been deemed secondary to the marshalling of muscle. In terms of her mobilized, and mobilizable, assets, Germany in World Wars I and II was grossly inferior to her enemies. Eventually, this inferiority produced the predictable outcome--defeat. However, the German army in those two wars--although ultimately defeated for reasons of deficiencies of substance--outperformed its adversaries to a noteworthy degree. The political fact of victory, achieved through brute force or sheer quantity of military/civilian assets, tended to subsume issues of strategy.

Until the mid-1960s, issues of strategy, so-called, required that scant American attention need be paid to political objectives. War planning, traditionally, was informed by an elementary, and eminently defensible, desire to win. American military experience, from the Seven Years War through to 1945, yielded some dominant national beliefs.

First, it was believed that good causes tend to triumph--and Americans only wage war in good causes. The United States, as the modern pioneer in democracy, religious liberty and so forth (the "city upon a hill,"²¹ the light from Plymouth Rock, etc.), is an extraordinary country. American ideology on participation in war is notably congruent, in some broad essentials, with that of the Soviet Union. Just as the Soviet Union, by Soviet doctrinal definition, cannot wage an unjust war²²--so American political culture cannot accommodate the idea that the United States can, and occasionally should, wage a war for goals that are even controversial in terms

of enduring American ideas of justice. The American anti-war movement of the Vietnam era was a thoroughly American phenomenon. The United States of Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon was judged, and found wanting, in terms of American values.

Second, it was believed that Americans could achieve anything that they set their hands to in earnest. America/the United States--until 1966-67 at least--was, by very popular consensus (by and large acknowledged-- though not untinged by jealousy--abroad) one of history's success stories: Horatio Alger at the national level. The American national experience provides ample evidence for an optimistic ideology. Americans survived and triumphed in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries against the might of intermittently hostile, and numerically vastly superior, Indian tribes, against the might of France and Great Britain--and, perhaps most impressive of all--against a very challenging physical geography. By 1814, as John Shy has argued, the infant United States had registered a historically very unusual achievement:²³ complete victory, in all essentials, against enemies of the Republic, and consolidation of a secure base for repetition of the same, if need be. Admittedly, as Ken Booth points out, contemporary Americans, reasoning prudentially, did not view their defense condition in quite so optimistic a light²⁴--but, historically assessed (i.e., with the virtue of 20-20 hindsight), the United States after 1814 (and really even earlier) was unassailable, save by domestic fission.

Third, in Sir Denis Brogan's phrase, there was an "illusion of [American] omnipotence" which was, of course, fed and justified by reference

to the national success story.²⁵ American wars in the Nineteenth Century had been waged against third-class opponents--Mexico, Spain, and the series of Indian Wars--while the drawn war against Great Britain in 1812-14 was waged against a first-class adversary able, and motivated, to commit only a small fraction of its defense capability. The only truly hard-fought war of the Nineteenth Century, the Civil War, did not dent the American ideology of guaranteed success for the simple reason that it was, of course, waged between Americans. Americans, of all persuasions, could--and did--take pride in the (American) resilience of the Confederacy. Robert E. Lee is a genuinely national hero (North and South).

Although the United States waged war against a first-class adversary in World Wars I and II, Americans have tended to downplay the contribution of others to Germany's successive defeats. The United States may well have saved the Allies (co-belligerents--in American terms) from defeat in 1918, but the Germany of 1918 was not the Germany of 1914-17. Similarly, the Germany defeated to a very significant degree by American arms in 1943-45, was a Germany already bled white by America's allies in 1941-42. This is not to argue that the United States could not have triumphed over an enemy at the peak of its power, it is only to note the historical fact that Americans, save for their atypical civil-war--until 1945, at least--waged war against enemies who were severely disadvantaged (by geography, in relative strength of political will for the struggle, or by massive prior attrition effected by others). Imperial Japan was very much a first class adversary in some local situations, but not strategically. Japan,

as her own leaders recognized, had no hope of ultimate victory over a fully mobilized United States.

As Edward Luttwak has argued, in the Nineteenth Century Great Britain effectively conducted America's strategic thinking for her,²⁶ since the off-shore insular diplomacy of British "balance of power" machinations served American interests as well as they did British. In the Twentieth Century, as an economic (and potentially military) superpower, protected--until the mid-1950s--by oceanic distance from theaters of major threat or conflict, the United States was permitted the luxury of intervening in wars already very well underway. It is true that United States' entry into both World Wars was precipitated by events created by others, but the scale and character of American military intervention was uniquely--among the major belligerent powers--at the national discretion.

Fourth, in their industrial, et al. resource hubris, Americans believed that they could--if so moved--mobilize sufficient military muscle as to overwhelm any enemy. Since Americans first scented world power in the 1890s, they tended to have faith in the ability of American technology, pragmatic "know-how," and managerial skills of all kinds, to overwhelm any evil cause. This faith has not been ill-grounded. In their individual ways of war, countries naturally stress their comparative advantages and reflect their societal values. In the Twentieth Century, the United States, whenever possible, has waged technological war, rather than wars of human (American) attrition. Very sensibly, American governments have been sensitive to potential American casualties--as befits a country genuinely dominated by the idea that government is a necessary evil charged

with facilitating the "life, liberty and pursuit of happiness" of its citizens.

The long historical experience of a condition of near (and perhaps as near as makes no difference) total security, courtesy of transoceanic distance from potential enemies, and industrial pre-eminence, were erosive of what pressure there might otherwise have been for strategic thought. The American experience, from the Napoleonic era to 1945, was characterized by an absence of year-in/year-out external menace, and--in the Twentieth Century--a once-in-each-generation need to surge actual military capability to overwhelm an enemy.²⁷ The idea of devising long-term political-military strategy (or grand strategy) to help control America's external security condition, although defensible in terms of objective factors, could not be retailed successfully against the weight of America's popular security culture. America was far removed from danger, geographically, and had near limitless potential to mobilize for defense, if need be. In addition, most Americans, as more or less recent immigrants, were not at all eager to see their new country, and themselves, involved intimately in the conflicts of a world that they (thought they) had left behind. Central and Eastern Europeans, Jews, Germans, Italians, Swedes, Irish, et al. did not, by and large--as new Americans--feel that indissoluble nexus to the 'old country' felt, say, by British emigrants to Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. Aside from the very important fact that no single immigrant group, relative to the total size of the American electorate, (or even by virtue of geographical concentration), could--prior to 1945--affect American foreign policy in decisive ways, it would seem

to have been the case that, in a fashion that is historically unusual, immigrants to the United States were eager to cast off their European memories and possible residual loyalties.

To summarize, prior to 1945 it was unusual to find Americans endorsing the idea that the United States should be, or had to be, a permanent guardian of international order. In the popular American conception, the United States was a haven for the disadvantaged (though very restrictive immigration legislation effectively had negated the practical force of that thesis); was an example to the rest of mankind (the "city upon a hill");²⁸ and would, and could, intervene decisively on the side of good when the disorder in the Old World so required. The reality of material abundance, married to a historic engineering-pragmatic national style,²⁹ was not a soil fertile for strategic seeding. Skill in the tactical-operational handling of forces tends to be encouraged by a shortage of material means. In the popular phrase--"necessity is the mother of invention." A United States rich in machines, men, and logistic support of all kinds, is not a United States obviously in need of clever strategems, or needful of a careful balancing of likely political benefit against probable cost in material and human assets. German tactical skills in the two world wars of this century were the product of military necessity--the side inferior in material and human assets needs to seek compensation in the quality of its tactics and strategy.

The Twentieth Century

Although there have always been individual exceptions, it is--nonetheless--valid to argue that strategic thinking has been, and remains,

alien to the mainstream of American thought on defense questions.³⁰ Prior to 1945, wars were waged, very intermittently, for the end of defeating a particular enemy (representing an evil cause)--wherein the only admissible goal was victory. In World War I Woodrow Wilson appeared to endorse the goal of a military stalemate leading to a compromise peace, but--in practice--he endorsed the military means for total victory (the plan to send 5,000,000 American soldiers to France was not compatible with a quest for a compromise peace based on a mutually admitted military impasse). Whatever the President's intentions may have been, American military power was not applied in World War I in a manner calculated to achieve American political objectives. However, American military behavior in the First World War is, of course, easily defensible. General Douglas MacArthur was correct when he asserted that "there is no substitute for victory." If one wishes to dominate the process of designing the post-war political order, one has first to win that right on the battlefield. From time to time countries are unable to translate military victory into political success (witness France vis à vis the war in Algeria), but it is a general truth that in the absence of clear military success only extraordinary incompetence on the part of the enemy permits you to have a decisive voice in the design of the post-war order. The political meaning of military defeat is very well illustrated by recent events in Southeast Asia.

World War II is a more complex case than was World War I, in that the goal of defeating Nazi Germany, unlike the Allied goal of beating the Kaiser's Germany, clearly was politically valid in and of itself. It is a relatively elementary matter to defend the American military

conduct of World War II against the charge that considerations of the post-war balance of power in Europe were unduly discounted. It may be argued that American politicians: are, of necessity, sensibly reluctant to expend American lives in pursuit of (distant) political goals unrelated to--and possibly even subversive of--the immediate needs of the conflict; believed that the Soviet Union was owed a preponderant voice in the design of the security order of post-war East-Central Europe--by virtue both of the magnitude of her wartime contribution, and of the behavior of Poland, Rumania and Hungary in the late 1930s (and beyond); believed that there was little or nothing the United States could do to prevent Stalin having his way in East-Central Europe--and that the only practical policy option open to the Western allies was to be unambiguously accommodating to (reasonable) Soviet wishes and, thereby, to help diminish Stalin's possible sense of need for an extensive defensive glacis.

Roosevelt's policy of near-unconditional cooperation with the Soviet Union in retrospect plainly was unwise and even naive. But it was understandable, given the "national peculiarities" of American political culture, and was easy to defend in the light of real-time American policy assessment. It is easy to forget, from the vantage point of the early 1980s, that the Western Allies of 1943-44 (when, for example, critical decisions were taken concerning zones of occupation in post-war Germany) felt profoundly guilty over the massive inequality of effort, as between the Soviet Union, and themselves, devoted to the actual engagement of the German armed forces. When an ally is doing most of the fighting and dying, one is not in a strong position--or even likely to feel much motivated--to design strategies

intended to deprive him of most of the potential fruits of a victory to which he has made a disproportionately large contribution.

Nonetheless, with the excuses admitted, the fact remains that competent war leaders are supposed to have vision and pursue long-term, as well as short-term, security measures. Once the Grand Coalition was fully assembled and had weathered the crises of 1942 (i.e., after Midway, Alamein, and Stalingrad), strategic genius was not required to discern that Germany and Japan's defeat (barring the improbability of German production of atomic weapons) was inevitable, and that the most important issues of Anglo-American statecraft pertained to the character of the post-war world. For good, though insufficient, reasons, American statecraft proved unequal to the historic challenge. Western allied forces could, and should, have liberated Prague, Vienna, and much of what is now East Germany--and should have remained in place pending a post-war peace settlement. Greater vision in 1944-45--admittedly at a non-trivial cost in military casualties--could have denied the Soviet Union many of the military-geopolitical advantages that she obtained vis à vis Western Europe. Certainly, the Soviet Union could have been denied control of Czechoslovakia.

American military performance in World War II was effective and successful, but it was effective and successful in a context where, overall, it was difficult to fare very badly. American staff training prior to the war stressed management, as opposed to tactical-operational skills, and lacked a firm commitment to true excellence in the candidates selected for higher command.³¹ With a few exceptions, as always, American (and British) military professionals in World War II (referring to the Army

only) virtually were amateurs compared with their German counterparts-- save in the (admittedly important) realm of management skills.³² The German Army that American soldiers met in combat in Normandy was advanced in its decline, devoid of air cover, and mishandled in good part for reason of Hitler's ill-timed interventions. Military resource super-abundance, not to mention the debilitating requirements of coalition management, led the Western Allies, in effect, to pursue a strategy of attrition instead of annihilation through maneuver. Attrition, of course, is the risk-minimizing option, since the larger side must win (provided the adversary does not have available any annihilation options of his own).³³

However unimaginative and deficient in strategic vision was the general American conduct of its campaigning in World War II, at least it had the virtue of pursuing the unambiguous, attainable, popular, and necessary (though not sufficient) goal of victory.

The astrategic American tradition, the product of continental insularity and abundant defense mobilization potential, continued into the nuclear age--although it took different forms. The American national military experience, prior to 1945, was characterized by relatively short, relatively cheap, and unambiguously successful campaigning against enemies easily portrayed in demonological terms. In practice, if not in terms of public recognition, the United States waged two balance-of-power wars in 1917-18 and 1941-45--to prevent the domination of Eurasia by a single country/coalition. However, as Henry Kissinger came to lament, Americans do not think geopolitically,³⁴ and tend to be unwilling to sacrifice their nearest and dearest for the balance of power, or for international equilibrium--

even if American security rests upon the preservation, or restoration of such a balance, or equilibrium. This is not acceptable language in American political culture.

"The New Strategy"³⁵

The period from the mid-1950s until the early 1960s saw the evolution and development, very largely by civilian theorists, of ideas on--or supposedly on--strategy, which, superficially at least, were fundamentally challenging to the traditional American way of war. The three central pillars of "The New Strategy," deterrence theory, limited war theory, and arms control theory, appeared to represent a sharp break with traditional American style.

- Deterrence theory came to be held to require a condition of near wartime readiness in peacetime, year after year. (The traditional American pattern was unpreparedness--during peacetime "normalcy"--initial setbacks, mobilization, and eventual triumph).
- Limited War theory required a readiness to apply a limited quantity and quality of force for limited political goals (thereby requiring circumstantial redefinition of the meaning of victory).³⁶
- Arms Control theory pertains to "some kind of collaboration with the countries that are potential enemies."³⁷ (This involved the conduct of business with those presumed to be evilly disposed).

These theories could have been developed in a way, and with policy implications, compatible with prudent strategic thinking. However, the fact is that by and large they were not. Henry Kissinger, in the first popular work published on nuclear strategy, in 1957, castigated the traditional absence of strategic thinking in the United States, the inability to relate power to political purpose.³⁸ For the better part of a decade, 1955-65, American theorists elaborated schemes for the fine-tuning of military power, in threat and, if need be, in execution, for the securing of limited political objectives.³⁹ The era of American strategic thinking appeared to have arrived. Indeed, as Ken Booth reminds us, many commentators in the United States and abroad were distressed by what they discerned as an over-intellectualized American approach to military-diplomatic problems.⁴⁰ This study has no quarrel with the earnest endeavor to think strategically, its quarrel is with the content of much of that thought and with the eventual consequences of that thought when it came to dominate American policy-making in the 1960s and 1970s.

Because of the effective preponderance of (uniformed) military opinion within the U.S. defense establishment prior to 1961,⁴¹ in a context of massive, if unplanned U.S. military superiority over the Soviet Union (by virtue of the relative strength and dynamics of U.S. high-technology industry)--American war-planning in the 1950s, if ever tested in combat, should have led to the military, political, and economic annihilation of the Soviet Union (and China). As early as August 18, 1948--in the document NSC 20/1--official American thinking rejected the idea of unconditional surrender, or total victory, as a prudent and feasible war aim.⁴²

This novel departure from the American tradition reflected both the recent experience with Germany and, above all else, an appreciation of the scale of effort required to elicit such an outcome in a war with the Soviet Union. However, after 1954-55, the deployment of thermonuclear weapons with a Strategic Air Command and naval aviation expanded and re-equipped as a consequence of the more than threefold increase in defense funds triggered by the Korean mobilization, meant that the United States' defense community was back in the victory-effecting business.

Notwithstanding the contemporary (mid-1950s) theorizing on the subject of deterrence, with its highly critical (of official policy) tone and content, SAC did have war plans which made strategic sense. An American President could back his foreign policy, if need be, with threats of central nuclear employment, and expect to be believed. American political objectives could be forwarded by nuclear action because the United States should have won such a war in classic fashion. Soviet military (and industrial) power could have been defeated and most Western--and certainly most American--assets, could have been protected.

Leading defense intellectuals in the United States, by and large (though there were exceptions) preferred to focus upon pre-war deterrence, and to abstain from investigation of putative operational strategy. More to the point, they neglected the logical, and practical political, connections between likely net prowess in war and the quality of pre-war deterrent effect. For much of the post-war period this neglect was a matter of relatively little importance, because Soviet leaders had no difficulty appreciating that, whatever the deficiencies in American strategic thought

might be, the Soviet Union would lose a war. This is a fairly generous interpretation, because if the Soviet Union anticipated being able to compel the United States to take the lead in a process of escalation, then the phenomenon of self-deterrence should paralyze American, rather than Soviet will. The United States would have been the first country to face the decision whether or not to initiate action very likely to result, by way of retaliation, in catastrophic damage.

The quantity and quality of weaponry available, and the sound professional inclination of SAC produced, therefore, a robust theory of victory in the 1950s. The next decade began in a promising fashion, as the Kennedy Administration hastened to effect a very large buildup in ballistic missiles and, overall, to ensure the invulnerability of U.S. strategic forces. However, the 1960s saw, for the first time, the domination of defense planning by civilian defense intellectuals who, by and large, had a managerial, or defense-analytical, rather than a strategic orientation.⁴³

With the virtue of historical hindsight, it is not obvious whether the poverty of American strategic thought and practice in the 1960s and 1970s reflected the reassertion of long-standing traditional patterns, or whether those two decades, instead, saw the temporary dominance of a strategic subculture. The facts of the past twenty years are clear, even if the relations among all of the responsible driving forces are not. In 1960-61, the United States almost certainly could have won a war against the Soviet Union, under most probable conditions: not a war of attrition, with both sides taking comparable damage and then the more resilient side staying the course longer, but a war of annihilation.

By 1981, albeit very expensively, the Soviet Union had achieved a position of marginal strategic superiority--meaning that with good luck and judgment she would win at modest cost; with less good luck and less good judgment she should still win, though very possibly at catastrophic cost.⁴⁴ Overall, it is a condition wherein the United States should be deterred from pressing political conflicts to the point of direct Soviet-American military action.⁴⁵

American Attitudes

The dominant strain in the American defense community (Democrat and Republican) for twenty years, while not (in general) demeaning the theoretical value of strategic superiority, came to believe that:

- Meaningful superiority could not be regained or, if regained, sustained. Moreover, such superiority was not necessary to meet the goals set by national security policy.
- The evolution of technology was imposing an impasse, a strategic deadlock.
- Continued doctrinal commitment to strategic superiority would merely license the armed services to request larger forces from which little, if any, net political or military benefit could be anticipated.
- Little benefit could be expected because the Soviet Union would react in such a fashion to any efforts to ensure superiority as to nullify those efforts. Damage-limitation came to be seen as the primary dynamic of the "arms race."

As a plausible generalization, the American defense community came to fear the arms race more than it did the Soviet Union. After a brief

flurry of interest in strategic operational issues, Robert McNamara declined to press for major revisions in targeting strategy.⁴⁶ Although the targeting professionals in Omaha continued to do their best to match available weapons to an expanding target list, there was only minimal high-level civilian, or military, guidance offered for the shaping of war plans which would provide for flexibility in execution in support of particular war aims.⁴⁷ (This is not to deny that, in time of acute crisis, very selective attack options could, in principle at least, be designed ad hoc.)

Overall, however, it is true to claim that the defense community, at the high policy-making level, came to be profoundly disinterested in nuclear (operational) strategy. Nuclear weapons had "Utility only in Nonuse":⁴⁸ they came to be considered more and more explicitly through the 1960s in terms of a particular theory of strategic stability.⁴⁹

What American, and in some cases uniquely American, attitudes, have contributed to the cumulative relative decline in American deployed strategic power over the past twenty years?

First, there has been, and remains, a belief that nuclear war cannot be won. The United States, save for the exception of the Civil War, has always taken relatively modest casualties in war. (In World War I, for example, the United States suffered 100,000 deaths, compared to 950,000 for Great Britain and 1,350,000 for France). Demographic decimation, actual or easily comprehended, is a sad fact of European military experience. The United States, in 1945 and after, could not--and still cannot--come to terms, culturally, with the probable fact that war against a first-class enemy is a very expensive enterprise. The traditional American

definition of victory would appear to have excluded any outcome other than one that entailed only very modest American casualties. This definition reflected American historical experience (apart from the Civil War), and a value system that accords great importance to the well-being of individuals. However, it is worth noting that there is some friction between this devotion to low American casualties and the facts, throughout most of American history, both of an abundance of American manpower, and of a relative indifference on the part of American military commanders to local material and civilian loss (not to mention enemy combat loss). General Van Fleet, Commander of the Eighth Army in Korea, said in May 1951:

We must expend steel and fire, not men. I want so many artillery holes that a man can step from one to the other.⁵⁰

As a materially rich country, the United States Army in World War II often would attempt to clear minefields with a profligate artillery barrage. The Soviet Army would expend men (and women) on the same duty.

Second, American defense intellectuals have tended to believe that other cultures either share, or will come to share, American values and strategic ideas. An important example of this phenomenon has been the fact that although American (and NATO) defense policy envisages nuclear war if need be, for the better part of twenty years that policy has been contradicted by the reality that nuclear war has not been approached, operationally, as an instrument of policy--even in cases of true desperation. A United States serious about its declared intention to use nuclear weapons would not be totally naked of homeland defense. Because very reliable defense against all forms of nuclear attack cannot be constructed,

it has been assumed (and even argued explicitly) that defenses are without value--indeed, they should serve simply to stimulate the adversary to deploy larger and more sophisticated offensive forces.

It has been believed that apparent evidence of Soviet preparation for the conduct of nuclear war, by way of homeland defenses, reflects morale-boosting programs, domestic political control concerns, atavistic, though attenuating, traditional attitudes, or plain folly. The strong possibility that Soviet leaders view the American eschewal of homeland defense as reflecting low morale and an imprudent faith in deterrence has not been a popular position in the United States.

Fourth, there has been an optimism that Soviet thought and behavior can, if encouraged by cooperative American policies, evolve in a constructive direction. This reflects a belief that the two super-powers can stabilize their strategic relationship, in tandem with a stabilization of their political relationship, and that a process of tentative detente can move--courtesy of growing mutual respect--to the complex institutionalization of a relationship characterized, on each side, by a determination not to infringe on the legitimate interests of the other. The optimism which has underpinned the thought of many American arms controllers may be traced to a combination of idealism, classical liberalism, and rationalism. In this American view, war is an aberration in the natural order. Man can pursue his productive pursuits, and maximize his values only in the absence of war. Since war cannot serve the best interests of any community, the possibility of war must reflect some malfunction in relations. The Soviet Union, on this argument, is not evil or genuinely

threatening, rather is it fearful of American intentions. It should follow that if only, or rather when, Soviet leaders can be brought to understand the rationality of, and mutual benefit that would flow from, general acceptance of American deterrence and arms control reasoning, much of the fuel would be removed from the engine of the arms race.

Fifth, it has been believed that the American military establishment, in all its manifold ramifications, poses as great, if not a greater, threat to traditional American values than do Soviet ambitions (which almost certainly have been misassessed on the hostile side by official assessors with vested interests).⁵¹ The decline in the American willingness to compete in strategic weapons began prior to the depredations caused by popular (or, at least, vocal and undeniably politically significant) reactions to the Vietnam War. That decline flowed from the honest, if astrategic, conviction of defense intellectuals that strategic superiority probably could not be maintained; that attempts to maintain it would simply spur the Soviet Union to compete more energetically (and ultimately successfully--that is, vis à vis the attainment of a rough parity); and that strategic stability achieved in substantial part through a broadly conceived commitment to arms control processes would constitute a virtuous recognition of (eventual) technological necessity.

However, the "window of vulnerability" evident in the 1980s, though traceable to the posturally debilitating long-term impact of highly questionable (and very distinctly un-Soviet) stability theory, is no less easily traceable to the several political-budgetary effects of Vietnam. The mere fact of the war reduced the financial resources available for strategic-

force modernization (particularly in the context of an ongoing Great Society program which President Johnson would neither abandon pro tem, nor finance soundly through tax increases), while the unpopularity of the war spilled over to political opposition to all military programs--including the strategic forces.

Sixth, there has been a widespread belief in the superiority of American technology and strategic ideas. The Soviet Union was viewed as an unsophisticated fundamentally peasant country, capable of challenging in quantity but not in quality; in short, technological and intellectual hubris. Americans could find convenient scapegoats for defeat in Vietnam:⁵² military incompetence; political incompetence; a deviation from true American values in the waging of an unjust war--the range of choice is considerable. But, Americans could not, and possibly still cannot, anticipate seriously the Soviet Union achieving a condition of strategic nuclear superiority. Strategic weapons, after all--for all the ambivalence as to their political utility--were close to home. They spoke almost to the nature of the United States--of all the elements in the defense posture, they are high technology, and high technology is America.

The belief in American defense (and other) high technology was not ill-founded. But it took all too little account, in practice, of the difference between actual defense capability and mobilizable defense potential. American ICBMs, for example, almost certainly are more accurate and reliable than are Soviet ICBMs, and it is at least plausible to argue that American nuclear-weapon design permits a more efficient yield-to-weight ratio than does Soviet nuclear weapon design. Unfortunately,

the size and number of Soviet ICBM launchers, married to a reliability, accuracy, and warhead design that is not very far behind those of the United States, results in a gross putative operational imbalance to the American disadvantage in hard-target counterforce comparison. The size of Soviet ballistic missiles used to be cited in the United States as clear evidence of Soviet technological backwardness. Today that size is recognized, and even envied, as providing the flexibility allowing for: a very impressive measure of future payload fractionation; relatively low-risk warhead design; and safe-siding with high yields (to compensate for anticipated operational degradation in CEP). American defense scientists may be on the technological frontier, but it has been the Soviet, rather than the American, defense establishment which has worked steadily to translate technical accomplishment into weapons deployed. At the time that SALT I was signed, in 1972, it was near-axiomatic, to many, to assert that neither side, and certainly not the United States, would (or need) permit the other to achieve a politically or militarily meaningful lead in strategic weaponry.⁵³ In the 1970s the Soviet Union accomplished just that.

In their hubris, or arrogance, American defense intellectuals in the 1960s and early to mid-1970s had difficulty even conceiving of the possibility that there could be more than one strategic theoretical enlightenment. The strategic-culturally distinctive doctrine of France, the idea of proportional deterrence, could be both dismissed from the vantage point of superpower logic, yet accepted as representing the particular circumstances of an inherently minor nuclear-weapon power. It

was believed widely that Soviet thinking on strategic nuclear weapons lagged behind that of the United States by perhaps five years. So, the contemporary absence of plain evidence suggesting Soviet endorsement of American concepts of strategic stability did not occasion much alarm.⁵⁴ The Soviet Union would be elevated to the American level of understanding: as Soviet defense technology and weapon procurement allowed; as more Soviet policy-makers came to appreciate the merit in American ideas; and as a result of the educational benefits of the SALT process. (It was popular to assert that the SALT process would result in the politicization of many strategic-weapon decisions--bringing them to the urgent attention of Politburo-level policy-makers and very senior, civilian, foreign affairs officials for the first time--thereby producing a healthy [for stability] dilution of erstwhile unduly professional military perspectives on major defense programs).⁵⁵

The politicization of some major strategic-weapon decisions in the Soviet Union may well have occurred, but--as Richard Pipes argues⁵⁶--there is no evidence to suggest that (civilian [?]) political views of the value of those weapons differ notably from the view of the professional military. Moreover, the long course of SALT, from November 1969 until June 1979, produced no discernible shift in the Soviet "science of war." If anything, the decade of the 1970s was characterized by a marked convergence of American strategic ideas upon those popular, and authoritative, in the Soviet Union.

Seventh, to return to an earlier theme, the United States effectively substituted a well-meaning endeavor to manage the strategic balance and

relationship in place of defense planning geared to her unique foreign-policy responsibilities. The whole collection of shapeless, indefinable, strategic concepts which have muddied the waters of American strategic thought since 1969-- sufficiency, rough parity, essential equivalence--were all bereft of reference to American, and American-allied, military, and hence political, security needs. The enterprise of controlling, or more accurately, of appearing to control, the nuclear arms competition, tended to take precedence, in practice, over strategic planning. The United States was not developing and deploying weapons so as to ensure American freedom of action in crisis and war--and, hence, to ensure (insofar as possible) a high quality of pre-and intra-war deterrence: instead she was developing and deploying weapons above all else for their negotiability, or utility as bargaining tools, for the better management of a (U.S.-style) stable strategic balance.

Deep in the psyche of the American policy elite of the 1970s, as one would expect of a sub-culture dominated by lawyers (and politicians who were trained in law) who are expert really only in American domestic phenomena, was the belief that all peoples fundamentally are reasonable. Force, latent or applied, is anathema to this sub-culture.

Eighth, moving from beliefs to the rhythm of defense behavior, it is the American way, still, for the country to mobilize in response to "evil" behavior by foreigners (assessed accurately or otherwise--in retrospect), to overwhelm the enemy with the products of American industry, or to enjoy the underappreciated blessings of military superiority, and then gradually to sink back into a condition of greater or lesser defense

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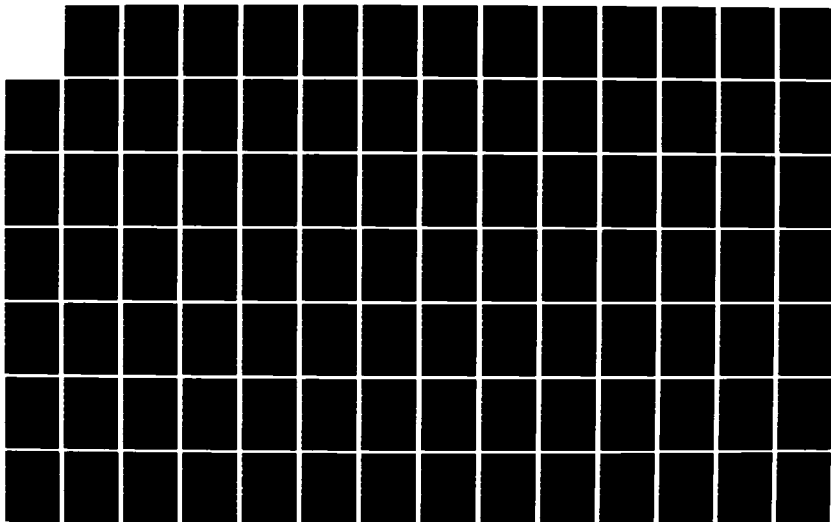
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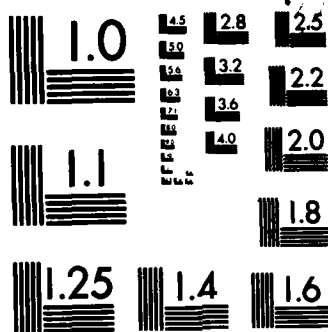
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ill-preparedness pending the next "security shock." This political phenomenon has obvious, and historically traceable, effects upon defense preparation in general, and major weapon-procurement cycles in particular.

The admirable, and historically accurate (for the United States), American belief that peace is normal, married to the associated optimistic cultural conviction that progress can be, and is being, achieved in the quality of inter-state relations, means that the United States has inordinate difficulty sustaining an adequate domestic political constituency for a high level of peacetime defense expenditure. To assert that the United States should, prospectively forever, maintain a preponderance of military power over the Soviet Union, is to attract the counterassertion that one has fallen victim to "an ideology of international conflict" or is in the pay of "the warfare state." For reason of her history and geography, it is not perceived as normal for the United States to remain semi-mobilized for war, year in and year out. Unlike the facts of Soviet political culture, major social costs are associated in the United States with a high level of defense preparation.

"Feast and famine" is the American way of defense preparation. During the years of diminished political alarm over security dangers the country coasts, gradually downhill, on the hardware legacy of the most recent procurement surge. For example, the United States deploys the 3-MIRVed Minuteman III ICBM in the early 1970s, and spends the next decade debating the proper technical character of a successor system. Minuteman III, the fourth-generation U.S. ICBM, entered service in 1970; the fifth generation, the MX ICBM, is not scheduled to become operational until mid-1986

(at the earliest--under current procurement and environmental-legal rules). Although improvements have been made in the NS-20 guidance system for Minuteman III, the U.S. defense community is locked into a true "generational jump" system. Unlike the situation in the Soviet Union, the United States' Department of Defense has to justify, and re-justify, every major (and many minor) weapon program virtually at every stage of its development-procurement cycle. Underlying this continual controversy over weapons is a fundamental absence of consensus over strategic doctrine and, at the highest level, over grand strategy also. In the Soviet Union, strategic-force modernization, year by year, is expected and is justifiable by reference to a compôt of beliefs that scarcely needs explicit presentation at all. The national security consensus in the Soviet Union is different from that of the United States--indeed, the character of the American defense debate often suggests the absence of such a consensus altogether.

Conclusions

American strategic culture and national style in strategy, the product of the significantly unique American historical experience, contains some apparently opposed tendencies--which is why it is so easy to locate historical exceptions to any sweeping generalizations that flow from "essentialist" premises. America's style encompasses oscillations between extremes, and both extremes are quintessentially American.

The American national experience (a dynamic data base) produced a nuclear strategy, and nuclear-strategy related policy, in the 1970s which had the following characteristics:

- A theory of strategic stability, and its implications, was endorsed which rested upon the belief that the super-powers shared a tolerably congruent perspective upon a desirable status quo.
- A confidence was placed in reason and (American-style) rational decision-making to the extent that the physical protection of Americans came to reside solely in anticipated pre-, or intra-, war deterrent effect.
- It was simply not serious at the operational level. American policy-makers endorsed flexibility as a desideratum, but U.S. strategic forces continued to be postured for a very short spasm war.
- Inchoate optimistic notions of progress in international cooperation were invested in an arms-control process the evident failure of which was rationalized by reference to ever more minimalist criteria.

One can trace these specific items to "the American way." Unfortunately for clarity of understanding, one could reverse the policy logic in these items, and trace them also to "the American way." This is why it has to be stressed here that the analysis in this chapter is time-specific. This chapter targets a United States that is reconsidering the merits of the path pursued for the past fifteen years. Although national political

culture and its derivative, strategic culture and national style in strategy, evolve over time, American oscillation between under- and over-preparedness, between wishful thinking and Manichaeism is endemic, for the foreseeable future, to "the American way." It is instructive to speculate as to the reasons for this.

First, the United States is an insular political culture. There is an expectation of safety, as the norm, which flows from the geographical fact of insularity. For an insular power to be stirred to take expensive and dangerous actions, foreign threat has to be (believed to be--rightly or wrongly) immediate and massive. The drawing of a sharp distinction between peace and war is natural to Americans and Englishmen--traditionally, they have not lived in constant fear of loss of life or liberty. Geographical isolation, however illusory, encourages one to discount apparently distant dangers. But, the cultural proclivity to assume that peace is normal, produces, when turned around by apparently unambiguous evidence of foreign threat, a possibly disproportionate military response.

Second, with very few exceptions, American policy-making in the national security area (foreign policy, defense policy, arms control policy) tends to be dominated by people with a poor sense of the value of history. In the inimitable words of one American policy maker:

....all this history business! We've got to make policy decisions.⁵⁷

To the average American maker of "high" policy, international events occur as by constant revelation and have meaning, if any, solely with reference to his personal historical experience. It is commonplace to observe that American decision-making style tends, pre-eminently, to mean

that policy-makers judge each event on its merits, in isolation, because they know no better. Pragmatism without principle produces a reactive, "muddling through" style. Since history provides the only possible basis, or data base, for prediction, lawyers and engineers do not, and cannot ignore it, they simply employ it by and large in unacknowledged and uncritical fashion and very crudely. The United States' Government is vulnerable to almost any professor-turned-policy-maker who has a historically grounded (or apparently grounded) theory of statecraft.

Third, in part courtesy of the a-, or even anti-, historical training of American policy-makers, American national security policy tends typically to be dominated by people who truly are expert only in inappropriate American domestic matters. A few individuals excepted, as always, Harvard Law School, Wall Street, or a governor's state house, really do not prepare one well, in general, for coping with the surviving graduates of Stalin's "Great Purge" of the 1930s. The United States' SALT delegation, to be optimally effective, probably should be chosen from the ranks of organized labor.

In practice, the best and the brightest of the American educational process tend to be almost heroically ill-equipped to cope with the Soviet Union. It is unreasonable to expect prudent and judicious foreign-policy assessments from an official who has essentially no historical knowledge of Russia/the Soviet Union, and no personal life experience likely to facilitate his rapid on-the-job education. It is a tentative contention of this chapter that the perilous defense condition in which the United States finds herself today stems, in part, from the fact that American policy-makers of ten to fifteen years ago had no (accurate) sense of history

and essentially had no understanding of the fundamental character of the U.S.S.R.

The study of strategic culture and the associated concept of national style, should enable us better to understand ourselves, better to understand others, and (scarcely less important) better to understand how others interpret us. Although, as illustrated above, many elements of American defense policy in the 1960s and 1970s are traceable to cultural traits, the concept of strategic culture is policy neutral.

Americans are what their interpretation of their history and their contemporary roles has made them. If the United States has a recurring security problem that flows from a relatively unchanging national strategic culture, that is altogether a more serious, and intractable, condition than are the typical subjects of U.S. defense policy contention. American strategists may, for example, debate "quick" or longer term "fixes" to the problem of ICBM vulnerability, but what can one suggest, sensibly, to encourage a level of prudence in threat estimation in a strategic culture that swings almost rhythmically between under- and over-preparation? This study, ultimately, cannot have a positive policy-oriented conclusion. It would be fatuous to urge that Americans be other than what they are. All that can be achieved is an exercise in policy science--that is to say an analysis of the structure of the problem. Our security dilemma is that both Russians and Americans have a distressing, though predictable, proclivity for behaving "in (national) character," and that in the 1980s these two cultures/styles have produced, in competition, a dangerous shortfall in sustained defense effort on the American side.

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14. Shy, "The American Military Experience."
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Chapter 3

NATIONAL STYLE IN STRATEGY: (2) THE SOVIET UNION

This study is interested in the Soviet Union qua the Soviet Union, not--as in so many academic texts on comparative government--as an example of totalitarianism, mature authoritarianism, or whatever the latest fashion in political "modeling" may be.¹ The Soviet Union is of interest here as the principal recipient of American strategy messages, and as the principal candidate-adversary for any bilateral nuclear combat in which the United States is likely to be compelled to engage. In the 1980s the United States is obliged, faute de mieux, to compete for international influence with the U.S.S.R., to be prepared to seek to dissuade the U.S.S.R. from taking (U.S.-) undesired actions, and if need be, to endeavor to thwart Soviet policy by means of applied military power. Given these elementary, unarguable, facts, it is important that the Soviet Union be as well comprehended in the West as may prove possible.² Soviet policy may not be likened to a loose gun carriage on a rolling deck (indeed, that simile more nearly approximates the enduring American policy condition), it is not eccentric, irrational (in local Soviet terms, at least), or even particularly mysterious in its driving motivations and its goals. However, it is different from American policy, it cannot usefully be approached in familiar American terms; and many of the Western policy errors of the past thirty-six years could have been avoided, or reduced in scope, had a proper respect been

paid both to Soviet cultural uniqueness, and, in addition, simply to the plain facts of local Soviet conditions.³

It is relatively easy both to acknowledge, in a formal way, the trivially obvious fact that the Soviet Union is very different from the United States, and then to engage in policy analysis which focuses far more heavily upon the apparently familiar, than the unfamiliar, elements in the Soviet system.⁴ Save for the intrusion of the democratic political process (Western style),⁵ the strategic policy analyst may easily locate comfortingly familiar elements in the Soviet policy-making and policy-executing process. He finds a familiar set of technologies (a ballistic missile is comprehensible as a ballistic missile--regardless of the politics of the pertinent decision-maker); a powerful military establishment (though one which, like that of the United States, has no "Bonapartist" tradition) riven with inter-service rivalries;⁶ a massive defense-industrial complex that is, perhaps, both servant and master of the military user organizations;⁷ and a monitorable defense-policy-making/influencing elite, military and civilian, appearing to encompass a range of views which, although more restricted than in the American case, covers quite a broad spectrum even of American-analogous opinion.⁸ One could proceed. The point is that it is almost too easy to seek the familiar in the Soviet Union with respect to features on the defense landscape. One may not seek to emulate Richard Rosecrance's project and edit a book entitled The Soviet Union as an Ordinary Country,⁹ but in practice one may discern relatively little about contemporary Soviet policy-making circumstance which would incline one to seek to stress the alien character of Soviet political/strategic culture. Moreover, one

may be tempted, effectively, to dismiss discordant elements by making reference to the fact that the Soviet Union, like other states and societies, is dynamic. The Soviet Union may not be a fun-loving democracy in the American sense, but neither is she the grim Festung Russland of Stalin's day.¹⁰

This study has no difficulty in steering a prudent middle course between the absurd extremes of asserting either that the U.S.S.R. is a "worker's paradise" or is little better than a prison (which is not to say that the truth will, necessarily, lie in the middle). But, this author is concerned about the quite common phenomenon of Western scholars so immersing themselves in the apparent detail of Soviet affairs that they neglect to examine, or reexamine, the character of the overall system that they are studying. In the words of Robert Conquest:

....if one skips the fact that the Soviet leaders are the product of a political history alien to ours, and are exemplars of a deep-set political psychology unlike--and consciously hostile to--our own, no amount of erudition about formal detail is worth a wooden kopek.

As David Holloway has argued, following Alexander Dallin, one must beware of "essentialist" explanation.¹² A large and necessarily heavily bureaucratized state, ruling over a vastly numerous and culturally very diverse multi-national society must be a highly complex entity. The wellsprings of Soviet official thought and behavior may be sought in geopolitics (the response of Great Russian Man to a very hostile physical-economic and political-military environment),¹³ in ideology (Holy Russia and Pan-Slav Russia assumes the mantle of vanguard of the international proletariat in execution of the Historic Mission of spreading socialism

worldwide, and so on and so forth), or in a somewhat vulgar realpolitik.¹⁴ These are only the most prevalent of the "essentialist" approaches to Soviet phenomena.

This study acknowledges the dangers that lurk close to essentialist explanation--a disinclination to examine possibly discordant details (since one has to hand already "the essential truth"); a closed-mindedness towards competing theories; and--in general--an undue ease of explanation. Scholars tend to seek intellectual order in what, in practice, may well fairly be described as disorder. Not infrequently, book reviewers criticize authors for failing to impose order on their material. History may unfold as "one damn thing after another," but historians are charged (at least by reviewers who categorize themselves as political scientists) with "making sense of events."¹⁵ This author discerns a Soviet style with respect to nuclear (et al.) strategy, but he is attentive to the charge of (undue) determinism. "Essentialist" explanations are dangerous, but to register that fact is akin to observing that babies should not be thrown out with bathwater. Most of the more promising propositions with respect to the strategic behavior of particular states have the potential for gross distortion if they are taken beyond their proper perimeter.

Soviet Strategic Style: Observable Characteristics

Respected students of Russian and Soviet history differ almost as much in the conclusions that they offer as do economists endeavoring to offer authoritative advice on the causes of, and cures for, inflation. The ultimate focus of this study, in Chapter 9, is upon the choice of

an appropriate United States' nuclear posture and strategy for the 1980s and 1990s. That choice should be grounded in the best attainable understanding of Soviet motives and capabilities (and more general world conditions). The links between current, and recent, Soviet nuclear policy (and nuclear policy-related) behavior and the Soviet/Russian past are, in the opinion of this author, extensive, enlightening, and of considerable potential value for prediction. However, given that it is open season on offering explanations of the Great Russian legacy of the current Soviet leadership,¹⁶ it is essential to provide some fixed and (relatively) non-controversial features for the analytical landscape. With absolute certainty we do not, and cannot, know what strategic nuclear posture and doctrine the Soviet Union will choose to endorse for the mid to late 1980s and the 1990s.¹⁷ Also, although there is no shortage of theories on the subject, the Romanov, and pre-Romanov, indebtedness of the contemporary Soviet state remains a matter of scholarly conjecture. This study, while no more loathe than the next to indulge in (dubious) trans-historical pattern creation, begins at least with a firm factual foundation. While judgment, alas, cannot totally be precluded, the discussion which follows constitutes a presentation of the facts concerning some of the more important elements in the Soviet strategic style.

"the revolution in military affairs"

In a self-proclaimed "revolution in military affairs," the Soviet General Staff of the mid-to-late 1950s achieved the accommodation of nuclear weapons in the Soviet science of war.¹⁸ Soviet theorists, of the highest calibre, did not seek to deny the unique qualities of nuclear weapons, but

they did deny that nuclear weapons had effected a historical discontinuity in the utility, in extremis, of the resort to force. V.M. Bondarenko, for example, offered the thought that

...we are able to define the contemporary revolution in military affairs as a radical upheaval in its development, which is characterized by new capabilities of attaining political goals in war, resulting from the availability of nuclear missile weapons to the troops. (Emphasis in the original)¹⁹

Notwithstanding Malenkov's aberrational view in 1954 that nuclear war would mean the end of civilization,²⁰ and Khrushchev's aberrational view in January 1960 that nuclear weapons in and of themselves would be decisive,²¹ the Soviet General Staff--and the new collective leadership that assumed authority in October 1964--endorsed the policy line that nuclear war, as with other kinds of war, would be an experience which a robust, prepared society would--if need be--endure and survive. The historically unique features of nuclear weapons, the quality of energy released, and the very brief time span for destruction, were folded into military thought and preparations that envisaged decisive results from military action. Far from rendering war "unthinkable," nuclear weapons held out the promise of (possibly) prompt, decisive results.²²

prevention of war/preparation for war

Soviet theorists and officials have always seen the prevention of war as a political task--essentially unrelated to the day by day activities of the military establishment. In Soviet perspective it is the duty of the statesman and the diplomat to manage the political environment for potential armed conflict; it is the duty of the soldier to prepare as best he is able to wage war, should the threat or the reality of war

emerge.²³ This Soviet view, and its defense programmatic implications, stand in quite dramatic contrast to American thought and practice. In the United States, since World War II, there has been a near-fusion of foreign policy and strategic thought. Several generations of American senior policy-makers have been educated, or mis-educated, by Barbara Tuchman²⁴ and Thomas Schelling²⁵ into believing that military posture and doctrine, in peace and crisis time, may have a decisive negative (or positive) effect upon the course of political events. War, in the Soviet view, has deep political causes--it cannot be triggered by "mechanistic instabilities"²⁶ in the superpower strategic balance. Soviet military professionals appear to take very seriously Clausewitz's dictum that "[i]ts [war's] grammar, indeed, may be its own, but not its logic."²⁷

To a degree perhaps culturally unattainable by most American policy-makers, it should be appreciated that Soviet strategic preparation for the effective conduct of war bears relatively little relation to authoritative Soviet expectations of the occurrence of war. In the Soviet universe, preparation for war and the prevention of war, though logically linked, are quite distinctive endeavors.

threat perceptions

Nikita Khrushchev, in 1956, may have delivered a serious body blow to the thesis that war was "fatalistically inevitable," but any Soviet military officer who has studied his Lenin carefully should know better.²⁸ Whether in Leninist (ideological) or Russian/Soviet geopolitical (real-politik) perspective, the Soviet defense establishment knows that war could come. The Soviet regime was born out of quasi-military action,

was established in the period of War-Communism and eventually achieved such legitimacy as it could in good part through the military defense of Mother Russia in the Great Patriotic War.²⁹ If Soviet theorists have a vision analogous to that of American self-perception of a "city upon a hill," they anticipated that city to be closely beset about by hostile tribes. The Great Russian historical experience in, and in tentative steps taken outside, the taiga is of a very hostile outside world.³⁰ The Soviet Union/Russia does not expect to live in peace and harmony with its neighbors; instead it hopes to be permitted sufficient time to consolidate the latest territorial acquisitions so as to be able to withstand the inevitable hostile military reaction.

Russian colonial experience on the open steppes bred the same anticipation of military threat that the process of Soviet imperial expansion since 1945 has fostered.³¹ The insecurity of empire has been an enduring Russian/Soviet theme--which is developed in detail below in this chapter.

victory in nuclear war

Soviet military science has never endorsed any outcome to war, at any level, short of victory. Soviet military and political theorists have never had any notable difficulty understanding what victory meant, and have been, and remain, unable to cope with any concept of a less attractive kind. This does not mean that Soviet leaders anticipate victory in any and every war that they wage, only that they can envisage the possibility of victory (or defeat) and deem themselves obliged to seek such an outcome. This endorsement of victory does not have connotations of the mindless pursuit of military solutions to problems. Instead

it means a determination to achieve political objectives (be they modest or otherwise). Soviet style in the exercise of military force, to intimidate and if need be to overwhelm, has been well exemplified in the operations against Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968. Afghanistan does not represent aberrant behavior, rather may it show evidence of Soviet miscalculation.

By way of contrast to the American practice of limited war from Korea through Vietnam,³² it has been the Soviet way to have a high threshold for the taking of military action, and--when action is taken--to attempt to apply overwhelming force in pursuit of very rapid political results. Americans seek to minimize the risks and potential costs of armed conflict by sharply graduating applied violence (or never doing by halves what might be accomplished by quarters). In Vietnam for example, the United States was always "behind the (necessary) power curve." Consistently, the Johnson Administration applied too little force too late (not to mention the many sins of military mal-execution that were committed--against the policy background of inchoate and unpersuasive political objectives). The Soviet Union has favored a reverse strategy. Following the old dictum that no general ever lost a battle because he was too strong, Soviet leaders have sought to minimize risks and costs by the threatening and applying of military force on such a scale as, hopefully, to guarantee prompt success. Whether or not this historical pattern would be reflected in the Soviet conduct of central nuclear war is a question of more than tangential interest to this study.

The American proclivity for easing her way into combat with symbolic, quarter and half measures--for the excellent purpose of seeking to dampen the pace of conflict expansion and maximize the prospects for political control of military events--extends into the realm of central war planning. The popularity of the ideas of flexible response (or initiative), graduated deterrence, escalation control and crisis management and crisis bargaining, and the planning facts of limited nuclear options in implementation of some of the recommendations of NSDM 242,³³ all attest to the dominant American approach to risk management in the nuclear age. That approach is eminently defensible. However, American defense planners should be concerned lest their preferred style of operations be overtaken and rendered valueless, or even counterproductive, by a contrasting Soviet style. The possibility of strategic miscalculation in Washington is non-trivial when one considers that American leaders may have to wage war against a country that is far more determined upon winning than it is upon early war termination on mutually acceptable terms.

the conduct of war

American officials and scholars do not, and cannot, know with high confidence just how Soviet leaders would choose to wage a central nuclear war. Indeed, it may not even be prudent to assume that Soviet leaders would perceive that they enjoyed the luxury of strategic choice.³⁴ Unfortunately, there is no alternative other than to speculate on this subject. To the limited degree to which there is Western expertise on the subject of Soviet strategic-nuclear operational intentions, the story is a grim one for American hopes for escalation control. The Western experts on

probable Soviet style in the conduct of central nuclear war--preeminently John Erickson, William T. Lee³⁵, Joseph Douglass and Amoretta Hoeber³⁶--all agree (which does not, of course, mean that they are correct). John Erickson has argued as follows:

The Soviet strategic missile forces are organized into armies, brigades, and regiments, geared to salvo firing--in short it is a battlefield deployment of strategic weapons, "nuclear guns," if you like, aimed at the enemy in order to fight a "counternuclear battle," knocking out the enemy nuclear guns and exploiting at the same time accepted military principles of surprise, deception, and maneuver....It is worth noting in passing that the founders of the Soviet strategic missile force were not strategic theoreticians but experienced and distinguished artillery commanders....In the sequence of strikes, the maximum number should be allocated to the first launch, in order to maximize survivability...³⁷

Such evidence as there is suggests that if the politicians fail to prevent war, the Soviet military establishment would do its duty and endeavor to conduct it in efficient pursuit of a clear, favorable military outcome. The consistency of evidence (from writings, from behavior in other military-diplomatic respects, from the technical details of Soviet military deployment, from exercises, and from Soviet/Russian strategic/political culture) is remarkable and probably should be viewed as persuasive--if only for reasons of prudence. In practice, Soviet political leaders may prove to be as interested in attempting to retain political control of military events through flexibility in military execution as were their predecessors in July 1914. The partial mobilization (non-) option, against Austria-Hungary only, which attracted the Russian Foreign Minister, Sazanov (a man heroically ignorant of military [and many diplomatic] realities), was always absurd because it would have been certain to trigger an Austro-Hungarian general mobilization which would have triggered German general

mobilization...and so on to the Marne.³⁸ Although one cannot be certain, it is only prudent to assume that, in the event, Soviet political leaders will be unable-- assuming, perhaps over-optimistically, that they would try--to cope with the apparently sound military arguments of the General Staff (and its political allies) for waging the war according to plan.³⁹

If they are obliged to fight a nuclear war, for truly compelling political reasons, Soviet soldiers should be expected to seek to achieve a prompt military decision, all the while anticipating the strong possibility that even a sequence of very heavy early blows against American strategic forces, C³I, logistic chokepoints, and war-supporting industries would not suffice to win the war. America is too large, too powerful and too cohesive a society to be neutralized easily. In John Erickson's words, expressing what he discerns as the dominant Soviet military opinion:

...a battle, or an operation or a war cannot be reduced to one act of destruction of the enemy; all must be considered in terms of a series of consecutive strikes, each of which is different in nature.⁴⁰

attitudes toward military power

The Soviet state, like the Czarist state before it, was founded on and sustained by military power. To a greater or lesser degree, this is a necessary, and hence rather trivial, truth about all countries-- not excluding the United States. The United States was born by force, from 1775-83, and perpetuated by force, from 1861-65. Furthermore, the Great American Desert between the Alleghenies and the Rockies, notwithstanding the legal niceties of treaties, was occupied effectively by force. The acquisition of Texas and the Southwest could provide Mexico with as

much, if not more, cause to complain about "unequal treaties," as China has in her continuing territorial disputes with the Soviet Union. Notwithstanding the general historical fact of the military basis to political territorial organization,⁴¹ there are important differences of degree of military dependence as between countries. It is not true to assert of the U.S.S.R., as was said of the Prussia of the Great Elector that it is "an army with a country," but such a judgment does err on the correct side.

Territorial aggrandizement has always been "the Russian way." As Richard Pipes has argued:

Russia's traditional expansionism and the militarism to which it gave rise were primarily caused by economic factors... There is a tragedy in the vicious circle that permeates Russian history: poverty calls for conquests; conquests demand a large military establishment; a large military establishment saps⁴² the productive forces of the country, perpetuating poverty.

The Slavs who founded what was to become Russia occupied the least desirable territory in Europe, the taiga--the infertile Northern Forest. The history of Russia, for several centuries, was a history of the colonization of more fertile lands, and of military protection of that colonization. The military power of the Kievan, Muscovite, and then Imperial Russian state was not an occasional necessity when foreign threat appeared to loom. Instead, Russians could survive--vulnerable, geographically, from East and West, once they advanced on to the open black earth steppe from the relative safety of the inhospitable taiga--only if "the national economy was mainly geared to warfare."⁴³

The Muscovite and Czarist states did indeed abut genuine enemies, and the price of defeat was terrible--warfare for Russians, as a centrally

placed continental power lacking natural defenses, was always, at least potentially, a total experience. (The destruction of Riazan, and the grisly fate of its inhabitants at the hands of the Mongols in the Winter of 1237, makes grim reading even today).⁴⁴ As the heirs to a Russian, distinctively continental, experience Soviet leaders and officials have a cultural legacy of attitudes which disincline them to place much trust in the possibility of limited conflict against first class enemies.

Russian and Soviet history is dominated by its military experience. Quite aside from the important Petrine legacy (Peter the Great instituted the first standing army based on conscription in Europe), not to mention the scarring effect of the Mongol conquest and preponderance--from 1237 until (formally, at least) 1480--Soviet power and military power really are inseparable facts. The Soviet regime owes its foundation, its continued existence, and its international reputation to its ability to generate and sustain a level of military power which commands awe and respect (not least, at home).

In a very important sense, the CPSU draws its domestic political legitimacy from its military assets. The Bolsheviks seized power and sustained themselves through the frequently critical period of War-Communism (until the Winter of 1920-21)⁴⁵ because they had higher quality and/or more military assets than their many, divided and not-infrequently indecisive, adversaries. The revolution should not, of course, have occurred in Imperial Russia (according to Marx and Engels). Russia may have been the "weakest link of capitalism" but, contrary to self-serving and some genuinely misinformed commentary, the Russia seized by Lenin

and his band of adventurers in 1917 was not a moribund feudal structure (at least, not in some critical respects). The Russia of 1914-17 was racing into the Twentieth (or, perhaps the late Nineteenth) Century at a pace that exceeded its ability to manage. It is no exaggeration to say that the domestic crises of Imperial Russia in the First World War were not so much the crises of a hopelessly backward country, rather were they the crises of a country that was modernizing too rapidly.⁴⁶ It may be true to claim that, for reasons of catastrophic inflation and general economic paralysis "the Bolshevik Revolution was a fact before it happened,"⁴⁷ but having once happened it was sustained by the bayonets of the Red Army.

Those commentators impressed by the apparent novelty of the Soviet military modernization drive of the 1960s and 1970s should be reminded of the fact that the Soviet Army and Air Forces of 1935 were probably the most modern, as well as the largest, in the world.⁴⁸ Furthermore, to cast back further, ever since Peter the Great defeated Sweden at Poltava in 1709 Russia has nearly always either been, or been believed to be, a first-class military (land) power.⁴⁹ Soviet leaders, like Russian leaders before them, know that while military power is far short of everything,⁵⁰ it does offer essential compensation for at least some other deficiencies.

Soviet strategic culture is acutely aware of the consequences of military weakness: two and a half centuries of Tartar domination (1237--1480); near-permanent insecurity for Russian colonists in the face of militarily well-organized nomadic tribesmen; humiliation by Poles, Lithuanians

and Swedes; catastrophic invasion by the French; defeat in the Crimea in 1854-56; defeat in Manchuria in 1905 (and revolution at home); humiliation at Brest-Litovsk in December 1917 (armistice) and March 1918 (peace treaty); near defeat by the Poles in 1920; intervention by the Allies on behalf of the Whites; near defeat by Nazi Germany in 1941-42; and humiliation by the United States in October 1962--to select only a few of the high (or low) points in the potential recital.

The Slav tribesmen/Russians/Soviets have been obliged to live very dangerously by virtue of their geopolitical condition. This is not to deny the force of Richard Pipes' argument that "a country does not become the largest state in the world, as Russia has been since the seventeenth century, merely by absorbing or repelling foreign invasion."⁵¹ But it is to say that Russian and Soviet history, up to and including living memory, is not of a kind likely to encourage Soviet leaders, any Soviet leaders, to choose to neglect their military power. To summarize, in Soviet perspective one cannot be too strong militarily. Soviet policymakers demonstrate no observable sensitivity to what Western commentators term "the security dilemma." Specifically, the security of one country easily can become the insecurity of others (which tends to trigger security enhancing responses on the part of those others which feed new, or augmented, insecurity feelings/assessments on the part of the first country...and so on and so forth).

the value and costs of military power

The Soviet Union is, like Imperial Russia and Muscovy before it, a heavily militarized society. The maintenance of a very large standing

army requires no particular effort of justification in Moscow. As the legatee of a somewhat unstable multinational empire, surrounded by actual or potential enemies, not to mention the inalienable Soviet duty to prosecute the Historic Mission for which the U.S.S.R. (nominally) was founded, the Soviet case for a very large military establishment virtually makes itself. No matter what the character of defense policies in NATO countries, Soviet military and para-military preparedness will remain massive. When Western theorists of disarmament in the early 1960s sought to devise schemes for complete and general disarmament, they failed to find a way to cope with the awkward fact that the U.S.S.R. (on today's count) maintains roughly 460,000 fairly heavily armed "internal security" troops (border guards, under the KGB, and MVD security forces).⁵² Russia/the U.S.S.R. has long been obsessed with the fear of domestic disorder⁵³ and internal security has always been a military, or para-military, duty.

The Soviet Union does not view its heavy economic-social burden of defense preparation in ways at all analogous to those familiar in American terms. While the separate Soviet armed services may, and do, squabble over relatively scarce industrial and human resources, there is never any question of debating the fundamental state drive for multi-level military preponderance over any and all potential enemies. This may mislead the unwary, since clearly the steady slowdown in the rate of growth of the Soviet economy must sharpen defense-non-defense allocation controversies. However, the Soviet weltanschauung does not admit of any controversy over the need for constant military vigilance. Without denying the growing need of Soviet high-technology industry for the Great Russian (in particular)

youth that currently must spend two or three years performing generally economically unproductive military tasks, Soviet leaders discern no alternative--for the following reasons (or cultural conditions):

- A very large armed force is "the Russian/Soviet way." The tradition of public service in the mass army is as solidly entrenched in the Soviet Union as it is in France.⁵⁴
- The U.S.S.R. knows, by ideological definition, that it has deadly enemies in the outside world.
- The military power of the Soviet state induces politically beneficial awe and respect on the part of citizens, untrustworthy Warsaw Pact allies, and those currently beyond direct Soviet control.
- Military and para-military organizations of all kinds, from units in schools and factories to elite Guards regiments, are a source of national pride, an instrument of social cohesiveness, and a tool for nation-building and national integration.⁵⁵ Almost regardless of its actual military functions, DOSAAF (Dobrovol'noye Obshchestvo Sodeystviya Armii, Aviatsii i Flotu--the Volunteer Society for Cooperation with the Army, Aviation, and the Fleet) has in excess of 80 million members (nominally) and is charged, de facto, with the militarization of Soviet youth and working people (at the school and factory-floor levels).⁵⁶

the rhythm of defense preparation

There is a steady rhythm to Soviet military preparation which lends itself all too easily to misassessment in the West. Whereas the United States stumbles, or lurches, from feast to famine in its allocation of resources to defense, the Soviet Union--for enduring reasons of style and structure--adheres to a tolerably even course, year after year. This well attested fact is subject to the phenomenon of redundant causation. In other words, several quite distinct, and plausible, theories serve to explain the steady pace of Soviet defense preparation. The Western misassessment flows from the alien character of this Soviet rhythm of preparedness. In some Western eyes, it seems virtually self-evident that the unrelenting social and economic costs of Soviet defense preparation must have political meaning in terms of "a day of reckoning." The familiar phrase, "the Soviet military build-up," suggests an activity purposefully directed--and what purpose can a military build-up have other than to coerce enemies? Consideration of build-up leads easily enough to the Soviet window of opportunity/Western window of vulnerability thesis. This author does not wish to risk propagating spurious reassurance, but he believes that the Soviet military "build-up" should be viewed, first, in Soviet perspective.

The steadiness in Soviet defense allocation, year by year, is what one should expect of a state which enjoys a stable, long-term appreciation of the character of its security problems and opportunities. Soviet statecraft, a malign mixture of Great Russian Imperialism, Leninist opportunism and millenialism, and vulgar realpolitik, is capable of almost any tactical

diplomatic maneuver, but it does not lurch from one characterization of external (and internal) threat assessment to another one that is radically different. Soviet leaders, like other leaders, may miscalculate in detail, but they have a grand strategy (or doctrine--for the Soviet term)⁵⁷ that is not subject to peurile Manichaenism or to juvenile detente euphoria. No matter what Pravda, Tass, or itinerant Soviet "scholars" may say, day by day, Soviet statecraft is dominated, at a high level, by an enduring comprehension of the essential rules of the game of world politics, and of the proper Soviet role as a player in that game.

In addition, a country with a centrally planned economy with respect to the priorities within which major decisions are made at quinquennial intervals, is not a country easily capable of adjusting its kinds and levels of defense production on a flexible, year by year, basis. Every serious Western student of Soviet defense industry of recent years has stressed the inertia in that system,⁵⁸ and the difficulty there would be in attempting to shift resources as threat estimates varied.

Unlike the situation in the United States, Soviet defense industry (in alliance with its particular military users), year after year, maintains a fairly steady work flow on the products that it knows how to build. While major innovation is possible, the system, disproportionately, rewards formally satisfactory performance and discourages risk-taking. Regular patterns of defense industrial activity can be and have been upset by policy decisions taken in Moscow:⁵⁹ witness the creation of the defense-industrial base for what was to become the Strategic Rocket Forces. However, the tendency, generically, is for relatively low-risk improvement

of existing products. In addition, there is good reason to believe that particular programs are continued long after there is excellent reason to doubt their prospective military utility. As with all styles in defense preparation, the Soviet one has the vices of its virtues.

Nonetheless, however one elects to explain it, there is no significant dispute concerning the character of Soviet style in defense-industrial activity. The United States defense community is able to predict, with quite high confidence, the level and kind of Soviet defense product output in the 1980s, and even 1990s (barring some traumatic system shock), in a way that simply is not feasible for Soviet intelligence analysts contemplating the United States. The American cycle of defense-industrial feast and famine is not a regular one. By 1990 the United States may have deployed the MX ICBM, Trident II, the B-1, and a low-altitude ABM system--or she may not.

The Soviet Union as an Empire

Although the subject of this study is nuclear strategy and national style, it is imperative that political drives and temptations not be subsumed in, for example, technical consideration of nuclear war planning and approaches to arms control. Above all else, this chapter seeks to provide the reader with a clear sense of the character of the Soviet Union as a strategic actor--with particular reference to strategic-nuclear concerns. The previous section detailed certain prominent facts about Soviet thought and behavior, this section advances a somewhat sweeping hypothesis concerning the political engine that may summon forth Soviet nuclear posture and strategy to action. To be specific, it is contended here that

the Soviet Union may usefully, indeed most usefully, be approached as an Empire, moved in her thought and behavior by distinctively imperial considerations. As will be made evident, this hypothesis is not advanced as a preclusive explanation and basis for prediction, simply as a very useful one. There have been many empires, all unique in important respects. However, the purpose here is not to uncover general truths about empire, rather is it, much more modestly, to contribute to improved understanding of the Soviet Union. In this context, it is proposed that some frequent and enduring (if not necessarily universal) themes of empire are very useful indeed for comprehending Soviet reality.

the meaning of empire

In looking for the essence of empire one is compelled, faute de mieux, to have recourse to common sense. What are the characteristics of empire--properly understood? They should include:

- Rule by one nation over many nations.⁶⁰ (Virtually by definition, a uni-national state cannot be an empire). Contemporary China (Beijing), for example, is not an empire because the Han people constitute more than 90 percent of the total population. Traditionally, the Chinese (Han) response to ethnically alien intrusion has been absorption.
- A sense of mission or duty--properly authorized by some Mandate of Heaven--to exercise authority over ethnically different peoples.⁶¹
- A profound sense of insecurity, since the domination of "others" carried with it the implication that they have loyalties other than to the empire.

Imperial rule, fundamentally, implies a relationship of authority founded on the power to coerce. Imperial rulers, even in the hey-day of their authority, and notwithstanding the possible reality of their actually believing in some form of a mission civilisatrice, are often wont to recognize that there is an abnormality (of legitimacy) in their relationship with many of their subjects such that coercion must underlie all ruler-ruled connections. This argument can easily be overstated. The relations between rulers and ruled in most empires, at most times, have not been characterized by overt coercion. Nonetheless, essential to the authority of empire is the idea that putative national-separatism is very unlikely to succeed--because of the power of the coercive instruments of central imperial rule.

Very often, the idea of empire is confused with the idea of "colonial empire." A colonial empire, by definition, is an empire of colonies with colonists. More often than not, imperial reality has had no colonial referents worthy of note. For a prominent example, the British Empire in India never extended, in personnel, beyond administrators, the army and traders: there was never any question of bringing native British persons out to "colonize" the Indian Empire. It should be noted that colonization, as an adjunct to empire, may have several distinct motives. In the Soviet case, one observes Great Russian colonization both as a response to population pressure, and as intended to dilute, and eventually overwhelm, local nationalisms that otherwise might become politically-troublesome.

Even though the nation-state is a comparatively modern invention--after 1500--the sentiments that make for nationhood are anything but modern. Empires have always had to contend against the local particularisms of group, tribe, clan, city, and nation. It would appear to be a universal, and historically ancient, preference, for people to favor rule, and even misrule, by "one (or some) of their own kind" to rule by foreigners. Any nation that rules another nation in the absence of freely given consent (an unlikely condition) assumes a permanent insecurity burden. The price of (multinational) empire is high, and the essential dynamics of imperial expansion have been notably constant over the centuries. Presented here is but one thesis concerning the security perimeter of empires. It is possible, and indeed probable, that different theses have explanatory value concerning other empires.

The Russian/Soviet empire, like for example, the Roman, the British, and the Austro-Hungarian, has chosen to seek enhanced security through expansion. The motive, at root (though far from exclusively), has been defensive in character. The Romans invaded Britain not in quest of gold and glory, but rather to deny rebellious tribes in Gaul a sanctuary. Similarly, Rome expanded to the Rhine and the Danube in a search for natural, defensible, frontiers, but found that the security of those river lines required a forward policy beyond them.⁶²

Until the 1880s, the British Empire was relatively unpopular at home,⁶³ and much of it had been acquired to protect the two routes to India (around the Cape and, later, via Egypt)--itself a classic example of by and large unplanned imperial expansion. The Honorable East India Company came to

acquire an Indian empire as a direct, and generally undesired (because of the expense), consequence of the need to protect trade. Anglo-Russian hostility throughout the Nineteenth Century was fed, above all else, on the British side at least, by (largely unwarranted) fears concerning Russian designs on India. The British policy of "bolstering Turkey" was driven in good part by a determination to deny St. Petersburg easy access to the Eastern Mediterranean (thereby threatening the route to India); while British paranoia concerning Soviet designs drove generations of British diplomats-spies-soldiers to play the Great Game in Central Asia. In toto, Great Britain waged three disastrous Afghan Wars (the third one immediately after World War I).⁶⁴ The Northwest frontier of India offers a near perfect example of how an empire, basically satisfied with its extant holdings, feels compelled to seek some measure of control beyond the existing frontier in order to safeguard that which already is held.

Austria-Hungary, with its ethnic smorgasbord, offers potentially the most compelling, and alarming, analogy with the Soviet Union today. Vienna and Budapest prior to 1914, confronting a domestic multinational time bomb, decided that their best strategy for coping with Slav separatism was to restrict the growth of Slav states on its borders. The formal annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1908 led directly to the events of 1914.

the drive for empire

Almost as important as what is claimed here, is what is not claimed here. I am not arguing that there is only one model of imperial statecraft; that empires can never be satisfied with their frontiers; nor that

empires are created only with a single motive in mind. Instead, it is argued that there is a model, and really a historically dominant model, of imperial statecraft which is characterized by a largely defensive urge to expand--and that the Soviet Union (following Imperial Russia) behaves true to this particular tradition. Also, although it is contended here that the key to comprehending Soviet foreign policy should be sought in this dominant model of the imperial need to expand for essentially defensive security reasons, many other factors play their part in addition. Naturally, the mix of motivating factors will differ from case to case and from time to time, nonetheless it is worth mentioning the following reasons for empire:

- Financial gain.
- Glory and self-esteem. (The French acquired much of their Empire in Africa as psychological compensation for their shame at defeat by Germany in 1870.)⁶⁵
- Land hunger. (This was a particularly strong motive in the Russian case. Backward methods of farming, a very adverse climate, and poor soil in the heart of Great Russian territory--the taiga--motivated persistent colonization on to the open Steppes.)⁶⁶
- Balance of power. (The British saw their overseas empire after 1890 in part as redressing the adverse British diplomatic condition in Europe.)⁶⁷ Also, empires can expand for political preemptive reasons--e.g., "if we do not take it, someone else will."

- Personal careerism. (Poor communications and great distances meant that, for example, Russian and British proconsuls of distinction could create empires in Central Asia and the Far East, and India, respectively, with scant reference to policy in St. Petersburg and London. Able individual adventurers often were of greater historical consequence than were distant policymakers. There was scope for talent on the frontier. As Great Britain had its Cecil Rhodes, so the Russia of the Czars had Count Muraviev-Armursky--both were in the business of building empire.)
- Civilizing (or other) mission. (Essential to the mental hygiene of most imperialists had been the provision of legitimacy. Empire has to be not merely fun and profitable, but somehow beneficial to those acquired as subjects. Cultural differences usually suffice to provide the pretext for imposing "civilization." The determined imperialist is not usually at a loss to find some local practices sufficiently obnoxious as to require the benefits of imperial discipline. The right to good government [Westminster or Paris style] of native peoples tended to be placed above the right of those peoples to self-government [even if only autocratically and perhaps inefficiently by one of their own].)
- Lust for, and enjoyment of, power. (Individuals and states enjoy exercising authority over others.)

After 1917, the Soviet Republic, following a brief experiment with the right of peoples to secede, unsurprisingly came to function as the vehicle for the Great Russian imperialism long embraced by "the Czar of all the Russias." Out of the turmoil of the First World War and the civil war which followed, only Finland, Poland and the Baltic peoples of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia managed to sustain a new-founded, Versailles-decreed and blessed, independence. Independence did not, of course, come free--both Poland and Finland had to affirm their independence in blood.

It would probably be an error to look for a general theory of empire and imperialism. One of the leading authorities on the idea of empire has offered the following cautionary words:

Politics and semantics make uneasy bedfellows, and anyway "Empire" has always appealed more to oratory than to analysis....For what is imperialism anyway? It is the predictable expression of a will to power, which in turn is something that manifests itself in unpredictable ways.⁶⁸

One can find several compelling partial historical analogies to the situation and policies pursued by the Soviet Union as an imperial power. However, the insecurity of empire--which is a general condition flowing from the inherent tension between local particularism and central imperial authority--is unusually acute in the Soviet case. In addition, the phenomenon of empire, with the necessary strength of that "will to power" cited by Professor Thornton, almost invariably excites suspicion and hostility abroad. The British Foreign Office in the 1830s (and well beyond) for example, could make little sense of the Russian drive into Central Asia and the trans-Caucasus region save in terms of a hypothesized Russian ambition eventually to exercise authority (imperium) over India and Persia.

Russia, it was believed (with good reason) in London, already had more territory than it could exploit, control, or people (colonize) effectively--what need had it to extend its dominion? Moreover, the Khanates of Central Asia posed no threat of significance to extant Russian "holdings"--so any defensive-security rationale was weak.

the insecurity of the Soviet Empire

The Soviet Empire today is unusually insecure, in terms of historical imperial phenomena, because the authority of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) is fragile even in its core (Great Russia) domestic area. Whereas many groups of imperial statesmen, historically, have feared, appropriately enough, that trouble on the frontier could easily spread, and that their individual political fortunes required at least the appearance of policy success, it is a little unusual for the character of the state itself to be potentially at risk in every crisis on the marches: unusual, but not unprecedented. For recent examples: the Portuguese revolution of the early 1970s was a fairly direct consequence of policy failure in Angola and Mozambique; while the Fourth French Republic fell in 1958 over the issue of policy in Algeria. So, domestic Soviet political stability, while unusually sensitive to imperial failures of policy, is by no means unique in this condition.

The Soviet government has a problem of legitimacy--even among Great Russians. Because of her particular history, Russia/the U.S.S.R. produced a fragile relationship between rulers and ruled. The state in Russia/the U.S.S.R. has always functioned essentially for purposes apart from the interests of individual subjects (though interests may coincide). Since

the Mongol conquest of 1237-40 (probably the single most important date in Russian/Soviet history),⁶⁹ Russian leaders have represented interests which bore no necessary relationship to the interests of their subjects (which is not to deny that the passion for order evidenced by all Muscovite Grand Princes, Czars and Soviet leaders benefited the populace as well as the courtiers who were its immediate beneficiaries). Raison d'etat, in practice, reached (and reaches) heights of patrimonial hubris undreamed of even by Louis XIV. Russians, and other peoples within the Russian or Soviet Empire, have acquiesced in imperial rule fundamentally because of their awe of the power of the state and because of their perennial fear of chaos. Russians fear disorder almost to a pathological degree, accept the need for firm government, and respect a leadership that demonstrates an inflexible will to power.

The legitimacy of the Czars rested on two essential pillars, a Mandate of Heaven endorsed by the Orthodox Church, and--as noted above--respect for the power of the state. The Czar was held to be God's representative.

To the Emperor of all the Russias belongs the supreme and unlimited power. Notably fear, but also conscience commanded by God Himself, is the basis of obedience to this power.
(Article 1 of the Fundamental Laws of Imperial Russia)

With regard to the awe in which Russian subjects held the power of the state, and on the character of the connection between ruler and ruled, it is worth quoting these observations by Edward Crankshaw:

The Russian autocracy in its most positive manifestations has always been so spectacular in its absolutism that it has compelled the myth of omnipotence with almost hypnotic force.

And,

The obedience of the Russian people was....negative, or passive, obedience. It was an abdication of responsibility. In only

the most limited sense could the Russian autocrats command: except in moments of extreme national peril they could only repress....The central government of Russia with its tightly organized provincial apparatus extending over unimaginable distances was, insofar as it affected the governed, less the administrative nexus of a unified nation than the colonial service of an occupying power, having no organic connection with the subject people....One person and one person alone, in the eyes of the subject people, stood above the detested government and was at the same time its victim; and he, whose supreme office did indeed reflect the people's need, was the very man who believed that he was the government: the Tsar.⁷¹

The alleged omnipotence of the Czar, and earlier, of the Grand Prince of Muscovy, was a carefully constructed legal-mystical myth designed to combat disorder. The myth of omnipotence was invented in the mid-Fifteenth Century--following nearly fifty years of appalling domestic disorder. The actual practice of Grand Princely, Czarist, and--save for most of the truly exceptional Stalinist era--Soviet power has tended more to the oligarchical than to the individual-absolutist.⁷²

The aged bureaucrats who comprise the innermost circle of the CPSU leadership today provide no human focus for Soviet loyalty, while the contemporary Soviet version of the Mandate of Heaven is the claim by the party to be the vanguard in prosecuting a Historic Mission. If, as virtually every apparently authoritative report attests, Soviet society is suffused with cynicism concerning the Historic Mission--what is left save respect for the power of the state and, for Great Russians at least, identification of Soviet power with a Great Russian power in which pride is felt?

Soviet leaders obviously are aware of the fact that popular, indeed well-nigh universal, doubts and cynicism regarding socialism and the self-asserted Soviet role as vanguard of the international proletariat, pose

a potentially deadly threat to the legitimacy of CPSU authority. If The Doctrine is wrong, the CPSU has no claim to authority--in which case the domestic crimes committed in the name of raison d'état since 1917 will require some skilled explaining.⁷³ Aside from the distressing realization that both they, and their general public, appreciate the tenuousness of Marxist-Leninist ideology, Soviet leaders also have to be aware that lurking none too far beneath the surface of society in their great Russian core area, is a vision of the Russian future notably different in key aspects from the tenets of state socialism. The crass materialism and (doctrinal) internationalism of the state ideology has few roots worthy of mention in Russian soil. There is reason to believe that the mysticism of the Orthodox Church, and Great Russian nationalism (or chauvinism), go far deeper than do any of the doctrines taught officially since 1917.⁷⁴ Nonetheless, the style of contemporary Soviet government, its oligarchical court politics, the presumption that the state is all powerful, and the absence of contractual nexi between rulers and ruled--are all quintessentially Russian. Mr. Brezhnev's leadership style would have been familiar to Ivan III in the Fifteenth Century.

In short, even the heart of the Soviet empire contains potentially politically combustible material. The British could divest themselves of empire, sometimes even in humiliating circumstances, without political revolution occurring at home. However fairly, or otherwise, Britain treated the inhabitants of its imperial holdings, there was always a contractual nexus binding British government and British people. Defeat abroad was not seen by British radicals as clear evidence that "they"--the authorities--

were not invincible, and was not, therefore, taken as encouragement to seek political-systemic change at home.⁷⁵ The contrast with the U.S.S.R. could hardly be more stark.

Within living memory suggestive evidence is available concerning the essential fragility of the Soviet empire. In much of the southern area of the European U.S.S.R., and in the former Baltic states, the German Army in 1941 was welcomed as a liberator. That welcome did not last long, but it suggests what might have been had the Third Reich been other than it was. Crude comparison cannot, of course, be made between the U.S.S.R. today and the U.S.S.R. of 1941. Victory in the Great Patriotic War for the CPSU in defense of the Russian Motherland bequeathed a legitimacy it had lacked previously; the passage of forty more years of CPSU rule in and of itself is significant; conditions of everyday life are much easier today than they were then; and the days of arbitrary terror are long past.⁷⁶

Nonetheless, the domestic political stability of the U.S.S.R. is fragile in ways well appreciated by Soviet leaders. Their empire comprises:

- A core area attracted by Russian nationalism, not state-socialist ideology.
- Other domestic holdings, such as the Ukraine, Moldavia, Kazakhstan, Georgia, et al., which are in the U.S.S.R. because the inhabitants, at present, perceive no realistic alternative.
- An Eastern European glacis with enormous potential for the promotion of (domestic) instability, yet from which Moscow believes it cannot afford to be seen to retreat.

The Soviet Union is rigid on territorial issues (as vis à vis China) because it believes that it dare not appear to show weakness--for fear of who might be tempted next to test Moscow's will. Similarly, the Soviet Union is rigid on the essentials of political control--though the local form may vary--in Eastern Europe for fear of the risk of domestic contagion.

It is not suggested here that the Soviet government lacks domestic support--Soviet subjects, like people everywhere, take a natural pride in the success of their country. Also, it is not suggested that the Soviet empire is a house of cards likely to collapse at the first push, or setback. There is a ruthless will to power about Soviet leaders which warrants, and receives, respect. Whether or not they were convinced that they could win a nuclear war, it is safe to assume that Soviet leaders would take any military risk if they could discern no alternative path to save their patrimony (albeit at the risk of having to absorb a catastrophic level of damage).

Soviet foreign policy behavior may be explained near-totally with reference to the dynamics of insecure empire. This author, suspicious of mono-causal explanations, elects not to do so. However, he does believe that such a theory would not lead the student too far astray. "The dynamics of insecure empire" thesis holds that power centers independent of Moscow must be defined as a threat. In particular, the empire in Eastern Europe can never really be secure so long as Western Europe is free to attract, propagandize (however inoffensive the motive), and provide a peninsular beachhead for American power and influence. The Soviet Union certainly does not want to fight a war in Europe, but it does need--to be much

more secure--at least to neutralize currently non-Soviet controlled Europe as a generic threat to the extant empire. Beyond Europe, the U.S.S.R., to be secure in Eurasia, needs to deny the United States access (of all kinds) and to isolate her in the Western hemisphere. Such an accomplishment would change dramatically the terms of the long-range Soviet-American competition to the Soviet advantage.

The theory of the ever-expanding empire is very similar to the geopolitical explanations of Soviet behavior that I have advanced elsewhere.⁷⁷ It is important to recognize that the argument advanced here on behalf of an (insecure) imperial model of Soviet political structure and behavior is fully compatible with other explanatory themes. For example, ignoring all aspects of imperial statecraft, a geopolitical/realpolitik explanation of Soviet foreign policy must come to very much the same conclusions as those advanced here. That explanation is not incorrect, it is simply enriched by the addition of the imperial theory. Also, unfashionable though it remains (by and large for good and sufficient reasons), ideological interpretation of Soviet foreign policy behavior need not mislead the careful observer very much.

The conclusions and implications of this section are disturbing because they point to structural, as opposed to transient, individual-human influences upon Soviet foreign policy behavior. In short, this section identifies enduring features in Soviet thought and practice. First, the U.S.S.R. may usefully be thought of as an empire. Although scholars disagree on definitions of empire, as scholars will, the essential qualities of empire are not much in dispute. Second, a general theory of empire

is a chimera, or Holy Grail, that may absorb years of wasted effort on the part of scholars. However, while admitting of the strong possibility that empires, historically, have emerged, evolved, and died in different ways, the evidence suggests a tentative hypothesis to the effect that there is a (non-exclusive) dominant theory of empire to which contemporary Soviet phenomena relate fairly directly. Third, like France in the 1920s, though for different reasons, empires in the Soviet mold are compelled to seek an impossible securité totale. The price of greatness is eternal vigilance--or, in the Soviet case, paranoia. Fourth, the imperial theory of Soviet foreign policy permits one usefully to sidestep the issue of aggressiveness. The Soviet empire is insecure in all its geographical layers--from the Great Russian heartland, through the non-Great Russian Republics of the U.S.S.R., to the Eastern European glacis. As with the Romans, the British, and the Austro-Hungarians, enhanced security is perceived in expansion. Fifth, because of Soviet insecurity, even in their heartland, it is difficult to discern any reasonable path for imperial divestiture short of a general war.

Sixth, in essence, the legitimacy of the Soviet state reposes in the awe in which its power, its will to succeed, is held by its subjects. A military or political defeat on the frontiers of the empire could shake the world view of many formerly acquiescent subjects who simply could not envisage the possibility of Soviet defeat. A healthy political system can survive the shock of foreign defeat--although it may choose to punish the current office-holders. Soviet state ideology is an ideology of long-term success, of inevitable victory in the Historic Mission of spreading

socialism worldwide. Defeats for Soviet arms and/or diplomacy strike both at the credibility of the omnipotence of the state, and at the robustness of the myth that the CPSU rules by right of being the correct interpreter of the authoritative doctrine. Finally, given the very obvious insecurity of its extant, multi-layer imperium, the U.S.S.R. discerns no option other than to seek to expand its control of the outside world. Geopolitics/realpolitik, ideology, Great Russian national hubris, and the dynamics of empire, all impel the U.S.S.R. on an expansive foreign policy.⁷⁸

Soviet Style and Nuclear Strategy

The image of the Soviet Union as an insecure empire bent upon achieving the impossible dream of total security will be unwelcome to many readers. From the left this author no doubt will be accused of inventing a permanent Soviet military danger--flowing directly from the very structure of the Soviet imperial polity. From the right this author no doubt will be accused of inventing an essentially defensive rationale for the Soviet propensity to aggress. To return to a theme introduced en passant several times already in this chapter, this author is not convinced that there is a single "essential" drive behind Soviet foreign policy, in support of which Soviet strategic nuclear posture and strategy is designed (or mal-designed--allowing for error). However, the insecure empire proposition advanced above, for all its simplicity (or desirable parsimony--from the point of view of elegant theory design), seems to offer little prospect of misleading the reader, while it fits the historical facts persuasively. In short, there may be a superior proposition waiting to be discovered, but this

one is judged by this author to be good enough for his limited purposes in this study. It is against the background of appreciation of Soviet imperial statecraft that American defense planners should design their conflict scenarios for the 1980s and 1990s. If World War III should occur in this period, it will most likely not occur because adventurous Soviet leaders are willing to leap through a perceived "window of opportunity" in pursuit of gains, nor because mechanistic technical instabilities in the strategic balance produce a condition characterized by "the reciprocal fear of surprise attack"⁷⁹ (which the author views as constituting largely an American "engineering" fantasy), but rather because a Soviet leadership, accurately or otherwise, fears for the political integrity of its empire.

The detailed strategic implications of differences in the national styles of the superpowers are presented below, in Chapters 4-8. By way of scene-setting for those detailed discussions, the following paragraphs comprise some terse pointers to the impact of Soviet national style on Soviet nuclear posture and strategy.

First, Soviet state ideology, married malignly to Soviet historical memories, identifies certain foreign powers as enemies, by definition. Limited tactical accommodation, as in SALT, is always possible, but there can be no fundamental and lasting accommodation of interests. War with these enemies is an ever-present possibility. Second, as the student of some very painful historical lessons, and as the principal banner-carrier for the Historic Mission of spreading socialism worldwide, Soviet leaders know that there is no adequate substitute for victory in war. Third,

in the Soviet view, wars of all kinds can be won (or lost). The prevention of war is the duty of politicians; the duty of soldiers is to prepare for the efficient conduct of war. Fortunately, deterrence and defense are believed to be fully compatible.

Fourth, it is the Soviet belief that war, of any kind, should be a survivable experience. Damage limitation is a non-negotiable concept. For temporary tactical reasons a Soviet leadership may sign on for an arms control regime which appears to limit Soviet freedom of national action in this regard (i.e., the ABM Treaty of SALT I), but careful net assessment of putative combat prowess demonstrates the undiminished primacy of damage limitation considerations--appearances to the contrary notwithstanding.⁸⁰ Fifth, born of repeated and catastrophic-level national experience, Russia /the Soviet Union does not approach the possibility of nuclear war with any facile expectation of cheap and easy success. The dominant Soviet idea of victory in an undesired World War III encompasses expectations of human and economic loss which the United States tends to deem incompatible with a meaningful concept of victory.

Finally the Soviet Union has only one authoritative body of military science. All Soviet publications are subject to rigorous censorship.⁸¹ While Soviet political (and military) leaders undoubtedly would like to be able, permanently, to prevent the outbreak of nuclear war, a political task, the somewhat traditional, battlefield, war-waging themes that can easily discern in the official General Staff organ, Voyennaya Mysl (Military Thought), should, prudently, be taken at very close to face value. The Soviet General Staff's view of nuclear war is not one of a

violent bargaining process, rather is it one of 'nuclear battle,' and as John Erickson observes, "battles have winners and losers."⁸²

American politicians, officials, and commentators may make of this what they will. At the very least I hope that readers will take full account of the apparent facts of Soviet strategic cultural/stylistic distinctiveness. The issue here is not one of truth or desirability--which superpower national style is more correct or preferred-- rather is it the possible or probable consequences for Western security when two very different cultures and styles are engaged in conflict.

REFERENCES

1. Otherwise excellent scholarly studies not infrequently forget that the Soviet Union (for example) is real, while political science is an invention which as often as not--to be generous--comes between the author and his subject. This is the case with Seweryn Bialer, Stalin's Successors: Leadership, Stability, and Change in the Soviet Union (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1980). For a very perceptive review, see Robert Conquest, "Worse to Come?" The New Republic, January 17, 1980, pp.29-33.
2. It is fairly commonplace to assert a need to understand Soviet attitudes and opinions on their own terms. Somewhat less commonplace is the scarcely less valid assertion that there is a need for American understanding of the attitudes and opinions that Soviet policy-makers believe Americans to hold (rightly or wrongly).
3. This is a very sweeping judgment. Consideration of space and focus preclude extensive defense. Indeed, in very general terms--as in the text--the judgment is well-nigh an obvious truth. To be specific, this author believes that much of East-Central Europe need not have been conceded to Stalin in the period 1944-48; that the Korean War could have been prevented; that major political-military disengagement opportunities may have been lost in 1953 and 1954; that the Soviet Union could and should have been prevented from reconquering Hungary in 1956; that a United States less obsessed with Southeast Asia might

have deterred Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia in 1968; and that American foreign policy, from Nixon through Carter, in its Soviet dimension, was a cumulative disaster for U.S. national security and for international order.

4. This is analogous to the scholar who notes in an introduction to a book that there are many ways of examining his subject matter and then, having paid brief formal obeisance to theoretical ecumenicalism, proceeds for the entire length of the book to employ only his own preferred theory--without explaining why his theory should be preferred.
5. Democracy, unfortunately, is a concept that is not patented: perversions abound --as in "People's Democracy" or "democratic centralism."
6. Which remains very much a matter of speculation in the West. Studies conducted by my Hudson colleague, Norman Friedman, of the shifting fortunes of Soviet Long-range Aviation and of the Soviet Navy are particularly fecund sources of insight into the functioning of inter-service rivalry in the U.S.S.R. Also, see Matthew P. Gallagher and Karl F. Spielmann, Jr., Soviet Decision-Making for Defense: A Critique of U.S. Perspectives on the Arms Race (New York: Praeger, 1972), Chapter 3.
7. A useful introduction to this subject is Harriet Fast Scott and William F. Scott, The Armed Forces of the U.S.S.R. (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1979), Chapter 9.
8. For example, see Robert Arnett, "Soviet Attitudes Toward Nuclear War: Do They Really Think They Can Win?" The Journal of Strategic Studies, Vol.2, No.2 (September 1979), pp.172-91.

9. Richard Rosecrance, America as an Ordinary Country: U.S. Foreign Policy and the Future (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1976).
10. Commentators are addicted to the assertion that their subject is "in transition." This wise-seeming observation often refers, in practice, to little more than the necessary fact that today is placed between yesterday and tomorrow.
11. Conquest, "Worse to Come?," p.31.
12. David Holloway, "Military Power and Political Purpose in Soviet Policy," Daedalus, Vol.109, No.4 (Fall 1980), p.28.
13. This, fundamentally, is Richard Pipes' thesis. For the fullest presentation of Pipes' ideas, see Russia Under the Old Regime (New York: Scribner's, 1974).
14. Vulgar realpolitik does not suffice to explain Soviet foreign policy behavior. Commentators attracted to the idea that Soviet leaders are just crass opportunists have yet to explain to the satisfaction of this author why it was that Finland (an ally of Nazi Germany) escaped occupation in 1945. On this subject see William Pfaff, "Reflections: Getting Ahead of the Curve," The New Yorker, December 27, 1980, pp.90-98.
15. Not infrequently very competent and informative, fundamentally historical Ph.D. dissertations in international relations are trivialized, if not ruined, by the professional requirement that some political science theoretical architecture be added. Prominent among this author's favorite comments on the state of international relations theory are the following words written by James Rosenau: "Thus these are hard times for those who theorize about world affairs and foreign policy."

No sooner had we successfully come through several decades of enormous theoretical progress than the world which we began to comprehend manifested unmistakable signs of profound change, rendering our hard-won theoretical sophistication increasingly obsolete...In short, nothing seems to fit. Our great strides in theory and research during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, no longer correspond well to the world they were intended to describe." "Muddling, Meddling and Modelling: Alternative Approaches to the Study of World Politics in an Era of Rapid change," Millenium, Vol.8, No.2 (Autumn 1979), p.130.

16. For example, see Richard Pipes, "Soviet Global Strategy," Commentary, Vol.69, No.4 (April 1980), pp.31-39; and Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, "Misconceptions about Russia Are a Threat to America," Foreign Affairs, Vol.58, No.4 (Spring 1980), pp. 797-834.
17. But, it takes many years to change a strategic posture in fundamental ways--which means that the Soviet strategic posture observable today has to be the posture dominant in many major features through most of the 1980s. Similarly, Soviet doctrine and military science are not the casual invention of transient political elites. While innovation is always possible, it is sensible to anticipate continuity rather than radical change. See Scott and Scott, The Armed Forces of the U.S.S.R., Part 1; and the "Soviet Military Thought" series of Soviet military texts translated and published under the auspices of the U.S. Air Force. The basic Soviet text remains V.D. Sokolovskiy, Soviet Military Strategy, 3rd ed., edited by Harriet F. Scott (New York: Crane, Russak, 1975). Soviet scholars claim, at least for Western

ears, that Sokolovskiy (first ed., 1963) is now obsolete and is due to be replaced.

18. See Colonel General N.A. Lomov, ed., Scientific Technical Progress and The Revolution in Military Affairs (A Soviet View). Soviet Military Thought Series No.3 (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1975, first pub., Moscow, 1973). Also see William R. Kintner and Harriet F. Scott, eds., The Nuclear Revolution in Soviet Military Affairs (Norman Okla.: University of Oklahoma Press, 1968).
19. V.M. Bondarenko, "The Modern Revolution in Military Affairs and the Combat Readiness of the Armed Forces," Communist of the Armed Forces, December 1968, p.29.
20. See Herbert Dinerstein, War and the Soviet Union (New York: Praeger, 1962).
21. For a summary and discussion of Khrushchev's speech of January 14, 1960, see Scott and Scott, The Armed Forces of the U.S.S.R., pp.41-6.
22. See John Erickson, "The Soviet Military System: Doctrine, Technology, and 'Style,'" in Erickson and E.J. Feuchtwanger, eds., Soviet Military Power and Performance (Hamden, Conn.: Archon, 1979), p.25.
23. This is well explained in Holloway, "Military Power and Political Purpose in Soviet Policy," pp.19-21.
24. Barbara Tuchman, The Guns of August--August 1914 (London: Constable, 1962).
25. Thomas C. Schelling, Arms and Influence (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1966), Chapter 6.

26. Richard Burt, "Arms Control and Soviet Strategic Forces: The Risks of Asking SALT to Do Too Much," The Washington Review, Vol.1, No.1 (January 1978), p.22. See the discussion in Chapter 7 of this study.
27. Carl von Clausewitz, On War (Michael Howard and Peter Paret, eds.) (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press 1976, first pub. 1832), p.605.
28. See Richard Pipes, "Militarism and the Soviet State," Daedalus, Vol.109, No.4 (Fall 1980), pp.5-6.
29. See Bialer, Stalin's Successors, Chapter 9.
30. On this, and related, points, see the stimulating paper by Edward L. Keenan, "Russian Political Culture," unpublished manuscript (Cambridge, Mass.: Russian Research Center, Harvard University, July 1976).
31. See Pipes, Russia Under the Old Regime, particularly Chapter 1.
32. For a detailed critique of the American style of limited war see Colin S. Gray, Strategic Studies and Public Policy: The American Experience (Lexington, Ky.: The University Press of Kentucky, 1982, forthcoming). Also see Robert E. Osgood Limited War Revisited (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1979); and idem, "The Post-War Strategy of Limited War: Before, During and After Vietnam," in Laurence Martin, ed., Strategic Thought in the Nuclear Age (Baltimore, Md.: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979), pp.93-130.
33. See Colin S. Gray, Strategy and the MX (Washington, D.C.: The Heritage Foundation, 1980), particularly pp.22-25. For a positive assessment, see Henry Rowen, "The Evolution of Strategic Nuclear Doctrine," in Martin, ed., Strategic Thought in the Nuclear Age, pp. 151-56.

34. Careful speculation on this subject pervades Benjamin S. Lambeth, Selective Nuclear Options in American and Soviet Strategic Policy, R-2034-DDRE (Santa Monica, Cal.: RAND, December 1976).
35. William Lee's studies of Soviet targeting policy are classified.
36. Joseph D. Douglass, Jr., and Amoretta M. Hoeber, Soviet Strategy for Nuclear War, (Stanford, Cal.: Hoover Institution Press, 1979). Also of interest is Joseph D. Douglass, Jr., A Soviet Selective Targeting Strategy Toward Europe (Arlington, Va.: System Planning Corporation, August 1977).
37. John Erickson, "The Soviet View of Nuclear War," Transcript of broadcast on BBC Radio 3, June 19, 1980, p.8.
38. Instructive detail may be found in L.C.F. Turner, "The Russian Mobilization in 1914," in Paul M. Kennedy, ed., The War Plans of the Great Powers, 1880-1914 (London: Allen and Unwin, 1979), pp.252-68.
39. Although a great measure of flexibility in military execution may have apparent political merit to (rightly) terrified statesmen, the military arguments for "going large" rather than "going small" are likely to be very pressing. Strategic forces that are deliberately withheld in time of war are liable to destruction, their C³I will be a very high priority target set, and--in general--it may be next to impossible to execute a series of strikes in an efficient manner in accordance with anything that resembles a war plan if one suffers a lot of pre-launch damage.
40. Erickson, "The Soviet View of Nuclear War," pp.9-10. Also see Douglass and Hoeber, Soviet Strategy for Nuclear War, pp.12-13.

41. Above all else a state is a security community and its first duty, its sine qua non, is the protection of the values of its citizens.
42. Pipes, "Militarism and the Soviet State," pp.2,3.
43. Ibid., p.3.
44. See James Chambers, The Devil's Horsemen: The Mongol Invasion of Europe (New York: Atheneum, 1979), p.73.
45. The protracted military crisis of the Republic ended in late 1920. An armistice was signed with the Poles in October (the Treaty of Riga), and the Whites evacuated the Crimea in November. (It should be noted that the Japanese did not evacuate Vladivostok until 1922).
46. This argument is advanced and defended persuasively in Norman Stone, The Eastern Front, 1914-1917 (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1975). Stone goes so far as to argue that "t here was, in other words, a burst of economic activity between 1914 and 1917 that brought as much change to Russia as the whole of the previous generation. It was, indeed, the economic 'takeoff' that men had been predicting for Russia; that had, in a sense, caused the First World War, since German apprehensions of it had led Germany's leaders into provoking a preventive war. The First World War provoked a crisis of economic modernization, and Bolshevik revolution was the outcome." Pp.285-86. A sharply contrasting picture is painted in Edward Crankshaw, The Shadow of the Winter Palace: The Drift to Revolution, 1825-1917 (London: Penguin, 1978, first pub. 1976), see particularly the summary judgment on p.460.
47. Stone, The Eastern Front, 1914-1917, p.301.

48. See John Erickson, The Soviet High Command, 1918-1941 (London: St. Martin's, 1962), p.326. But see Ronald R. Rader, "Anglo-French Estimates of the Red Army, 1936-1937," in David R. Jones, ed., Soviet Armed Forces Review Annual, Volume 3, 1979 (Gulf Breeze, Fla.: Academic International Press, 1979), pp.265-80.
49. Practice and performance have often been ill-matched, but dreams or nightmares (depending on the pertinent political relationship) of "the Russian steamroller" long pre-dated the birth of the Red Army on January 28, 1918. See Norman Stone, "The Historical Background of the Red Army," in Erickson and Feuchtwanger, eds., Soviet Military Power and Performance, pp. 3-17.
50. A fact affirmed in the breadth of the Soviet concept of "the correlation of forces."
51. Pipes, "Militarism and the Soviet State," p.2.
52. See Scott and Scott, The Armed Forces of the U.S.S.R., pp.218-22; and The Military Balance, 1980-1981 (London: IISS, 1980), p.12.
53. This has been a chronic, enduring Russian fear. See Keenan, "Russian Political Culture," passim.
54. Though in the days of Czarist authority, up to (and even during) World War I, an extravagant system of "exemptions" operated. As Stone has noted: "Russia called up just over 14 million men between 1914 and 1917, from a population of almost 180 million. This was barely more than France, with a population of 40 million, and less than Germany, with one of 65 million." The Eastern Front, 1914-1917, p.213. The

Russian military manpower problem in World War I was a direct result of administrative incompetence.

55. See Teresa Rakowska-Hormstone, "The Soviet Army as the Instrument of National Integration," in Erickson and Feuchtwanger, eds., Soviet Military Power and Performance, pp.129-54.
56. See William E. Odom, "The 'Militarization' of Soviet Society," Problems of Communism, Vol.XXV, No.5 (September-October 1976), pp.34-51.
57. See Benjamin S. Lambeth, "The Sources of Soviet Military Doctrine," in Frank B. Horton III, et al., eds., Comparative Defense Policy (Baltimore, Md.: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), pp.200-16.
58. For example: Arthur J. Alexander, Decision-Making in Soviet Weapons Procurement, Adelphi Papers No.147-48 (London: IISS, Winter 1978/9); and David Holloway, "Technology and Political Decision in Soviet Armaments Policy," Journal of Peace Research, 4 (1974), pp.257-79.
59. See Alexander, Decision-Making in Soviet Weapons Procurement, p.27.
60. See Helene Carriere d'Encausse, Decline of an Empire: The Soviet Socialist Republics in Revolt (New York: Newsweek Books, 1979), p.11.
61. One can do no better than to refer to William T. Stead, "The White Man's Burden," Review of Reviews, February 15, 1890, p.107ff.
62. On the evolution of Roman imperial strategy, see Edward N. Luttwak, The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire: From the First Century A.D. to the Third (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976).
63. See A.P. Thornton, The Imperial Idea and its Enemies (London: Macmillan, 1963).
64. See T. Heathcote, The Afghan Wars: 1839-1919 (London: Osprey, 1980).

65. Imperial Germany encouraged French expansion in Africa in the hope of diverting Gallic energies in a direction of only limited relevance to the European balance of power.
66. See Pipes, Russia Under the Old Regime, Chapter 1.
67. "Splendid isolation" looked (from London) more dangerous than splendid in the late 1890s and early 1900s.
68. A.P. Thornton, For the File on Empire: Essays and Reviews (London: Macmillan, 1968), pp.290, 299.
69. See Tibor Szamuely, The Russian Tradition (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1974), Chapter 2; Pipes, Russia Under the Old Regime, Chapter 3; and James Chambers, The Devil's Horsemen: The Mongol Invasion of Europe, Chapter 6. The "Tartar Yoke" ceased formally with the ending of the payment of tribute in 1480, on the crowning of Ivan III. Although the Mongol inheritance can be seen in the relationship between the Grand Princes of Muscovy, Czars, and Soviet leaders to their people, it remains a matter of some historical contention whether or not Muscovy borrowed much of note by way of political organization, method and attitude from the Tartars. Muscovite political structure, at the level of the village (mir) and the court, was almost entirely its own--given the need to respond to unique geographical-economic and political problems; while Mongol state organization fundamentally reflected the military power of nomadic clans. See Keenan, "Russian Political Culture."
70. Crankshaw, The Shadow of the Winter Palace: The Drift to Revolution, 1825-1917, p.43.

71. Ibid., pp.45-46.
72. Keenan, "Russian Political Culture." However, the thesis, or myth of absolutism continues to be believed widely. See, for example, Ronald Hingley, The Russian Mind (New York: Scribner's, 1977), Chapter 4.
73. See Robert Conquest, The Great Terror: Stalin's Purge of the Thirties (New York: Collier, 1973, first pub. 1968).
74. Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn is an eloquent, if misleadingly pacific, spokesman for this submerged Great Russian yearning. See Solzhenitsyn, "Misconceptions about Russia Are a Threat to America," pp.797-834.
75. The British Empire was at least as popular an idea among the British working class as it was among the upper classes who benefited more directly from it.
76. Stalin's reign of terror was historically unusual because of its arbitrariness. In most totalitarian, or aspiring-totalitarian, countries, people can play reasonably safe by giving to Caesar that which Caesar demands (provided one is not unfortunate enough to be inherently guilty by some ethnic accident)--the qualification, "reasonably," is needed, because any system neglectful of "due process" lends itself to personal exploitation (by individuals eager secretly to denounce personal enemies and rivals). In Stalin's day, innocence provided no assurance whatsoever of personal safety.
77. Colin S. Gray, The Geopolitics of the Nuclear Era: Heartland, Rimlands, and the Technological Revolution (New York: Crane, Russak for the National Strategy Information Center, 1977), particularly Chapter 3.

78. An excellent set of readings is Erik P. Hoffman and Frederic J. Fleron, Jr., The Conduct of Soviet Foreign Policy, 2nd ed. (New York: Aldine, 1980). also see Helmut Sonnenfeldt and William G. Hyland, Soviet Perspectives on Security, Adelphi Paper No.150 (London: IISS, Spring 1979).
79. Thomas C. Schelling, The Strategy of Conflict (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960), Chapter 9.
80. To date, at least, the Soviet Union has not endorsed any arms control regime which would have a net negative impact on its ability to wage war in a militarily effective manner. See Colin S Gray, "The Soviet Union and Arms Control," Air Force Magazine, Vol.63, No.3 (March 1980), pp.66-71. Also see Thomas W. Wolfe, The SALT Experience (Cambridge, Mass.: Ballinger, 1979), pp.247-50.
81. See Pipes, "Militarism and the Soviet State," p.12, fn.21.
82. Erickson, "The Soviet View of Nuclear War," p.3.

Chapter 4

DETERRENCE: A WESTERN PARADIGM

Introduction

From the dawn of the nuclear age in 1945 until the present day the concept of deterrence has been the master leitmotiv, leading Western policy-makers, strategic theorists and journalists down a particular track of appraisal on nuclear-weapon policy issues. What has happened, particularly in the 1960s and 1970s, is that the warm glow of a really unchallengeable very general concept (deterrence) has been appropriated in favor of particular theories of "what deters."¹ As the next chapter demonstrates, a near identical fate has overcome the closely related concept of stability.²

A serious intellectual (or policy) historical survey of the concept of deterrence, and its parasitic doctrines, would be of interest, but is not the purpose of this chapter. I have traced Western, largely American, thinking on deterrence in considerable detail elsewhere,³ and here am far more concerned to advance understanding than to present the historical record yet again.

Deterrence is not a controversial concept--everyone is for it, just as they are for peace and security. Nonetheless, notwithstanding the non-controversial stature of the concept, it is a fact that rival theories of deterrence (what deters who, from doing what, in pursuit of what objectives?) underlie contemporary debate over targeting doctrine and over individual weapon systems. Outside several tens of strategic policy contenders, the U.S. body politic is generally ignorant of, and even indifferent

to, the interface between theories of deterrence and strategic doctrine as reflected in plans and forces. Nuclear-weapon employment policy (NUWEP), or targeting strategy, is a subject that rarely sullies university lecture halls wherein deterrence theory is presented and discussed (and those are none too numerous). Students introduced to the mysteries of deterrence theory all too rarely are told that the language of policy-makers may find only a pale reflection in the war-plan design actions of the Joint Strategic Target Planning Staff (JSTPS) in Omaha.⁴ Strange to say, perhaps, the peacetime, prewar deterrence, focus of university teaching reflects all too accurately the non-operational orientation of American defense professionals, in and out of uniform.⁵ For many years American, and other Western, defense intellectuals were proud of their accomplishments in bringing the military aspects of nuclear energy under firm theoretical control. For example, as contemporary commentaries attest, the American defense and arms control community entered the SALT I negotiations very confident that it knew what it was about, and no less confident that what it was about was right. Later chapters will probe in detail the intellectual context for United States' SALT policies.

Although an ocean of ink has been expended on the subject of deterrence theory, in 1978 Bernard Brodie could write that civilian scholars have "almost totally neglected" the question of "how do we fight a nuclear war and for what objectives"--if deterrence fails.⁶ It has always been understood that deterrent effect is as much a matter of will and credibility as it is of weaponry,⁷ and that will and credibility should be related to anticipated events in war, but nuclear war has not been

approached as "war"--that is to say as a struggle that one seeks to win for the achievement of political goals. Instead, American defense intellectuals, and even American governments, have approached nuclear war as though it could be conceived of in terms of a game of violent diplomatic bargaining, or a particularly painful exercise in coercive diplomacy. Strategic ideas of considerable subtlety and cleverness were designed and refined by Western strategists (the familiar litany includes graduated deterrence,⁸ city avoidance/controlled counterforce,⁹ limited nuclear options¹⁰ and the rest).¹¹ The issue here is not whether those ideas were interesting and relevant to the problem as we see it, rather is it whether such ideas--and their late 1970s and early 1980s facsimiles--help promote sensible strategic force programs and an intelligent targeting doctrine vis à vis a Soviet Union whose force posture and SIOP have been designed by somewhat tradition-minded Soviet general staff officers: in short by Soviet officers who appear to view nuclear war as war, not as a "diplomacy of violence."

Theories, Plans, and Capabilities

The actual details of how the United States would "go to war," to employ the old fashioned term, and of how it would conduct a central nuclear war, are--of necessity--among the most classified of all government information. Indeed, there are few people even within the Department of Defense who have access to very much of that information. The United States, faute de mieux, is in the business of deterring a range of inimical Soviet actions by threat of resort to nuclear violence effected ultimately by so-called "central systems." That threat reposes in military organizations

prepared and able to conduct war-like operations, but it is expressed for public consumption, at home and abroad, in words. (It is, of course, also expressed in noticeable changes in the alert status of forces--and such "mobilization/readiness signals" can be manipulated to transmit political messages.)¹² While each side monitors very carefully the words uttered by the other, by far the more reliable indicators are programs and actions. The actions in question, with regard to nuclear forces, to date have been confined to exercises.

The language of deterrence policy is formulated and reformulated with predictable regularity as administrations come and go in Washington, and the choice of words can indeed be important. However, the reality of American SIOP planning, in the past, often has diverged noticeably from contemporary fashion in official declaratory deterrence policy.¹³ Much, though far from all, of the scholarly and formalistic debates over nuclear-weapons policy has focused far too heavily upon the words of senior officials, and far too little upon the plans and programs required to carry them into effect. It appears that a President can shift policy merely by speaking, or by endorsing a document, some details of which are then leaked.

An example of this phenomena was Richard Burt's New York Times article of August 6, 1980, entitled "Carter Said to Back A Plans for Limiting Any Nuclear War," which carried the supposedly enlightening subtitles, "'Deterrence' Termed the Aim," and "New Strategy Would Stress Strikes on Military Objectives Rather than Cities, Officials Say."¹⁴

Whatever the merits of PD 59, and they are considerable,¹⁵ the following considerations apply:

- The Soviet Union is unlikely to be impressed by a strategy which lacks the necessary means of implementation. Some "new" strategies might be effected by existing forces and command and control arrangements, but not all (and certainly not this one).
- The "new strategy," if it really does call, inter alia, for the ability to take out Soviet (very) hard military and political targets requires, to be credible, American strategic forces with the appropriate survivability, war-head yields, and accuracy. The United States, today and for most of the 1980s, is not and will not be able to strike effectively at the complex of Soviet deep-underground political command bunkers, or at most Soviet missile silos and nuclear-weapon storage sites. This is an easily demonstrable fact, it is not a matter of opinion.¹⁶
- The "new strategy" is not really new at all. The United States has always targeted Soviet military forces and has long planned to attempt to strike at key political targets.¹⁷
- "Cities," per se, have not been targeted for very many years. Indeed, even in the years when the official rhetoric in praise of mutual assured destruction was fairly undiluted by "war-fighting" considerations (say, during 1967-69),

actual force allocation in SIOP planning was weighted overwhelmingly towards counter-military targeting.¹⁸

-- The "new strategy," as reported, envisages the possibility, though not the probability, of protracted (say two to six months) central, et al., war. To be able to wage such a war the United States needs to be able to ensure the physical survival and endurance of (a) a substantial fraction of the strategic forces; (b) the National Command Authority (NCA); and (c) the C³I essential for real-time (or near real-time) targeting decisions. At the present time none of (a) through (c) are even close to reality. The reason is because the American strategic force posture has been designed, essentially, for a spasm war.¹⁹

PD 59 and the debate that its (planned) leak, predictably, has catalyzed, is but the latest in a long series of public debates over nuclear deterrent policies that were very far removed from being policy, in terms of planned capabilities, at the time that they were announced. On February 18, 1970, for example, President Richard Nixon (i.e., Henry Kissinger) wrote in his first "state of the world" message,

Should a President in the event of a nuclear attack be left with the single option of ordering the mass destruction of enemy civilians, in the face of the certainty that it would be followed by the mass slaughter of Americans?²⁰

Aside from the facts that even in 1970 a President did have a range (though admittedly a small range) of pre-planned SIOP-level strike options, and that special-purpose strike options could always be designed rapidly,

President Nixon's call for greater flexibility in targeting strategy was not given planning effect until SIOP 5 was approved in December 1975--and effected in 1976. In addition, Robert McNamara, in 1962, had called for a considerable measure of flexibility in American targeting. At Ann Arbor, in June 1962, he said that

The U.S. has come to the conclusion that to the extent feasible basic military strategy in a possible general war should be approached in much the same way that more conventional military operations have been regarded in the past. That is to say, principal military objectives, in the event of a nuclear war stemming from a major attack on the Alliance, should be the destruction of the enemy's military forces, not of his civilian population...²¹

As Henry Rowen has explained, although McNamara did succeed in revising the "Optimum Mix" targeting scheme which he inherited--which did not provide for discrete strikes only against military targets, he presided over a targeting community which assigned first priority to placing at risk Soviet urban/industrial assets.²² This is not to say that the United States, in the 1960s, would have struck first at Soviet cities--only that the threat to Soviet cities was seen as being the most important, indeed "the ultimate," threat.²³ Much of the debate over a counterforce strategy that surfaced in 1962-63, in response to McNamara's publicly declared position,²⁴ rapidly lost its relevance as the Soviet Union increased, hardened, and dispersed its strategic nuclear assets. After 1966 the United States had rapidly deteriorating prospects of effecting major counterforce success, even though the lion's share of the strategic force allocation was directed to counter-military tasks.

Many commentators in the late 1960s mistook McNamara's declaratory shift in favor of urban/industrial assured destruction for a shift in

targeting strategy. In practice, there were no major changes in SIOP design from the early 1960s until the mid-1970s--what did change was the ability of the strategic forces to effect the forcible disarmament of the prospective enemy (i.e., the Soviet military target structure changed in a cumulatively dramatic fashion--unmatched by advances in American counterforce prowess). Although, as observed above, it is correct to say that many commentators simply assumed McNamara's doctrinal shift from damage limitation to assured destruction to be reflected in SIOP design, which it was not, they were correct in assuming that the Administration of the day, accurately, saw nuclear threat, and even nuclear war, very largely in terms of urban/industrial destruction. Henry Rowen has sought to defend McNamara by arguing that

[t]he primary purpose of the Assured Destruction capabilities doctrine was to provide a metric for deciding how much force was enough: it provided a basis for denying service and Congressional claims for more money for strategic forces. It also served the purpose of dramatizing for the Congress and the public the awful consequences of large-scale nuclear war and its inappropriateness as an instrument of policy. (However, it was never proposed by McNamara or his staff that nuclear weapons actually be used in this way.) (Emphasis in the original.)²⁵

The worth of these excuses admitted, the facts remain that McNamara: chose not to fight the Joint Chiefs of Staff on SIOP design--he did not press for changes which stressed flexibility and selectivity; he accepted the increasing invulnerability of Soviet strategic forces as a desirable fact of life--he did not press research and development programs intended to offset at least some of the survivability features of new Soviet programs; and finally, he blessed the evolving technological trend with the

concept of mutual assured destruction--which was really the idea of an apolitical bookkeeper or engineer, not of a strategist.²⁶

Robert McNamara, considered overall, as the strongest of all Secretaries of Defense to date (though James Forrestall, the first Secretary, might have been just as strong had he enjoyed the backing of a well-manned office, and had the domestic political context been very different),²⁷ appears, in judicious retrospect, to have had an enduring, very unfortunate, impact upon American nuclear-weapon policy. McNamara had a powerful mind, had undoubted leadership qualities, was hard-working...and so forth. Unfortunately, he had a powerful bookkeeper's, managerial, mind--he did not have the mind of a strategist.²⁸ On the evidence available, which includes his policies (declarations and programs) in the strategic-nuclear area, and the American conduct of the most crucial years of the Vietnam War, McNamara simply did not understand that a defense establishment has to be ready to fight wars; that if wars are not won they tend to be lost; and that general expectations of military success are beneficial for deterrence. This, perhaps, is becoming unduly personalized. But, the fact remains that Robert McNamara: set a tone of defense management, rather than strategic leadership;²⁹ through his strengthening of the Secretary's Office virtually required the services to follow analytical suit and confuse systems analysis with strategy;³⁰ presided, apparently contentedly, over the evolution of the central nuclear balance from a condition of very healthy clear American superiority to near parity; and when tested as a strategist in a real war (i.e., in Vietnam), failed lamentably.³¹

Although it is true to claim that Robert McNamara played a critically important role in shifting American nuclear-weapon policy from a sensible operational focus upon "winning," towards the support of highly tendentious theories of strategic stability, it cannot be denied that his contribution to the impoverishment of strategic thought and debate has been matched fully by an increasingly management-minded Joint Chiefs of Staff.³² This author has felt a little uncomfortable in criticizing Robert McNamara, when--really--that person merely represented a strategic culture, albeit in an unhealthily faithful way. If Americans feel moved to criticize Robert McNamara, they should realize that they are criticizing themselves. McNamara was an outstandingly worthy, and competent, example of the American way in peacetime defense thinking.

The American Theory of Deterrence

Although American strategic forces were targeted, throughout the 1960s, overwhelmingly against Soviet military targets, the essence of official United States' deterrence thinking was that strategic stability (and peace--insofar as peace was believed to be forwarded by strategic stability) flowed from a situation where neither superpower could protect its essential domestic assets. By implication, this meant that neither superpower should be able to threaten the pre-launch or penetration-survivability of a major fraction of the strategic forces of the other. Almost needless to say, this was (and remains) a theory of stalemate, or of paralysis in American statecraft.³³

For reason of historical accident, the United States happened to enjoy the underappreciated (then and now) benefits of clear strategic

nuclear superiority from 1945 until the late 1960s. By superiority this author is not referring to some astrategic bookkeeper's metric of relative force levels; instead he is referring to the certainty, or near certainty, that had the United States waged war against the Soviet Union in the period in question, it would have won in a quite unmitakeable manner (and in a manner whereby the American survivors would not have envied the dead).³⁴ Unfortunately, the kind of diplomatic leverage that should have flowed as a consequence of strategic superiority was diluted by the early American attraction to the idea of mutual deterrence. American policy-makers, even in the Eisenhower years, did not think in operational terms about strategic nuclear weapons.³⁵ It is probably no exaggeration to assert that the U.S. Air Force's Strategic Air Command (SAC) could have won a World War III at any time from the early 1950s until the mid-1960s, at very little cost in nuclear damage to American society. Because of their very cumbersome and time-consuming alert status--enhancement procedures, and their very poor communications security, Soviet strategic forces in the 1950s would have been a relatively easy target for SAC. This fact was well-known among defense professionals in the 1950s, yet, somehow, it never percolated to opinion-leaders and, thence, to the general public.

In terms of the "objective facts" of the strategic nuclear-weapon balance (the most important element in "the correlation of forces"), the United States should have enjoyed virtually a free hand in the 1950s. The critics of "rollback" in the 1952 elections were wrong, as were the critics of John Foster Dulles' carefully hedged theory of "a capacity for massive retaliation" in January 1954.³⁶ In addition, there was no

obvious military reason why the United States and NATO-Europe could not have embraced Imre Nagy's Hungary in the Fall of 1956 and dared the U.S.S.R. to do its worst. It is true that the Soviet political stake in Hungary was far greater than was that of NATO, but the strategic balance in 1956 could have permitted the West to begin to undo some of the damage in which it had acquiesced pusillanimously in 1945-46.³⁷ Because of its absence of war aims, worthy of the name, the United States won the war and proceeded with indecent expedition to lose the peace. Stalin's gains in East-Central Europe in 1944-48 far exceeded his prudent prior expectations.

American, and NATO-European, strategic culture simply could not accommodate the idea of using nuclear threats for forward political purposes--for the very congruent, if unheroic reason, that Western political cultures did not harbor any forward political ambitions (if only for contemporarily misassessed strategic prudential reasons).³⁸ As should be obvious by now, I believe that the Soviet imperium in Eastern Europe both could, and probably should have been "rolled back" during the period of clear American strategic nuclear superiority.

There have been fashions in the preferred popular details of American deterrence theory, but notwithstanding shifts of emphasis--a leitmotiv skeptical of operational utility has persisted. The non-, indeed almost anti-, operational theme was set very early in the nuclear age. Writing in 1946, Bernard Brodie offered the thoughts that

The first and most vital steps in any American security program for the age of atomic weapons is to take measures to guarantee to ourselves in case of attack the possibility of retaliation in kind. The writer in making that statement is not for the moment concerned with who will win the next war in which atomic bombs are used. Thus far, the chief purpose of our military

establishment has been to win wars. From now on, its chief purpose must be to avert them. It can have almost no other useful purpose.³⁹ (Emphasis added.)

For reasons that are understandable in American cultural terms, and are indeed praiseworthy by reference to humane values, American politicians, American civilian defense officials, and--increasingly--even American military professionals, have accepted the view that nuclear weapons are not usable: that they are different from other kinds of weapons. As argued already in this study, Soviet defense professionals, civilian and military, have also accepted the different quality of nuclear weapons, indeed they have endorsed the idea that such weapons, together with new means of delivery and new technologies of communication, computation, and control, have produced a "revolution in military affairs." However, this revolution is not the revolution signaled by Brodie in his 1946 judgment quoted above.

The Soviet Union recognizes the potentially decisive role of nuclear-missile weapons, albeit in the context of a "combined-arms doctrine."⁴⁰ Soviet spokesmen, civilian and military, have rejected "the fatal inevitability of war," but they have not denied the possibility of war, nor--more to the point--have they endorsed the idea that a nuclear war could not be won. Although it can be argued that the Soviet commitment to the idea of victory in nuclear war is mandated by ideological necessity and is useful for the sustaining of morale (just as the Soviet general public, and particularly the Soviet conscript soldiery, were not subjected to very much agitation and propaganda in the 1970s in favor of East-West detente--it may reduce vigilance), there is good reason to believe that

Soviet leaders view the prospect of nuclear war as an experience to be survived and as a contest that it is their duty to try to win.⁴¹

Brodie's statement is not totally alien in Soviet perspective. Soviet doctrine probably could accommodate Brodie's thought that the principal purpose of a military establishment is to avert war, though it would not accept the emphasis in the succeeding sentence: "It can have almost no other useful purpose." Latent military force, as a deterrent, can be "employed," ostensibly defensively, really for offensive purposes.⁴² Strategic nuclear weapons, as one component in the arsenal of weapons, military and non-military, available to support a country's statecraft, may be thought of as a "counterdeterrent."⁴³

In the mid-1950s, the burgeoning debate over nuclear strategy, and strategy in the nuclear age, produced (again) the idea that if there were "stability" at the level of the central strategic nuclear balance, then there could, logically, be instability at lower levels of possible conflict.⁴⁴ This idea was not new--an early variant of it may be found in NSC-68, the key State-Defense planning document of Spring 1950, which, inter alia, foresaw the need for general-purpose force rearmament once the Soviet Union succeeded in cancelling out the temporary American atomic advantage.⁴⁵

Stability in the central balance, meaning, in this context (reflecting the intellectual history of the 1950s), low or non-existent incentives to initiate central nuclear war, should mean a more permissive environment for local conflict. Trigger-fingers on strategic forces should not be itchy if there is no military advantage to be gained from escalation to

central war. Although Western theorists labored ingeniously in the 1950s to find military-strategic compensation for the emergence of a condition of mutual strategic deterrence, it seems, in retrospect, that they misassessed the nature of the deterrent threat as perceived in Moscow. Mutual deterrence was a political reality after 1954 because President Eisenhower and other American opinion leaders said that it was. The military reality of the 1950s and beyond, as noted already, was that the Soviet Union would have been defeated in war. Some contemporary RAND studies showed, or purported to show, how first-generation Soviet ICBMs, with follow-on attacks by Long Range Aviation, could have disarmed SAC. Those studies make frightening reading, even today.⁴⁶ However, operational realities on both sides, particularly pertaining to timely strategic intelligence, were such that to lose a war, SAC would have had to try very hard indeed.⁴⁷

What is important is to realize that in the period 1955-57, when the new American civilian defense intellectual establishment first flowered, having been catalyzed into being and into action by the evolution of the RAND Corporation⁴⁸ and by the trend in public policy events,⁴⁹ everyone--it seems--understood that the strategic stability of mutual deterrence posed major problems for the security of geographically forward-located friends and allies. A great debate over limited war ensued⁵⁰--to be terminated effectively in 1958 as a consequence of intellectual exhaustion and new doubts about the stability of the central balance (occasioned by speculation over the possible strategic meaning of ballistic missiles).⁵¹

Out of the lively strategic debates of the late 1950s and early 1960s, came the concept of escalation--controlled or uncontrolled.⁵² Even if

one does not believe that nuclear war can be won, in any meaningful sense, and even if one has grave difficulty believing that credible direct nuclear threats can be issued, one might perhaps be able to threaten to behave in so dangerous a fashion that the obvious risks of an intended escalation explosion or eruption would promote sober policy reassessment on the other side. The dangers of accidental war almost certainly have been much exaggerated by some commentators over the years, but an American strategic force posture in a very high alert status, say Defense Condition 2, or NATO in a state of General Alert, would be more war-prone than is the case with respect of normal peacetime operations.⁵³ As Thomas Schelling expressed it in a theoretically noteworthy essay written in the late 1950s, one may pose a "threat that leaves something to chance."⁵⁴

This theme still pervades American thinking about nuclear-weapon policy, official and unofficial. In trying to explain PD 59 before a Congressional committee, then Secretary of State Edmund Muskie asserted that the "new strategy" is not a war-fighting strategy and that the Carter Administration did not believe that a central nuclear war could be won.⁵⁵ In short, the Secretary affirmed the "rationality of irrationality" thesis, or paradox. If nuclear war would be a mutual holocaust, a non-survivable event, how could one support foreign-policy interests by the threat of its invocation?⁵⁶ Various answers have been provided.

First, it may be argued that it is rational for the United States to threaten to behave irrationally (i.e., to invoke societal suicide or mutual holocaust), if such a threat of irrational behavior is not totally incredible in some circumstances. Second, even if, with Secretary Muskie,

one does not believe that nuclear war can be limited, one may yet believe that by posing particularly fearsome threats to those assets valued most highly by the Soviet Union adequate compensation may be provided for the self-deterrent logic implicit in one's view of the probable dynamism of nuclear war. On this argument, a threat to the survival of the Soviet state is so fearsome a prospect that the credibility of its execution probably need only be very modest indeed. One may argue that the credibility of American execution of such a threat lies in the "fog of crisis," or--should the conflict proceed that far--in the "fog of war" itself. As Clausewitz affirmed, there is a degree of "friction" in war,⁵⁷ and "[i]ts [war's] grammar, indeed, may be its own,"⁵⁸ such that the actual course of combat may surprise policy makers on both sides. In other words, Soviet General Staff officers, if they reasoned après Paul Nitze in his article "Deterring Our Deterrent," may--logically--anticipate a paralysis of nuclear policy will in Washington for reasons of self-deterrence, but--as students of the history of war--they may well believe that men in moments of extreme stress do not always do, or refrain from doing, what strategic logic commands. Moreover, the military dynamics of thermonuclear war may, in practice, escape careful central political supervision. Deterrence may succeed as a consequence of the uncertainty of victory, as well as of the certainty of defeat.

Third, and finally, one may seek to argue that through a (reciprocated) flexibility and selectivity in nuclear execution, intrawar deterrence may function in a central war so as to interdict the slide to mutual holocaust.⁵⁹ Even if one affirms a belief in ultimate mutual holocaust, one may--without

self-contradiction--also affirm a belief in a putative process of combat escalation, with thresholds (some of which may be discovered in the event). Indeed, on this logic, it would be reasonable to argue that it is the clear, and increasingly present, perceived danger of the ultimate threat of holocaust that would provide the major incentive for both sides to find, in real-time, some prominent solution for their common need to settle upon a basis for prompt war termination.⁶⁰

Since the mid-1960s, the United States' defense community has not merely acknowledged the prospect of mutual holocaust as a (debatable) technological fact of life,⁶¹ it has positively embraced such an eventuality as constituting a desirable reciprocated threat.⁶² From the early 1960s to the present day the United States, intermittently and with various degrees of high-level policy persistence, has sought to diversify the range of threats posed in its SIOP to the Soviet Union, but at the end of the threat corridor lies, and has always lain, the specter of society-wide destruction. Even as recently as January 1980, when he was fully conversant with the details of the strategic nuclear targeting review (the "Sloss Report"), Harold Brown went on very public record as follows:

...we need, first of all, a survivable and enduring retaliatory capability to devastate the industry and cities of the Soviet Union.⁶³

Dr. Brown proceeded to stress the limited policy relevance of such a threat, but as the words quoted make clear, he did see a massive counter-value threat as being the "bottom line" of the range of American strategic threats. Indeed, Dr. Brown asserted that

What has come to be known as assured destruction is the bedrock of nuclear deterrence, and we will retain such a capacity in the future.⁶⁴

What has happened over the past decade is that the United States' defense community has come more than half-way, particularly at the rhetorical, declaratory level of policy, towards adopting the logic of a war-fighting strategy, but--for good or ill--major elements of an alternative stream of logic persist. It is possible that strategists with the views on deterrence theory held, for example, by this author, may have discerned more warfighting logic in recent official prose than in fact was present in the minds of the official authors. Although official deterrent reasoning has made an honest woman of countermilitary, and even hard-target counterforce, targeting, and although it is officially fashionable today to talk of victory-, or success-, denial as comprising the heart of the American deterrent requirement, the element of deterrence through the threat of punishment endures.⁶⁵ Indeed, it is just possible that the advertised greater emphasis that is to be placed upon posing threats to Soviet political and military assets⁶⁶ are thought of, really, as constituting threats to punish the Soviet state.

Much of the recently revived academic theorizing about deterrence has failed, signally, to understand the variegated character of the problem.⁶⁷ Although the design of an effective deterrence policy is a quest for persuasive negative sanctions, those sanctions do not have to, and probably should not, be viewed in terms of punishment. In attacking what he has termed the "managerial models of conflict and deterrence elaborated in the United States," John Erickson pointed to "the sort of semantic

nonsense which hid 'war' behind a phrase like 'violent bargaining.'"⁶⁸

Official American prose of recent years has recognized that for deterrence to succeed enemies must be convinced that

...they would be frustrated in their effort to achieve their objective or suffer so much damage that they would gain nothing by their action.⁶⁹ (Emphasis added.)

The second alternative reflects a continuing confusion. American officials and many extra-official theorists, not without some ambivalence, continue to view the probable dynamics of nuclear war as a very painful exercise in "violent bargaining"--really as a psychological process wherein the side most willing, or apparently most willing, to bear pain should win.⁷⁰ This is a reasonable vision of conflict save only, alas, that it is noticeably at odds with what the available evidence suggests to be the dominant Soviet view of nuclear conflict. It is not obvious that the Soviet Union can be, or ever has been, deterred by the prospect, even the very credible prospect, of suffering pain. Where the anticipation of pain may be effective as a deterrent almost certainly has been, and is, when pain and military and political effectiveness were believed to be synonymous. Let it be noted, this is not to argue that Soviet leaders are indifferent to the prospect of societal punishment--many aspects of their civil defense program attest to a (substantially instrumental) concern for the fate of their general public.⁷¹ (However, that concern is heavily qualified--as should be expected of a state that remains essentially patrimonial.)⁷²

Official deterrence theory, as declared and as reflected in actions and capabilities, has been roundly criticized by scholars for such failings

as overemphasizing negative, at the expense of positive, sanctions;⁷³ of assuming an undue potency to the concept of rational decision-making;⁷⁴ of assuming an unambiguous scope to the policy relevance of strategic deterrence; and of assuming too often that the adversary comprises a unitary actor with fixed values. These and similar charges have permeated the literature for more than ten years. The recent scholarly literature on deterrence, notwithstanding some of its ingenuity and inherent interest, has been disappointing. While many deficiencies in official thought and practice have been exposed, the most important questions have tended to escape close scholarly attention. However, it is encouraging to see Robert Jervis addressing the subject of "ethnocentrism and status quo biases," albeit very briefly.⁷⁵

With reference to the needs of American policy-makers, for the improvement of the American theory of deterrence with a view to its incorporation in policy, five questions stand out as being in need of particularly urgent attention. First, what do Soviet leaders find deterring? Second, should deterrence "fail," what employment policy would it be in the American interest actually to execute? Third, when is deterrence policy relevant? Fourth, how should nuclear-weapon employment policy enhance deterrence? Fifth, what is the relationship between the American ability (or perceived ability) to limit damage at home and the credibility and efficacy of deterrence threats?

It should never be forgotten that the credibility and the efficacy of a threat may not, indeed need not, be synonymous. The Soviet Politburo may believe an American President who issues a threat, but it may judge

that threat to be unsufficiently fearsome. Credibility is important but it is not all-important.

Revising the Theory

Before turning to the provision of detailed answers to the five questions posed above, several points of logical and factual reference need to be registered. First, I do not believe that the United States Government should be satisfied with its nuclear-weapon policy unless that policy is guided by, and reflects, a theory of victory.⁷⁶ In other words, any policy is unsatisfactory if it envisages as the final, or "ultimate," threat, the imposition of massive urban/industrial destruction upon the Soviet Union, or the destruction of the major political assets of the Soviet state--in a context where a no-less destructive Soviet retaliatory response cannot physically be thwarted. In terms of deterrence logic, the recent public emphasis placed by serious American officials upon counter-military and counter-political control targeting is as flawed as were its declaratory predecessors. It, and they, betray the absence of strategic thinking and the absence of a campaign analysis of nuclear conflict. This is not to criticize the content of the new emphases in targeting, though those emphases may fairly be criticized,⁷⁷ it is to say, simply, that the United States cannot prudently enter a process of competitive escalation if it anticipates holocaust as the final rung of the ladder.

Second, and in partial explanation of the reasoning behind the first point, official strategic thinking in the United States would appear to have been, and to continue to be, remarkably casual over the vital question of which side will be the deterrer and which the deterree. I am

framing my argument in frank recognition of the fact that I cannot predict with any assurance the answer to that question. Official American indifference to damage limitation as a major policy objective reflects, indeed logically has to reflect, one of two things. Either it is assumed that the United States will be the deterrer at critical times, or it is calculated (or just assumed--to be less generous) that a noteworthy measure of damage limitation is not technically attainable. Damage limitation, to the extent to which it is anticipated officially, is deemed to be a result only of deliberate targeting restraint-- the consequence of an intra-war deterrence process that is disciplined by reciprocated fears of punishment of various kinds.

If, as seems most probable, given the continuing deficiencies in Western conventional and theater-nuclear stopping power around the periphery of Eurasia, it is the United States which would feel compelled to initiate resort to the employment of central systems, the burden of escalation, logically, must fall on American shoulders. If, as this study argues, the United States needs to be able to enjoy the benefits of escalation dominance,⁷⁸ it is incumbent upon the United States to be able to deter, thwart or absorb, the Soviet response that escalatory initiatives may license. An undefended United States can promise to effect revenge in the event of Soviet strikes of different kinds, but it is far more difficult to threaten, credibly, to impose great damage on the Soviet state by way of an initiative (thereby inviting a Soviet response).

The logic chain developed immediately above is fatal (theoretically) to extant official American policy reasoning, but it does contain also

a major possible flaw which is destructive vis à vis virtually all schools of Western intra-war deterrence theory. To be specific, Western theorists of all shades of doctrinal persuasion appear to have been captured by the metaphor of the escalation ladder.⁷⁹ In practice, it is entirely possible that the course of a central war will not reflect a recognizable sequence of escalation and counter-escalation. In short, Western aspirations for the functioning of an intra-war deterrence mechanism may be dashed by an unanticipated Soviet style in strategic warfare, and/or by Clausewitz' "grammar of war" short-circuiting the schemes of theorists.⁸⁰ If a Soviet Politburo approaches a Soviet-American central war as a war and not as a violent bargaining game, then Western theories of controlled escalation and intra-war deterrence are most unlikely to be applicable.

Third, and finally, it is worth recalling that deterrence was the first, and most important, of the three major pillars of contemporary Western strategic theory--the other two were limited war and arms control theory.⁸¹ Limited war theory, insofar as it was reflected in American conduct in Vietnam, we know now to have been fatally flawed in conception (as well as in execution).⁸² Arms control theory we know, courtesy--in particular--of ten years of rather intensive SALT experience, to have been very substantially misconceived.⁸³ The only element in the strategic theory "triad" yet to have avoided a rigorous real-world field test is deterrence theory. No matter how grave one's reservations over United States' strategic policy, one cannot point to unambiguous evidence proving that the theory is incorrect. To date, one cannot point to strategic threats that have failed to deter, any more than one cannot point to a

strategic exchange that did not proceed as theory predicted. There is a major problem of evidence. Nonetheless, when field-tested, the American (and indeed, more generally, Western) strategic theory, with reference to its principal parameters, that was invented and refined in the "Golden Age" of 1955-65 has been proved to have been unable to withstand the traffic of events. Pertinent events have included real-world Soviet diplomatic démarches and arms programs; and real-world North Vietnamese political and military style. On the basis of the historical record one should at least be alert to the possibility that American doctrinal preferences in the region of nuclear deterrence similarly might fail if ever applied in the heat, and fog, of genuinely acute crisis.

It tends to be the case that when reliable data on the putative adversary is missing, officials (and extra-official theorists) resort to the plugging in of American data. We do not know what will deter Soviet leaders, but we do know what we find deterring: ergo, the United States designs a nuclear deterrent posture comfortably adequate to deter an American-style adversary. United States' strategic nuclear deterrent issues are framed and judged by Americans--who cannot help but frame and judge in American terms. We are all prisoners of our political-strategic culture.⁸⁴

In revising its nuclear deterrence theory, the United States has to be vigilant in self-criticism in assessing the answers provided to the most vital question, "what do Soviet leaders find deterring?" American officials and theorists need constantly to be mindful of the facts that strategic nuclear weapons comprise only one, albeit the single most

important, element in "the correlation of forces" as appraised in Moscow, and that the full force of nuclear deterrent effect is likely to be needed, diplomatically, only once in thirty, forty, or fifty years. As my colleague, Herman Kahn, likes to argue, our problems of nuclear weapon policy design are analogous to the problems of planning to survive a major earthquake. We know that a major earthquake is very likely, or even certain, once in, say, forty or fifty years, but we do not know when. This means that we have to be prepared, constantly, for an event which is exceedingly unlikely on a day-to-day basis.⁸⁵ However, if the United States cannot cope with that once-in-fifty-years event, policy planning has been inadequate. Nuclear deterrence policy, day-by-day, is close to irrelevant to American foreign policy. The problem is that there is no way of predicting when it might suddenly become the most relevant aspect of official American activity.

This chapter, and indeed this study taken as a whole, does not assume that nuclear deterrence design, if properly conceived, will always work. Indeed, it is only prudent to consider the possibility there may occur a political context for which there is no "proper conception" of nuclear deterrence.⁸⁶ A major reason why this study is concerned to explore the overall design and detail of American strategic defense preparation, is because I suspect that American policies of deterrence, no matter how cleverly and intelligently designed, might fail on the night--that is, on the one night in forty or fifty years when they were desperately needed. In principle, there should be a scale of plausible threats which would

deter even the most desperate and determined Soviet leaders from seeking military solutions to political problems. But, in practice, for reasons of cultural blindness, war-planning rigidity, the "fog of crisis," or plain incompetence, a situation could arise wherein a Soviet leadership group effectively would be beyond deterrent influence by an American Government.

Careful study of Soviet phenomena suggests very strongly that the most deterring prospect, in Soviet eyes, is the anticipation of military defeat. As former Secretary of Defense Harold Brown appears to have suggested, deterrence and defense are really identical.⁸⁷ The Soviets fear military defeat because such an outcome has to threaten their ability to sustain political control at home.⁸⁸ Of very recent years, it has become fashionable to argue that the ultimate threat to Soviet leaders is the threat to damage or destroy the ability of the centralized political apparatus in Moscow to control the country.⁸⁹ Intellectually, the threat to Soviet political control assets is certainly powerful. But, a basic question remains unanswered: Is a threat to the Soviet political control structure seen as a possible (early) warfighting option, intended to paralyze, or at least to degrade the quality of performance of, the Soviet war machine; or, is such a threat seen as the ultimate penalty that could be imposed by a United States that had exhausted all lesser options: the functional equivalent of the 1960s threat to destroy Soviet cities?

Studies conducted at Hudson Institute over the past few years suggest strongly that American targeteers, in support of nuclear deterrence policy,

should seek to target what may be termed "the essential assets of the Soviet state," rather than a somewhat simple-minded idea of what constitutes major political-control, or political-leadership, aim points. It seems likely that, no matter how hard the United States tries, the Soviet central political (and military) control structure is unlikely to be totally vulnerable to American offensive attention. Moreover, even if central political control can be isolated (for awhile), or severely degraded, its eventual fate must rest upon the course of military operations. It follows that the essence of an intelligent American nuclear deterrent policy should comprise a not-incredible threat to deny victory to Soviet arms. The ultimate threat that can be posed to Soviet leaders is not the massive punishment of Soviet society, it is the defeat of Soviet arms and the political implications of that eventuality. Russian imperial history, which appears to have major elements of continuity with the contemporary scene, suggests that military defeat in foreign wars translates into political defeat at home.⁹⁰

To summarize, the most deterring prospect for Soviet leaders is the thought that political control at home might be attenuated or destroyed. That control can and should be targeted directly in the United States' SIOP insofar as this proves to be feasible, but, plausibly, control would also be damaged or destroyed were the coercive authority of Moscow to be challenged persuasively. The defeat of Soviet arms at all levels would transmit potentially fatal ripples throughout the Soviet Empire. An ability to defeat Soviet military power, in American perspective, has the joint virtues of both blunting/thwarting the Soviet ability to hurt the West,

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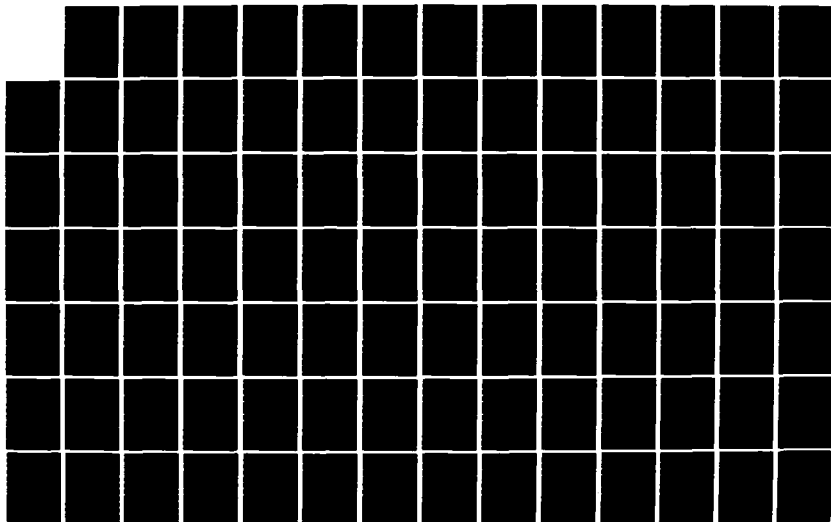
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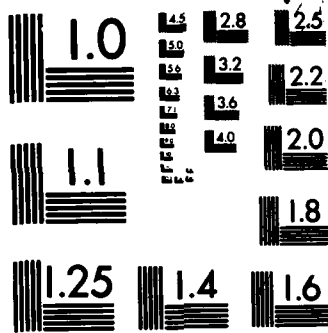
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and of threatening to emasculate the principal asset supportive of the Soviet regime.

This author is very concerned lest some American officials, newly persuaded that the Soviet political control structure is "the target of last resort," neglect to recognize that a United States which could not decide the military conflict on favorable terms, could not do permanent damage to the Soviet state. I am, and remain, an advocate of counter-control (or political-leadership, to have resort to the long-preferred official jargon) targeting, but I would warn that the United States:

- may not be able to find enough of the vital targets.
- may not know who is dispersed where, and with what residual responsibilities.
- does not understand very well how the U.S.S.R. would likely function in time of war--meaning that it is very difficult to calculate just how much political-control damage would be inflicted by particular strikes.⁹¹
- has well short of perfect information on the quantity and quality of Soviet internal communications, and on the vulnerabilities of those communications.
- by executing a truly major counter-control strike probably would leave the surviving Soviet government believing that it had little or nothing left to lose. In short, actual execution of an "ultimate threat" would free Soviet hands from any consideration of intra-war deterrent effect.

-- might want to negotiate war-termination with a Soviet government--and that could be exceedingly difficult if the United States has just sent 1,000 or more nuclear warheads in search of the Soviet political control structure.

It is difficult to deny the logic in the position which holds that should Soviet military power be defeated, or even just stalemated, the entire Soviet political control structure might come unravelled. To a large, though uncertain, degree, Soviet authority rests upon the respect felt by subject nationalities for Soviet power. If Soviet military power is seen to be defeated, the awe in which Moscow is held must diminish.

Next, following directly from the above discussion of the deterrent threats most likely to induce fear in Soviet official minds, United States' nuclear-weapon employment policy should be directed in the first instance to the defeat of Soviet military power-projection and strategic nuclear forces. Second, United States' nuclear-weapon employment policy should be directed both to the destruction of the (over-) centralized apparatus of the Soviet state, and--in the course of a central war which may be protracted (up to six months, perhaps)--to the destruction of the entire Soviet state-system at all levels. This is a case where the best is likely to be the enemy of the good enough. The United States cannot threaten, plausibly, to hit every target essential to the functioning of the Soviet state. But, the United States can threaten, plausibly, to do very great damage to the command network that is the Soviet state. It should not be forgotten that just as American officials cannot be certain that fatal

damage would be inflicted on the central Soviet control apparat, so Soviet officials cannot be certain that fatal damage would not be inflicted. At the very least we can assert, with high confidence, that this is the kind of threat which Soviet officials would be most unlikely to take lightly.⁹²

Third, when is deterrence policy relevant? In eyeball-to-eyeball war-threshold terms, probably only once in thirty, forty, or fifty years. But, as best may be judged, the Soviet Union does not see its strategic posture as an instrument for the direct coercion of the United States (and others). Instead, the Soviets have invested in a strategic nuclear posture intended: (a) to deter (or, more accurately, counter-deter) or negate the relevance of American strategic nuclear power in local crises around the Rimlands of Eurasia; and (b) to defend the Soviet homeland, "the citadel of socialism," as competently as possible, should central war occur. Given the adverse trends in all elements of the East-West military balance, it is quite evident that the mainstream of post-1965 United States' deterrent reasoning has, simply, been imprudent. Because of the enduring, even planned, insufficiency in Western military provision for Eurasian theater defense, United States' strategic forces cannot sensibly be designed solely to deter a Soviet assault against the American homeland.⁹³ The United States needs a strategic force posture capable of seizing the initiative in the event of some galloping theater disaster in Eurasia, and imposing an enduring condition of escalation dominance in central war.

Largely for cultural reasons, the United States' defense community has tended to see overwhelming value in a strategic nuclear posture clearly compatible with a somewhat narrow and American-centric (and distinctly un-Soviet) interpretation of stability⁹⁴--criteria for strategic-force adequacy have tended to relate to putative day-to-day needs, and to presumed crisis--time needs that reflect, unintelligently, the lessons learned in the nuclear age thus far. To date, the quality of American strategic nuclear deterrence policy probably has not been tested. The fact that there has been no general war in Europe, and no central nuclear war, does not necessarily attest to the massive stability of the strategic balance;⁹⁵ instead it probably attests to the relatively low level of political incentive to take action felt by Soviet leaders. In short, our deterrence policy has yet to be tested.

A close reading of Soviet history suggests that American policymakers should consider the strong probability that the Soviet Union is fairly easy to deter up to a certain point, beyond which she may be almost impossible to deter. In other words, there may well not be a broad region wherein deterrence policy, in varying intensity, can function.

Because of their antipathy to risk-taking, really to anything that might be characterized as adventurism, Soviet leaders probably do not need deterring in the terms most familiar in Western strategic discourse. The nuclear deterrence equation may well be relevant only once in thirty or forty years when the Soviet military propose to solve a major and dire political problem in a military way. In that event the first question, in Soviet minds, will be, "can the West (the United States) deny us

victory?" The second question will be, "will the United States seek to deny us victory, given the strategic nuclear deterrence relationship?"

Finally, embracing questions four and five specified at the end of the previous section of this chapter, "how should nuclear-weapon employment policy enhance deterrence?"--and "what is the relationship between the U.S. ability to limit damage at home and the credibility and efficacy of deterrent threat?" There is much to recommend the view that deterrent effect flows from Soviet perceptions of United States' acquisition and declaratory policies, rather than from weapon employment policy. Assuming proper security, the Soviet defense establishment has to speculate on the real details of U.S. nuclear-weapon employment policy. However, that speculation can be influenced very substantially by the clues offered in the American defense debates that they monitor, and in the strategic logic of particular weapons and C³I assets.

The United States should be able to enhance healthy deterrent effect in Soviet minds by talking about the kinds of nuclear-weapon employment options believed to be most worrisome to Soviet officials--given the known, unique strengths and vulnerabilities of the Soviet system. Essentially, as outlined already, American deterrent policy should lay emphasis upon the threat posed to the likely efficacy of Soviet military power, at all levels, and to the ability of the centralized Soviet political command structure (a) to control its instruments of domestic and external coercion; (b) to survive, physically; and (c) to be able to organize postwar recovery. This formulation recognizes that the first duty of the armed forces of

the United States and of NATO is to deny victory to Soviet arms (i.e., it is to defend Western society). If the Soviet Union can win a war militarily, it will very likely be able to pick up the somewhat radioactive pieces at home. Moreover, Americans should be more interested in avoiding defeat than they would be in defeating the U.S.S.R.--let alone in posing extremely severe problems of postwar recovery for the enemy.⁹⁶ However, victory denial, as a goal--when examined rigorously--translates with little struggle into a theory of victory. Victory denial, rests upon the idea that the Soviet state and/or society can be so punished that Soviet policy goals either cannot be achieved, or can be achieved only at prohibitive (and deterring) cost. In practice, I believe that to deny the Soviet Union victory, the United States would have to defeat Soviet arms--which, given the very probable political disintegration that this would promote at home, could, and should, mean victory for the West.

Whether victory for the West is attainable, and--more to the point, given the deterrence focus of this chapter--whether the pre- (and perhaps intra) war beneficial deterrent effect of Soviet anticipation of such a conflict outcome is attainable, has to rest critically upon the ability of Western countries to limit damage to their homelands. The most important revision needed in official American thinking on nuclear deterrence is the accommodation of the very obvious point that a country cannot prudently take the initiative if it has every reason to expect an intolerably damaging retaliatory response. Much, and probably most, of the potential deterrent benefit of a generally praiseworthy document such as PD 59 is negated when an administration balances the presentation of militarily

and politically intelligent targeting ideas with statements to the effect that, really, it does not believe that nuclear war can be limited or won. Mainstream official American thinking on damage limitation, PD 59 notwithstanding, seems not to have advanced since Harold Brown offered the following judgment in January 1978:

I am not persuaded that the right way to deal with a major Soviet damage limiting program would be by imitating it. Our efforts would almost certainly be self-defeating, as would theirs. We can make certain that we have enough warheads--including those held in reserve--targeted in such a way that the Soviets could have no expectation of escaping unacceptable damage.⁹⁷

In 1973-75, Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger at least recognized the crucial role of civil defense vis à vis his flexibility of initiative and response theme--no such recognition is au courant in Washington today. There are, of course, major practical questions in need of answers. Can damage be limited in the context of a nuclear campaign waged by an adversary not noted for great sensitivity to the issue of unwanted collateral damage?⁹⁸ What would be the probable cost of purchasing worthwhile domestic damage limitation?--and what is meant by "worthwhile?" Could the Soviet Union offset American damage-limitation endeavors with relative ease? These are serious questions indeed. But, the strategic value, really necessity, of a major ability to limit damage is also serious--and should not be ignored simply because it would be very difficult, and probably very expensive to effect. The defense programmatic issues pertinent to damage limitation are treated in Chapters 8-9. Here, in this chapter, the author confines himself to strategic and political logic.

A defense community which fails to recognize the relevance of damage limitation for the quality of its deterrence policy is a defense community

which is failing to think strategically. Because of the extended-deterrent duties placed upon United States' strategic forces, nuclear-weapon policy, in the last resort, has to be about freedom of action (not, as in the Soviet case, by and large, about "holding the ring square"--checking the strategic nuclear posture of the adversary). If he cannot hold damage to the American homeland down to the level of a survivable catastrophe, an American President could not, responsibly, initiate a process of escalation into the realm of central nuclear war. In other words, the United States, prudently, would have to acquiesce in defeat in the theater.

Unfortunately, this problem cannot be finessed cleverly by an attempt to slice it into many parts. More or less elaborate schemes for targeting flexibility and restraint do not address the point that, at every potential threshold, it would most likely be the United States who would have to contemplate the probable consequences of its next escalatory move. In practice, I have grave doubts about the realism in Western escalation thinking, the idea that a nuclear war might (or should) comprise a series of fairly discrete moves and counter-moves.⁹⁹ Nonetheless, the discussion here has been cast in terms of the familiar framework of Western escalation theory, for the purpose of showing that United States nuclear policy would be unlikely to function as intended--even on its own terms (assuming, unrealistically, a U.S.S.R. willing and able to play the escalation game, Western style).

Without damage limitation we do not have an adequate theory (and policy) of nuclear deterrence, instead we have a theory (and policy) of nuclear self-deterrence.

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1. The history of strategic ideas after 1945 has been traced in: James King, The New Strategy, unpublished ms.; Colin S. Gray, Strategic Studies and Public Policy: The American Experience (Lexington, Ky.: The University Press of Kentucky, 1982, forthcoming); and Michael Mandelbaum, The Nuclear Question: The United States and Nuclear Weapons, 1946-1976 (New York: Cambridge University Press 1979). The Mandelbaum volume reads essentially as a panegyric praising the strategic wisdom of the Kennedy Administration.
2. "Stability" for all its importance as a policy-relevant concept, has attracted remarkably little extensive discussion. See John Steinbruner, "National Security and the Concept of Strategic Stability," The Journal of Conflict Resolution, Vol.XXII, No.3 (September 1978), pp.411-28; and C. Johnston Conover, "Strategic Stability and U.S. Strategy in the Third Postwar Era," in Keith B. Payne, Conover, and Bruce W. Bennett, Nuclear Strategy: Flexibility and Stability, Student Paper No. 82 (Santa Monica, Ca.: California Seminar on Arms Control and Foreign Policy, March 1979), pp.49-60.
3. See Gray, Strategic Studies and Public Policy.
4. I have lectured on defense questions in universities (and war colleges) and have been attentive to the problem of the implementation of doctrine in my work at Hudson Institute. Surprisingly few of the university students who are introduced to the mysteries of contemporary strategic

theory are introduced to the problem of the interface between ideas and policy execution.

5. This thesis, in somewhat exaggerated form, is advanced admirably in Edward N. Luttwak, "A New Arms Race?" Commentary, Vol.70, No.3 (September 1980), pp.27-34.
6. Bernard Brodie, "The Development of Nuclear Strategy," International Security, Vol.7, No.4 (Spring 1978), p.66.
7. For examples, see William Kaufmann, "The Requirements of Deterrence," in Kaufmann, ed., Military Power and National Security, (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1956), Chapter 1; and Glenn Snyder, Deterrence and Defense: Toward a Theory of National Security (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1961).
8. See Anthony Buzzard, "Massive Retaliation and Graduated Deterrence," World Politics, Vol.VIII, No.2 (January 1956), pp.228-37; and Anthony Buzzard et al., On Limiting Atomic War (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs 1956).
9. See Thomas C. Schelling, Controlled Response and Strategic Warfare, Adelphi Paper No.19 (London: ISS, June 1965).
10. See Lynn E. Davis, Limited Nuclear Options: Deterrence and the New American Doctrine, Adelphi Paper No.121 (London: IISS, Winter 1975-76); and Benjamin S. Lambeth, Selective Nuclear Options in American and Soviet Strategic Policy, R-2034-DDRE (Santa Monica, Ca.: RAND, 1976).
11. "The rest" include such ideas as controlled city exchange schemes. See Klaus Knorr and Thornton Read, eds., Limited Strategic War: Essays on Nuclear Strategy, (New York: Praeger, 1962); and Thomas C. Schelling,

Arms and Influence (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1960), Chapter 5.

12. The intelligence communities of East and West constantly monitor the alert status of the forces of the other. So many are the indicators of enhanced military preparation for combat that it should be impossible for either party to achieve surprise. However, many enhanced readiness signals may be covered by exercise activity, while no mobilization posture today can be totally unambiguous. The pre-1914 axiom that "mobilization means war" is not true today, any more than it was a universal, invariable truth then. For some useful historical perspective, see Paul Kennedy, ed., The War Plans of the Great Powers, 1880-1914 (London: Allen and Unwin, 1979). Some Powers could mobilize to bluff.
13. See Henry S. Rowen, "Formulating Strategic Doctrine," in Commission on the Organization of the Government for the Conduct of Foreign Policy, Vol.4, Appendix K, Adequacy of Current Organization: Defense and Arms Control (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, June 1975), pp.219-34.
14. Pp. A1, A6.
15. See my discussion of PD 59 in "Presidential Directive 59: Flawed But Useful," Parameters, Vol. XI, No. 1 (March 1981), pp.29-37.
16. SIOP targeteers on the JSTPS in Omaha can cover most of the target set, but, after 1976-77, they were unable to cover the target set with appropriate weapons. The yield, accuracy and reliability of U.S. strategic weapons are well known within an analytically acceptable range of doubt, while good guesses as to the psi resistance of Soviet

hard and super-hard targets are not difficult to make. The result of such "back of the envelope" calculations are, to a degree, simple-minded, but they do not much mislead the curious.

17. See Desmond Ball, Déja Vu: The Return to Counterforce in the Nixon Administration (Santa Monica, Ca.: California Seminar on Arms Control and Foreign Policy, December 1974). However, this is not to deny that that may be a change in targeting emphasis--which could have profound effects upon the details of force allocation.
18. The overwhelming problem in those years was that the U.S. was devoting more and more weapons in expectation of diminishing results--as Soviet strategic forces were hardened in silos or dispersed to sea in the Yankee-class SSBNs.
19. In military perspective, it is neater, more manageable, to have virtually a single pre-canned war planned which one executes promptly when so ordered. It is profoundly complicating to have to plan to withhold many of one's more competent force elements, to be prepared to effect major re-targeting design in response to superior political orders in the course of a war, and to prepare attacks that are constrained by imposed political considerations.
20. Richard Nixon, U.S. Foreign Policy for the 1970s: A New Strategy for Peace (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, February 1970), p.122.
21. Robert McNamara, "The No-Cities Doctrine," in Henry A. Kissinger, ed., Problems of National Strategy: A Book of Readings (New York: Praeger, 1965), p.136.

22. In Rowen, "Formulating Strategic Doctrine," particularly pp.229-34.
Also see Henry S. Rowen, "The Evolution of Strategic Nuclear Doctrine," in Laurence Martin, ed., Strategic Thought in the Nuclear Age, (Baltimore, Md.: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979), Chapter 5.
23. Similarly, in the 1970s, "first priority" for targeting was the need to cover Soviet economic-recovery assets.
24. For example, see Michael Brower, "Controlled Thermonuclear War," The New Republic, July 30, 1962, pp.9-15; and Schelling, Controlled Response and Strategic Warfare.
25. Rowen, "Formulating Strategic Doctrine," p.227.
26. For a privileged "in-house" explanation of the development of the criteria for assured destruction sufficiency, see Alain Enthoven and K. Wayne Smith, How Much is Enough? Shaping the Defense Program, 1961- 1969 (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), Chapters 5-6.
27. See Arnold A. Rogow, James Forrestal: A Study of Personality, Politics, and Policy (New York: MacMillan, 1963).
28. For a devastating critique, see James M. Roherty, Decisions of Robert S. McNamara: A Study of the Role of the Secretary of Defense (Coral Gables, Fla.: University of Miami Press, 1970), particularly Chapter 3. Also useful is Gregory Palmer, The McNamara Strategy and the Vietnam War: Program Budgeting in the Pentagon, 1960-1968 (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1978).
29. On reflection, it is not obvious that Mr. McNamara had any conception of strategy. More to the point, perhaps, it is not obvious that many of Mr. McNamara's RAND-trained senior advisors had any conception

of strategy. See Bernard Brodie, "The McNamara Phenomenon," World Politics, Vol.17, No.4 (July 1965), pp. 672-86; and idem, War and Politics (New York: Macmillan, 1973), pp.473-9.

30. See Aaron Wildavsky, "Rescuing Policy Analysis from PPBS," in U.S. Senate, Committee on Government Operations, Subcommittee on National Security and International Operations, Planning-Programming-Budgeting, 91st Cong., 2d sess. (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1970), pp.639-58.
31. However, to be fair, the greater failure was that of the U.S. armed services who neglected to approach Vietnam as though it were a real war.
32. See Luttwak, "A New Arms Race?"
33. This is an argument advanced forcefully in Henry A. Kissinger, "The Future of NATO," The Washington Quarterly, Vol.2, No.1 (Autumn 1979), pp.3-17.
34. To allude to the famous question posed by Herman Kahn, "Will the Survivors Envy the Dead?," in On Thermonuclear War (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1960), pp.60-95.
35. See Colin S. Gray, The Defence Policy of the Eisenhower Administrations, 1953-1961, unpublished D. Phil. dissertation (Oxford: Rhodes House Library, Oxford University, 1970), particularly Chapters 5-7.
36. I have analyzed the so-called "massive retaliation" doctrine in detail in Strategic Studies and Public Policy: The American Experience, Chapter 5. Also see Paul Peeters, Massive Retaliation: The Policy and its Critics (Chicago: Regnery, 1959).

37. Notwithstanding the popular belief in 1956 that the age of mutual deterrence had dawned, the military facts of that year carried a politically permissive message for Western foreign policy which is almost unimaginable by the standards of 1981. It is not implied in the text that the United States and NATO should have defended free Hungary (though that is my personal belief), only that this option was a very real one--based on prudent military considerations.
38. The U.S. defense community, decade after decade, has resolutely declined to think about the possible compellent merits of nuclear threats. Not merely did it fail to consider the forward, or offensive, use of compellence, it has also failed to consider the repellent requirement that is built into the current architecture of NATO strategy. On "compellence," see Schelling, Arms and Influence, particularly pp.69-91. Strictly speaking, of course, Hungary in 1956 need not have been a case for nuclear compellence. Once the Soviet forces withdrew, the U.S. nuclear threat could have been posed to deter their further engagement.
39. In Bernard Brodie, "Implications for Military Policy," in Brodie, ed., The Absolute Weapon (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1946), p.76.
40. See Joseph D. Douglass, Jr., and Amoretta M. Hoeber, Soviet Strategy for Nuclear War (Stanford, Ca.: Hoover Institution Press, 1979).
41. These ideas permeate the books in the Soviet "Officer's Library" series, published from 1965-1975 (many of which have now been translated by the U.S. Air Force); V.D. Sokolovskiy, Soviet Military Strategy, Harriet F. Scott, ed. (New York: Crane, Russak, 1968, 3rd Ed.); and articles

in the official Journal of the Soviet General Staff, Voyennaya Mysl, in the 1960s and 1970s.

42. This thesis is well-argued in Paul H. Nitze, "Strategy in the Decade of the 1980s," Foreign Affairs, Vol.59, No.1 (Fall 1980), particularly pp.86-91.
43. This idea is developed in detail in Nitze, "Deterring Our Deterrent," Foreign Policy, No. 25 (Winter 1976/77), pp. 195-210.
44. This proposition underpinned much of Henry Kissinger's theorizing on the subject of limited nuclear war in Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy (New York: Harper and Row, 1957).
45. For the text of NSC-68, see "NSC-68: A Report to the National Security Council," Naval War College Review, Vol.XXVII, No.6 (May/June 1975), pp.51-108. Also see Samuel F. Wells, Jr., "Sounding the Tocsin: NSC 68 and the Soviet Threat," International Security, Vol.4, No.2 (Fall 1979), pp.116-58.
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47. In the 1950s, Soviet Long Range Aviation (LRA): (A) did not exercise very far beyond its national territory (meaning that its pilots probably would have had severe problems finding the United States, let alone finding SAC bases); and (B) had only the most rudimentary notions of communications security (meaning that the USAF probably knew as much about LRA readiness and operations as did the Soviet High Command, and probably rather more than did Soviet civilian leaders).

48. See Bruce Smith, The RAND Corporation: Case Study of a Non-Profit Advisory Corporation (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1966).
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50. See Henry Kissinger, "Military Policy and Defense of the 'Grey Areas'," Foreign Affairs, Vol.33, No.3 (April 1955), pp.416-28; Kaufmann, "The Requirements of Deterrence"; and James King, "Nuclear Plenty and Limited War," Foreign Affairs, Vol.35, No.2 (January 1957), pp. 238-56.
51. A useful overview of the limited war debate of the mid-to-late 1950s is Morton H. Halperin, Limited War in the Nuclear Age (New York: Wiley, 1963).
52. For the logic of Western thinking on escalation see Herman Kahn, On Escalation: Metaphors and Scenarios (New York: Praeger, 1965).
53. See the wide-ranging discussion in Thomas C. Schelling, "Reciprocal Measures for Arms Stabilization," in Donald G. Brennan, ed., Arms Control, Disarmament, and National Security (New York: Braziller, 1961), Chapter 9.
54. Thomas C. Schelling, The Strategy of Conflict (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960), Chapter 8. Also see Schelling, Arms and Influence, Chapter 3.

55. Michael Getler, "Muskie Says New A-Strategy Isn't 'War-Fighting' Concept," The Washington Post, September 17, 1980, p. 8.
56. This and related questions have been explored rigorously in Stephen Maxwell, Rationality in Deterrence, Adelphi Paper No.50 (London: ISS., August 1968). Also useful is Patrick M. Morgan, Deterrence: A Conceptual Analysis (Beverly Hills, Ca.: SAGE, 1977), Chapter 4.
57. Carl von Clausewitz, On War (Michael Howard and Peter Paret, eds.), (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1976, first pub. 1832), Chapter 7.
58. Ibid. p.605.
59. Coral Bell has coined the powerful concept of the "crisis slide." See Bell, The Conventions of Crisis: A Study in Diplomatic Management (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), p.14.
60. One critic of so-called war-fighting doctrine has asserted that war fighters "have paid scant attention to organizational, cognitive, and political impediments to war termination." He concludes by asserting that "[t]wenty years after Wohlstetter and Kahn proposed strategy for waging nuclear war, it is time to make war fighters think about terminating one." Leon V. Sigal, "Rethinking The Unthinkable," Foreign Policy, No.34 (Spring 1979), p.51. Sigal is correct in stressing the importance of war termination, but not correct in asserting that Kahn has neglected the subject. See Herman Kahn, "Issues of Thermo-nuclear War Termination," The Annals, Vol.392 (November 1970), pp.133-72. Nonetheless, the U.S. Government could profit from a major renewal of interest in how nuclear war might be terminated.

61. Wolfgang K.H. Panofsky, "The Mutual Hostage Relationship Between America and Russia," Foreign Affairs, Vol.52, No.1 (October 1973), pp.109-18.
62. For a very sympathetic study of this phenomenon, see Jerome H. Kahan, Security in the Nuclear Age: Developing U.S. Strategic Arms Policy (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 1975).
63. Department of Defense Annual Report, Fiscal Year 1981 (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, January 29, 1980), p.65.
64. Ibid., p.65.
65. See Desmond Ball, Developments in U.S. Strategic Nuclear Policy Under the Carter Administration, ACIS Working Paper No.21 (Los Angeles: Center for International and Strategic Affairs, February 1980).
66. As, for example, in Harold Brown, Speech at the U.S. Naval War College, Newport, R.I., August 20, 1980.
67. See Robert Jervis: "Deterrence Theory Revisited," World Politics, Vol.XXXI, No.2 (January 1979), pp.289-324; and "Why Nuclear Superiority Doesn't Matter," Political Science Quarterly, Vol.94, No.4 (Winter 1979-80), pp.617-33. The latter article by Jervis defends a counter-city theory of deterrence quite explicitly. Other works of interest include Alexander George and Richard Smoke, Deterrence in American Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974); Richard Rosecrance, Strategic Deterrence Reconsidered, Adelphi Paper No.116 (London: IISS., Spring 1975); and Morgan, Deterrence. A useful survey of the evolution of American ideas on nuclear deterrence during the most fecund years is Michael W. Kanzelberger, American Nuclear Strategy: A Selective Analytic Survey of Threat Concepts

- for Deterrence and Compellence, R-1238-AF (Santa Monica, Ca.: RAND, September 1979).
68. John Erickson, "The Soviet View of Nuclear War," Text of talk delivered on BBC Radio Three, June 19, 1980, p.5.
69. Department of Defense Annual Report, Fiscal Year 1981 (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, January 29, 1980), p.65.
70. This author is attracted to Herman Kahn's advice: "Usually the most convincing way to look willing is to be willing." On Thermonuclear War, p.287.
71. See Leon Gouré, War Survival in Soviet Strategy, (Coral Gables, Fla.: Center for Advanced International Studies, University of Miami, 1976). A Soviet author tells us that "Soviet civil defense intensifies the peaceful actions taken by our state and strengthens international security as a whole." General-Major A.S. Milovidov and Colonel V.G. Kozlov, eds., The Philosophical Heritage of V.I. Lenin and Problems of Contemporary War (A Soviet View), Soviet Military Thought Series No. 5 (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1975, first pub. Moscow, 1972), p.251.
72. In the words of Richard Pipes: "...the essential quality of Russian politics derives from the identification of sovereignty and ownership..." Russia Under the Old Regime (New York: Scribner's, 1974), p.24. The CPSU reigns, rules, and owns the Soviet Union. For complementary analysis, see Tibor Szamuely, The Russian Tradition (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1974), Chapter 4.

73. See David A. Baldwin, "The Power of Positive Sanctions," World Politics, Vol.XXIV, No.1 (October 1974), pp.19-38; Jervis, "Deterrence Theory Revisited," pp.294-6, 304-5.
74. This and the charges which follow immediately (comprising but a small sample of the focus of scholarly concern) are discussed in detail by this author in Strategic Studies: A Critical Assessment (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1982, forthcoming).
75. In "Deterrence Theory Revisited," pp.296-9. Also see Booth, Strategy and Ethnocentrism(London: Croom, Helm, 1979), passim.
76. These are strong and unfashionable words. See Gray, "Nuclear Strategy: The Case for a Theory of Victory," International Security, Vol.4, No.3 (Winter 1979/80), pp.54-87.
77. On the evidence available to this author, public and private, it is not obvious that the U.S. Government has thought through some of the more fundamental issues pertaining either to counter-control or to counter-projection force targeting. See Colin S. Gray, "Targeting Problems for Central War," Naval War College Review, Vol. XXXIII, No. 1 (January-February, 1980), pp.3-21.
78. Sensible comments on "escalation dominance" may be found in Kahn, On Escalation, pp.23, 289-91. Particularly useful is Kahn's judgment that "...mere military superiority will not necessarily assure 'escalation dominance.' Escalation dominance is a complex concept in which the military calculations are only one element. Other elements are the assurance, morale, commitment, resolve, internal discipline, and so on, of both the principals and the allies." P.23. However, as

Kahn recognizes, this does not mean that one can afford to be relaxed about military balance and imbalance.

79. A superb set of historical case studies is Richard Smoke, War: Controlling Escalation (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1977). Also useful is Ole R. Holsti, Crisis, Escalation, War (Montreal: McGill-Queens Press, 1972).
 80. It is worth noting that Kahn, in On Escalation, does discuss explicitly "The Problem of the 'Fog of war'." Pp.211-13.
 81. See the discussion in Gray, Strategic Studies and Public Policy, Chapter 4.
 82. Essentially because (A) the theory failed to take proper account of the inherent tension between "limited" and "war"--and the U.S. Government neglected to notice that the restrictions it placed on military means by and large foreclosed on the possibility of achieving even limited ends; (B) the U.S. armed forces conducted the war as best suited their short-term, peacetime, bureaucratic interests (i.e., "combat experience" rather than "war")--and it is not obvious that the United States could have behaved otherwise (given the domestic politics of war); and (C) the authors of the theory seemed not to consider the fact that American values and American strategy have to be tolerably congruent--limited war theory, in very major respects, was not, and is not, compatible with American strategic culture.
- An excellent, judicious review of the limited war record, written by one of the founding fathers of U.S. limited war theory, is Robert E. Osgood, Limited War Revisited (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1979).

83. See Richard A. Burt, "The Relevance of Arms Control in the 1980s," Daedalus, Vol.110, No.1 (Winter 1981), pp.159-77; and Robin Ranger, Arms and Politics, 1958-1978: Arms Control in a Changing Political Context (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1979).
84. See Booth, Strategy and Ethnocentrism; and Jack L. Snyder, The Soviet Strategic Culture: Implications for Limited Nuclear Operations, R-2154-AF (Santa Monica, Ca.: RAND, September 1977).
85. Kahn also argues that people take earthquake survival planning very seriously only because there is an unambiguous fairly recent record of major earthquake activity. If there had never been a truly major earthquake, serious planning probably would not take place--regardless of the scientific prediction of expert seismologists.
86. Fred Ikle's important question, "Can Nuclear Deterrence Last Out the Century?" may thus be inadequately pessimistic in its implications.
87. Speech at the U.S. Naval War College, Newport, R.I., p.6.
88. This thesis is argued strongly in Norman Friedman and Colin S. Gray Soviet Vulnerabilities and U.S. Strategic Employment Policy, December 1978 unpublished paper, Chapters 2,3,6,7.
89. Among a large number of analyses which support this point of view, see Richard B. Foster, The Soviet Concept of National Entity Survival, SSC-TN-7167-1 (Arlington, Va.: Strategic Studies Center, SRI International, March 1978).
90. The most prominent examples of this recurring phenomenon were the freeing of the serfs in 1861 following the humiliation of the Crimean War (though this example was a defeat for major landed and other ultra-

conservative interests, not a defeat for the new Czar, Alexander II); the granting of the First Duma (Parliament, of a pale kind) in 1906 following the defeat by Japan; and the revolution in 1917.

91. See Steve F. Kime, "How the Soviet Union is Ruled," Air Force Magazine, Vol.63, No.3 (March 1980), pp.54-9; and William F. Scott and Harriet F. Scott, The Soviet Control Structure, SPC 575 (Arlington, Va.: System Planning Corporation, April 1980).
92. See Colin S. Gray, "Soviet Strategic Vulnerabilities," Air Force Magazine, Vol.62, No.3 (March 1979), pp.60-64.
93. An assault which the Soviet Union has no interest in making.
94. See Chapter 5.
95. For a related, if not complacent, approach to the requirements of stability, see Christoph Bertram, The Future of Arms Control: Part II: Arms Control and Technological Change: Elements of a New Approach, Adelphi Paper No.146 (London: IISS., Summer 1978), pp.6-7.
96. On the evolution of targeting policy of recent years, see Ball, Developments in U.S. Strategic Nuclear Policy Under the Carter Administration, particularly p.11. On the rise and maturing of the U.S. interest in counter-recovery targeting see Kurt R. Guthe, MARS: America's Strategic Retaliatory Doctrine and Its Implications for Force Posture, Honors Thesis, Department of Government, Harvard College, March 1978.
97. Department of Defense Annual Report, Fiscal Year 1979 (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, February 2, 1978), p.6.

98. For a strongly positive view, see T.K. Jones and W. Scott Thompson, "Central War and Civil Defense," Orbis, Vol.22, No.3 (Fall 1978), pp.681-712.
99. These doubts are detailed and pursued in Chapter 6.

Chapter 5

STRATEGIC STABILITY

Introduction

In an important article published in 1978, John Steinbruner claimed that

As the United States force posture has evolved over the past 15 years, the idea of stability has emerged as the central strategic objective, and the asserted conceptual consensus seems to be organized around the objective.

The following concerns underlie this chapter: that the particular theories of stability most widely held in the West may be gravely deficient; and that the integrity of the concept of strategic stability itself may be questionable.

Discussion of stability and its possible requirements is really a discussion of deterrence theory which in reality is a debate about the operational merits of different postures and doctrines. There can be no useful, objective, doctrine-neutral, exploration of the idea of stability. The discussion which follows makes no pretense of neutrality; instead it endeavors first to explain the roots, meaning, and deficiencies, of the still dominant theories of stability, and second to suggest a theory that has much greater internal and external integrity.

It is very important to recognize that for all its popularity, there is no useful consensus upon the meaning of the idea of stability. Most commentators, and certainly the U.S. Government (and NATO) writ large, acknowledge the value in the twin concepts of arms race stability and

crisis stability. Arms race stability is understood to be a condition wherein neither party to an arms competition is motivated strongly to press military developments or deployments in quest of major advantage--because such advantage is judged to be unattainable (however desirable). Crisis stability is understood to be a quality of strategic relations wherein, during periods of acute crisis, instruments of war (mechanical, electronic, organizational) should not be the immediate cause of war. These concepts, at this level of generality, have been widely understood and approved (in the West) since at least 1960.² However, consensus breaks down over the particular policy implications. From an operational perspective, how is arms race stability to be achieved and maintained?--how is crisis stability enforced?--in both cases vis à vis a distinctively Soviet adversary.

This quest is after a theory of stability that should work "well enough" given the full dimensions of Western strategic security problems in the context of the military consequences of the unique "cultural thought-ways"³ of a particular major adversary. As a working hypothesis, I contend that the ideas of arms race and crisis stability, and the theory of deterrence to which they most usually make (often implicit) reference, have (mis)led Western policy makers into neglecting the operational dimensions of strategy--indeed, many politicians, officials, and analysts seem to believe that nuclear strategy cannot really have any operational dimensions. An adequate theory of deterrence must encompass, really as its first priority, a determination of military (and relevant civilian) requirements in war itself. Extant, still-dominant deterrence theory--as the leitmotiv for

Western strategic preparation--is fully consistent with a strategic force posture that is incredible as a threat because it would not be intelligently usable in practice. It is essential to recognize, as argued throughout this study, that the Western ideas on stability, and the relevant Soviet approach to the determination of the principles that should guide defense preparation and war planning, have deep cultural roots--they are not accidents of history.

For much of this chapter, as the context makes clear, "stable deterrence theory" refers to the proposition that stability, in arms competition and in time of crisis, is maximized when both sides are unambiguously vulnerable at home, and when each side is confident that a large number of its strategic offensive weapons are invulnerable prior to launch and during mission execution.⁴ This condition of mutual assured vulnerability has been identified for many years as a mutual assured destruction (or, perjoratively, MAD) posture. Orthodox Western stability theory, even today, rests very heavily upon the assumption that mutual societal vulnerability is desirable. However, it has to be observed that a MAD posture, in principle, is compatible with a wide variety of strategic targeting plans.

By way of providing an initial point of doctrinal reference for this chapter, it is my view that the strategic balance would be stable were it to permit Western governments to enjoy not-implausible prospects of both defeating their enemy (on his own terms) and of ensuring Western political-social survival and recovery. This admittedly somewhat muscular definition, which closely parallels the known Soviet approach to defense

planning, is already American policy with respect to the requirement for the defeat of the enemy,⁵ and is not incompatible with the more familiar connotation of (arms race and crisis) stability. The bedrock of this definition is the proposition that forces which do not lend themselves to politically intelligent employment in war are unlikely to suffice to deter--at least in those very rare moments when an adversary may be motivated to seek a military solution to his problems.⁶ The costs of major war today are anticipated to be so high, and so many of the weapon systems on both sides lack realistic field tests,⁷ that the definition's call for a war-survival capability would hardly be likely to encourage Western governments down the path of military adventure.

The thesis of this chapter is that the West requires a concept of stability appropriate for the provision of the theoretical underpinning for the determination of military requirements that should enable it to defend its vital interests. The stability theory dominant in the 1960s and 1970s at root was addressed to a relationship between two supposedly like-minded, and ultimately (after detente processes had done their work) like-intending adversary-partners. At the beginning of the 1980s, although a sea-change is evident in official U.S. (and NATO) appreciation of Soviet habits and motives, the burden of obsolescent strategic theories of stability remains heavy.

Strategic Stability and Strategic Culture

Recognition, if not uncritical acceptance, of the idea of strategic culture outlined in Chapter 2 is important for the following reasons. First, it might help explain how and why the concept of strategic stabil-

ity took such firm root in the soil of the U.S. defense and arms control community. Second, it should facilitate more accurate comprehension of Soviet deeds and words. Third, it should help U.S. policymakers identify programs and doctrines which, while broadly compatible with American values, are adequately responsive to Soviet developments.

the United States

The concept of strategic stability took firm root as an American strategic desideratum long before there was either substantial testing in the field of the Soviet-American military competition or a directly relevant formal arms control process. American theoreticians reasoned that the multi-tier arms competition between East and West could be stabilized through cooperative management effected through tacit or formal bargaining. Moreover, the literature of the early and mid-1960s conveys the very clear message that the U.S. defense community thought that it knew both what strategic stability was, and how the fortunes of the concept could best be forwarded. A gifted Israeli commentator upon the U.S. arms debate, wrote in 1964 that

Stability has become a fundamental concept in nuclear strategy, and a magic formula. Strategic situations are measured by the degree of their stability....Once a situation of stability has been achieved, the initiation of war by surprise no longer assures any gain or advantage. A situation is stable, therefore, when there is no temptation to force the issue; it is a situation of mutual neutralization in which both the householder and the burglar know that even if one slays the other, the latter will manage to retaliate posthumously.

The U.S. defense community, with very few exceptions, decided that a stable military balance should mean a safer world; should mean a safer world at less cost in resources expended upon defense than would be the

case with an unstable military balance; should be compatible with the support of U.S. foreign policy interests (though it is unclear that very careful analysis was performed on this subject); and should eventually find favor with the U.S.S.R. both for reason of its technological inevitability, and for reason of its near self-evident desirability. In a book which probably merits description as the fullest and most mature statement of 1960s-style stability (through mutual vulnerability) theory, Jerome Kahan wrote that

A mutual stability approach, in the broadest sense, rests on the premise that the United States is benefited if the Soviet Union maintains a strategic deterrent capability comparable in overall strength to our own; it is an acceptance of both the mutual assured destruction relationship and numerical parity.⁹

A little earlier Kahan had written that

if, then, the U.S.S.R.'s strategic doctrine is largely understandable and somewhat comparable to ours, it is possible to establish a relatively effective U.S. policy of mutual stability.¹⁰

Thus, the United States seemed to know what it wanted, and to believe that what was good for the United States would come to be seen by the U.S.S.R. as being good for the U.S.S.R. also. A stable military balance, in American perspective, would be a balance wherein each side's military forces looked roughly comparable, and wherein neither side would believe that it could register a significant military advantage by striking first because neither side would be able to protect its domestic assets against retaliation. This set of stability elements derived initially, in good part, from discouraging analyses of the future promise of damage-limiting strategies. Military-technological prediction--that future societal vulnerability will be a fact, not a matter for choice--was transformed into

normative terms. Far from being a problem, mutual vulnerability was seen instead as an opportunity to establish more stable Soviet-American strategic relations. The Soviet Union might prefer to compete for "useful advantage" so long as that was believed to be attainable, but technology, surely, has a logic which the Soviets must and will respect. In a 1970 publication, Roman Kolkowicz expressed the then popular, and perhaps even plausible, view that

Soviet strategic doctrine and capabilities appear to have lagged behind those of the United States by about five years...modern defense technology determines to a large extent the kind of strategic doctrines and policies that will be adopted by the superpowers. Thus, technology seems to have a leveling effect which subsumes political, ideological and social differences in various political systems.

The convergence of strategic ideas hoped for in the late 1960s and early 1970s, in reality meaning a Soviet convergence with the American concept of a stable military balance, did not occur. By 1981 most American commentators on Soviet-American strategic policy issues accepted as a very probable fact the existence of a "conceptual gap" between Soviet and American thinking on strategic issues which appeared to be enduring because each side's thought was rooted in what has come to be termed strategic culture.¹²

The important difference between 1981 and 1971 (or 1961) is that what then was plainly recognized as a possibility, that the Soviet Union would not wish to engage in genuinely "reciprocal measures for arms stabilization," has now taken on the plausible character of a fact. Indeed, a major question which should be posed is whether, or perhaps how, the United States can conduct serious arms control business with a Soviet

Union that shows no evidence of endorsing a recognizable or attractive concept of strategic stability. Through the 1960s, and at least part of the 1970s, such a troublesome question could be, though should not have been, ignored or deferred. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, when American arms control theory was being forged, uncooperative Soviet ideas and practices could plausibly be interpreted as reflections of a relatively backward technology, or of a policy/intellectual "lag." By the early 1970s, the SALT process appeared to carry promise for the cooperative management of strategic relations. It was appreciated both that the Soviet Union still had to catch up in some important military respects, and that program momentum reflecting pre-SALT I thinking and practices would take some time to be amended so as to be compatible with the new relationship.

Today, the U.S. defense community has to grapple with the implications of the hypothesis that Soviet military ideas and activities are deeply rooted in local soil, and hence are very likely to endure; that the Soviet General Staff is extremely well acquainted with Western ideas on stability--Soviet military thinking is not crude and "uneducated"; and that there are no important apparent strains between the policy preferences of the Soviet military and the Soviet political leadership.¹³

It would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of this very widespread, if somewhat belated, Western recognition of the strategic cultural distinctiveness of the U.S.S.R. The distinctiveness diminishes markedly, of course, as Robert Jervis has observed, if Soviet military thinking is compared with American professional military thinking.¹⁴ The American military establishment prepares to fight and, if possible, to win wars,

and from preference probably would support a military doctrine as traditional in its concerns as is that espoused by the Soviet Union.¹⁵ However similar the doctrinal preferences of Soviet and American soldiers, it is only in the Soviet Union that those preferences are fully expressed in postural terms.

Soviet thought on the military dimensions of statecraft, what loosely can be called "strategic theory," is distinguished by its rarity.¹⁶ Soviet writings tend to focus upon efficient force preparation and implementation--generically operational matters--or upon grand-strategic, highly politicized topics. There are no functional Soviet equivalents to the Western theories of deterrence, limited war, and arms control, just as the key Western concepts spawned by, and in, those theories--stability, escalation control, bargaining, sufficiency/adequacy, and the rest--appear to play no identifiable role in guiding Soviet military planning.¹⁷ In the half-light of the growing appreciation of the alien character of Soviet strategic culture, American policymakers have to reassess the relevance, and prudence, of the strategic ideas that have held intellectual and declaratory (policy, if not war-planning) sway for the past fifteen years.

Despite the accumulating evidence on Russian/Soviet strategic culture and the implications of that culture for military-program momentum, Western commentators continue to deny, implicitly, that stability is a condition describing a military-political relationship. The vision of stability that pervades much of American theorizing about deterrence questions is essentially static and absolute in character. It tends to be bereft of the idea of competition. On this logic, the United States has a deter-

rence problem of finite physical dimensions. The complex military balance is stable if the Soviet urban-industrial target set is adequately covered and if the United States looks, and preferably is, resolute in its willingness to retaliate.

The question of what kind of damage a Soviet leadership would most likely judge to be unacceptable has been posed, and even answered, of recent years¹⁸--with conclusions that cast grave doubts on the merits of the society destruction bedrock of the theory which identifies stability with mutual vulnerability--but the covering of the urban-industrial target set still is accorded importance, and even pride of place, in official American stable deterrence prose.¹⁹

It may be the case that this society punishment oriented theory can provide a robust basis for a stable military balance, even in the context of an adversary relationship with an alien Soviet strategic culture. It is possible that the Soviet military (and political) establishment is seeking the unattainable in its evident pursuit of a war-waging/war-winning capability, and that the United States would be ill-advised to compete very vigorously with military programs designed to improve war-waging performance. However, now that it is generally recognized that the Soviet military effort marches to the beat of a distinctly non-American drummer,²⁰ and as the Soviet military competitive position continues to improve across the board, there should be no serious resistance to consideration of the possibility that the consequences of mainstream Western stability theory may lead to under-recognized dangers.

The ideas that comprise the concept of a stable military balance reflect fairly faithfully the world view, values, and pertinent education of those commentators, policymakers, and theorists who have articulated American strategic culture.²¹ The United States is a satisfied Power, with a fundamentally defensive strategic mission as its international responsibility. From the time of the publication of The Absolute Weapon in 1946, through to the present day, American strategic theorists have tended to argue, explicitly or implicitly, that the development of nuclear weapons has imposed a "technological peace." The mainstream concept of stability speaks eloquently to the long-recognized U.S. tendency to define conditions as problems to be solved. The existence of very large and diverse strategic nuclear arsenals thus may be held to have solved the problem of possible premeditated war between nuclear-armed states, because the initiator will know that he cannot deny the enemy the capability of destroying his society in retaliation. Moreover, this ability to destroy a society in a second strike can deter not only attacks on the U.S. homeland, so the theory maintains, but also--with only a modest loss of credibility--attacks on at least some of the vital overseas interests of the United States. The balance of terror is thus massively indelicate. As Soviet strategic capabilities improved relative to those of the United States over the decade 1965-75, so the United States sought to retain or restore the credibility of strategic deterrence through the advertisement of more flexible targeting designs (the so-called Schlesinger doctrine).²² However, it is important to note that the 1970s' style strategic flexibility was, at root, an endeavor to retain the credibility of the ultimate sanction

of the very large counter-society strike. What beliefs, attitudes and perspectives are reflected in this simple theory?

It reflects a belief that nuclear war would mean the end of history. The assumed certainty of unrestrained escalation and mutual destruction leads easily to the conclusion that there can be no intelligent way of preparing for, or waging, nuclear war.²³

Even if some stable balance theorists are prepared to admit that nuclear war could have a wide range of outcomes, they tend to reject the possible policy implication--that the United States should design a policy and posture so as to minimize the prospective damage in war. American political culture, unlike Soviet political culture, does not take an instrumental view of the value of the lives, and quality of life, of its citizens. But, American foreign policy, in its potential need for military support, rests heavily on nuclear threats. However, no operational nuclear strategy is compatible with American societal values. An important reason why American strategic commentators have focused so heavily upon deterrence, as opposed to military operational questions, is because they have realized that American society is profoundly unwilling to contemplate, or debate coolly, the prospect of losing tens of millions of people.

For the better part of two decades, the United States has been highly dependent upon latent nuclear threat, but American society, and even the U.S. defense community, has shown little inclination that it was willing to think beyond prewar deterrence, let alone that it was willing to invest large resources in a capability to prevail in, survive, and recover from

a nuclear war. Michael Howard was close to the mark when he wrote as follows:

But such credibility [of nuclear response] depends not simply on a perceived balance, or imbalance, of weapons systems, but on perceptions of the nature of the society whose leaders are threatening such retaliation. Peoples who are not prepared to make the effort necessary for operational defense are even less likely to support a decision to initiate a nuclear exchange from which they will themselves suffer almost inconceivable destruction, even if that decision is taken at the lowest possible level of nuclear escalation.²⁴

Also, stable balance theory reflects a conviction that an enduring East-West political modus vivendi is possible--if only for the reason that nuclear arsenals mean that neither superpower dares intrude into regions well understood to be of vital interest to the other. The relationship between intense arms competition, and its associated first-strike alarms, and political tension remains ill understood, but a plateau of stable deterrence resting upon total societal vulnerability and sufficient weapon invulnerability should--so the argument goes--calm many of the anxieties that the arms competition can foster.

The more reasonable supporters of SALT I tended to avoid asserting that the Soviet political leadership and General Staff had been educated into accepting American-style stable deterrence thinking. Instead, they assumed that American strategic vigilance would deny the U.S.S.R. any militarily meaningful future advantage, and that Soviet leaders would rein in their programs in anticipation of the futility of a bid for superiority. In addition, it was assumed widely that the five-year "Interim Agreement" on strategic offensive arms would be superceded by a permanent treaty regime which would greatly assist stability through the survivability it would provide for offensive forces, and the predictability it would

provide for for defense planning.²⁵ Although stability could be enforced through expensive competitive effort, the case for attempting to encourage stability through negotiated joint management of the strategic balance had to be (and remains) attractive.

In short, stable balance theory was believed to reflect inescapable technological truths;²⁶ those truths were to be codified, at least in part, via the SALT process; and the SALT process was to be both the centerpiece, and the beneficiary, of a multi-channel and increasingly entangling detente venture.

Stable deterrence theory indicated, quantitatively, "how much is enough."²⁷ As observed already, American strategic culture is oriented towards attempts to solve problems. The United States defense and arms control community has extreme difficulty accommodating the idea that it is condemned to an endless competition with the U.S.S.R. Stable deterrence plus "the parity principle" appeared to reduce the stress and strain of unwelcome and unfamiliar strategic thought to a fairly simple problem of efficient management.

Stable deterrence, with its logical implication of a finite need for weapons, appeals to the Western belief that peacetime defense preparation has an almost wholly negative social impact. An insular strategic culture such as that of the United States tends generally to view the allocation of scarce resources for defense functions as being inherently wasteful. Such a culture supports substantial armed forces in peacetime with the attitude that they constitute, at best, regrettable necessities. Major defense program initiatives often are taken belatedly and clearly reluctantly,

and they have to be justified in very specific ways in terms of identifiable, or very plausible, threats.

Even on its own terms, it is legitimate to question the validity of mainstream stable deterrence theory. For example: as Henry Kissinger has argued forcefully, in policy practice it constitutes "a revolution in the strategic balance as we have known it"²⁸ (which was not noticed, or was simply disregarded, by its proponents); it has nothing to say on the problem of self-deterrence (which is not a trivial deficiency, because it would likely be the United States which would be under the most pressure to lead an escalation process); and it is not responsive to the fact that deterrent calculations are not always relevant in the sequence of events that lead to war. However, leaving such reservations aside, the most troublesome aspect of mainstream stable mutual deterrence theory is that it does not speak to Soviet reality.

the Soviet Union

Soviet thinking on the preferred character of the complex East-West military balance is easily identified as a product of the lessons perceived in Russian and Soviet history, the nature and rationale of the Soviet state, and what may best be termed strategic logic. The Soviet Union cannot endorse a Western style concept of military stability. The legitimacy of CPSU rule in the Soviet imperium resides in its claim to be the sole authoritative interpreter of the scientifically correct theory of historical change--and the peoples and the physical resources of that imperium, allied to "progressive forces" everywhere, are the instruments for effecting that process of historical change. Save as a tactical ploy, the U.S.S.R.

cannot endorse a concept of stability in the relations between socialist and non-socialist states. Richard Pipes almost certainly is correct when he argues that Marxism-Leninism became the state ideology in Russia because the grosser features of that ideology, and the practices which they legitimized, fitted so well a Russian national political character marked by cunning, brutality, and submissiveness.²⁹ Soviet military thinking today, on this argument, is influenced by, and expresses, a strategic culture that is, at root, Russian rather than Marxist-Leninist.³⁰ The important point is that obligatory Soviet ideology and Russian historical impulses both drive Soviet military thinking in the same direction.

The commitment to permanent struggle, the need for eternal vigilance, the militarized character of society, the fundamental distrust of independent power centers (domestic and foreign)--all are enduring features of Russian/Soviet strategic culture. "The revolution in military affairs," as evidenced in Soviet military programs and as discussed in detail in the Penkovskiy "Special Collection," was dramatically different from the revolution in strategic thinking caused by nuclear weapons in the West.

The Western non-operational focus upon deterrence as opposed to defense is totally alien to Soviet strategic culture, and is indeed viewed as dangerous, irresponsible, and scientifically incorrect. Since 1956 the Soviet Union has rejected Lenin's "inevitability of war" thesis, but has continued to believe that war is possible, that the difference in the range of outcomes could encompass the distance between victory and defeat, and that more military power cannot fail to pay political dividends.³¹ The notion of having enough military power is alien to Soviet

thought and appears to be contrary to the Soviet reading of their, and other states', history.³² Equivalence and parity are recognized by the Soviet Union as being the necessary basis for East-West security relations, but that necessary basis is not, and cannot be, accepted as sufficient.

Quite aside from any ideological imperative, Soviet geopolitics--like Russian geopolitics in times past--is the story of near continuous struggle against actual or potential enemies who posed, or might pose, a threat to the (multi-) national existence.³³ Russian and Soviet history teaches the lesson that "those who fall behind, get beaten."³⁴ The Soviet Union is engaged in improving its security condition through attaining an increasing measure of control over its external environment. It does not matter whether one seeks to explain this outward pressure in terms of ideology, strategic calculation, or the absence of imagination (more power is sought for the purpose of being more powerful, which cannot fail to be useful in a world where the U.S.S.R. is surrounded by enemies).

Even if one attempts to discard cultural and geopolitical explanations, the detail of Soviet military activity drives one back to recognition of the deeper imperatives that have molded Soviet strategic culture.³⁵ As many observers have recognized, there is an enormous inertia behind the Soviet military establishment. Much of that inertia can be explained in Western military-rational ways, but much of it reflects what amounts to a mindless momentum. That momentum flows from habitual practices of "safesiding" through minimal decision-making, of eschewing the taking of potentially dangerous initiatives, and generally focusing on doing that

which one knows one can do--all in the context of a society that is near-obsessed with the fear of disruptive change and which seeks to avoid risks.

Of course innovation is possible in the Soviet Union, though that innovation generally has to be ordered and even organized from above. The Soviet military buildup and modernization programs of the past fifteen years (in particular) thus speak to forces very deep within the character of the Soviet system. Some alarmed Western observers see clear evidence of the Soviet Union building more military power than it needs for defense (a totally alien formulation in Soviet perspective), and rejecting the Western concept of a stable military balance (as if that concept could possibly strike a genuinely responsive chord in Soviet breasts). However, it is probably more accurate to argue that what we see is the cumulative product of a bureaucratic-industrial system that finds it very difficult to change a course once set (not that there is any evidence suggesting any Soviet official desire to change military direction), and is steadily providing the military means to express the Soviet vision of a desirable military relationship with potential enemies (i.e., preponderance).

Unless a thousand years of Russian history, and the strategic cultural attitudes which flow from that history, can be expunged from Soviet consciousness, there is no way in which the U.S.S.R. is likely to join with the United States in cooperative ventures in the management of a stable military balance. The Soviet commitment to compete for relative advantage (real or illusory) is so fundamental, and so rational in Soviet terms, that stability can only be enforced.

The implications of this strategic cultural theme could be very grim for Western security. The strategic concepts and attitudes of both sides are valid on their own terms. However, the quality of a strategic concept pertains not to its intellectual elegance, but rather to its utility as a policy guide or reference in a context of dynamic competition with opponents who may, and in this case clearly do, hold to very different ideas.

By dint of fairly steady effort, and moved by an ethic of prudence that has expansive implications for military requirement, the Soviet Union could come to believe that in East-West crises it will be the United States that will back down. The ideas and military program details associated with the dominant Western concept of stability amount to a posture, military and civilian, that is not serious about the actual conduct of war. To itemize: The United States has a very limited hard-target counterforce and counter-control capability; it lacks survivable command, control, communications and intelligence (C³I) assets; it has no homeland defense; it has no real plans for timely industrial mobilization or for postwar recovery; it has no vision of how all parts of the military posture should cooperate in a global war; it has made only the most feeble preparation for strategic-force reconstitution; and it has no convincing story to tell vis à vis war aims and the political character of a postwar international order.³⁶

All of the above criticisms are leveled in the context of a Soviet adversary that attempts to provide adequately in those areas.³⁷ The idea that some weapons and operating practices promote stability, and that other weapons and practices promote instability, is alien to Soviet stra-

tegic culture.³⁸ The Soviet Union has attended in great detail for many years to what, in Western perspective, might be called the unilateral crisis stability of her military posture (missile silos have been super-hardened, some missiles are truly mobile SS-20s and stockpiled SS-16s , political and military command and control facilities have been proliferated and super-hardened, and so on...). Whether it is for reasons of political-cultural insensitivity, or cold military calculation, the Soviet Union seems unwilling, or unable, to take a systemic approach to what Western analysts identify as stability problems. Judging by the evidence of Soviet deeds, and to employ Western terminology, it is stabilizing, in Soviet perspective, for Soviet strategic combined arms forces to threaten successful surprise attacks against American strategic systems and NATO's posture in Europe.³⁹ Similarly, Soviet military thinkers see nothing unstable about a strategic context wherein Soviet society is afforded some useful measure of protection via civil defense and air defense and American society has none.

There is a distinct possibility that a United States' government, in the future, could believe the Soviet Union to be deterred by the assumed short fuse from provocative (Soviet) military action to nuclear holocaust-- a belief that projects stable deterrence reasoning into Soviet decision-making processes--while a Soviet government could believe that it had a very good prospect of winning a war, and that the United States' government should appreciate its weak political position and back down. In short, both sides might falsely project the perspective of their strategic culture onto the other--with very dangerous consequences.

Stability Dissected

A focus upon stability criteria oriented towards mutual vulnerability encourages a defense community to think astrategically. A military posture that is truly innocent on classically defined crisis or arms race instability grounds, is likely to be a military posture ill-suited to coercive diplomacy. American strategy should translate military posture into plans for the efficient and effective application of force in support of political goals. Stability is fully compatible with policy paralysis.

If one postulates stability at every level of potential conflict,⁴⁰ the problem disappears. However, unless the United States can enforce multi-level stability, a stability at the strategic nuclear level should mean that the United States could not, responsibly, exert strategic nuclear pressure in compensation for an unfolding theater defeat.⁴¹ Indeed, the integrity of NATO's defense doctrine of flexible response requires that there be a measure of instability at the central war level--translated as a potential for American advantage.

The concept of stability is used in a wide variety of senses. Among that wide variety, three in particular stand out as meriting individual analytic attention: arms race stability, crisis stability, and stability in perception.

arms race stability

The idea of arms race stability holds that the basic engine of competition is the first strike fear encouraged by defense programs designed to threaten at least part of the opponent's ability to wreak massive societal damage in a second strike.⁴² A stable condition of the arms competition, on this reasoning, is one wherein neither side invests in programs that the other would view as a challenge to its assured destruction capability--and hence would be motivated to offset. This logic was elaborated in detail in the late 1960s. It was argued that the arms race was driven not so much by the reality of first strike dangers, but rather by the fears that flowed from anticipation of such dangers.⁴³

The idea of "sympathetic parallelism" in armament programs was the logical colollary of the arms race "spiral" theory. It was argued that just as the superpowers could stimulate each other to build more and more capable weapons, so they should be able, through deliberate restraint, and perhaps explicit cooperative management, to remove much of the anxiety which drives essentially anticipatory--reactive armament programs.

The concept of arms race stability, in terms of defense-intellectual history, carries with it the stable deterrence ideas that incorporate the desideratum of mutual assured destruction capabilities. Such a linkage is not inevitable. Arms race stability could be held to obtain in a context where one side maintained a permanent, variably substantial, lead, and was in a political, financial, and industrial position to deter most arms race challenges. With some qualifications, this kind of arms race stability characterized Great Britain's naval relations with her

actual and potential rivals from the 1840s until 1914. This stability, however, was not achieved easily, cheaply, or without recurring alarm in British defense circles: "panics" and anticipated "gaps" were familiar, repeated, features of British naval debates.⁴⁴ Ronald Reagan, campaigning for the Presidency in 1980, implied that because of the disparity between Soviet and American industrial power, a United States competing very vigorously in armaments could achieve an enduring condition of superiority, or--to employ the then Governor's phrase--a "margin of safety."⁴⁵ This view has been unfashionable for more than fifteen years, but as Americans consider the state of the multi-level military balance in the early 1980s, judge whither that balance will be tending through the remainder of the decade, and assess the heightened risks of conflict that may flow from that deteriorating 'balance'--the case for restoring a healthy 'margin of safety' comes increasingly to seem to be not an example of nostalgia, as former Secretary of Defense Harold Brown has claimed by strong implication,⁴⁶ but rather a dictate of prudence.

Also, stability can obtain in a period when there is a rapid change in technological generations, and considerable unpredictability concerning the building programs of rivals, yet where a tolerable balance of military power is maintained--albeit near-exclusively through competition. Indeed, as Bernard Brodie observed in assessing the complex naval competition of the later decades of the Nineteenth Century, there are periods in strategic history wherein stability, by any reasonable definition, is best maintained through unconstrained competition.⁴⁷ Arms control processes are as likely to constrain the wrong (i.e., ultimately "stabilizing")

as the right (i.e., ultimately "destablizing") defense technologies--given human frailty in strategic prediction.

In its loosest, though most easily defensible, sense, arms race stability could be held to pertain simply to the pace and degree of rival postural change, regardless of the character of that change. An unusually rapid succession of deployed weapon generations, on both sides, would appear to many people to constitute an unstable situation. However, such rapid change may reflect a particularly fecund period of parallel defense research activity, rather than unusual political hostility, and may be fully compatible with some important definitions of a stable situation. Nonetheless, it is reasonable to allow that rapid postural change would be very likely to breed fears abroad that militarily significant, if transitory, breakthroughs were a distinct possibility--breakthroughs which might facilitate or enable disarming first strikes to be planned with some confidence.

Probably the major problem attending the concept of arms race stability was that it rested upon an easily challengeable theory of arms race dynamics.⁴⁸ 1960s vintage stability theory posited an abstract and very simple model of arms competition. The banner-carriers for arms race stability in the late 1960s leapt from abstract propositions to defense policy claims and arms control proposals (e.g., do not deploy BMD or MIRV because they will be destabilizing). The arms race (and crisis) instability claims deployed to challenge BMD and MIRV (and, later, the Mk 12A RV and MX) were by and large, both interesting and internally consistent: but, were they true?--and how might they be validated or invalidated? This

argument applies, of course, to all sides in the ongoing American defense debate.

It is just possible that Soviet offensive force deployments in the 1970s would have been greater than actually was the case, had the United States proceeded with Safeguard or Site Defense BMD deployment in the absence of the ABM Treaty. However, in the presence of United States BMD deployment, opponents of that deployment would very likely be attributing the pace and much of the character of the Soviet ICBM and SLBM programs to alleged Soviet BMD-offset motivations. The kind of Soviet offensive-force deployments that should lack for a strong strategic rationale in the absence of American BMD, assuming a mutual assured destruction framework to Soviet thinking, have occurred anyway.

On the basis of the often ambiguous and incomplete evidence available, the United States defense and arms control community now should consider the proposition that Soviet arms programs are driven not by a determination to (over-) compensate for American programs which could threaten Soviet maintenance of an adequate capability to destroy American society, but rather by some combination of a doctrinal imperative to improve Soviet war waging/war winning ability, and bureaucratic defense-industrial momentum. This proposition suggests that for many years our arms control surgeons may have diagnosed falsely (and hence sought to operate inappropriately upon) the causes of the arms race disease.

Many people who debate arms race stability/instability charges are really concerned lest continuous competitive military-technological innovation might open temporary windows of opportunity for possible exploitation.

"Gaps" may occur with respect to comparison of some elements in superpower postures, but they should not be of such a kind as to call into serious question the overall quality of deterrent effect purchased by the United States through its military investment.

Deterrence stability is compatible with a formidable rate of change in competing postures. For example, the charge that the MX ICBM will be destabilizing is sustainable only if one equates arms race instability with a large change in posture which may provide a substantial incentive for postural change on the Soviet side. A crisis instability charge is fragile in that the very survivability of the MX system should remove the Soviet incentive to go first in a "use them or lose them" spirit.

crisis stability

The concept of crisis stability refers to a strategic condition wherein the very character, readiness, and mobilization procedures of armed forces in confrontation should not comprise the proximate cause of war. Very often, crisis stability/instability is deemed to inhere in particular kinds of weapons. However, as Thomas Schelling has argued persuasively, to focus upon weapons technology is to miss a good part of the potential problem.

To impute this influence [of weapons] on the likelihood of the outbreak of war to "weaponry" is to focus too narrowly on technology. It is weapons, organizations, plans, geography, communications, warning systems, intelligence, and even beliefs and doctrines about the conduct of war that together have this influence. The point is that this complex of military factors is not neutral in the process by which war may come about.

Particularly valuable is the distinction Schelling draws between the static and dynamic dimensions of (crisis) stability.

The static dimension reflects the expected outcome, at any given moment, if either side launches war. The dynamic dimension reflects what happens to that calculation if either side or both sides should move in the direction of war, by alert, mobilization, demonstration, and other actions that unfold over time. (Emphasis in the original)⁵⁰

It is not difficult to slip into self-congratulation concerning the stability that appears to have obtained with respect both to the military standoff in Europe, and to the central nuclear relationship. However, the stability of those balances is not tested day by day, nor even by the kinds of crises registered over Berlin, Hungary, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, and potentially Poland. In none of those cases is it very plausible to argue that either the Soviet Union or NATO was strongly motivated to launch a theater or general war. The real road-test for crisis stability would be that one occasion in forty or fifty years when nearly everything appeared to be at stake and one or both leadership groups could not see any non-military solutions to its, or their, political problems. A force posture and strategic doctrine good enough for one crisis may not be good enough for another. Those who are inclined to believe that American and NATO forces are broadly resilient to crisis stress, should ask themselves what it might take to dissuade a very desperate Soviet leadership.

Robert Jervis, quite rightly, has argued that rival schools of thought over the requirements of deterrence differ over how much deterring it is prudent to assume that the Soviet Union might need.

Thus there is a disagreement over "how much credibility is enough": two policy analysts therefore might agree on how likely the Russians thought it was that a limited war would escalate and disagree over whether they could be deterred.⁵¹

If taken to its logical extreme, the more pessimistic argument might lead to the conclusion that, at some point in the future, the Soviet Union might be so desperate as to be "beyond deterrence"--meaning, again logically, that considerations of crisis stability, however rigorous, would be irrelevant. The only question remaining would be "how well would the West fare in the war?" Different analysts may agree on the general characteristics of a crisis-stable military balance, and even on the character of Soviet strategic culture, yet they may disagree on whether particular United States military postures are sufficiently crisis stable. The reason for the disagreement lurks in the different range of political crises that each is willing to consider as relevant to the sizing and character of the U.S. defense effort. Some interpretations of the military implications of the concept of crisis stability bear the potentially dangerous hallmark of a managerial, as opposed to a strategic, perspective upon security issues. Crisis stability is fully compatible with an American strategic force posture which could take the initiative, compete for escalation dominance, and--if need be--fight the war through to a favorable military decision. However, crisis stability very often is considered narrowly in the context either of a rigid application of mutual assured destruction reasoning or, beyond that in sophistication, in the addendum of flexible targeting design. Typically, any capability that threatens Soviet strategic forces, pre-launch, or during mission execution, is held to be an affront to crisis stability. Crisis stability, properly understood, does not lend its conceptual authority to such judgments. For reason of extended deterrence duties, the United

States cannot afford a quality of crisis stability which precludes first use of strategic nuclear weapons. As Nicholas Spykman has written:

There is no possibility of action if one's strength is fully checked; there is a chance for a positive foreign policy only if there is a margin of force which can be freely used.⁵²

However, Jerome Kahan has written that

In order to establish a mutual stability policy, it is necessary to classify strategic systems as either stabilizing or destabilizing and to avoid the latter.⁵³

Following classical mutual vulnerability theory, Kahan claimed that weapons threatening to the countervalue mission performance of strategic offensive forces are destabilizing, "since they can directly negate an opponent's deterrent capability."⁵⁴ Examples of "stabilizing" weapons include SLBMs, MRVs (or inaccurate MIRVs), long-range cruise missiles, manned bombers, and missile site (or bomber base) BMD. "Destabilizing" weapons include accurate MIRVs, strategic ASW systems, area BMD and area air defense.

This simple classification is only as useful as are its doctrinal premises. If, for example, the Soviet Union does not equate the quality of its deterrent with its ability to devastate urban-industrial America, then defense of the urban-industrial American homeland would not threaten the Soviet deterrent. Moreover, one could argue, as noted above, that overall stability in the East-West military-political relationship requires that the United States be able to initiate strategic nuclear use in defense of forward-located allies--and that such central war initiation, no matter how selective, cannot be credible in the event unless an American President

were confident that damage to the American homeland physically could be severely limited.

Given the Soviet traditional military approach to nuclear war planning, strategies and tactics which in the West tend to be judged as destabilizing almost certainly have no such implications in Soviet thinking. Soviet political and military planners would be most unlikely to view programs intended to provide active and passive defense of the American homeland as signalling anything other than common sense.⁵⁵ To the extent that those programs threatened the success of Soviet plans for the military conduct of the war, they would be candidates for some Soviet response. However, the mechanistic ying-yang envisaged in some simple-minded defense-offense, action-reaction theories of the arms race is the stuff of the (American) seminar room, not of the real world of Soviet defense decision-making.

The small strategic theory community has paid very little attention to the place, let alone the details, of command, control, communications, and intelligence (C³I). Like peace and security, everyone, from every school of thought, is for good C³I. Understandably, it would be difficult to generate a debate over the issue, "does the United States require high quality C³I?" Non-controversial subjects tend to escape attention. John Steinbruner has argued that

The most severe problems with the concept of stability result from the fact that its technical definition has not included a critical dimension of strategic capability: namely, the physical and organizational arrangements for exercising deliberate command of strategic forces.⁵⁶

As Steinbruner proceeds to argue, when the concept of stability is expanded so as to accommodate C³¹ desiderata, the preferred force structure (given classic stability themes) might alter markedly. For example:

The submarine-based strategic force which is clearly the most stable under the conventional definition is just as clearly the worst in terms of command stability.⁵⁷

Those theorists who believe that deterrence is a function of mutual societal vulnerability should be concerned lest command instability either results in unintended armed conflict, or in essentially uncontrolled escalation in the course of a war. Those theorists who believe that deterrence flows from the promise of proficient military conduct, should be concerned lest command instability denies the armed forces the ability to wage war in a militarily intelligent fashion.

It is almost certainly the case that a good fraction of the strategic debate of recent years has rested upon quite unrealistic assumptions concerning the quality and survivability of American (and NATO) C³¹ assets. There was much weaving of interesting strategic targeting tapestries in the 1970s, but I suspect that most of the targeting schemes which envisaged the protracted and progressive unfolding of a deliberate design of destruction (for carefully calculated military and political effect), failed to take adequate note of likely, or possible, command instability phenomena (American and Soviet).

There is ample evidence suggesting that classic stability theory, which encourages the belief that nuclear war would be the end of history, promoted a relaxed climate concerning the many details of actually managing

a central war campaign. A dominant belief that nuclear forces have failed if they are ever used, is hardly likely to energize officials to think very realistically about command stability problems in a nuclear war. Steinbruner's persuasive advocacy of the need to place command stability at the center of nuclear (et al.) planning concerns, fails to recognize that the relative neglect of command stability issues flowed in good part from the widespread acceptance of a classic stability theory (based on the assumption of the desirability of mutual societal vulnerability) of which he approves. Furthermore, when he suggests that ...the conceptualization of national strategy should be organized not around deterrence but rather around the much broader issues of managing modern strategic operations.⁵⁸

he is ignoring the fact that those who tend to worry about stability, as classically defined, are not merely fundamentally uninterested in the improvement in the United States' ability to manage a central nuclear war, they are profoundly suspicious of any such improvement. It is far from certain that the arms control community could be persuaded to purchase a really robust quality of command stability (encouraging politicians with poor judgment in the mistaken belief that nuclear war can be waged, controlled, and survived?), notwithstanding Steinbruner's argument that

... the preservation of a strong deterrent effect and the actual prevention of war are not the same thing. Indeed the most serious threat of war under current circumstances probably lies in the possibility that organizationally and technically complex military operations might override coherent policy decisions and produce a war that was not intended. (Emphasis in the original.)⁵⁹

it is worth noting that although PD 59 of July 25, 1980 has attracted a substantial literature, most commentators failed to notice that it was, above all else, a document about C³I. Commentators were so excited,

positively or negatively, about the allegedly increased stress placed in the document on counterforce targeting, that they ignored the fact that PD 59 called for an American ability to command and employ strategic forces in war over a period (perhaps) of months, with the benefit of real-time, or near real-time, strategic-target intelligence-gathering identification assets.⁶⁰ The counterforce theme, in historical terms, was a call for "more of the same": the survivable C³I theme was revolutionary.

stability in perception

For many years it has been recognized that military forces can cast a political shadow even when the assessment of probable relative military prowess is not conducted in what defense professionals would regard as a sophisticated manner. The 1970s saw a debate in the United States over the political value of military power,⁶¹ and particularly of strategic-nuclear military power, wherein the contending schools of thought, not for the first, or last, time, appeared to be talking past each other. Harold Brown's Annual Reports tended to perpetuate the confused structure of this debate. In 1979, Dr. Brown wrote as follows:

Perceptions of the military balance, correct or not, affect political behavior both of our own nation and of others as well. Instability can result from swings in perceptions, which can be much greater than the changes in the factual situation. The best way to avoid that instability is to avoid, to the maximum extent possible (it is a difficult task), expressing the balance in tendentious terms or, even worse, shading it,⁶² whether this be in order to excite alarm or to calm fears.

A year later, Dr. Brown explained that

The need for essential equivalence reflects the fact that nuclear forces have a political impact influenced by static

measures (such as numbers of warheads, throw-weight, equivalent megatonnage) as well as by dynamic evaluations of relative military capability. It requires that our overall forces be at least on a par with those of the Soviet Union, and also that they be recognized to be essentially equivalent. we need forces of such a size and character that every nation perceives that the United States cannot be coerced or intimidated by Soviet forces.⁶³

Without denying that appearances, reflected in the cruder static indices of relative capability, can matter--the major thrust of those who argued in the 1970s that perceptions of strategic nuclear (and theater force) imbalance, real or imaginary, should have a political impact, was to the effect that the disadvantageous trends in some of the more visible, or static, indices had real military significance. Harold Brown suggested that perceptions of imbalance in megatonnage, throw-weight, warhead numbers (et al.) can influence observers. That may be true, though it remains, notwithstanding many years of repeated assertion, almost entirely a matter of conjecture. Perceptions of American (and Soviet) will and capability flow far more from cultural stereotyping (what kind of a country, performing what kind of roles, is the United States?)--and from real-time fine-tuned assessment resting upon observation of American (and Soviet) deeds. Most of the foreign opinion-leaders that, year after year of United States Department of Defense Annual Reports have implicitly depicted as being susceptible to influence on the basis of learning of crude throw-weight or megatonnage imbalances, would not know a cold launch from a cold lunch. The quality and quantity of American and Soviet actions, reflecting, to some indeterminate degree, American and Soviet perceptions of their relative military standing, is the raw

material influencing foreign perception of who is ahead, or which way the Soviet-American political-military competition is tending.

For understandable reasons, some American commentators appeared to believe that the debate over the foreign policy implications of (alleged) military imbalance was a debate over military "appearances" only. In the 1970s it was fairly popular to argue that, ultimately, a military imbalance would have political significance only if it had (plausibly) military significance.⁶⁴ Since classic stability theory, with its focus upon sufficiency in the region of the elbow of the equivalent megatonnage to casualties/economic damage curve, was antagonistic, or antipathetic to the idea that political points could be scored through the United States competing in militarily (by MAD definition) meaningless ranges of values on static indices, adherents to that theory naturally focussed upon the "appearances" dimension of the debate. Those who argued that comparison of Soviet and American competitive performance on the static indices was important had some severe problems of evidence.

Although it is sensible to insist that the United States should not sign arms control agreements which prohibit American pursuit of Soviet advantages (as under the "launcher" and "heavy missile" ceilings of SALT I, and the "heavy missile" carryover to SALT II), while the Soviet Union is able, legally, to pursue U.S. advantages (as in missile accuracy, payload fractionation, and reliability), I would not endorse the argument that militarily meaningless numerical advantages must, or even are very likely to have, a destabilizing effect in the realm of perception. Those "static indicators," so heavily maligned by classical stability theory

adherents, happen to have major capability implications. Equivalent megatonnage, for example, can be related directly and graphically to anticipated population loss;⁶⁵ while missile throw-weight is relevant to the issues of fractionation, warhead yield, and decoy deployment (vis à vis BMD). In short, the "static indicators" which many commentators in the mid-1970s assessed purely in a political context, have major potential military operational meaning. For the most obvious of contemporary examples, they speak directly to the Soviet prospect for being able to saturate the baseline, deceptively based MX deployment.

Stability in perception, where it matters most (e.g., in Moscow, Washington, Beijing, and some European capitals), should be held to refer to a military capability that could actually defeat Soviet military plans. The debate over the political meaning of a perceived military imbalance should not focus upon the arguable merits of forces developed solely for the purpose of ensuring a perceptual symmetry with those of the Soviet Union. The United States defense community has never really understood the issue of the political meaning of perceived military imbalance: to repeat, the issue is not one of appearances, save in very minor key. I would recommend paying very little indeed for appearances per se. The hypothetical Third World leader or editorial writer who is deemed to be impressed, in his presumed ignorance, by crude ICBM launcher or ICBM throw-weight counts, almost certainly is a mythical person. Moreover, even if he is real, his unsophisticated perception of who is ahead or who is behind should not influence the course of U.S. defense policy. The perception that matters most is the Soviet, and that perception is

colored by a war-fighting/war-winning perspective. To impress Soviet observers, the United States needs to invest in the kind of military muscle and societal protection which could yield war-waging advantage, or enforced denial of war-waging success.

The level of argument over the instability potential of perceived military imbalance has remained at a near-sophomoric level since James Schlesinger first introduced it in 1974-75. Skeptics, by and large on the left of the political spectrum, have tended to secure the better of the argument. The United States could have a considerably smaller (in terms of launch vehicles) strategic force deployment than is the case today, and certainly than that maintained by the U.S.S.R., yet there need be no perception of U.S. inferiority. The deployment envisaged might comprise, as its high points, land-mobile MX ICBMs, B-1 bombers, wide-body ALCM carriers, and Trident SLBM-carrying submarines.

Stability and U.S. Strategy

John Newhouse, the privileged chronicler of the NSC perspective upon the SALT I negotiations, asserted that stability was "a truly divine goal."⁶⁶ Today, it is apparent that the theories of arms race and crisis stability which permeated the American approach to SALT I were either wrong or misleading. At a general conceptual level, arms race and crisis stability are, of course, unexceptionable. No one favors frenetic arms race activity per se, or military postures which could themselves precipitate war: so much is well-nigh axiomatic. Where the mainstream of American strategic theorizing erred was in tying the multifold concept of stability to a particular theory of deterrence that did not match the burgeoning

evidence. That theory of deterrence held that each Super Power had an assured destruction (countervalue) requirement vis à vis the other, and that an enduring stable deterrence relationship could be constructed only on such a basis.

This theory of arms race stability was wrong--it could not explain the course of the strategic arms competition in the 1970s (under the aegis of SALT I, or in the shadow of SALT II). Whatever mix of motives and institutional forces drove Soviet weapons procurement, a leitmotiv of sufficiency resting upon the idea of assured destruction (let alone mutual assured destruction) clearly was not prominent among them. It is a matter of unambiguous historical record that the Soviet Union, since 1972, has worked hard to undermine whatever degree of strategic stability (based on mutual societal vulnerability) there may have been at that time. In their ICBM, air defense, BMD (in research and development), ASW, and civil defense programs, the Soviets have been providing persuasive evidence that their systemic view of the arms competition is dramatically different from the view adhered to by succeeding United States' administrations. They have sought, and are continuing to seek, "useful advantage" through whatever degree of preponderance the United States permits.⁶⁷

The "classical" theory of crisis stability may or may not be correct; fortunately the 1970s did not provide a field test. However, the Soviet perspective on strategic matters suggests that the explanatory power of the theory may be poor. Richard Burt expressed this skepticism when he wrote that

Central strategic war, according to Soviet literature, is not likely to stem from mechanistic instabilities within the super-

power military relationship, but rather from real and enduring differences⁶⁸ between competing political systems and national interests.

In principle, certainly, it is sensible to argue that it would be undesirable for the superpowers to deploy forces which lend themselves to first-strike destruction. However, it is no less sensible to argue that "the reciprocal fear of surprise attack"⁶⁹ as the principal proximate cause of war, merits probable identification as an American "mechanistic" fantasy. This is not to endorse a total indifference to Burt's "mechanistic instabilities," but it is to suggest that the traditional theory of crisis stability--on the basis of which particular weapons and doctrines are praised or vilified--needs considerable amendment because it overemphasizes the probable role of "mechanistic instabilities" in an acute East-West crisis, while taking a wholly apolitical approach to an inherently political phenomenon; and it is inimical to the extended deterrence requirement that the United States be able and willing to take the strategic initiative.

Many of the elements of a new theory of strategic stability already have been expressed in official prose and action over the past five years. However, the theoretical revolution remains incomplete. What is missing, above all else, is both a recognition of the pervasiveness and longevity of competition, and a positive approach to the functions of strategic nuclear forces. On this last point, for example, Harold Brown treated both arms race and crisis stability in negative terms. In the former case the U.S. must ensure "that the balance is not capable of being overturned by a sudden Soviet technological breakthrough..."; in the latter

case by ensuring that neither the U.S. nor the Soviet Union would feel itself under pressure to initiate an exchange in a crisis.⁷⁰

Dr. Brown's concerns were appropriate, but they did not approach the heart of what stable deterrent ideas should indicate vis à vis United States force planning. An adequate concept of stability has to be anchored in a prospectively effective theory of deterrence at the highest levels of violence. Crisis stability should be approached in terms of the calculations of probable war-waging prowess made by the several parties involved. Concern about mechanistic, or technical, crisis (in)stability would be policy-appropriate only in a condition of such intense antipathy that overall central war campaign analyses would likely dominate decision processes. The Soviet Union, as a prediction, would not "go to war" because a large fraction of its ICBM force was theoretically vulnerable to a United States first strike⁷¹--any more than would the United States. Crisis stability would flow from a Soviet belief that any escalation of the military conflict would produce negative military and ultimately political returns. The United States Department of Defense acknowledges this logic,⁷² but it does not recognize that the United States is most unlikely to be able to enforce stability if damage to the American homeland cannot be limited.⁷³ The Reagan Administration seems no more amenable to this logic than was the Carter Administration.

Strategic stability should not be equated with strategic stalemate. The United States cannot afford to endorse a strategic concept which implies thorough-going mutual American-Soviet strategic deterrence.⁷⁴ If strategic stability is to retain its preeminence as a policy goal

of the United States, it should be redefined for compatibility with the extended-deterrent duties that the geopolitics of the Western Alliance place upon the American strategic force posture. A stable strategic balance, in American/NATO perspective, is one which would permit the United States to

- initiate central strategic nuclear employment in expectation of gain (this is a requirement of NATO strategy)--or recovery of positions lost.
- seize and hold a position of "escalation dominance."
- deter Soviet escalation, or counter-escalation, both by reason of the potent threat posed to the most vital assets of the Soviet state, and by reason of the ability of the United States to limit damage to itself.⁷⁵

A Soviet Union confronting a United States that had military and civilian programs appropriately supportive of the above objectives, would have very little incentive either to effect a military "breakout" from a regional crisis, or to engage very persistently in a competition in risk taking at very high levels of violence. Crisis stability would be enforced through the Soviet perception of the United States as a very tough wartime adversary indeed. It might be objected that an American President should not be trusted with the capabilities suggested above.⁷⁶ However, even if such a concern is valid (which is extremely dubious), it must be weighed against the greater danger of a President not having recourse to such capabilities. The concept of strategic stability envisaged here is the only one which speaks persuasively to Soviet strategic culture,

and it is intended--of necessity--only to minimize that self-deterrent element which is the most crippling deficiency in existing official American strategic thought. Self-deterrence cannot be removed altogether because the United States would know that even under the aegis of a stable military balance, as defined here, several tens of millions of American casualties would most likely result from central war. Nonetheless, the United States would have a guiding concept from which military requirements could be derived in support of militarily and politically intelligent strategic targeting plans. This concept relates robustness in crisis regimes to anticipation of success or defeat in war and to a judiciously competitive program of peacetime armament.

As stated earlier, the identifiable Soviet approach to arms competition is the steady acquisition of a more and more formidable war-fighting/war-survival capability. It is highly improbable that the Soviet Union can be dissuaded from pursuing this approach.⁷⁷ The evidence of the 1970s suggests that although, in principle, stability might be encouraged through negotiated SALT restraints--whereby both sides agree to forgo those capabilities which the mutual vulnerability theory of stability holds to be undesirable--it is far more likely that stability has to be enforced through competition. It is virtually self-evident that Soviet strategic culture precludes the negotiation route to enhanced stability, save in the context of very vigorous American strategic effort. Moreover, there is growing agreement within the Western defense community to the effect that stability cannot rest intelligently upon the threat of massive societal destruction (save, possibly, as an ultimate threat). Such damage is unacceptable to the United States, while it may be insufficiently unacceptable

to Soviet politicians. If the American concept of a stable military balance in extremis makes more or less formal reference to the assured destruction threat--then the United States has a deterrence theory which probably is fundamentally unsound. The "ultimate threat" posed by the United States would be incredible because it would never be in the U.S. interest actually to implement it. Execution of such a threat would be the negation of strategy: in and of itself it would solve no military or political problems, while it would near-guarantee a Soviet retaliation that would preclude U.S. recovery from war.

The strategic nuclear targeting review of the late 1970s, as summarized in PD 59, has prepared the way for serious discussion of the concept of stability suggested in this chapter.⁷⁸ The United States government recognizes that: Soviet military and political assets should be the primary focus for strategic offensive attention;⁷⁹ that "limited nuclear options" have little promise unless the United States has a good theory of escalation dominance (and the forces to match); and that Soviet economic "recovery" targets are both difficult to identify and are probably of relatively little interest. However, Washington does not yet recognize that crisis and intra-war stability cannot rest upon intelligent strategic offensive planning alone. The United States' SIOP can have integrity only in the context of active and passive defense. Fortunately, there is good reason to believe that the technology of air and missile defense for the late 1990s and beyond,⁸⁰ with substantial civil defense assistance, could restore a much more even relationship between offense and defense, and a useful meaning to the concept of stability.

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67. See Erickson, "The Soviet Military System: Doctrine, Technology and 'Style'," pp.28-29.
68. Richard Burt, "Arms Control and Soviet Strategic Forces: The Risks of Asking SALT to do Too Much," The Washington Review of Strategic and International Studies, Vol.1, No.1 (January 1978), p.22.
69. The title of Chapter 9 in Schelling, The Strategy of Conflict.
70. Department of Defense Annual Report, Fiscal Year 1981, p.69.
71. Notwithstanding the enormous significance which the Soviets attach to the surprise disruptive/disarming blow, their operational practices vis a vis their strategic forces have never approached the day-in, day-out instant readiness ethos of SAC and the U.S. SSBN force.
72. Department of Defense Annual Report, Fiscal Year 1981, pp.65-68, 85-88.
73. Damage limitation on a major scale is very far indeed from the desiderata of Harold Brown's Department of Defense. See Brown, Department of Defense Annual Report, Fiscal Year 1979, p.65. By way of contrast, a useful discussion of the Soviet approach to damage limitation is Daniel Goure and Gordon H. McCormick, "Soviet Strategic Defense: The Neglected Dimension of the U.S.-Soviet Balance," Orbis, Vol.24, No.1 (Spring 1980), pp. 103-27. Notwithstanding its utility, this article declines from a promising interpretative beginning into something of a bookkeeper's catalogue.

74. For a strong statement to this effect from a highly credible source, see Kissinger, "The Future of NATO."
75. I have explored this thesis in some detail in my article, "Targeting Problems for Central War."
76. Some U.S. commentators believe that they should be even-handed in their judgment as between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. Victor Utgoff of the NSC staff, for example, in a speech before the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics in Monterey, California, February 1, 1978, argued to the effect that the United States could not be trusted not to abuse a strategically superior position.
77. See Pipes, "Why the Soviet Union Thinks It Could Fight and Win a Nuclear War."
78. Useful background is provided in Henry C. Rowen, "The Evolution of Strategic Nuclear Doctrine," In Laurence Martin, ed., Strategic Thought in the Nuclear Age, (Baltimore, Md.: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979), pp.131-56; and Desmond Ball, Developments in U.S. Strategic Nuclear Policy Under the Carter Administration, ACIS Working Paper No.21 (Los Angeles: Center for International and Strategic Affairs, February 1980).
79. Department of Defense Annual Report Fiscal Year 1981, pp.66, 67, 86.
80. See Colin S. Gray, "A New Debate on Ballistic Missile Defence," Survival, Vol.XXIII, No.2, (March/April 1981), pp.60-71.

Chapter 6

ESCALATION CONTROL AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Introduction: Strategic Ideas and the McNamara Stable

This chapter develops the thesis that many, if not most, of what pass for defense policy problems continue to evade successful, or convincing, assault because the United States defense community does not address strategic questions in strategic terms. Military officers and civilian analysts who should have been trained by Sun Tzu, Clausewitz and Thucydides,¹ instead were trained on Charles Hitch and Roland McKean's book, The Economics of Defense in the Nuclear Age,² and Schelling's Strategy of Conflict. The economic wizardry of "Hitchcraft," as the new defense economics have been called, brings to mind the awe-struck comment of the French general who observed the charge of the Light Brigade at Balaclava, "c'est magnifique, mais ce n'est pas la guerre." The largely chimerical wonders of the bag of analytical techniques collectively termed systems analysis³ might have had a net beneficial effect were the United States plentifully endowed already with an institutionalized tradition of strategic thinking.⁴ As it was, systems analytic techniques constituted the schwerpunkt for the domination of the official defense community by a new breed of, essentially "glorified accountants."⁵ For reasons of survival, the armed forces followed suit.

These are harsh words, but consider the strength of the grounds for the indictment: coinciding in time with "the occupation of the Pentagon"⁶ by the (largely) RAND-schooled economists--appearing-to-be-strategists -- the United States lost a major war in Southeast Asia.⁷ (Policy

is judged by the quality of its outcome, not by the elegance of design of its inputs--i.e., "did it work?"--not, "was it well made?").

- the United States enunciated a strategic doctrine (of stable mutual deterrence deriving from assured-destruction based ideas of crisis and arms race stability) that was devoid of strategic merit.⁸ That is to say it neglected to relate military power to the accomplishment of political objectives. Although Robert McNamara apparently did not intend his preferred doctrinal leitmotiv of assured destruction to pertain in detail to actual strategic-operational plans, the facts remain that the stable deterrence ideas of the late 1960s did have a major impact upon the course, and kind, of weapon acquisition,⁹ and contributed in a lasting way to the cumulative strategic debility that began to afflict the United States seriously by the mid-1970s.

There is an apparent paradox: How could a defense establishment whose sophistication in management was the envy of the Western (and perhaps the Eastern, also)¹⁰ world, contrive to lose a major war and so mismanage its end of the strategic arms competition with the Soviet Union that it is plausible to talk about the opening of a Soviet "window of vulnerability" in the 1980s? Could it be that sound management and sound strategy need have no necessary close relationship one with the other?¹¹ This is not

to argue that sound management is not, ipso facto, desirable. Rather is it to suggest that the American defense community has approached strategic questions as if they were only problems in efficient management. If Robert McNamara had attended to Carl von Clausewitz as well as to Charles J. Hitch, he might have learnt that

War plans cover every aspect of a war, and weave them all into a single operation that must have a single, ultimate objective in which all particular aims are reconciled. No one starts a war---or rather, no one in his senses ought to do so--without first being clear in his mind what he intends to achieve by that war and how he intends to conduct it. The former is its political purpose: the latter its operational objective. This is the governing principle which will set its course, prescribe the scale of means and effort which is required, and make its influence felt throughout down to the smallest operational detail.¹²

Clearly, how a war is to be conducted has to be congruent with the aims to be achieved. The United States, in Vietnam, violated Clausewitz' principle with predictable consequences. (Explicit defense analysis can promote efficiency in the acquisition, maintenance and employment of military means--always provided somebody is minding the strategy store [i.e., is determining policy ends and the connections between ends and means]).

In the wake of the Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962, Robert McNamara is reported as having offered the revealing opinion that

there is no¹³ longer any such thing as strategy, only crisis management.

Moreover, scarcely less representative a standard-bearer for Western strategic culture than Robert McNamara, Alastair Buchan (the principal founder and first director of the Institute for Strategic Studies in London), writing in 1966, felt moved to characterize crisis management

as "the new diplomacy."¹⁴ The two, very closely related concepts that are the subject of this chapter, escalation (and its control), and crisis management, speak very directly to their roots in America (and, more generally, Western) strategic culture. As with virtually every major concept analyzed in this study, they--as disseminated and accepted in detail--constitute good ideas that became less good ideas when taken too far (as they were). The problem for this author is to identify, and develop, what is of value and should be retained, while--no less rigorously--specifying the specious and the dangerous and/or misleading. Lest there be any misunderstanding, I favor the control (as opposed to the absence of control) of escalation, just as I favor the management (as opposed, presumably, to the mismanagement, or absence of management) of crises.

The Discovery of the Obvious

Escalation and crisis management achieved what amounted to fashionable, even vogue, status, briefly in the mid-1960s among strategic and diplomatic commentators.¹⁵ Crisis management was "discovered" in the course of the intermittent Berlin crisis of 1958-61, and--most particularly--during the Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962, while escalation was the "in" idea during 1964-66 as the United States flexed its military muscles in a very selective and deliberate way over Southeast Asia.¹⁶ These were very much cases of pouring old wine into new bottles. Foreign Offices have always known about crisis management and many governments have practiced controlled escalation¹⁷--even if they did not so label

their activities. However, the theory-conscious social-scientific community in the United States wrote as if gold had been discovered.

As a historical aside, it is not self-evident that the appearance of an over-arching theory, pertaining to a long-practiced reality, necessarily improves the quality of policy. For example, notwithstanding its quite genuine gratitude to Alfred Thayer Mahan for his services as a publicist, it is a fact that the British Royal Navy had practiced the doctrine of "seapower," as expounded by Mahan, for more than two centuries prior to his detailed exposition.¹⁸ In fact, his "seapower" thesis assisted Admiral von Tirpitz in selling a battle fleet theory that was quite inappropriate for Imperial Germany.¹⁹ For a further example, American limited war theorists of the mid-1950s erected a fragile theory overwhelmingly on the basis of one historical case, Korea, while the practice of limited war has, of course, been a hardy perennial throughout recorded history.²⁰

The argument in this chapter is leading towards an indictment of poor, instant, theory, by ahistorical strategists looking backwards (virtually) to a single, or very small population of, events, and seeking therefrom the elements of a general theory, not to an indictment of theory creation writ large. This author believes that from a close study of direct historical evidence, from the folklore of statecraft, and from the viewpoint of political-military logic, it might be possible to derive useful theories of escalation control and crisis management. To date, the United States does not enjoy the services of such theories. Escalation control remains, as it began, almost solely a deductive theory resting near-exclusively upon inexplicit American cultural values. Also, because

it burst forth, as already stated, as a fashionable concept/theory in 1964-66, its further evolution was stifled when its real-world referent in Vietnam lost favor with most defense intellectuals.²¹

By 1968-69, at the latest, one could argue that the idea of controlled escalation, and limited conventional war more generally, were missing in action somewhere in Southeast Asia. However, although public scholarly development of the escalation concept virtually stopped in 1967-68, the concept--reflecting, after all, long-standing practice in statecraft--did take firm root in NATO and United States' general war planning. Unfortunately, official endorsement of the concept, as in NATO's "flexible response" document MC-14/3 of 1967 for a very important example, virtually coincided with a period of defensiveness, and even complacency,²² on the part of strategic theorists, meaning that NATO (and the United States in its ideas pertaining to the conduct of central war) was bequeathed an undeveloped infant of a concept, not a mature theory. Moreover, the controlled escalation concept embraced by NATO-allied officials reflected all too accurately the ethnocentric weaknesses of the strategic theories outlined in the West as of 1964-66. The "Golden Age" of American strategic theorizing, for all its deductive merits, was as culturally insular as apple pie.

Crisis management, like the control of escalation, had immediate appeal to a management-skill oriented United States defense community. Here is "how to do it" advice--which is always popular. More often than not, when scholars brief officials on their academic "findings," those "findings" amount to the conclusion that "the subject is more complicated

than you think." (The discovery, and elaboration, of complications is an academic specialty. In the words of the science fiction writer Poul Anderson: "I have yet to see any problem, however complicated, which, when you looked at it the right way, did not become still more complicated.")²³ Crisis management, in short, was touted in the mid-1960s as a body of knowledge which, in reality, constituted the distilled "lessons" believed to be derivable, very largely from the Cuban Missile Crisis. The first wave of commentaries on crisis management tended to focus near exclusively upon the events (and non-events) of October 1962²⁴-- with some references to the recent crisis experience over Berlin.²⁵ Scholarly social science, ever eager to pursue quantifiable wisdom, was scarcely less eager to leap aboard the crisis study train. The product of many years of prodigious social-scientific enquiry into crises has been, with a few noteworthy exceptions,²⁶ a literature of almost monumental inutility. For example, one unquestionably scholarly compendium offers its unfortunate readers an Appendix with no fewer than 311 "propositions." Without evidence of irony, proposition number 302 holds that "the credibility of threats increases when there is consistency between verbal statements and action."²⁷ The appropriate response has to be, "Amen."

Notwithstanding the pomposity and naivete that permeates the crisis management literature, it should be remembered that this literature was catalyzed by a particular event and that it had a very serious, indeed an unquestionably praiseworthy, motive. First, in the early and mid-1960s, difficult though many people today find it to recall, there was a sense of crisis-management achievement: that in October 1962 the United

States' decision-making system at the highest level had been tested almost à l'outrance and had not been found wanting.²⁸ Second, scarcely less important, there was a belief that although we were successful, we were also fortunate. Third, it was believed by many commentators, analysts, and theorists that through proper codification of "the rules of crisis management" the element of fortuna in future crises could be reduced in favor of deliberate (partially pre-planned) prudent calculation. Among the most penetrating descriptions of the intent behind the crisis management theorizing of the early to mid-1960s were these words by Robert Osgood and Robert Tucker:

There is, of course, nothing novel in the aspiration, as such, to manage diplomatic crises. What is novel in contemporary "crisis management" is the intensity of aspirations to exercise a far greater measure of control over those critical junctures in state relations than men have exercised in the past and the confidence that this may indeed be done through exhaustive analysis, imaginative speculation, and careful planning for future actions. Whereas in the past crises all too often "broke" on men who, being unprepared and having no time, were made the prisoners of events, crisis management would reverse this ancient and today dangerous form of servitude and make men the masters of events.

Almost needless to say, the optimism to which Osgood and Tucker referred stemmed from reflections upon the course and outcome of the very recent experience of Cuba, October 1962.

The Theory of Escalation (Control)

The (Western, really American) theory of escalation, to stretch terminology a little, holds that force can be applied purposefully in measured graduated quantities, of specified quality, to a point--or zone--where an enemy will decide that his expectation of (future) loss exceeds his expecta-

tion of gain, and hence he will acquiesce in a process of war termination.³⁰ As a very bare framework of rational decision-making, escalation theory can accommodate a wide range of deterrence theories. Also, the theory, if left sufficiently sparse of detail, need not be vulnerable to charges of strategic-cultural relativism (or ethnocentricity), or of wishful thinking. To have a vision of escalation need not be to endorse that particular vision as prospective reality.³¹ Nonetheless, defensible though the theory of escalation is in very general terms against theoretical (and prospective operational) assault from all quarters, in practice the theory has had a powerful specific impact upon Western defense thinking. Aside from what a wise strategist might make of the theory of escalation, American (and NATO-European) officials have tended to the following beliefs:

- war, particularly nuclear war, is a bargaining process, or competition in risk-taking.
- that bargaining process, or competition in risk-taking, has thresholds likely to be recognizable as such by both parties.
- escalation is a process of graduated punishment (and the threat thereof). Both sides will have many opportunities (at the thresholds) to consider carefully whether or not the stakes of the war are worth the damage yet to be inflicted and suffered.
- neither side will have grave difficulty understanding the strategic/political meaning of the military actions taken by the other.³²

- neither side will be beyond deterrence.
- a "seamless web" of escalation possibilities/probabilities means that militarily convincing defense capability is not needed at any particular level of the process, though particularly at the lower levels, because deterrence works through the fear of the damage that can be inflicted at ever-higher levels of violence. Indeed, a truly convincing-seeming denial capability with respect to theater-conventional and/or theater-nuclear forces, might well undermine the Great Chain of Deterrence that reposes in the escalation connections between different kinds of military forces.

The above constitutes only a very modest caricature of orthodox NATO deterrence thinking. In practice, the theory of escalation, as interpreted by very self-interested NATO members, has functioned as an alibi for a fundamentally non-serious in- (European) theater defense posture. As Kenneth Hunt has argued, the principal duty of NATO's conventional forces in Europe is to guarantee the Soviet Union a "major war" should they invade Western Europe.³³ That "major war" raises the very credible prospect of a theater-nuclear war, and a theater-nuclear war renders very credible the prospect of intervention by central nuclear systems. In short, the strength of NATO's defense posture for deterrence, appraised in a fairly narrow military way, lies in the fact of, and believed escalation chains interconnecting the NATO "triad" of conventional, theater-nuclear, and strategic nuclear forces.³⁴

In principle, this theory, with its multiple synergisms, has much to recommend it--particularly if the prospective adversary shares Western values and would engage in rational decision-making in familiar Western terms. Unfortunately, there is no good reason to make these assumptions. Some Western commentators have sought to argue that, "in the event," Soviet decision-makers would likely prove far less idiosyncratic, or bloodthirsty, than might be believed on the basis of study of Russian/Soviet national style and the evidence of Soviet literature and military exercises.³⁵ The proposition is that Soviet operational strategy would demonstrate a sensitivity to thresholds relevant to a process of relatively early war termination, far beyond any signals received in the West in peacetime. I am not scornful of this proposition, but neither am I particularly respectful. Unwelcome though the judgment is, it is difficult to find an evidential base to controvert Jack Snyder's argument that

Countercultural strategic analysis is not well-developed in the Soviet Union and has been in retreat since the Cuban Missile Crisis. As a result, there has been no discernible effort to explore the advantages of flexible-option strategies. Based on what is visible to the outside observer, Soviet crisis decision-makers would appear intellectually unprepared for real-time improvisation of a doctrine of intrawar restraint.³⁶

In short, while the Soviet Union may identify some potential thresholds in an East-West military conflict, it is not at all obvious--on the basis of the admittedly very imperfect evidence available--that they embrace any theory of intra-war deterrence or of escalation control that could function as a combat dampener in conjunction with Western policies.³⁷ This is not to suggest that the thin reed of intrawar thresholds is not worth grasping, however fragile, for reasons of the damage implications of an

absence of escalation control. But it is to suggest that an American theory of escalation control has to take explicit account of the strong possibility that the Soviet Union will seek to wage war according to its own rules.

Western theorists of escalation, no matter how well they hedged their theoretical frameworks with caveats, provided Western decision-makers with a dangerous concept. Herman Kahn's hypothetical escalation ladder may be a metaphor, really a heuristic device to stimulate creative official thought, but in practice it may have encouraged some particularly dangerous illusions concerning the potential for the control of conflict. By way of summary:

- Many politicians and officials, unused to strategic theoretical thinking, have difficulty distinguishing between "what can be conceived" and "what is likely to happen."
- The logical structure of a "44 rung" escalation ladder may be too explicit with reference to official minds in search of answers rather than aids to constructive thought.³⁸
- Theoreticians' caveats notwithstanding, some officials may have acute cultural difficulty understanding that the rungs and thresholds (if any) most obvious in Moscow almost certainly are substantially different from those most obvious in Washington.
- Finally, and perhaps of greatest significance, escalation theory, to many strategically ill-educated persons, may

seem to offer a "management offset" to a major decline in relative military muscle.

As with the concept of crisis management, discussed below, the idea of escalation control contains an inherent tension which may prove fatal for its efficacy in policy practice. In the enduring absence of substantial domestic damage-limitation capabilities, American enthusiasm for the control half of the escalation control concept promises to be fatally erosive of the desired deterrent effect. In the Disney World of some American theorists, fearful Soviet leaders either are deterred by the Great Chain of Escalation reasoning, or--in the worst case--are brought to their senses abruptly by sharp escalatory initiatives by the United States³⁹: i.e., deterrence is restored. Yet no explanation is offered as to why the U.S. would be willing to escalate an unfolding conflict while the Soviet Union would be unwilling to continue that escalation process--there simply is no basis presented for anticipating such U.S. boldness or Soviet caution. Indeed, there is some evidence (discussed below) to suggest that just the inverse would be the case. As argued extensively already in this study, no one can predict with high confidence which superpower will lead an escalation process: geopolitical logic suggests that it should be the United States, for reasons of local weakness in Eurasian theaters, but Soviet strategy may overwhelm that logic.

If the logic of geopolitics holds true, and the United States is in the driver's seat of escalation, seeking to reverse the course of some local conflict, then the American cultural attraction to escalation control in the context of a totally vulnerable American homeland, could

well vitiate the threat efficacy of the escalation concept. The more carefully the United States seeks to control a process of escalation, the less menacing her deterrent profile may seem in Soviet eyes.

The Theory of Crisis Management

For a rather crude, though not wholly misleading, caricature, crisis management attained the status of being a chic concept in the early to mid 1960s--apparently it had cultural appeal to some of those Americans whom David Halberstam described, ironically, as The Best and the Brightest. The concept of crisis management, and the theory (or theories) that was woven around it, spoke to some enduring American cultural themes.

First, crisis management suggested toughness, or at least a tough-minded approach to problems. (Adversaries of the United States would do well to remember that, notwithstanding recent foreign-policy behavior, the United States is fundamentally a very macho country. Gary Cooper in High Noon and George C. Scott in [and as] Patton may have been cultural stereotypes--but those stereotypes should not be dismissed lightly by America's friends and foes. Cooper and Scott spoke truly to, and of, American culture.)

Second, crisis management appealed to the American proclivity to solve problems and to define conditions as problems. By definition, a crisis is, or may be, a problem-solving mechanism (as is war). Third, crisis management was attractive to Americans as a concept because it was both optimistic (crisis management) and skill-oriented. The concept, in its very structure, suggests that crises can be managed--and Americans have never lacked for confidence in their ability to manage effectively.

Fourth, crisis management seems to imply that the (inferred) pacific management of crises is the natural order of affairs. The prevalence of lawyers or--more realistically perhaps--of people with some legal training, in the United States' Government, has the skill-bias effect upon "policy planning" of encouraging the belief that "a deal" can always be struck between fundamentally reasonable advocates for their state-clients. The concept of crisis management has immediate appeal to an American policy-making community heavily populated by lawyers, (temporarily) lapsed-lawyers, or lawyers--manque's-- who have been "socialized" by the net-unhealthy effect of a legal perspective imbued at an impressionable age, to believe that reasonable people will eventually come to terms to manage a crisis to the satisfaction of all interested parties. In other words, the very concept of crisis management encourages the view that every crisis can be managed successfully, if only 'the right package' of incentives (and disincentives) can be assembled and negotiated. There is what may be termed a "fallacy of negotiability."⁴⁰

For example, Roger Fisher, Professor of Law at Harvard, has long advised American governments to "give them a yesable proposition"⁴¹--in other words, seek a way of packaging American desires such that the adversary will feel moved to say "yes." This is yet another example of a good idea that all too easily becomes a poor idea. There are occasions--as, for example, over "who rules South Vietnam?," or "shall the American hostages be released?"--where men of good will on both sides cannot attain a mutually satisfactory crisis outcome. It is worth recalling the rather obvious historical points that not all crisis landscapes are well populated

with men of good will (for example, Munich, September 1938); sometimes the issue at stake does not lend itself to a compromise decision; while not all crises permit one party to make an offsetting side payment in return for acquisition of the major prize in the conflict. In practice, Roger Fisher's advice to "give them a yesable proposition" serves as a temptation to appeasement (although Fisher does not, of course, intend it as such). Fisher advocated his "yesable proposition" option in relation to the American hostages in Tehran, but no one, including Professor Fisher, succeeded in designing a proposition that appealed to Shi'ite zealots. If there are no "yesable" propositions on the horizon, and if the issue truly is a matter of vital national interest, one has little recourse other than to send in the Marines. The final resolution of the hostage crisis in January 1981 had little or nothing to do with the quality of American diplomacy.

As Osgood and Tucker have suggested (quoted above), the crisis management theorists of the early and mid-1960s were reacting to the perceived fact that, as they believed, the world was fortunate to have been spared nuclear war in October 1962.⁴² It seemed sensible to argue that although every crisis has distinctive features (of time, place, strength of commitment of adversaries, alliance complications/assistance, correlation of forces, and so on), at a fairly high level of generality one should be able to specify some guidelines for crisis management, or "conventions of crisis,"⁴³ that would have value apart from the details of one or two particular passages of diplomatic arms. Although I am very friendly to the idea that policymakers should be forearmed for crisis with appropriate

general wisdom, I am also concerned lest policymakers enter acute international crises forearmed either with "wisdom" so general in character that it can offer no guidance to policy determination, or with apparent "wisdom" that offers a false sense of security. One can conceive of situations where probably it would be preferable for policymakers to enter a period of crisis with something approaching a tabula rasa of prior thought, rather than with minds full of half (or less) relevant pre-canned contingency plans.

Notwithstanding the prodigious efforts of scholars to provide an explicit "data base" of historical crises, the (possibly unfortunate) fact remains that the historical and social-scientific education of the average senior American policymaker remains lamentably elementary. His understanding of the dynamism of crises tends to be limited to: any crisis decision-making in which he participated personally; the Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962; the crisis slide of 1936-39; and the crisis slide of 1914.⁴⁴ Unfortunately, each of these historical cases for easy reference constitutes a quite distinctive "dominant scenario." Moreover, with respect to October 1962, and particularly 1914, it is far from obvious that scholars agree at any useful level concerning the lessons of successful (1962) and unsuccessful (1914) crisis management. Indeed, 1914 is an extreme case of crisis pathology⁴⁵--one might well learn more from the successful crisis management practiced by the Great Powers in 1908-1909 over the Bosnian crisis.

Notwithstanding the major scholarly endeavor undertaken to dissect crisis phenomena, the end result--at least to date--has been disappointingly

obvious. For example, one distinguished scholar, Ole R. Holsti, having engaged in scrupulous, painstaking research, informs us that the following are the most important items of crisis-management advice:⁴⁶

Perhaps the first prerequisite is a sensitivity to the adversary's frame of reference. (Comment: Sun Tzu said much the same in the China of the Third Century, B.C. "Know the enemy" is good advice, but its propagation is hardly a triumph of scholarship.)

Avoid taking steps which seal off "escape routes."

Reducing the adversary's incentives to escalate will probably require a combination of incentives and threats. (Comment: this is so obvious as to be banal and without value.)

In crisis diplomacy, as in other forms of communications, actions tend to speak louder than words. (Comment: this is good advice, but again, stupefyingly obvious.)

Make every effort to slow the pace of crisis events. (Comment: this was good advice for October 1962; was irrelevant for 1939; was believed by the best military brains of the time to be bad advice in July 1914;⁴⁷ and could be disastrous advice for NATO vis à vis an unfolding military crisis in the 1980s.)⁴⁸

During a crisis responsible policymakers should be in control not only of broad strategic decisions, but also of the details of implementation." (Comment: clearly, and sensibly, Professor Holsti does not want a battalion commander in the U.S. Fifth Corps starting World War III on his own initiative. However, the long-standing American tradition of trusting "the man on the spot" should not be discarded too lightly. Far from starting World War III, prompt and resourceful action taken by a battalion commander might just resolve a military problem that could otherwise have escalated had it been left to the judgment of the man with the global perspective in the White House.)

Although there should be policy value in wisdom derived from the careful historical study of statecraft and from a high-level theory of crisis management, the facts remain that the American record of crisis

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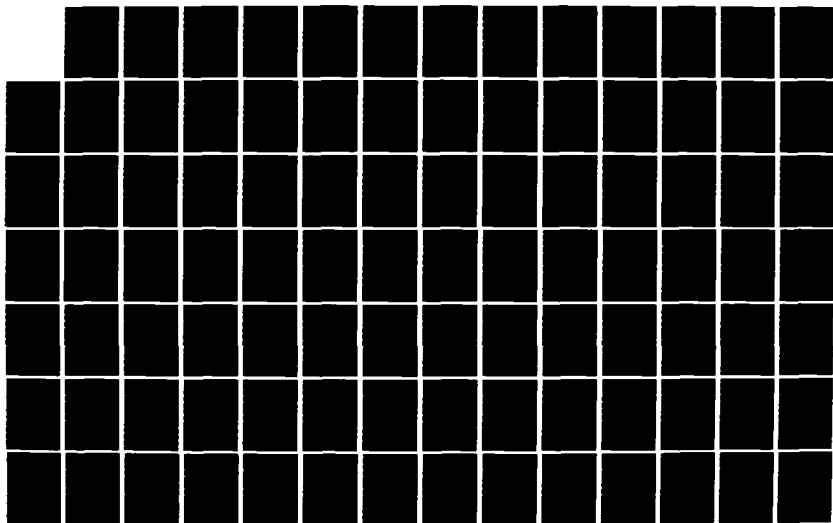
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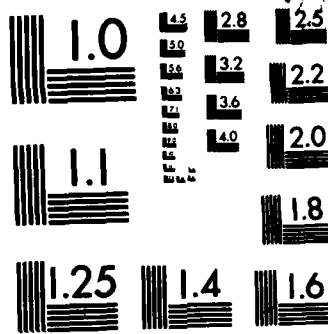
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management prior to enunciation of crisis management theory was not obviously inferior to the post-enunciation record. This, of course, is not necessarily to indict the theory. Any theory, of any degree of explanatory power, may be ignored or misapplied by fallible and fumbling policymakers--not to mention the distressing fact that adversary policymakers may either hold to a quite different set of rules of crisis management, or may read your theory and ambush it in detail.⁴⁹

To lend a little much-needed reality to this discussion, readers are invited to consider Holsti's six items of crisis-management advice in the light, or dark perhaps, of the protracted Iranian hostage crisis of 1979-81, and the overt Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan. I suggest that a President would be no more likely to know how to direct American grand strategy vis a vis those two protracted crises after having studied Holsti's advice, than he would have been before. Persuasive, well-informed studies of the Iranian hostage crisis have yet to appear. However, I believe that such studies, when they do appear--as they surely will--are very likely to demonstrate that the United States' government crippled the effectiveness of its diplomacy, first by attaching, or appearing to attach, far too much importance to the lives of the hostages; and then by being overly concerned not to antagonize Iran further (drive her into the arms of still less friendly elements, and so on). What happened is that the United States lost "face" over the hostages, and as Thomas Schelling has argued, face "relates not to a country's 'worth' or 'status' or even 'honor' but to its reputation for action. If the question is raised whether this kind of 'face' is worth fighting over,

the answer is that this kind of face is one of the few things worth fighting over."⁵⁰

Finally, as with the concept of escalation control, there is an inherent tension in the concept of crisis management which can subvert the effectiveness of American policy. The term crisis implies: a short period of time; an important issue at stake; a turning point; a decision; and danger.⁵¹ Management, on the other hand, implies: deliberate control; careful planning; and the efficient and measured application of resources. If deterrent effect, to some important though indeterminate degree, is believed to flow from the fear that one is making threats "that leave something to chance," in Schelling's phraseology,⁵² then a devotion to careful management of the crisis may largely negate putative deterrent effect. In principle at least the term management is neutral as to its implied policy context. One could manage, carefully, to place one's armed forces on a genuine war-footing (and, as noted already in this study, at a very high alert status the risk of accidental war has to increase). However, management, in Western perspective, tends not to carry that implication.

It is probably no exaggeration to argue that just as it may be held that deterrence has "failed" if force has to be used, so crisis management often is judged to have failed when war, nonetheless, breaks out. In terms of Western culture, wherein peace is normal and war is abnormal, crises tend to be viewed either as Acts of God (or of a capricious nature), or as acts of a malevolent adversary. It would be almost inconceivable to describe as successful a case of crisis management which resulted

in war. American strategic theory and strategic policy makes no provision for the coercive use of crises.⁵³ Indeed, the very idea of crisis fomentation as a deliberate act of policy is a challenge to American strategic (and political) culture. This is probably unfortunate, though culturally inevitable, because a new rule of crisis diplomacy, to date unknown to defensive, stability-minded, theorists in the United States, is to the effect that "you are more likely than not to win a crisis that you yourself initiate" (because you choose the time, place, and issue of the crisis, and you have the initiative).

Although they carry some risk of a wider war erupting, local crises are--on occasion--the deliberate and intended outcomes of the policies of the Soviet Union. Even if Western policymakers are unable to foment local crises in the prospect of political gain, they should not forget the fact that Soviet policymakers, although not wanting war, do see (some) local crises as advancing Soviet power. Disorder, instability, crisis and war are all, by definition, undesirable in Western perspective--but not, necessarily, in the Soviet view.

The Soviet Perspective

The United States' defense community, though it acknowledges, belatedly, the distinctiveness of Soviet strategic thought, has yet to recognize many of the logical implications of that alien way of thinking. For example, the United States has yet to begin to come to terms with the plausible implications of the assertion in The Soviet Officer's Handbook that

In wartime, military doctrine drops into the background somewhat,

since, in armed combat, we are guided primarily by military-political and military-strategic considerations, conclusions, and generalizations which stem from the condition of the specific situation. Consequently, war, armed combat, is governed by strategy, not doctrine. (Emphasis added)⁵⁴

Although the Soviet Union holds to a supremely political view of war, there is good reason to believe that the Soviet General Staff, theorizing in peacetime, anticipates that in a future war the Stavka (Headquarters of the Supreme High Command) would function much as it did in World War II.⁵⁵ The Stavka is a fully integrated policy-making body of senior civilians and soldiers and the General Staff is its executive agency. There are no good grounds for believing that civilians on that body, in the event, would view problems of strategy very differently from their military colleagues. Western models of civil-military relations, by and large, do not apply to the U.S.S.R.⁵⁶ Colonel P.A. Sidarov, the author of the words quoted above, was not voicing a highly personal opinion, intended to stimulate debate, nor was he engaged in the propagation of misinformation. The Officer's Handbook, with an original printing of 83,000, should be taken at face value: it is intended to assist "officers in broadening their outlook and in resolving many practical problems related to the training and education of subordinates."⁵⁷ Moreover, the Soviet-Clausewitzian view that war is a political instrument is not in any way challenged by the proposition that "war...is governed by strategy, not doctrine." While the Soviet Union would not engage in war lightly, or for frivolous reasons, once bent upon combat Soviet military professionals appear to expect to be permitted to conduct military operations according to sound military criteria.

Sensibly enough, Soviet officials (and military professionals) are committed to the view that war should be waged only for the most serious of reasons, only in pursuit of clearly defined (in advance) political goals, and only with a level and kind of violence appropriate to the political goals sought.

Whereas Western theorists of limited war have been "means-oriented" in their search for ways of limiting war, Soviet military thinkers are obliged by Soviet military doctrine (grand strategy) and the state ideology behind that doctrine to be "ends oriented" in their consideration of what kinds of force may be permitted in particular kinds (defined politically--not technologically) of war. The long-standing Soviet denial of the validity of American limited-war theory almost certainly has reflected a genuine professional repudiation of what has been believed to be an erroneous approach to conflict.⁵⁸ The Soviet Union does not have an undifferentiated view of war. Of particular relevance to this discussion, Soviet authorities appear to recognize the difference between a theater conflict in Europe and a superpower homeland-to-homeland war.⁵⁹ Also, they recognize a variety of local "just wars" in the Third World. However, it is important to remember that doctrinal recognition of possibilities need not be matched by war plans constrained in major ways. It is suggested in this chapter that although Soviet officials acknowledge, in practice, the somewhat basic concepts of escalation (control) and crisis management, much of the detail appended to those concepts by Western theoreticians is simply not relevant to the Soviet view of diplomacy and war.⁶⁰

While Soviet writers do not deny the potential for catastrophe (though,

in their--Soviet--perspective, survivable catastrophe) inherent in nuclear-weapon use, they do not, by and large, endorse the idea that military operations should be conducted with a view to manipulating adversary expectations of further damage.⁶¹ In short, once combat begins, in pursuit of clear political goals, the Soviet armed forces would not, on the literary evidence available, be engaged in a "diplomacy of violence" or in "the manipulation of risk." Instead, political objectives, translated into military terms, would be sought. Consistent with political guidelines, Soviet military professionals would be unleashed to solve military problems in proper military fashion. The leading Western authority on Soviet military thought (and military practice), John Erickson, has offered the following relevant judgments:

It is worth noting in passing that the founders of the Soviet strategic missile force were not strategic theoreticians but experienced and distinguished artillery commanders, doubtless having little or no patience with American strategic obstructions and high-falutin' nonsense about zero-sum games.⁶²

And,

In the sequence of strikes, the maximum number should be allocated to the first launch, in order to maximize survivability though the phasing of launches can afford a certain degree of flexibility, which after survivability is certainly a Soviet objective.⁶³

Escalation theory, in the United States, has been something of an academic plaything: with great ingenuity richly differentiated logical sequences of escalatory actions were invented. Unfortunately perhaps, it appears to be the case that the Soviet Union is not attracted to the idea of engaging in a very carefully graduated "diplomacy of violence"--she seems to believe that the "grammar" of war is largely sui generis

and that, ergo, there is an internal logic or integrity to military operations which, albeit within predetermined political parameters, should be permitted to run its course. In other words, military action has political meaning in the sense that war must be conducted only for appropriate political ends, but not in the sense that war comprises a series of violent political messages.

It is not "the Soviet way" to choose to place reliance upon the self-restraint exercised by others--if there is an alternative direct-control option. Deterrence, pre- and intra-war, is believed by Soviet theoreticians to be the consequence of anticipation of war-waging success, or of net prowess in combat.⁶⁴ Although a Soviet government may surprise us in the event, it is virtually inconceivable that the Soviet Union would edge its way onto and up an escalation ladder, hoping that political decisions by very frightened Western politicians would yield victory at relatively modest cost. In Soviet perspective, the political character of the war would (or should) determine the strategy and tactics of military operations. Historical experience⁶⁵ does not encourage a Soviet leader to expect major gains to be secured at low cost, while the price of victory against a first class enemy (the Third Reich, or the United States) is known, and expected, to be very high indeed. Wishful thinking is not a trait known to be highly developed among Soviet leadership cadres, civilian or military.

Soviet thinking on the set of problems and possibilities encompassed by the concept of escalation control has to be considered both in the light of Soviet attitudes and beliefs and--scarcely less important--in

the context of a major war. The Soviet Union is not a status quo power seeking only to ensure the stability of its existing imperium. Careful escalation control, for motives easily recognizable in the West, is not consistent with Soviet strategic culture. In a war embracing the whole European theater of operations, the Soviet Union would anticipate the employment of any, and perhaps all, theater weapons (conventional, chemical, battlefield-oriented theater-nuclear, and deep-strike theater-operational nuclear weapons). Although the Soviet military literature, and Soviet military exercises, accommodate the idea of the possibility of a non-nuclear phase to a European conflict, there is no Soviet evidence known to this author which would suggest Soviet anticipation even of the possibility of a theater-wide totally non-nuclear conflict.⁶⁶ In Soviet terms, and in Soviet estimation of NATO-European terms, the political stakes of the war would be so high that both sides would be expected to use their most effective weapons. (This is not to deny the small possibility of Soviet planning for some very limited-purpose military operations west of the existing dividing line, which would not entail expectation of resort to nuclear combat.)

Should the Soviet Union decide to attack NATO-Europe, a decision emerging perhaps as a consequence of Soviet frustration in attempting to deal with muscular dissent in Eastern Europe, then it should be presumed that the Soviet leaders would have thought through what the cost might be of an assault against a very heavily nuclear-armed adversary. By way of sharp, and even embarrassing, contrast to the thinking that underlies NATO's doctrine of flexible response, the Soviet Union gives every evidence

of believing that "war is war," and that because wars are either won or lost (stalemate would translate into "lost" in the Soviet political context) it is preferable to try hard to win. Victory, in Soviet military--and, we must presume, authoritative political terms, is not a nostalgic idea clung to by old soldiers, and neither is it simply a morale-boosting concept;⁶⁷ rather is it the operational objective of the Soviet armed forces, at whatever level of violence they are committed to action. For ideological and sensible analytically based military reasons, the Soviet Union remains convinced that victory is possible in wars of all kinds.⁶⁸

Once a Soviet government takes the decision to fight, it should not be expected that the Soviet military establishment would be much constrained by considerations of escalation control. The Soviet Union would not employ force needlessly (in its estimation), but neither should Western countries anticipate a Soviet willingness to risk paying a major military price in return for a considerable lowering of the risks of escalation.⁶⁹

Although Western defense analysts have discerned some evidence of Soviet identification of a possible geographical threshold between theater war and superpower homeland-to-homeland war (a central war, as Americans theorists are wont to express it--ethnocentrically) I am not at all convinced that Soviet military planners place any credence upon the serious possibility of a theater war confined to Europe--which is not to deny their evident interest in such an option. In Soviet perspective, they confront a multinational adversary

- whose societal assets in Europe constitute "the principal prize" in world politics. Thinking geopolitically, as they do, Soviet planners must notice what was obvious to Nicholas Spykman:⁷⁰ that control of the Eurasian Rimlands, ultimately, means control of the world. In terms of her long-range competitive prospects, the United States simply cannot afford to permit the assets of Europe to fall totally under Soviet control (or even controle).⁷¹
- who has roughly 300,000 Americans in uniform (plus their dependents) deployed forward (by and large) in the European theater. The Soviet Union cannot wage war against NATO-Europe alone.
- who is in the process of modernizing his nuclear strike systems so as to provide a convincing-looking threat to the Soviet homeland. Soviet leaders probably understand that in the eyes of NATO leaders the Polish-Soviet frontier does not constitute an appropriate political-geographical threshold for the containment of a war in Europe.⁷²
- whose fundamental strategic concept embraces the idea of a seamless web of deterrent effect--flowing from the "planned deficiencies" of the lower levels of the NATO Triad (or "tripod").⁷³ Year after year, Soviet leaders observe NATO's intra-mural conflicts over the credibility of the connection between events pertinent to NATO's Central Front in West Germany and American central systems. Those Soviet leaders

cannot afford to take very seriously Henry Kissinger's gloomy judgment "that our European allies should not keep asking us to multiply strategic assurances that we cannot possibly mean or if we do mean, we should not want to execute because if we execute, we risk the destruction of civilization."⁷⁴ (However, Western defense planners, for their part, cannot assume, prudently, that Henry Kissinger is wrong.)

For these reasons, it is improbable that the Soviet Union anticipates at all seriously the prospect of confining a war initiated in Europe to Europe. Probably the most appropriate way to express this inferred Soviet perspective is to suggest that although a Soviet government would prefer a war to be confined to Europe, and would not be eager to accelerate the expansion of the geographical domain of military operations, it would--for reasons of elementary prudence--both expect, and have to anticipate, American resort to the employment of central strategic systems. Moreover, by way of a truly vital qualification, the Soviet Union almost certainly would not be willing to initiate armed conflict in Europe unless it was reasonably confident that the central war, down the road, could be won. No Soviet government should be expected to place total reliance upon the counter-deterrent efficacy of its strategic force posture.⁷⁵

As best I can tell, on the basis of several different kinds of evidence, the Soviet Union, while not willing to "waste" nuclear weapons on politically or militarily meaningless targets, would wage war in the European

theater, or beyond it, with an overriding determination to win. In terms of targeting tactics, this determination--in a central war--should translate into very large-scale strikes directed against such elements of the American strategic forces' posture as could be struck (perhaps even struck cost-ineffectively); against the National Command Authority (NCA); against C³I nodes; against immediate war-supporting industry; and against the national power grid.⁷⁶ The Soviet targeting "withhold" suggested here vis à vis urban areas is of no great military relevance, could be interpreted as applied escalation control, but probably is better viewed simply as military common sense. Readers of this study should be aware of the fact that Western strategic theorists advertising ideas for the control of escalation in central war are condemned to listen to the echoes of their own voices. Save for very negative commentary on American theories of strategic flexibility,⁷⁷ escalation and limited war, the Soviet military theory establishment simply has not produced a literature on the subject of escalation and its possible control.

Aside from political-propagandistic motives for not joining a transnational debate on the subject of escalation (or, on "the rules of engagement or exchange" in nuclear warfare), the Soviet defense establishment probably has not felt moved to advance down the escalation theory road because the very concept of escalation, at least in terms familiar via the American theoretical literature of the mid-1960s, is alien in the Soviet context. In Soviet perspective, political leaders decide if, when, where, and for what objectives, Soviet military power will be applied

in action--following which the "how" of combat is a matter for professional military determination.⁷⁸

The concept of escalation control is very much the product of an insular, as opposed to a continental strategic culture. The insular situation of Great Britain and the United States, and a good part of their actual (as opposed to romanticized) histories, have lent credence to the view that a country could "take as much and as little of the war as he will."⁷⁹ Insularity, in the context of superior friendly seapower, prior to the maturing of the means of long-range aerial and space bombardment, meant that the United States or Great Britain (more precariously--for reasons of the narrowness of the Straits of Dover) would, or should, retain the initiative in war direction.⁸⁰ Those countries enjoyed the luxury of being able, unilaterally, to decide just how much effort to apply to a particular political-military venture, because--essentially--the center of national power was not immediately at risk in war.⁸¹

Insular countries, and particularly insular democracies like Great Britain and the United States, are unusually vulnerable to the siren appeal of a concept such as escalation control. This concept presumes the feasibility of deliberate manipulation of the military environment in favorable ways (which was long a condition for these two countries by virtue of their geographical location); appeals to the pragmatic, engineering-manipulative impulse that is dear to the American (and to a much lesser degree, the British)⁸² self-image;⁸³ and, virtually by definition, affirms the insular-democratic axiomatic preference for order

(meaning stability consolidated through explicitly or tacitly negotiated compromise).

Readers may recall the discussion in Chapter 2 which made explicit the strategic-cultural implication of continental heartland political location. The Soviet Union shares none of the deep cultural drives which incline American politicians and officials to look with favor upon the concept of escalation control. One can imagine a Soviet leadership group so fearful of "the next," or the anticipated "next but one," step in American strategic targeting execution, that it develops--in real-time--an overwhelming interest in the control of escalation. However, proceeding inductively rather than deductively, I see few, if any, grounds for the still widespread American (and NATO-European) belief that, "on the night," the Soviet Union would actually conduct its military operations paying very close attention to the escalatory potential of those operations.

Some Implications

The analysis in this chapter, though admittedly hampered by lack of evidence from the Soviet side--not to mention the obvious point that there is no "hands-on", real-world experience of the functioning of escalation processes in a nuclear war--reinforces the conclusions reached in the prior discussion of deterrence and stability. Looming over all of these subjects is the apparent fact of a Soviet "battlefield" view of the proper use of nuclear weapons in war.

As with mainstream American theories of deterrence (through the threat of punishment) and stability, so the American theories of escalation control and crisis management are riven through with American cultural

desiderata. The issue is not whether those desiderata are, or are not, praiseworthy, rather is it whether or not those cultural desiderata lead, in practice, to military postures and policies which would be unlikely to be able to withstand the traffic of Soviet policies driven by Soviet culturally-derived impulses. The basic idea of escalation control, on the surface at least, appears to be compatible with both American and Soviet strategic cultures. The idea that more and more (or different) force may be applied in discriminating ways for the achievement of political objectives is hardly culture-specific. Similarly, the idea of intra-war deterrence, even if alien in the Soviet context, once understood potentially has to be a major candidate for policy influence. It is not difficult to believe that Soviet leaders, in the course of a war, would prefer not to conduct military operations in such a way that the United States might feel moved strongly to begin to execute a series of strike options against Soviet political-control targets. The caveat increasingly is the thought that Soviet leaders would be most unlikely to jeopardize the achievement of their war-waging goals for reason of anticipation of damage likely to be inflicted by the United States. The prospect of such damage would have been discussed prior to the taking of the decision to fight.

Those relatively optimistic thoughts aside, American defense planners have no prudent choice other than to assume a strategic-culturally very distinctive Soviet adversary in time of acute crisis. I believe that the Soviet Union is very slow to anger--to the point where a decision is confronted on the proximate use, or non-use, of military power. Soviet

leaders, courtesy of their Russian/Soviet historical, and Marxist-Leninist ideological inheritances, almost axiomatically think the worst of their adversaries. (There are no disillusioned liberals in the Politburo.) In short, typically there is virtually no emotional input to Soviet decision-making on foreign policy.⁸⁴ Soviet government is very much committee government, and Soviet political leaders know, or think they know, that they are beset by actual or potential enemies. A major problem in Soviet-American understanding is the extent to which the American government is highly personal in the hands of one man who has few, if any, ideological preferences, and probably little sense of historic mission and responsibility at all comparable to those familiar to the men in the Kremlin. The very structure of the Soviet mode of leadership, since 1964 at least, lends it a degree of predictability which is quite absent from the American (Presidential) scene.

In addition to the dampening effect imposed by committee government upon policy initiative, the apparent Soviet belief that "war will run its course" also should serve to discourage boldness in prediction of putative chains of escalation logic. Furthermore, it should not be forgotten that although the Soviet Union has been elected by History (i.e., Lenin with a revolver) to lead and guard the transformation of capitalism/imperialism into socialism (thence, eventually, to communism), the Soviet Union is both the vanguard and the principal asset of proletarian internationalism. Soviet leaders are not supposed to place the citadel of socialism (i.e., the U.S.S.R.) at serious risk through adventurous diplomacy.

7
Finally, although the Soviet Union traditionally has been, and should be expected to continue to be, relatively slow to anger, once the decision to fight is taken Soviet leaders are unlikely to endorse any outcome short of military, and hence political, victory. Unlike the United States, the Soviet Union will not stumble into a war, thinking about its political objectives in the course of fighting. Should the Soviet Union, for whatever mix of the most compelling reasons, decide to fight NATO, it is fairly safe to predict that any tentative Soviet consideration of escalation-control factors rapidly would be overwhelmed by the will to win (and the sense of duty to try to win).

The Soviet Union, courtesy of many living historical memories, knows that war is a very serious business--a theory (of escalation control) which poses a potentially major threat to military efficacy is unlikely to secure many converts in Moscow, even under the dire pressure of wartime events. Soviet leaders know, through historical and personal experience, that if a war can be won virtually any kind of damage sustained eventually can be made good. Recognition of this perspective, alien though it is, did not permeate the writings of American theorists on escalation in the 1960s.

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2. Charles Hitch and Roland McKean, The Economics of Defense in the Nuclear Age (New York: Atheneum, 1966, first pub. 1960).
3. See E.S. Quade, ed., Analysis for Military Decisions: The RAND Lectures on Systems Analysis (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1964); and E.S. Quade and W.I. Boucher, eds., Systems Analysis and Policy Planning: Applications in Defense (New York: Elsevier, 1968).
4. See Russell F. Weigley, The American Way of War (New York: Macmillan, 1973); and John Shy, "The American Military Experience: History and Learning," Journal of Interdisciplinary History, Vol. 1 (Winter 1971), pp.205-28.
5. Edward N. Luttwak, Strategy and Politics: Collected Essays (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, 1980), p.263. A little earlier, Luttwak offered the thought that "our defense planners take pride in knowing nothing of military history...". P.261.
6. Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy in the White House (London: Deutsch, 1965), p.283. For a positive assessment of the new defense economics by a participant-commentator, see Ralph Sanders, The Politics of Defense Analysis (New York: Dunellen, 1973).

7. This author does not deny that the United States effectively won the campaign on the ground--the fact remains that the war was lost.
8. See Chapters 4-5.
9. See Sanders, The Politics of Defense Analysis, p.9.
10. Quantified defense analysis was hardly novel in the 1960s; what was novel was the invention, at RAND in the early 1950s, of systems analytic techniques which, basically, comprised operations research without fixed and given goals. For example, whereas in operations research one might ask "what is the most cost-effective mix of air defense weapons to deploy and maintain against particular levels of threat?"; in systems analysis, one could ask the question "should the United States maintain any mix of air defense weapons?" The Soviet General Staff is no less enthusiastic about explicit defense analysis than is the U.S. Office of the Secretary of Defense. For example, see V.V. Druzhinin and D.S. Kantorov, Decision Making and Automation: Concept, Algorithm, Decision (A Soviet View). Soviet Military Thought Series of the U.S. Air Force, No.6 (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1975, first pub. Moscow, 1972). This book explains the science of automated troop control. Soviet criteria identify military cybernetics as constituting the third phase of the ongoing "revolution in military affairs."
11. This concern permeates James R. Schlesinger's Selected Papers on National Security, 1964-68, (Santa Monica, Cal.: RAND, September 1974).
12. Clausewitz, On War, p.579.

13. Quoted in Coral Bell, The Conventions of Crisis: A Study in Diplomatic Management (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), p.2.
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15. For an explanation of the historical context favoring the emergence of these concepts, see Colin S. Gray, Strategic Studies and Public Policy: The American Experience (Lexington, Ky.: The University Press of Kentucky, 1982, forthcoming).
16. The book of the period was Thomas C. Schelling, Arms and Influence (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1966).
17. See Richard Smoke, War: Controlling Escalation (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1977).
18. Which is hardly surprising, given the fact that Mahan's theories were devised inductively from meticulous study of the operational practice of the Royal Navy.
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20. The best overviews of limited war theory and practice are Robert E. Osgood: Limited War Revisited (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1979); and idem. "The Post-War Strategy of Limited War: Before, During, and After Vietnam," in Laurence Martin, ed., Strategic Thought in the Nuclear Age, (Baltimore Md.: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979), pp.93-130.
21. "Period classics" include Herman Kahn, On Escalation: Metaphors and Scenarios (New York: Praeger, 1965); and Bernard Brodie, Escalation

- and the Nuclear Option (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1966).
22. This argument is developed in detail in my Strategic Studies and Public Policy.
 23. Quoted in Arthur Koestler, The Ghost in the Machine (London: Pan, 1970), p.77.
 24. For example, see Harland Cleveland, "Crisis Diplomacy," Foreign Affairs, Vol.41, No.4 (July 1963), pp.638-49.
 25. See Buchan, Crisis Management.
 26. Ole Holsti, Crisis, Escalation, War (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1972); Smoke, War: Controlling Escalation.
 27. Charles F. Herman, ed., International Crises: Insights from Behavioral Research (New York: Free Press, 1972), p.320.
 28. A popular book that provided a graphic first-hand record of the achievement was Robert F. Kennedy, 13 Days: The Cuban Missile Crisis (London: Pan, 1969, first pub. 1968).
 29. Robert Osgood and Robert Tucker, Force, Order and Justice (Baltimore, Md.: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1967), pp.342-3.
 30. See Alexander George, David K. Hall, and William E. Simons, The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy: Laos, Cuba, Vietnam (Boston: Little, Brown, 1971).
 31. But, provision and discussion of a particular metaphorical ladder of escalation (as in Kahn, On Escalation), will mislead those who are easily misled. Kahn recognizes this problem, though--with justice--argues that theorists should not desist from developing interesting,

and occasionally sophisticated ideas, just because some officials (et al.) will fail to understand them properly.

32. If only because their incentive to understand will be so high. I find this assertion to be grossly optimistic. Aside from the blinkering effect of cultural stereotype thinking, the plain physical facts of the "fog of battle" must impede timely receipt, let alone analysis, of information concerning military activity.
33. An extreme, though penetrating, statement of this thesis is Robert Close, Europe Without Defense? 48 Hours that Could Change the Face of the World (New York: Pergamon, 1979).
34. Kenneth Hunt, The Alliance and Europe: Part II: Defense With Fewer Men, Adelphi Paper No. 98 (London: IISS, Summer, 1973), p.20, and passim.
35. Nathan Lienes, for example, has conducted research for many years intended to illuminate what "real", as opposed to apparent or pretended, Soviet strategy might be.
36. Jack L. Snyder, The Soviet Strategic Culture: Implications for Limited Nuclear Operations R-2154-AF (Santa Monica, Ca.: RAND, September 1977), pp.39-40.
37. See Joseph D. Douglass, Jr., Soviet Military Strategy in Europe (New York: Pergamon, 1980); and Joseph D. Douglass, Jr. and Amoretta M. Hoeber, Soviet Strategy for Nuclear War (Stanford, Ca.: Hoover Institution Press, 1979); and The Soviet Theater Nuclear Offensive, Studies in Communist Affairs, Vol.1 (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1976). Also, see John Erickson: "Soviet Theater-Warfare Capability: Doctrines,

Deployments, and Capabilities," in Lawrence L. Whetten, ed., The Future of Soviet Military Power (New York: Crane, Russak, 1976), pp.117-56; and "The Soviet Military System: Doctrine, Technology and 'Style'," in Erickson and E.J. Feuchtwanger, eds., Soviet Military Power and Performance (Hamden, Conn.: Archon, 1979)

38. See Kahn, On Escalation, p.37-41.
39. Initial nuclear use in Europe, and execution of one or more sub-SIOP level limited nuclear options, are widely viewed in this light--as shocks to restore deterrence.
40. In American culture, traditionally, a stigma attaches to obvious failure in negotiations. The idea that a U.S. government might have performed well (even succeeded--in terms of protecting the national interest) by not reaching agreement remains somewhat alien. This strain to agreement in the American body politic can be a severe handicap in the SALT context, for example. As several commentators have observed, the long history of the SALT II negotiations showed a fairly steady American retreat from negotiating goals judged to have been sensible in 1972-73. See Paul Nitze's prepared statement in U.S. Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, SALT II Treaty, Hearings, Part I, 96th Cong., 1st sess., (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1979) pp.441-2. Appropriate commentary on Mr. Carter's almost indecently rapid retreat from his ambitious, and praiseworthy "comprehensive" SALT II package of March 1977, may be found in Foy D. Kohler, How Not to Negotiate with the Russians (Washington, D.C.: Advanced International Studies Institute, The University of Miami, 1979), pp.17-18. Also, see Strobe

- Talbott, Endgame: The Inside Story of SALT II (New York: Harper and Row, 1979), Chapters 3-4.
41. Roger Fisher, International Conflict for Beginners (New York: Harper Colophon, 1970, first pub. 1969), Chapter 2.
 42. In retrospect, President Kennedy's crisis management success in October 1962 looks somewhat less impressive than it did at the time. The United States had the military power, local and strategic, to insist upon withdrawal of the missiles. Nikita Khrushchev knew that he had no choice other than to back away. This is not to deny that there was some danger of the military dynamics of the crisis escaping political control, but it is to deny that was any substantial risk of the Soviet Union choosing to fight.
 43. See Bell: The Conventions of Crisis; and "Crisis Diplomacy," in Martin, ed., Strategic Thought in the Nuclear Age, particularly pp.173-82.
 44. As is well known, Barbara Tuchman's book, The Guns of August--August 1914, (London: Constable, 1962), had made a deep impression on President Kennedy, who was determined that, by way of contrast to what occurred in the July crisis of 1914, he would not permit himself to become the prisoner of any pre-planned logic of military events.
 45. See Ole R. Holsti, "The 1914 Case," The American Political Science Review, Vol.LIX, No.2 (June 1965), pp.365-78. Also see Paul Kennedy, ed., The War Plans of the Great Powers, 1880-1914 (London: Allen and Unwin, 1979).
 46. Holsti, Crisis, Escalation, War, pp.222-5.

47. It was believed by most competent military professionals at the time that any unilateral slowing in the pace of execution of mobilization would be to invite defeat. See L.C.F. Turner, "The Significance of the Schlieffen Plan," in Kennedy, ed., The War Plans of the Great Powers, 1880-1914, Chapter 9.
48. Because of its known preference for blitzkrieg-type campaigning, the Soviet Union might be accorded the 24 or 48 hours that it needs to out-mobilize NATO and thereby prepare the way for a short-war victory, should NATO capitals seek to "cool the crisis" beyond the point when the Soviet Union has decided to fight.
49. As Herman Kahn has written: "If one nation uses the threat of escalation to coerce an opponent, the escalation will be more effective in exerting pressure if it does not depend too explicitly and publicly on 'escalation theory'. (Indeed, it probably is a serious error to look as if one has read a book)." "On Establishing a Context for Debate," in Frank E. Armbruster, et al., Can We Win in Vietnam? The American Dilemma (London: Pall Mall, 1968), p.51.
50. Schelling, Arms and Influence, p.124.
51. For an excellent theoretical dissection of the phenomenon of crisis, see Charles A. McClelland, "The Acute International Crisis," in Klaus Knorr and Sydney Verba, eds., The International System: Theoretical Essays (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1961), pp.182-204.
52. See Thomas C. Schelling: The Strategy of Conflict (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960), Chapter 8; and Arms and Influence, Chapter 3.

53. Even in the cases discussed in George, Hall, and Simons, The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy, the American intent was fundamentally, or strategically, defensive--"coercive diplomacy" was a possible muscular approach to compel an adversary to desist from inimical activity, and/or to disgorge gains already made. In Soviet terms, of course, active American resistance to regional imperialism (masquerading as a war of national liberation--as in Vietnam) is, by definition, an example of the waging of unjust, aggressive war. See General-Major A.S. Milovidov and Colonel V.G. Kozlov, The Philosophical Heritage of V.I. Lenin and Problems of Contemporary War (A Soviet View), Soviet Military Thought Series of the U.S. Air Force, No.5 (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1975, first pub. Moscow 1972), Chapter 2; and General-Major S.N. Kozlov, The Officer's Handbook (A Soviet View), Soviet Military Thought Series of the U.S. Air Force, No.13 (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1977, first pub. Moscow 1971).
54. Ibid., p.65.
55. See Harriet F. Scott and William F. Scott, The Armed Forces of the U.S.S.R., (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1979), particularly pp.99-102. Also of interest is Richard Pipes' judgment that the organization and procedures of the Soviet High Command are such that "[i]t taxes the imagination how, under these circumstances, there could develop in the Soviet Union two distinct military doctrines." "Militarism and the Soviet State," Daedalus, Vol.109, No.4 (Fall 1980), p.12, fn.21.
56. Although the U.S.S.R. has a tradition of civilian supremacy at least as strong as does the United States, for reasons of history

- and political prudence (and KGB practice) the dividing line between soldier and civilian in the U.S.S.R. is considerably blurred.
57. S.N. Kozlov, ed., The Officer's Handbook, p.vii.
 58. See the informative and persuasive discussion in Benjamin S. Lambeth, Selective Nuclear Options in American and Soviet Strategic Policy, R-2034-DDRE (Santa Monica, Cal.: RAND, December 1976). Also see Thomas W. Wolfe, The SALT Experience (Cambridge, Mass.: Ballinger, 1979), pp.162-66.
 59. See the excellent, and appropriately tentative discussion in Douglass, Soviet Military Strategy in Europe, pp.187-93.
 60. Phil Williams offers the sensible thought that "[m]erely because there is no formal Soviet recognition of crisis management as a distinct type of behavior does not necessarily mean that the Soviet leaders have not developed procedures and techniques designed to contain within tolerable limits their confrontations with the opposing super-power." Crisis Management: Confrontation and Diplomacy in the Nuclear Age (New York: John Wiley, 1976), p.10. However, there is a problem of evidence--beyond the inferences that may be drawn concerning Soviet motives behind policy action (and inaction).
 61. The "by and large" qualification intrudes in the text because there appears to have been some very modest level of discussion in the Soviet military literature of strategic targeting designed to attack the political will, or morale, of an enemy. See Douglass and Hoerber, Soviet Strategy for Nuclear War, pp.27-8. However, it is not totally clear from the Soviet texts that terror strikes for morale destruction,

apres Douhet, are either what the Soviet authors had in mind, or have met with official Soviet approval.

62. John Erickson, "The Soviet View of Nuclear War," Transcript of broadcast on BBC Radio 3, June 19, 1980, p.8.
63. Ibid., p.10.
64. An interesting Soviet commentary by a highly qualified author is Henry Trofimenko, Changing Attitudes Towards Deterrence, ACIS Working Paper No. 25 (Los Angeles: Center for International and Strategic Affairs, UCLA, July 1980). Notwithstanding the disinformation which this publication provides in large measure, the author does, in places, reveal more than he may have intended.
65. And what is more, even personal (historical) experience. See the career details of members of the Soviet High Command provided in Scott and Scott, The Armed Forces of the U.S.S.R., pp.120-6. Serious civilian and military leaders in the United States appear as amateurs by comparison. This is not, of course to suggest that (very long) experience is the only virtue: nonetheless, the Soviet High Command is distinguished by both the quality and quantity of the experience of its members.
66. See the extended discussion in Norman Friedman and Colin S. Gray, Soviet Theater Nuclear Forces' Issues (Croton-on-Hudson, N.Y.: Hudson Institute, December 1979). Also, see Douglass, Soviet Military Strategy in Europe, Chapter 7.
67. For a view skeptical of the judgment in the text, see Robert L. Arnett, "Soviet Attitudes Towards Nuclear War: Do They Really Think They

- Can Win?," Journal of Strategic Studies, Vol.2, No.2 (September 1979), pp.172-91. Useful balanced discussion is David Holloway, "Military Power and Political Purpose in Soviet Policy," Daedalus, Vol.109, No.4 (Fall 1980), particularly pp.18-21.
68. Western commentators should never forget that Soviet military professionals believe that war, in all its aspects, lends itself to "scientific" study. Soviet texts on "military science" should be taken at face value as reflecting the genuine Soviet approach to the subject. See Kozlov, ed., The Officer's Handbook, pp.47-61; Milovidov and Kozlov, eds., The Philosophical Heritage of V.I. Lenin and Problems of Contemporary War, Chapter 4; General-Lieutenant G.T. Zavizian and Lt. Col. Yu. Kirshin, "Soviet Military Science: Its Social Role and Functions," in Selected Soviet Military Writings, 1970-1975 (A Soviet View). Soviet Military Thought Series of the U.S. Air Force, No.11 (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1977), pp.76-85. Zavizian and Kirshin claim that "military science is one of the important factors for attaining victory in war." As the American editor of this collection of important articles, William F. Scott, observes: "In Soviet military writings, nothing less than 'victory' ever is considered." P.64.
69. A fascinating speculative analysis of the possibility that the Soviet Union would be very concerned to minimize unwanted collateral damage in a war in Europe is Joseph D. Douglass, Jr., A Soviet Selective Targeting Strategy Toward Europe (Arlington, Va.: System Planning

Corporation, August 1977). Douglass develops his argument further in Soviet Military Strategy in Europe, pp.70-79.

70. "Who controls the rimland rules Eurasia; who rules Eurasia controls the destinies of the world," Nicholas Spykman, The Geography of the Peace (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1944), p.43.
71. The French contrôle, which translates as a somewhat distant general supervision, is close to the usual meaning ascribed to a "Finlandized" Western Europe.
72. Over the years, Soviet theater-operational strike assets have been deployed overwhelmingly on Soviet rather than Eastern-European soil. This continuing fact suggests that the Soviet Union does not expect to be able to preserve its homeland as a sanctuary in a war in Europe. For details of Soviet MRBM/IRBM deployment, see the map in Clarence A. Robinson, Jr., "Soviet SALT Violations Feared," Aviation Week and Space Technology, Vol.113, No.12 (September 22, 1980), p.15. See the brief discussion in Douglass, Soviet Military Strategy in Europe, pp.171-2.
73. On the NATO "tripod," see Harold Brown, Department of Defense Annual Report, FY 1981 (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, January 29, 1980) , p.91.
74. Henry Kissinger, "The Future of NATO," The Washington Quarterly, Vol.2, No.4 (Autumn 1979), p.7.
75. The American defense community has been outstandingly lax in addressing problems relevant to issues of military transition--from theater-conventional to theater-nuclear operations, and from theater to central war. Notwithstanding the difficulty of the subject matter, the absence

of well-conducted studies of transition matters is as notable as it may prove fatal one day.

76. Unclassified Western commentary on this subject is virtually non-existent. For a lonely example of such commentary, see Douglass and Hoeber, Soviet Strategy for Nuclear War, Chapter 6.
77. For example, see Trofimenko, Changing Attitudes Towards Deterrence, particularly pp.21-6.
78. See Pipes, "Militarism and the Soviet State," p.11, fn.21.
79. Sir Francis Bacon, quoted in Bernard Brodie, War and Politics (New York: Macmillan, 1974), p.178.
80. See Michael Howard, The British Way in Warfare: A Reappraisal (London: Jonathan Cape, 1975). Also pertinent is Howard's masterly short study, The Continental Commitment: The Dilemma of British Defence Policy in the Era of the Two World Wars (London: Temple Smith, 1972).
81. But, for some negative considerations, see Brian Bond, Liddell Hart: A Study of His Military Thought (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1977, first pub. 1976), particularly p.75.
82. The British have elevated "muddling through" to the level of a distinctive national approach to strategic policy-making.
83. See Stanley Hoffman, Gulliver's Troubles: or the Setting of American Foreign Policy (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968), Chapter 5.
84. This judgment clearly does not apply to the Khrushchev period.

Chapter 7

ARMS COMPETITION AND ARMS CONTROL

Crisis of Arms Control

For the better part of fifteen years, arms control considerations have been in, or close to the forefront of American policy deliberations over research and development on, and the acquisition of, strategic nuclear weapons.¹ Indeed, younger civilian officials and military officers have not known, first hand, a strategic policy-making process that did not have to accommodate "the SALT factor." For twelve years, SALT has either been imminent or underway. The purposes of this chapter are to examine the nature of the arms competition that supposedly was the object of the arms-control negotiating endeavor, and the character of the arms control process.

Because of its ongoing character since November 1969, because of its major linkage to East-West political relations and because of the political dynamics which have driven it forward, it is not unfair to observe that there has been a "mad momentum" to the SALT process.² That pejorative characterization is not intended to imply, ipso facto, that national or international security necessarily has been harmed by the arms-control process, but it is to imply that the process has been endorsed and has continued even as expectations of substantively worthwhile outcomes have withered.³ Indeed, it is no exaggeration to argue that many people, somewhat strangely, discern merit in the SALT process, even though they

deplore, or at least are not impressed by, the direct outcomes produced by that process to date. A major reason why the debate over SALT II seemed never, or only very rarely, to rise above the level of dispute over secondary, essentially technical, details, was because neither "side" (to simplify) in the debate had thought through the criteria that should be applied for the assessment of the SALT II Treaty. Hence, had the debate over SALT II ratification gone its full course in 1979, to a vote on the floor of the Senate, whichever "side" won would have won, very possibly, for the wrong reasons.⁴

Barry Blechman, former Assistant Director of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA), has offered the following judgments on the course of the SALT II debate in the late summer and fall of 1979:

Although passage was far from certain, betting in Washington was that approval by the full Senate would be in hand by Thanksgiving. The subsequent travails of the treaty are traceable not to the surfacing of any new arguments about the agreement itself, nor to new information about the balance of strategic weapons, but to other types of events [Soviet combat brigades in Cuba; the Tehran hostage crisis; and, finally, the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan].⁵

Blechman's words, quoted here, raise again the basic question: "what are the right reasons for approving or disapproving a SALT agreement?" It is quite evident from the historical record that SALT, process and agreements, by the late 1970s, was markedly different from the dominant American expectations of the early 1970s.⁶ In and of itself that fact was of no great consequence. However, few public officials took the time and trouble to stand back from the quest for a new agreement to ask fundamental questions of their activity. Ultimately, as a consequence of this neglect of basic--or strategic--issues, as the debate in 1979

was to reveal, neither side really developed a very persuasive story to tell. What was lacking was a theoretical center to the debate--a common framework for the conduct of orderly debate. Although Senators and the general public could assess rival point-scoring on individual issues, "heavy" missiles or promised restraint in Backfire production, basing, and operations, for examples, they had no doctrinal guide as to which arguments were more, as opposed to less, important. In the fall of 1980, Andrew Pierre, who is certainly not hostile to arms control, could write as follows:

Arms control is, indeed, in crisis. There is a need to rethink its aims and reconceptualize some of its basic premises before commencing the next stage, rather than automatically moving on into SALT III (if and when SALT II is ratified).

I would argue that the United States defense community should "rethink" and "reconceptualize" before, not after, SALT II ratification. The debate over SALT II has been raised here in order to introduce and illustrate the thesis that the United States' defense community has never benefited from an arms control theory worthy of the name--essentially because, to quote Johan Holst, "we just do not have an adequate explanatory model for the Soviet-American arms race."⁸

Holst offered that pessimistic judgment more than ten years ago. The intervening years--years of fairly intensive superpower arms-control interaction and even more intensive arms competition (on the Soviet side, at least)--still have not seen the presentation of "an adequate explanatory model," but several false or partial models have been identified for what they are.⁹ As a consequence, this chapter presents, in an appropriately tentative manner, at least the broad outlines of a model of the

Soviet-American competition. The following points cannot be stressed too vigorously: if a proponent of one or another approach to arms control policy problems lacks a theory of arms race dynamics he, quite literally, cannot know what he is about; while, if he reposes confidence in a theory of arms race dynamics which demonstrably is false, his advice on arms control similarly should be flawed.¹⁰

It should be emphasized, as I have argued elsewhere,¹¹ that the American defense (and arms control) community is interested in forwarding the objectives of arms control rather than particular processes of arms control--save insofar as they are believed to be likely to have instrumental value. Albeit on a modest scale, arms control as a set of widely accepted broad objectives of policy has spawned a constituency and even a vested interest in its support. As with all vested interests and constituencies, program maintenance can come to dominate considerations of probable policy outcomes.¹² The maximizing of arms control business has healthy short-term bureaucratic-political-financial implications for the arms control community.¹³ But, as Barry Blechman has observed,

[e]ven in its early days, the experience of the Carter Administration demonstrated conclusively that neither the American political system nor the contemporary condition of relations among nations is capable of sustaining arms negotiations on a broad front.

In short, what are needed are "tangible accomplishments."¹⁵ Unfortunately "the arms control paradox" has done its worst--in other words, those areas in most need of negotiated attention have proved, unsurprisingly, to be the most difficult. At some risk of inducing a

mood of extreme pessimism, it is important to lay out very explicitly the ingredients in the current crisis of arms control.

First, although there is very general agreement on the identity of the broad objectives of arms control--to reduce the risk of war; to reduce the damage that might be suffered should war occur; and to reduce the burdens of peacetime defense preparation--there are no authorities on the subject of rendering those objectives operationally effective in American defense policy. To be specific, there is no generally accepted theory of the causes of war--so, which postures and doctrines reduce the risk of war, and which do not? Furthermore, in good part because of its heavy focus on the problems of prewar deterrence, the American defense community has never developed a mature theory of intra-war deterrence which could withstand the probable traffic of Soviet General Staff-authored targeting plans.¹⁶ Although it is relatively easy to save money on defense, there is much to recommend the argument that because of the geopolitics of the Western Alliance it is particularly foolish to cut costs close to the margin of sufficiency in the strategic-forces region. The strategic force posture places only a very modest burden on the defense budget¹⁷--in comparison to manpower intensive general-purpose forces--and, it encompasses that high end of the technology competition spectrum wherein Soviet officials know that they are at a major, enduring, disadvantage.

Second, although it is difficult to argue with Leslie Gelb when he asserts that

Arms control has essentially failed. Three decades of U.S.-Soviet negotiations to limit arms competition have done little more than to codify the arms race.¹⁸

The fact remains that since the United States has yet to decide just what it is about in arms control negotiations, it is perhaps too harsh to conclude that "[a]rms control has essentially failed." Failed to accomplish what? There can be no doubt that the United States' arms control community, in reviewing the 1970s, must judge its performance to have been unsatisfactory.¹⁹ However, given the realities of a Soviet strategic culture that has no known concept of "sufficiency," and an American political system both profoundly suspicious of the Soviet Union and insecurely attached to the idea that "rough parity" is good enough,²⁰ it is not obvious that arms control policy failed in the 1970s.

Third, following directly from the line of argument developed above, a very important aspect of the current crisis of arms control is profound uncertainty over the proper operational objectives of arms control. How high should the criteria be set for policy success or failure? "[F]or the most part, SALT agreements have tended to ratify, rather than restrain, the expansion of Soviet forces"²¹--but could they do anything else? If the SALT process can only reflect political and military reality, is it fair, or enlightening, to criticize its American part-authors for failing to accomplish the impossible?

Fourth, it is an open question whether negotiated arms control agreements are politically feasible for an American government, given both the kind of foreign policy pursued by the Soviet Union under the banner of peaceful coexistence, and what is beginning to be understood about the internal dynamics of the Soviet weapon procurement process.²²

Fifth, if the charge can be sustained that, in some important respects, an ongoing, or imminent, arms control process contributes both to the astrategic skewing of Western defense programs away from the path of policy rationality and to the psychological disarmament of noteworthy political constituencies in the West--then it may be the case that the West cannot afford arms control. Richard Burt has argued that

SALT, during the last decade, did not become a forum for American and Soviet doctrinal convergence. In fact, it tended to mask²³ the different directions in which the two sides were moving.

As phrased, this judgment is misleading. SALT masked nothing: though it may be true to argue that the existence of a SALT process encouraged American officials and commentators to believe, falsely, that the Soviet Union had "signed up" for some rough facsimile of standard Western theories of strategic stability.²⁴

Sixth, if it is true that after nearly seven years of very hard and diverting labor the best that the SALT negotiators could do was to achieve an agreement that comprised essentially a photograph of the contemporary strategic balance,²⁵ and which permitted both sides to proceed with force modernization unhindered in important ways, then the SALT process may be vulnerable to the charge of triviality or irrelevance.

Although it has become commonplace to argue that there is a crisis of arms control,²⁶ I am not convinced that the crisis, generally, is correctly characterized. There is a crisis in that many people have come to wonder whether, judged on the historical record, arms control really is, or even can be, as important as successive American administrations have asserted to be the case. As Richard Burt and others have

noted, SALT and the debate over its future, tends to direct attention to matters of only secondary significance.²⁷ The real defense debate of 1979-80 was not over the merits of SALT II, rather was it over the adequacy of Western defense programs.²⁸ Also, an arms control process such as SALT encourages the paying of attention to "a symbolic balance based on static hardware counts" and not "an operational balance reflecting the real capabilities of the two sides to engage in sustained nuclear conflict."²⁹

Strong advocates of negotiated arms control are very much on the defensive today--a condition well-illustrated by the fact that the Director of the Arms Control Association was moved to entitle an article "A Farewell to Arms Control?"³⁰ This study, while certainly sympathetic to the argument that the United States could and should improve the quality of its negotiating performance in the future, is rather more sympathetic to the proposition that the poverty of "tangible accomplishments" in arms control to date must, very largely, be laid at the doors of an inadequate momentum in Western defense programs (i.e., "we need a better hand with which to play"), and of a principal adversary who is incapable, for strategic cultural reasons, of cooperating in any arms control endeavor which exceeds in its mandate the registration of facts.

On balance, SALT II should be judged to be a poor bargain for the United States. However, that belief is not particularly important in the context of this chapter. The many references here to SALT II are solely for the purpose of illustrating a more general argument--this study is not concerned to prosecute one side of the SALT II debate, yet

again. The effective demise of SALT II in the late fall of 1979 was beneficial for Western security not so much because a particular Treaty regime was avoided, but rather because that demise enables the United States' defense community to place some valuable, perspective-granting distance between the arms control record of the 1970s and what might be attempted in the 1980s. In the words of Richard Burt:

In fact, even a temporary hiatus in the SALT process provides an opportunity for unfettered thinking about American nuclear options during the coming decade and beyond. The opportunity should be exploited.³¹

Unfortunately, many people appear to have difficulty understanding that the crisis of arms control is really only a crisis of formally negotiated arms control. A poor, or only marginally useful, SALT II agreement is not a triumph for arms control. Arms control should be about reducing the risks of war, reducing the damage that might be suffered should war occur, and reducing the burden of peacetime defense preparation. Those goals should be forwarded through a well-designed defense policy. Moreover, if they can be forwarded through formal inter-state negotiations, it will only be because of the well-designed defense policy that American negotiators had as "the hand" with which they could play.³²

Understanding the Arms Race: A New Model

In company with Albert Wohlstetter,³³ I believe that employment of the term arms race to characterize the Soviet-American military relationship of the past twenty years misleads as much as it informs. However, this study is not about the scoring of rather easy debating points on the subject of "when is an arms race an arms race." It is a fact that

the world at large, with some justification, believes there to be, extant, "a nuclear arms race." In macroscopic terms, at least, this belief is not unreasonable.

- The United States and the Soviet Union have identified each other as their principal adversary.
- Each country is almost desperately attentive to the course, and detail of the arms programs of the other.
- Each country attends carefully to its relative position on the multi-level military balance.

These three facts do not really qualify the Soviet-American military relationship as an arms race. Unfortunately, many of the pejorative connotations of "arms race" are all too lightly attached to Soviet-American military rivalry, notwithstanding the absence of supporting evidence.³⁴

Arms races tend to be associated, popularly, with the risk of war; somewhat paradoxically, they also tend to be viewed as an expensive exercise in futility (a particularly mindless mechanistic model of arms race dynamics still attracts a great many commentators).

Insofar as history offers any general wisdom on the subject, it is to the unhelpful effect that some wars have been preceded by arms races and some have not.³⁵ A fundamental theoretical problem that awaits scholarly attention pertains to the identification of cases. States which envisage the possibility of fighting one another, naturally and responsibly seek to achieve or maintain a favorable relationship of military power. Since political rivalry very often is expressed, in part, in

military rivalry--and since wars tend not to occur between states who had not considered each other as prospective enemies until the eleventh hour of peacetime--some historical juxtaposition of arms race and war is only to be expected. Notwithstanding the empirical knowledge claimed, and the theoretical ingenuity displayed, the possibility remains that arms races are more the invention of polemical writers and social scientists in search of cross-historical general theory, than they are genuinely identifiable event-sequences that do, or may, have dynamics different from peacetime defense preparation as usual.

Heretical though the thought appears to be, it is worth considering the proposition that arms race theory has made so little progress in large part because the concept of an arms race is mainly metaphor. The confusion of metaphor and reality may have encouraged Western arms controllers to seek what Robin Ranger has termed "technical," as opposed to "political"³⁶ arms control. Because arms controllers could conceive of an arms race system, to an important degree distinct from the framework of political relations, they came to believe that system could be controlled in useful ways with only the most minimal reference to the political environment. Authoritative confirmation of this claim has been provided by Barry Blechman.

The American theory of arms control would isolate such negotiations [SALT] from politics. In theoretical terms, arms limitation talks should be viewed as technical exercises, directed at constraining the risks which weapons themselves add to existing political conflicts. As those espousing arms control made no pretense of solving political conflicts through the negotiations they proposed, they saw no relationship (other than that artificially instilled by politicians) between progress or lack of progress in settling underlying sources of conflict and progress or lack of progress in arms negotiations.³⁷

Blechman proceeds to notice that "[i]n practice, however, the United States has closely linked movement in arms control with broader political accommodations with the Soviet Union." Nonetheless, the practice of "linkage" admitted,³⁸ the fact remains that the political roots of competitive arms behavior continue to escape the attention of American policy-makers. Where many theorists of arms racing, and many policy proponents masquerading as arms race theorists,³⁹ have erred, has been in focusing far too heavily upon the putative interactive traffic in the alleged arms race system. Indeed, the very concept of a largely autonomous arms race system encourages a quest for the military dynamics of military interaction. Scholars of Soviet-American relations tend to be ignorant of the precise historical detail of the process of genesis of a weapon system in the United States, and profoundly (and, by and large, excusably) ignorant with reference to Soviet program details. This is a subject where broad-brush characterization, deduced from first principles, can lead one astray all too easily.⁴⁰

Consider the likely impact of the following first principles upon one's understanding of the dynamics of arms competition and the prospects for negotiated restraint:

- The defense programs of each side are, and can be, greatly influenced by perceptions of the other side's programs--actual, anticipated, and possible.
- Both sides would like to reduce the burden of resource allocation for defense.

- The larger, and more dynamic, the defense programs of the two sides, the greater the policy influence of defense-minded hard-line officials.
- Both sides would like to be able to negotiate a plateau in weaponry, or at least to be able to set some "cap on the arms race," so that strategic predictability is enhanced--permitting both governments to deny requests for programs that plainly would provide "excessive" capability.

The above very short list encapsulates much of the theoretical, first-principle baggage with which the United States government conducted SALT and its end of the arms competition through much of the 1970s.⁴¹ Each of the four principles was true--for the United States. None of the four principles was true, or contained enough truth to be useful as a guide for policy, vis à vis the Soviet Union. It is difficult to improve on the words of Sun Tzu:

Know the enemy and know yourself; in a hundred battles you will never be in peril.

When you are ignorant of the enemy but know yourself, your chances of winning or losing are equal.

If ignorant both of your enemy and of yourself, you are certain in every battle to be in peril.⁴²

This study suggests that, to date, American policy-makers have not made adequate efforts to know the enemy, and that even the level of American self-knowledge has left much to be desired. The arms race metaphor, aside from its unhelpful pejorative aspects, encourages scholars and officials to consider Soviet-American military relations apart from their

local strategic-cultural soil. Although this discussion is cast in terms highly critical of past United States nuclear-weapons and arms control policy, it should not be supposed that all, or even most, of the strong criticism of that policy (really policies) that has been voiced of recent years is any better grounded in strategic-cultural realities than is the policy assailed. Just as one should not leap, with fashion, from a simple-minded theory of detailed inter-state action-reaction to a scarcely less simple-minded theory of eigendynamik, so one should not leap too precipitously from the erstwhile belief that the Soviet Union was in the process of converging upon the American theory of strategic stability (through the maintenance of mutual assured destruction capabilities),⁴³ to the conviction that the Soviet Union is on the high road heading, deliberately, for the goal of clear strategic superiority.⁴⁴ All sides of the American nuclear-weapon policy debate are prone to project very American perspectives and concepts upon an alien, though not unfathomable, Soviet strategic culture.

The questions which underlie the analysis which follows of the Soviet-American arms race are the following: is there a sufficient basis of common interest for an arms control process to be able to achieve outcomes deemed at least minimally useful by the two sides? Even if a sufficient basis of common interest can be identified, what, and how strong, are the domestic political forces in the two superpowers likely to interdict the arms control process in a negative way? Finally, is it plausible to suggest that the future of arms control is likely to be as unimpressive--or short of "tangible accomplishments"--as its past, because of

the very character of the Soviet Union? (In other words, to control the arms race do we need, first, to see a major change in the nature of the Soviet polity?)⁴⁵

What drives Soviet-American military rivalry? The answer, at the macro level, is an antagonism that is part geopolitical, part ideological; while at the micro level, Soviet defense programs are driven very substantially by their own inertia and by a distinctively Soviet brand of bureaucratic politics.⁴⁶ Each country runs, or jogs, in the so-called arms race in a fashion to be expected given its very different political system.

Arms race model builders tend to err because they have not, by and large, recognized the critical importance of the "level of analysis" problem. As a result, apparently strong--and certainly superficially plausible--cases can be made both for the proposition that the superpowers may be likened to two swordsmen, thrusting and parrying, and for the proposition that there is so high a degree of autonomy in the arms programs of each side that the concept of an arms race is really very misleading. I discern both value and error in all major schools of arms race analysis, so, rather than indulge in a protracted, eventually negative, exercise in critical review, instead I offer the outline of a new model for the understanding of the arms competition. Perhaps the most difficult idea to communicate, though it is commonplace to pay lip-service to it, is that the two super-powers genuinely are different in their characteristic arms race behavior. Jonathan Steinberg, for example, has suggested that

An arms race is, after all, an immense social, political, legal, and economic process. Its influences penetrate every corner of the societies involved, and its attendant manifestations are simply too complex to fit the standard categories of historical

analysis. Even if the subject of study is only one of the participants in such a race, as is the case here [Imperial Germany], the number of elements in that nation's social, cultural, economic, and religious traditions which significantly affect the course of the arms race is very large.⁴⁷

Arms race activity cannot be explained satisfactorily exclusively either in macro or in micro terms--both must be accommodated.

the ghost of Mackinder

The greatest geopolitical thinker of the Twentieth Century, Sir Halford Mackinder, predicted a major clash between the Eurasian (land power), Heartland Power (the U.S.S.R.) and the leader of the maritime alliance (the U.S.A.).⁴⁸ Peninsular Europe clearly is the major stake in Soviet-American rivalry, although that stake may be secured more efficiently through effective control of its energy supplies, at source, in the Persian Gulf, than through an attempt at outright direct conquest. Although Mackinder, in 1904 (when he began to write on geopolitics), then held the familiar standard British view that Imperial Russia posed a potentially deadly threat to British India, his last geopolitical article, written in 1943,⁴⁹ pointed very clearly to the major enduring problem of the postwar world. Historians are wont to observe that the diplomatic history of the (near) century from the early 1870s to (perhaps) the late 1950s, was dominated by the fact of an overly-powerful Germany--in actuality or anticipation.⁵⁰ The new, post-1870, Prussian-dominated Germany could not be accommodated within the European balance of power system.⁵¹ Since 1945, with "the German problem" remaining essentially unresolved,⁵² the

Soviet Union has assumed the role formerly played by Germany. As Sir Halford Mackinder wrote in 1943,

All things considered, the conclusion is unavoidable that: if the Soviet Union emerges from this war as conqueror of Germany, she must rank as the greatest land power on the globe. Moreover, she will be the power in the strategically strongest defensive position. The Heartland [redefined by Mackinder to encompass "the territory of the U.S.S.R."] is the greatest national fortress on earth. For the first time in history, it is manned by a garrison sufficient both in number and quality.⁵³

The Soviet Union, like Imperial Russia, has never viewed her frontiers as settled lines of reference. In the same way that the British acquired an Empire in India by controlling the hinterland behind the extant holdings, and then the hinterland to yesterday's hinterland, so the U.S.S.R. will not feel truly secure in Eurasia until all potential threats to the stability of the extant Soviet "holdings" are controlled from Moscow.⁵⁴ Over the past hundred years Russian imperialism has contended, successively, with three principal adversaries:⁵⁵ Great Britain, Germany, and now the United States. Each of these adversaries has sought to prevent Russian/Soviet domination of Eurasia. Russian/Soviet history is a story of endless struggle for survival (by way of sharp contrast to the history of insular polities)--sources of power which they do not control pose, in the Soviet view, a threat to their well-being.

Motives are difficult to isolate. There is some sense in the claim that Soviet leaders seek power for its own sake (it is preferable to control than to be controlled). But, there is probably more sense in the argument that Soviet (and Russian) rulers feel perpetually insecure--lacking, as they do, any very secure "mandate from heaven" to rule--and that this insecurity drives them to seek more and more control over their

external environment.⁵⁶ Soviet (and Russian) history is replete with examples of political and military activity which, although undertaken for reasons plausibly characterizable as defensive, nonetheless were grossly insensitive to the legitimate security interests of other states and peoples. Russian and Soviet history, however sympathetically interpreted (apart from "court" or party-approved versions, of course), is a story dominated by the fear, and the achievement, of aggrandizement.

the weakest link of capitalism

Revolution should not, of course, have happened in Russia. Literally, a handful of very ruthless adventurers challenged successfully through action the theories of Nineteenth-Century socialist philosophers. Communism, a desirable condition of mankind wherein the state has withered away, should be the product of a phase of socialism which in its turn would be created by the contradictions of the capitalist-bourgeois society which preceded it. Imperial Russian was viewed by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, reasonably enough, as being very barren territory for the implanting of the seeds of socialism. That country was the most backward of all the major industrializing powers; had, ergo, the least developed bourgeoisie and proletariat; and offered, therefore, the least promising prospect for socialist revolution. Lenin scandalously and pragmatically revised Marxist theory--with its consistent disdain for "the idiocy of rural life"⁵⁷--and imposed his kind of autocratic, patrimonial rule on a society long accustomed to arbitrary central government. An understanding of Russian and Soviet history, and of the many major continuities between them, is essential for American comprehension of the behavior of its

arms-race adversary. Until very recently at least, Soviet officials have been acutely aware of their enduring technological inferiority, while authoritative Soviet political attitudes (which underlie the arms programs), as Richard Pipes has suggested persuasively, may be traced very directly to the attitudes that "paid" in village life in a peasant society.⁵⁸ The Russian peasant knows that "life" (the weather, local and central political/religious authority)⁵⁹ can be cruel and arbitrary. When placed in a position of authority, the village "strongmen" have behaved with exactly the kind of ruthless, amoral rapacity that was to be expected. The crudeness of Soviet diplomacy, the lack of concern for "the decent opinion of mankind," the general absence of finesse (witness Soviet behavior in Kabul in December 1979), should have warned the American defense community that the arms programs of the Soviet Union were being directed by a political elite that could not be understood in Western terms.⁶⁰

This unflattering portrait may be extended in great detail; however, on a lower scale, it is not totally dissimilar from the problems faced by British and French statesmen in the 1930s in their dealings with Nazi Germany. Mr. Chamberlain, who was a decent English gentleman to the tip of his umbrella, could not understand that a civilized country like Germany had been captured by a criminal riff-raff, essentially by gangsters. Even the proposition was inconceivable to him. The Soviet Union is Russia captured by village bullies, with all of the essential features of the Czarist regime left functionally intact: a patrimonial state; a quasi-mystical leadership; and an assumption that the world in general (domestic

and foreign) is hostile. American policy-makers could do a great deal worse than to ponder the implication of these colorful thoughts of Frank Barnett:

...some American entrepreneurs, anxious to sell technology to Moscow, still profess to believe the Russians are simply Slavic-speaking graduates of the Harvard Business School. They are not. They are an ideological Mafia in control of an empire with limitless designs on the rest of us, and with the guts, guile, and finesse to carry out their ambition. Our political heritage derives from the Magna Carta, Locke and Jefferson. The Soviet legacy is from Genghis Kahn, Ivan the Terrible and Lenin. The culture gap is wider, and perhaps more dangerous, than the missile gap.⁶¹

permanent struggle

The Soviet-American arms race, in its Soviet dimension at least, is founded upon the very character of the Soviet state. Quite aside from the geopolitical factors which drive Soviet-American rivalry, the U.S.S.R. exists only because it is the physical embodiment of a cause. By Soviet definition, the United States is a principal enemy. So as not to deny their Marxist-Leninist birthright, and the very legitimacy of the rule of the CPSU, Soviet leaders are obliged to engage--or appear plausibly to be engaged⁶²--in a permanent struggle against other social systems. This fact is very important to recognize because, not infrequently, commentators in the West seek to argue that the Cold War, and the arms competition that flowed from it, have been the product of mutual misperception. Also, it is argued that the arms rivalry might be damped down very considerably if only an appropriate measure of American/NATO self-restraint were to be exercised.

Such a view totally misreads the political reality of the Soviet-American arms competition. The fact is that regardless of what the West

does or does not do, the U.S.S.R. is committed irrevocably, by its basic character, to permanent struggle. The U.S.S.R. cannot become just another, though a rather unusually powerful, authoritarian state. The past and present sacrifices of the Soviet peoples have to be justified in terms of a historic mission. Not merely does the U.S.S.R. need a foreign enemy,⁶³ but the ideology that legitimizes the Soviet state very conveniently identifies such an enemy. The only choice open to the United States is whether or not she will compete effectively with the U.S.S.R. There can be no peaceful settlement of basic differences with the Soviet state--a detente process can have no foreseeable end point of that kind. The arms race must continue until either the U.S.S.R. suffers domestic revolutionary change of a character ultimately benign to the security condition of others, or until there is a military decision between East and West.⁶⁴ This is hardly pleasant news, and it is scarcely surprising that prominent American politicians have not shared this insight with their electorate. Nonetheless, this argument rests upon fact--not assertion. The relevance of this argument to the study is the long-term, really inalienable, nature of the problem to which it points. The roots and sustaining fuel of the Soviet-American arms race do not lie so much in the separate, very complex "domestic processes" which can be explored in detail by scholars of the bureaucratic-politics or Military-Industrial Complex (MIC) persuasion, rather do they lie in the particular political character of Soviet state power and in the facts of geopolitics.

The Action-Reaction Hypothesis

Arms-race analysis in the West continues to be afflicted by theorists seeking to identify patterns of arms-program interaction. It is my contention that, although each superpower has sought to be responsive in a broad and general way to trends in the evolution of the military capabilities of its principal rival, there has been very little detailed action and reaction. Because of the near-total absence of direct evidence on the motives behind individual Soviet weapon programs, this author and the scholars who he is criticizing, are driven, more often than not, to argue by technical inference.

While it would probably be an error to assert that Soviet defense programs are totally insensitive to perceived and anticipated threats, the historical facts of the period 1964-1981 (the Brezhnev leadership period, to date) suggest that a claim for the very substantial autonomy of the Soviet defense effort (vis à vis change in the level of the American defense effort) is unlikely to be far off the mark. In that extensive period, the rate of increase in the level of the Soviet defense effort roughly coincided with the rate of increase in the growth of the Soviet economy.⁶⁵ It is possible to argue that the absolute decline in the level of the American defense effort has encouraged the Soviet Union to compete more vigorously, but that argument lacks for evidence in its support--notwithstanding both its logical appeal, and its apparent fit with the facts. In Harold Brown's words:

As our defense budgets have risen, the Soviets have increased their defense budget. As our defense budgets have gone down, their defense budgets have increased again.⁶⁶

In short, the past fifteen years offer a happy playground for statisticians eager to establish positive and negative correlations. In practice,

as is known from American weapon program histories, much of the detail of a particular program is negotiated for reasons, and to conclusions, that have little or nothing to do with the anticipation of external threat. The MX, multiple protective structure (MPS) system, for example, with its "baseline" configuration of 200 MX missiles and 4600 shelters, certainly is defensible--and indeed, has to be defended--in terms of the Soviet threat, but the Soviet threat did not drive the determination of the basic parameters of the system. The figure of 200 MX ICBM's was a compromise number negotiated between the Air Force and Senator MacIntyre of the Senate Armed Forces Committee. The Senator was opposed to a force size too obviously capable of posing a credible first-strike threat to Soviet silo-based ICBMs.⁶⁷

Because the lead-time for a major strategic weapon system is on the order of ten years (or longer--to full operational capability [FOC]), neither superpower can act and react in the mechanical, deft manner suggested by some arms control theorists. In other words, so many are the technical, budgetary, political, and (in the United States' case) even basic doctrinal hazards facing a weapon program over its very long gestation period, that it simply is not possible to react to Soviet offensive or defensive developments. How could the United States, in 1980-81, react via a new weapon program to a Soviet weapon program anticipated for the period 1990-2000?⁶⁸

Aside from the truly major uncertainties of strategic intelligence predictions for a decade hence--the lead-time pertinent to major weapon program evolution--each party to the arms competition has unique foreign policy duties to perform, very individual strategic preferences to express

(in weaponry and C³I), and very particular domestic-process considerations to accommodate. In short, American officials and extra-official commentators cannot sensibly support or oppose a particular weapon program, be it MX, LoADS or whatever, on the grounds "that the Soviet Union will respond as follows.."69

Close study of such Soviet evidence as there is available suggests that the Soviet Union strives to achieve maximum prospective combat effectiveness (in the interest of proletarian internationalism, deterrence, and plain common sense), but that also it is devoted to the preservation of stability on the home military-industry front. Major changes in resource allocation for defense vis à vis non-defense programs, or even between defense programs, are very expensive in the Soviet system. An economy centrally planned on a series of five-year cycles is not the most agile of vehicles for the conduct of an arms competition characterized by an action-reaction process. The more that is learned of Soviet defense industry, and that remains all too little, the less convincing becomes the image of a Soviet defense establishment willing and able to conduct a process of deft thrust and parry in the strategic arms competition. I am prepared to believe that the Soviet defense system, writ large, is capable of "lurching" in step-level jumps, given sufficient notice. In other words, should an American administration decide to raise the level of American defense expenditure by, say, fifty or one hundred percent, one should expect the Soviet defense machine to react. However, I would not expect the Soviet defense machine to react directly, in detail to the new United States' defense program, and neither would I assume that

the Soviet Union necessarily could react--even in a gross fashion--as some action-reaction theorists tend to imply. It is not obvious that the Soviet Union could much increase the output of its high-technology industry for defense functions.⁷⁰

A Soviet Union devoted to the improvement in its military condition at all levels easily lends itself to misassessment by Western theorists. Where Western theorists are inclined, by strategic culture, to see purposeful design, one should perhaps see only prudence (defined in Soviet terms). Benjamin Lambeth has offered the relevant thought that

[i]t would probably not be overly facetious to suggest that for Soviet military planners, the favored measure of strategic sufficiency is the notion that "too much is not enough".⁷¹

The Soviet Union has not imposed a condition of strategic inferiority on the United States. Such a condition, if it exists,⁷² is the product of steady momentum, or perhaps just inertia, in Soviet weapon programs, and an enduring deficiency in American attendance upon its strategic-force survival problems. The current crisis in the survivability of the American ICBM force is not the result of a dramatic Soviet arms race challenge, nor need it be read as clear evidence signifying Soviet determination to achieve strategic superiority. Indeed, even to frame the problem in that way probably is to impose a very un-Soviet mode of thinking upon the Soviet defense establishment.⁷³

Believing that war can occur, and that the quantity and quality of defense preparation (considered expansively) can make the difference between victory and defeat, but all the while hoping that a direct military clash

with the United States can be avoided,⁷⁴ the Soviet Union has pursued an orderly, affordable, program of military modernization across the board of capabilities. Soviet effort with respect to strategic offensive forces has been extraordinary in relation to other military programs, a fact which may be explained by reference to the comparative disadvantage of the U.S.S.R. in high-technology defense research, development, and production, and to the extraordinary significance of strategic nuclear weapon systems in the structure of Western strategy.⁷⁵ While Western analysts may well overprice some of the more manpower-intensive military capabilities of the U.S.S.R., they almost certainly underprice Soviet strategic nuclear programs.⁷⁶

As an arms race participant, the Soviet Union appears not to be racing to achieve any particular relationship of power, unless an appreciation of the political and military benefits of a growing (though necessarily fragile) preponderance, may be so characterized. The Soviet Union, driven both by paranoid fears and by the general belief that coercive power is always useful, can never be satisfied that it has "enough" or "sufficient" military power. In a very dogged, steady, manner--the Soviet defense establishment makes, by and large, marginal improvements in its capabilities, year after year.⁷⁷ Insofar as can be discerned it is not performing at all consciously in a pattern of action and reaction (of any kind). The enemy is clearly identified, Soviet military science provides a stability of guidance for strategic direction, so--undramatically--the Soviet Union improves its ability to wage war, and hence enforce a deterrent condition, year by year. The fragility to which brief reference was made parenthetically

above, lies in the inherent, structural limitations of Soviet high-technology industry. Soviet officials know very well that they could not win or even sustain a rough parity in a high-technology arms competition with the United States (or with Japan, or West Germany). In other words, although American carelessness may have yielded them an advantage in the central nuclear balance, narrowly defined, in the 1980s, they cannot--and probably do not--expect that carelessness to continue for much longer.

The model of the arms competition implicit in the above discussion should have an impact upon Western debate over arms control policy. To summarize, the Soviet arms-race/arms-control adversary-partner has the following essential characteristics:

- A total, though long-term, commitment to the demise of Western governments. Detente, or even near-entente (as in the current phase of Sino-American relations), has to be solely a matter of tactical convenience.⁷⁸
- Both a geopolitical (realpolitik) and an ideological antipathy to the "maritime alliance" which continues to deny it a total imperium over Eurasia.⁷⁹
- A very Russian, and certainly non-Western (and even pre-modern), suspicion of foreign ideas and, indeed, of any alien elements that are not controlled by Moscow.⁸⁰
- A commitment, born of historical understanding and ideology, to global instability (in Western terms). Relationships of power and influence are not stable, they are dynamic,

and the Soviet Union/Russia has learned at first hand what apparent weakness can cost.⁸¹

- A commitment to offer the most effective defense feasible should war occur. Soviet defense programs are not guided, or inhibited, by any consideration of strategic stability that would be familiar to Western theorists.
- A stable doctrine, a stable strategy, and a commitment to orderly, stable, defense programs. This is not to deny the probable fact of intra-service rivalry having a biasing effect upon the evolution of quite broad categories of Soviet defense capabilities (for example, consider the shifting fortunes of Soviet Long Range Aviation),⁸² but it is to suggest that the Soviet defense effort, as a whole, is not an instrument capable of playing new tunes on little notice.

Interaction between Soviet and American defense capabilities tends, therefore: to be intermittent and necessarily somewhat broad in its effects at the higher levels of policy direction; to be all but absent at the level of particular major program development (the region classically assumed to be driven by a tight pattern of action-reaction); and to be quite intensive at the sharp end of (tactical) operating detail. Consideration of the evolution of weapon programs from the early 1900s to the present day suggests a surprising degree of autonomy in national rationales. Whether it be with respect to Dreadnoughts and Super-Dreadnoughts prior to 1914, or to ABM, MIRV and MX in the 1960s and 1970s, the evidence (pertaining to the real detail of program genesis and evolution--as opposed

to inferred strategic logic) of patterns of program interaction is, to be polite, extremely thin.⁸³

The argument presented immediately above may have major implications for United States' weapon programs and arms control policies, because--as was explained in Chapter 5--arms race stability is prominent among the defense and arms control objectives of the United States. Western theories of arms race stability posit a presumed relationship between what "we do" and how we anticipate the adversary to react. Most of the Western theoretical literature on arms race stability, because it does not rest upon a robust understanding of what drives the race, must simply be discarded.

Arms Control

As noted several times already in this chapter, the principal objective of arms control is to reduce the risk of war occurring. It is time to introduce the thought that there is no very obvious connection between arms control processes, as generally understood, and the likelihood of war occurring. If anything, the most prominent formal arms control processes of the 1970s, SALT and MBFR, probably contributed in a very modest way to the enhancement of the likelihood of war occurring.⁸⁴ This apparently perverse judgment refers to the known, indeed quite explicit, Soviet theory of the prospects for war.

The Soviet Union holds to the self-serving proposition that the stronger the forces of socialism, the stronger the forces for peace. The prospects for the occurrence of catastrophic East-West war are reduced, according to Soviet logic, if Soviet-led forces are sufficient (and then some) to deter the forces of imperialism from intervening in local conflicts of

national liberation (or "social progress"). SALT and MBFR should ratify Soviet counterdeterrent power, at least, with reference to the major military capabilities of imperialism--leaving Soviet, Soviet-proxy, and friendly local-indigenous forces free to subvert and "liberate" in the region of genuine political movement (South Asia, Africa and Central America⁸⁵).

Notwithstanding the importance of the central nuclear relationship and the political-military standoff in Europe, it has to be noted that those areas of competition are not "where the action is" on a day-by-day basis. The Soviet Union can make no major gains in Europe unless it is prepared to wage a major, and nuclear, war. The potential benefits of non-military success in Europe are very high, but so also are the risks. The East-West demarcation line in Europe has been frozen since the Spring of 1948 (with the pro-Soviet coup in Czechoslovakia). In the Middle East, South Asia and Africa there are no demarcation lines. Prospective gains are modest, assessed individually, but so also are the risks.

Although I endorse the hallowed trinity of arms control objectives: to reduce the risks of war occurring; to reduce damage should war occur; and to reduce the burden of peacetime defense preparation--I do not believe that inter-state formal arms control processes, as pursued thus far, in the 1920s and 1930s, or in the 1970s, have contributed usefully to the forwarding of those objectives. At the least, a strong case can be made for reassessing the sense in such a 1970s institution as SALT. It may be that such a reassessment will lead to deeper insight into the value of SALT as we have known it, but Western knowledge of the arms control process, the character of the negotiating adversary, and the relationship

between arms control and other streams of foreign policy activity, has advanced so greatly that the case for a creative hiatus would seem almost to make itself.⁸⁶

Without prejudice to one's final conclusions, and certainly without malice towards persons historically involved in the process here assessed, the following considerations of relevance to future United States' arms control policy would seem to be suggested by the protracted SALT, and SALT-related, experience.

First, the Soviet adversary, while respectful of American defense-industrial power and technological prowess (witness the ABM Treaty of 1977⁸⁷), is not at all respectful of American theories of strategic stability. The United States may enforce arms-race discipline on the Soviet Union, courtesy of Soviet anticipation of a net diminution in its security condition if the competition remains formally unconstrained, but the United States cannot induce cooperative Soviet arms behavior with reference to Western ideas of what is, and what is not, de-stabilizing.⁸⁸

Second, the Soviet Union cannot be persuaded to sign arms control agreements which would forfeit the right to wage war, should it occur, as efficiently as feasible in defense of the Soviet homeland. A condition of mutual vulnerability is not negotiable. Mutual vulnerability and mutual deterrence may be strategic facts of life, but the Soviet Union will never endorse those ideas as desiderata.

Third, notwithstanding the juvenile rhetoric of disarmament which is standard official Soviet fare, the Soviet Union is not at all interested in major measures of (again) mutual strategic nuclear disarmament. As

with regard to MBFR, in SALT the U.S.S.R. desires simply to register the facts of the competition and, insofar as possible, to help dissuade the American defense community from competing in its region of major comparative advantage. Central nuclear war is a kind of war that the Soviet Union hopes it will never have to fight--but, its reading of the possible calculations of imperialists-in-desperation leads it to conclude that such a war is possible. Hence, there is no way in which the Soviet Union would agree to a SALT reduction regime which impacted noticeably in a negative way upon its prospective war-waging prowess.⁸⁹ War is a truly serious business, SALT agreements and their political ramifications may be beneficial, but they are several orders of magnitude of less serious import than are defense capabilities.

Fourth, the SALT process as launched by Nixon and Kissinger was seen as an integral part of a much more general architecture of East-West detente. The historical record of Soviet foreign policy in the 1970s demonstrated conclusively what could easily have been deduced from Soviet statements--specifically, that the detente process, with SALT as its somewhat unfortunate centerpiece, was viewed in Moscow as a reward for the great improvement in the correlation of forces, and that it licensed a more forward Soviet foreign policy.⁹⁰

Fifth, the SALT process, bearing as it did upon the dominant weapons of the super-powers,⁹¹ could not possibly support the political traffic that it was required to accommodate.⁹² In fact the relationship between foreign policy in general, and arms control as a particular element in foreign policy, was heroically misunderstood for many years. The American

SALT-commentary literature of the early 1970s was generally ambivalent on the subject of "which was the dependent variable"--the SALT process or Soviet-American political relations, writ large. The full ten years of more or less active SALT inter-state engagement, from 1969 to 1979, tells the story that SALT, far from being an independent or even quasi-independent factor, was in fact very much at the mercy of passing fashion in political opinion.

Sixth, as the debate over SALT II in 1979 began to point to problems for a SALT III, the American defense community began to appreciate that the very integrity of a negotiating process limited, for reasons of negotiating convenience, to so-called "central systems" posed prospectively major problems for the credibility of NATO strategy. If, as Paul Nitze has argued, the Soviet Union succeeded with SALT assistance in "Deterring Our Deterrent," through the mechanism of a genuinely balanced SALT accord, what remains of NATO's strategy of flexible response? How can an American strategic force posture which has been offset be invoked to help reverse a developing theater disaster?

It is attractive to argue, as many people do today, that with respect to arms control

- the United States needs to find a "new approach," since clearly the old approach has not produced satisfactory results.⁹³
- the United States needs "a better hand" with which to bargain: "a new approach" will accomplish little, if anything, if the United States continues to lack visible, credible momentum in weapon programs.

-- the United States needs to attend to the quality of its negotiating tactics and strategy. There is ample evidence which would suggest that American SALT negotiators, if they have not given away the store, have at least failed to secure genuinely balanced agreements.

There is something to recommend all three of the above items of advice. Provided one does not focus, for example, upon such a naive idea as Christoph Bertram's "mission approach" to arms control,⁹⁴ it is sensible to have an open mind on new approaches. It is true, virtually beyond argument, that in SALT, to date, the least useful measure has been employed (to count "launchers"--a term which continues to remain undefined). Similarly, there is a growing realization that it is probably a poor idea to isolate so-called "central systems" (understood to refer to "strategic" arms) for isolated negotiating treatment.⁹⁵ However, I suspect that the fundamental reasons why East-West arms control processes have contributed either not at all, or only at the margin to international security, cannot be finessed by imaginative "new approaches." Diplomatic engineering cannot solve political problems. Much, though not all, of the well-intentioned advice proffered in the 1970s for the edification of American SALT negotiators, was analogous to proposals for deck-chair rearrangement on the Titanic--the SALT voyage of the 1970s was doomed from the start. The important question is whether any future SALT voyages might have a safer and more profitable passage.

The advice to "hold a better hand" in the negotiations is obviously sensible. However, it is not at all self-evident either that a strategically much stronger United States (than in the late 1970s) would be permitted by the U.S.S.R. essentially to shape a future SALT agreement (the U.S.S.R. may prefer not to negotiate with a strategically much stronger United States), or that an agreement 'with teeth'--even with teeth that bit genuinely to the mutual discomfort--would be negotiable, should the U.S.S.R. elect to continue negotiations. The least contentious of the three items of advice is number three, that the United States should negotiate in a professional and tough-minded manner.

The First Law of Arms Control holds that you will receive through negotiations only that which you have demonstrated a willingness to achieve unilaterally (i.e., there are no "free lunches" in SALT or MBFR). The Second Law of Arms Control holds that you will not receive what you deserve unless you attend meticulously to every detail in the negotiations. Unlike the United States, the Soviet Union adheres to the precept of caveat emptor ("let the buyer beware"). Like the Russian peasants from which they stem, Soviet SALT negotiators seek to secure a bargain that is weighted in their favor.

It remains an open question whether or not the SALT process and diplomatic institutions of East-West arms control activity are a net liability or benefit to international security. On balance, it appears to be the case that SALT probably is a net liability because, even if it is competently conducted on the Western behalf, even at best it can only register a rough parity in the realm of military competition wherein

the United States has major comparative advantage. It is to the Western advantage to negotiate agreements on the basis of parity in realms of military competition that are manpower intensive.⁹⁶

Western arms control theory, so-called, has foundered on the elementary fact that it neglected to take account of the character of the principal adversary. Behind the talk about controlling the arms race remains the unpromising reality of the Soviet imperium. No "new approach" to negotiated arms control, suggested by Left or Right in the West, merits serious policy consideration unless it takes explicit account of Soviet reality. Soviet arms control policy, as an integral part of Soviet grand strategy or doctrine, is dominated--sensibly in the Soviet view--by a conflict-oriented view of world politics. Soviet leaders do not endorse an arms control process in the hope that arms control may promote a lasting peace, instead they (are obliged to) endorse an arms control process because such a process may contribute usefully to the real and/or psychological disarmament of clearly identified enemies. The genuine mutuality of Soviet-American interest in avoiding a central nuclear war, and entry on any "powder train" which plausibly might lead to such an event, cannot suffice to deflect Soviet policy-makers from their duty to provide, as efficiently as possible, for the conduct of possible hostilities.

In seeking to control the arms race Western officials really are talking about seeking to control a state (the U.S.S.R.) which

-- is obliged, courtesy of its theory of legitimacy, to seek prospective war-waging success.

- cannot easily shift resource allocation from defense to non-defense function.
- sees stability in terms of development of an even more impressive Soviet counterdeterrent ability to discourage Western intervention in local conflicts.

In short, one wonders whether--given the known values of Soviet strategic culture--there is any approach, strategy or tactic, more likely to promote success in arms control than has been tried thus far. The Soviet drive to compete vigorously in armaments does not stem from misperceptions of Western hostility (since Soviet leaders define non-Soviet controlled countries as enemies); nor does it stem from a desire to achieve any identifiable, particular, relationship of relative power. Instead, the Soviet commitment to compete is inherent in the very character of the Soviet state. Moreover, Soviet military science identifies dynamic goals for Soviet military development which are incompatible with mainstream Western thinking on the nature of a stable military relationship between East and West.

On the basis of observation of their programs and from a close reading of their military literature, one is quite safe in arguing that arms control has not been a major planning factor in the calculation of the Soviet General Staff. Unlike the situation in the Soviet defense community, the United States has negotiated over the period of a decade in SALT while it has been bereft of a stable strategic doctrine.⁹⁷ Soviet military science, while it may err, does offer authoritative guidance to any Soviet

official seeking wisdom with reference to a particular capability that is the subject of SALT attention. A career-professional General Staff, as in the Soviet Union, is tasked, inter alia, with providing "correct" military solutions to military problems. The United States, with its lingering suspicion of "Prussian-style" general staffs, continues to debate even the most basic question of nuclear strategy.⁹⁸ The impact on the quality of SALT negotiating performance is obvious. The Soviet Union has a settled strategy which tells Soviet officials what particular military capabilities are worth--and, ergo, what kind of a price should be demanded for their control or abolition. American negotiations have enjoyed no such doctrinal guidance. Indeed, I am tempted to argue that until the United States settles authoritatively upon a reasonably clear and mature strategic doctrine it should not engage in negotiations on strategic nuclear arms.⁹⁹

It is probably sensible to adopt an essentially agnostic stance vis à vis the future of formal East-West arms control negotiations. The problem, to simplify, does not lie in "the dynamics of the arms race," rather does it lie in the character of the Soviet political system (which is perhaps the same thing). Although the superpowers share a common interest in the avoidance of war, it is reasonably obvious that Soviet officials see no incompatibility between their vigorous prosecution of strategic arms programs and that common interest. Plausibly, if unconventionally in Western perspective, Soviet officials appear to see no noteworthy danger of war in the dynamics of the arms competition itself. I agree with them.

The moral of this somewhat depressing story is to the effect that the United States should not inhibit its defense planning activities with (largely spurious) so-called arms control considerations. To the best of our knowledge the Soviet Union does not, and cannot, react program-for-program, to American arms race behavior. The only sound approach to SALT, or MBFR, is for the United States to pursue an arms policy that is robust in defense of American foreign policy interests. The more robust that policy the better "the hand" available to American arms control negotiators, and the less important will be agreement on arms control. After all, SALT, for example, only reflects--it does not change--the rules of international politics. As already observed in this chapter, by 1979 the most noteworthy feature of "the great SALT II debate" was the degree to which it was really marginal to matters fundamental to national and international security.

The American body politic should appreciate that the nuclear arms race, so-called, is driven essentially by the political character of the Soviet state. While developments in the arms race can be registered through SALT agreements, anything more fundamental has to rest upon a theory for (or purporting to explain) a benign alteration in the character of the Soviet state. The United States cannot seek "security through SALT," because SALT merely expresses the real world. The true basis for any SALT accord lies in the perceptions of power relationships in SALT-less futures. Foolish proponents of SALT seek to frighten the American public with prognoses of arms-control-unconstrained Soviet strategic

deployments--ignoring Soviet systemic fears of American arms competitive activity.

There is no close match between SALT diplomacy, as conducted thus far, and the three classic goals of arms control. Moreover, so different are the Soviet and American concepts of strategic stability that there is no strong case to be made, on the historical evidence, for formal East-West arms control institutions. The only sensible approach to the problem of strategic arms control is a United States' determination to develop a strategic force posture that should deny victory to Soviet arms, and which would extend a not-implausible prospect of success for the United States. Such a posture would mean that the United States would no longer be in the position of the demandeur, and that American officials could genuinely be relaxed over the fate of SALT negotiations.

It is entirely possible that "success" in SALT is beyond the grasp of the United States--no matter what the character of American defense policy. American politicians should not promise that "new approaches" to arms control will produce better arms control agreements. A United States with a robust strategic-forces' program may be no more able to negotiate a security-enhancing arms-control agreement than was the United States of the 1970s. This should be no great cause for dismay--security flows from programs, not from agreements.

REFERENCES

1. This claim, though deliberately phrased strongly, does not extend to the assertion that SALT has dominated U.S. strategic-force planning. On this very contentious issue see The National Security Affairs Institute, Defense Planning and Arms Control. Proceedings of a Special NSAI Conference, June 1980 (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, USGPO, 1980); and Richard Burt, "The Relevance of Arms Control in the 1980s," Daedalus, Vol.110, No.1 (Winter 1981), pp.159-177.
2. See Richard Burt, "The Future of Arms Control(2): A Glass Half Empty," Foreign Policy, No. 36 (Fall 1979), pp. 40-42.
3. Note the judgment (from an author friendly to the SALT process) in Andrew J. Pierre, "The Diplomacy of SALT," International Security, Vol.5, No.1 (Summer 1980), p.193. "If there is any single lesson to be learned from the experience of SALT thus far, it is that any future negotiations should not be attempted as a simple follow-on from the past."
4. This view is echoed (by a supporter of SALT II) in Gregory F. Treverton, "Issues and Non-Issues," Survival, Vol.XXI, No.5 (September/October 1979), pp.194-7.
5. Barry Blechman, "Do Negotiated Arms Limitations Have a Future?" Foreign Affairs, Vol.59, No.1 (Fall 1980), p.105.
6. Skeptical readers are recommended to compare the Senate hearings held on SALT I in 1972, with the Senate (and House) hearings held in 1979.
7. Pierre, "The Diplomacy of SALT," p.179.

8. Johna Holst, "Comparative U.S. and Soviet Deployments, Doctrines, and Arms Limitations," in Morton A. Kaplan, ed., SALT: Problems and Prospects, (Morristown, N.J.: General Learning Press, 1973) p.68.
9. See Graham T. Allison and Frederic A. Morris, "Armaments and Arms Control: Exploring the Determinants of Military Weapons," in Daedalus, Vol.104, No.3 (Summer 1975), pp.99-129; Albert Wohlstetter, Legends of the Arms Race, USSI Report 75-1 (Washington, D.C.: United States Strategic Institute, 1975); and Colin S. Gray, The Soviet-American Arms Race (Fornborough, Hampshire: Saxon House, D.C. Heath, 1976).
10. Many, and probably most, of the policy cases developed in opposition to ABM deployment in the late 1960s and early 1970s--whatever other merit they may have had--were not enforced by a robust theory of the arms race. For example, see George W. Rathjens, The Future of the Strategic Arms Race: Options for the 1970s (New York: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1969). Rathjens talks about trying to "break the ABM-MIRV chain by focusing on control of MIRV's or ABM defenses." P.38. That alleged "chain" was a logical postulate, rational only according to one, particular, American theory of arms race dynamics. Also see Herbert York, Race to Oblivion: A Participant's View of the Arms Race (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1976), passim.
11. In Donald G. Brennan and Colin S. Gray, Common Interests and Arms Control, HI-3218-P (Croton-on-Hudson, New York: Hudson Institute, August 1980).
12. See the argument in Burt, "A Glass Half Empty," pp. 40-42.
13. This author, in common with Burt, ibid., believes it to be undesirable

that the United States Government should have an Agency whose sole mission is the promotion of arms control activity. The Soviet practice of having the Ministry of Defense and General Staff develop strategic arms limitation positions would seem to be much sounder than the counterpart American policy-making procedure. Thomas Wolfe has speculated that the Main Operations Directorate of the General Staff (which directs military operations, helps formulate general military policy, and develops targeting and war plans) probably has charge of most of the substantive preparation of SALT options. See Thomas Wolfe, The SALT Experience (Cambridge, Mass.: Ballinger, 1979), pp.62-64.

14. Blechman, "Do Negotiated Arms Limitations Have a Future?," p.119.
15. Ibid., p.125.
16. PD 59, somewhat ambiguously, requires the U.S. defense community to think again about the possible/probable course of a general war. This author believes that the United States should seek to enforce escalation discipline on the Soviet Union, but he admits to being profoundly skeptical that this could be achieved. See Chapter 6 of this study.
17. Approximately 7 percent of the FY 1981 defense budget is allocated for strategic-forces programs (plus an arbitrary sum for intelligence and administrative support).
18. Leslie H. Gelb, "The Future of Arms Control (1): A Glass Half Full," Foreign Policy, No.36 (Fall 1979), p.21.
19. Though there are usually scapegoats upon whom some, or most of the blame, can be placed. Blechman, for example, believes that politicians and the public have come to ask arms control to achieve too much,

"Do Negotiated Arms Limitations Have a Future?", particularly pp.118-119. Gerard Smith, with no less reason, indicts the simultaneous (and uncoordinated) pursuit of two separate streams of negotiations (front and back channels). Doubletalk: The Story of The First Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (New York: Doubleday, 1980). The title tells all--at least concerning the frustration of a "chief negotiator" who was kept less than perfectly informed by an unusually devious National Security Advisor.

20. The Carter Administration, under campaign pressure in 1980, was compelled to state explicitly its collective belief that strategic superiority was neither necessary nor feasible. The then Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Planning, Walter Slocombe, was admirably explicit in this regard in "Seek Nuclear Edge Over Russia?" U.S. News and World Report, October 20, 1980, p.37. Whether or not Dr. Slocombe is correct, there can be little doubt that a majority of the American people do not agree with him.
21. Richard Burt, "Reassessing the Strategic Balance," International Security, Vol.5, No.1 (Summer 1980), p.49.
22. See Arthur J. Alexander, Jr., Decision-Making in Soviet Weapons Procurement, Adelphi Papers Nos. 147-148 (London: IISS, Winter 1978/9).
23. Burt, "Reassessing the Strategic Balance," p.37.
24. A belief which permeated John Newhouse, Cold Dawn: The Story of SALT. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973). Of some interest are Ambassador Smith's recollections of some doctrinal explorations in the very early days of SALT I. See Doubletalk, pp.85-88.

25. Henry Kissinger in U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, The SALT II Treaty, Hearings, Part 3, 96th Cong., 1st sess. (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1979), p.166.
26. For example: Deborah Shapley, "Arms Control as a Regulator of Military Technology," Daedalus, Vol.109, No.1 (Winter 1980), p.145; and Pierre, "The Diplomacy of SALT," p.179.
27. Burt, "Reassessing the Strategic Balance," pp.51-52.
28. I have developed this argument in "SALT II: The Real Debate," Policy Review, No.10 (Fall 1979), pp.7-22.
29. Burt, "Reassessing the Strategic Balance," p.39.
30. William H. Kincade, "A Farewell to Arms Control?" Arms Control Today, Vol.10, No.1 (January 1980), pp.1-5. Also see Sidney D. Drell, "Arms Control: Is There Still Hope?" Daedalus, Vol.109, No.4 (Fall 1980), pp.177-188.
31. Burt, "Reassessing the Strategic Balance," p.52.
32. The U.S. Government urgently needs to reconsider its continuing commitment to formal inter-state arms control processes. Harold Brown, and others' argument that SALT is the only vehicle available to the United States to effect a reduction in Soviet strategic force levels opens a Pandora's Box of dubious propositions.
33. See his Legends of the Arms Race.
34. See Jacek Kugler and A.F.K. Organski, with Daniel Fox, "Deterrence and the Arms Race: The Impotence of Power," International Security, Vol.4, No.4 (Spring 1980), pp.105-31.
35. See Theresa C. Smith, "Arms Race Instability and War," The Journal of Conflict Resolution, Vol.24, No.2 (June 1980), pp.253-284.

36. Robin Ranger, Arms and Politics, 1958-1978: Arms Control in a Changing Political Context, (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1979), particularly Chapter 1.
37. Blechman, "Do Negotiated Arms Limitations Have a Future?", p.108.
38. See Smith, Doubletalk, pp.25-26; and Michael Mandelbaum, The Nuclear Question: The United States and Nuclear Weapons, 1946-1976, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979), pp.199-200; and Henry Kissinger's prepared statement in U.S. Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, The SALT II Treaty, Hearings, Part 3, particularly pp.171-173, 175.
39. Arms race theory of the simple (and incorrect) action-reaction kind was deployed in 1968-70 to oppose ABM and MIRV, just as it is deployed today to oppose MX/MPS. For example, note the unexamined action-reaction premise which permeates Peter D. Zimmerman, "Will MX Solve the Problem?" Arms Control Today, Vol.10, No.1 (January 1980), pp.7-9.
40. I am grateful to my colleague, Norman Friedman, for pointing out to me the many misassessments of alleged technical-strategic motives that Western naval analysis have (falsely) discerned with reference to Soviet and American naval shipbuilding programs.
41. See Newhouse, Cold Dawn; Wolfe, The SALT Experience; Strobe Talbott, Endgame: The Inside Story of SALT II (New York: Harper and Row, 1979); and Smith, Doubletalk.
42. Sun Tzu, The Art of War (trans. Samuel B. Griffith) (Oxford: Clarendon, 1963), p.84.

43. See Thomas W. Wolfe, "The Convergence Issue and Soviet Strategic Policy," in RAND 25th Anniversary Volume (Santa Monica, Cal.: RAND 1973), particularly p.149.
44. See the detailed discussion of "superiority" in Chapter 8.
45. If this is judged to be the case, then one can only be pessimistic about the future of arms control.
46. See Norman Friedman, "The Soviet Mobilization Base," Air Force Magazine, Vol.62, No.3 (March 1979), pp.65-71. A work of enduring value is Matthew P. Gallagher and Karl F. Spielmann, Jr., Soviet Decision-Making for Defense: A Critique of U.S. Perspectives on the American Arms Race (New York: Praeger, 1972). Also see: Karl F. Spielmann, Analyzing Soviet Strategic Arms Decisions (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1978); and David Holloway, "Technology and Political Decision in Soviet Armaments Policy," Journal of Peace Research, No.4 (1974), pp.257-279.
47. Johnathon Steinberg, Yesterday's Deterrent: Tirpitz and the Birth of the German Battle Fleet (London: MacDonald, 1965), p.28.
48. Sir Halford Mackinder, Democratic Ideals and Reality (New York: Morton, 1962), which contains the title manuscript and three important additional articles.
49. Sir Halford Mackinder, "The Round World and the Winning of the Peace," reproduced in ibid.
50. Commentators in the late 1970s appeared almost to have forgotten how central "the German problem" was to East-West relations in the late 1940s, the 1950s, and the very early 1960s. See Philip Windsor,

- Germany and the Management of Detente (London: Chatto & Windus for The Institute for Strategic Studies, 1971).
51. For a masterly recent study, see Gordon Craig, Germany, 1866-1945 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978).
 52. Although many Western German politicians, of left and right, continue to adhere to the idea of a single German nation, prominent among the inexplicit common views of East and West (save for the Federal Republic) is that the permanent division of Germany is both acceptable and desirable.
 53. Sir Halford Mackinder, Democratic Ideals and Reality, p.269.
 54. For a detailed justification of this argument see The Geopolitics of the Nuclear Era: Heartland, Rimlands, and the Technological Revolution (New York: Crane, Russak for the National Strategy Information Center, 1977), particularly Chapter 3.
 55. Plus Japan in minor key--though defeat by Japan in 1904-5 nearly brought down the Russian Empire.
 56. On the drives behind the Soviet external policy, see Richard Pipes: "Soviet Global Strategy," Commentary, Vol.69, No.4 (April 1980), pp.31-39; and idem., "Militarism and the Soviet State," Daedalus, Vol.109, No.4 (Fall 1980), pp.1-12.
 57. Imperial Russia was nothing if not dominated, at least quantitatively, by "rural life."
 58. See Pipes, "Why the Soviet Union Thinks It Could Fight and Win a Nuclear War," Commentary, Vol.64, No.1 (July 1977), pp.21-34.
 59. The Czar was not only the supreme secular authority, he was God's representative in Russia. "To the Emperor of All the Russians belongs

the supreme and unlimited power. Not only fear, but also conscience commanded by God Himself, is the basis of obedience to this power."

Article 1 of the Fundamental Laws of Imperial Russia. The CPSU claims a functionally analogous religious-based obedience in the name, not of God, but of the correct, "scientific" theory of history.

60. On the history of the distinctive age cohort that is the contemporary Soviet leadership, see Jerry F. Hough, Soviet Leadership in Transition (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 1980); and Seweryn Bialer, Stalin's Successors: Leadership, Stability, and Change in the Soviet Union (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1980).
61. "Conflict Chess in a Global Mode." Speech at Pepperdine University, January 15, 1980, p.3 (of printed text).
62. Whatever Soviet motivations may truly have been, the detente policy line of the 1970s did pose the U.S.S.R. some public relations problems of a serious kind. As Dimitri Simes has argued, "[f]or decades, portrayal of the U.S.S.R. as fiercely fighting the imperialist enemy was a dominant theme in public Soviet diplomacy." "The Death of Detente?," International Security, Vol.5, No.1 (Summer 1980), p.6. Even though the Soviet Union remains a largely closed society, the Soviet government does have problems keeping separate its messages to the outside capitalist world and to its population at home. Alliance leadership, even Soviet-style in the command mode, also becomes far more complicated for a Soviet leadership pursuing a policy line of limited accommodation with the West.
63. As the reason, or excuse, for requiring continuing domestic sacrifice and vigilance. In the interests of discipline at home, the U.S.S.R.

would have to invent foreign enemies if they were not already so conveniently identified by ideology and geopolitics.

64. Logically, there is a third alternative--that Soviet-American antagonism will wither and die much as did Christian-Moslem and later Reformation-Counter-Reformation antagonism, as state and religious interests clearly diverged in the evolution of Modern Europe. It is possible that the rise of new centers of first-class power--China, Japan (or China-Japan), Western Europe, or Germany-Western Europe--will subsume Soviet-American rivalry into a broader and more complex pattern. Nonetheless, such a possibility is of less than pressing relevance to American policy makers today.
65. At least as averaged over the years. Typically, as best we can judge, the Soviet defense effort in the Brezhnev period has registered roughly a 4 percent rate of real growth each year. Such a rate was somewhat below the rate of growth in Soviet GNP in the better years of the 1960s, is somewhat above the rate of growth of the late 1970s, and is well above the expected rate of growth of Soviet GNP in the early to mid-1980s. As the Soviet Union enters a period of rate of economic growth averaging, say, 2-2½ percent per annum, unless one is willing to predict a Soviet willingness to contract the scale of its military programs, then one has to conclude that the expectations, if not the actual living standards, of the Soviet consumer will have to suffer.
66. Department of Defense Annual Report, Fiscal Year 1980 (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, January 25, 1979), p.6.

67. For a comprehensive study of the MX/MPS program, see Colin S. Gray, The MX ICBM and National Security (New York: Praeger, 1981).
68. For several years it has been argued that the U.S. cruise missile program would drive the U.S.S.R. to a massively expensive, offsetting air defense deployment. While the Soviet Union undoubtedly will endeavor to optimize its tactical efficacy against the cruise missile threat, U.S. officials tended to neglect to point out that the Soviet Union has long been committed to the orderly modernization of a massive air defense capability and that the scale of Soviet resource allocation to PV0-Strany is probably close to unaffected by predictions of the fate of individual U.S. weapon programs.
69. In 1980, Admiral Turner, the Director of Central Intelligence waged a campaign, via the national intelligence estimates, to dissuade the president from continuing with MX/MPS. The CIA, allegedly, predicted a Soviet "response" to MX/MPS, at the high end of the possible threat range, comprising well in excess of 20,000 ICBM warheads. The basis for this estimate range was, very largely, (CIA) strategic logic--it was not Soviet evidence. See Richard Burt, "Soviet Nuclear Edge in Mid-80s Is Envisioned by U.S. Intelligence," The New York Times, May 13, 1980, p.A12.
70. It is only fair to point out that the U.S. defense community is divided in its assessment of Soviet mobilization potential vis à vis defense high technology. A useful discussion is Abraham S. Becker, "On the Politics and Economics of the Burden of Soviet Defense," unpub. paper (RAND), May 1980.

71. Benjamin Lambeth, How to Think About Soviet Military Doctrine, P-5939 (Santa Monica, Cal.: RAND, February 1978), p.7.
72. The strategic balance is notoriously difficult to measure. This author, as a defense analyst trained (through a British education) to think historically, is compelled to assess dynamically in terms of hypothetical campaigns. Today, and for the next several years, I do not believe that the United States could wage acute crises or wars with the U.S.S.R. and secure her foreign policy goals. This has to translate into strategic inferiority--"soft" though the reasoning admittedly has to be. There is no magic metric or yardstick which can inform the U.S. defense community as to whether or not its programs are sufficient.
73. It is far from obvious that the U.S.S.R. recognizes a concept of strategic superiority outside the enveloping framework of the correlation of forces. See Bialer, Stalin's Successors, pp.241-253.
74. In Paul Nitze's words: "The Kremlin leaders do not want war; they want the world." "Strategy in the Decade of the 1980s," Foreign Affairs, Vol.59, No.1 (Fall 1980), p.90.
75. See Henry Kissinger, "The Future of NATO," The Washington Quarterly Vol.2, No.4 (Autumn, 1979), p.6.
76. And perhaps not only strategic-nuclear programs. ZSU-23-4 anti-aircraft guns and BMP infantry combat vehicles also have been judged to be relatively more expensive for the Soviet Union than the U.S. (with reference to U.S. counterparts), to produce. See John M. Collins, U.S.-Soviet Military Balance: Concepts and Capabilities, 1960-1980 (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1980), p.83.

77. The U.S.S.R. has provided, and is providing, a near-classical illustration of this thesis with its year by year improvement in what, generically, is termed the fourth generation of its ICBMs.
78. If detente is to be characterized as a quest for a modus vivendi, that modus vivendi would have to allow for Soviet support for fundamentally anti-Western forces in South Asia, Africa, and elsewhere.
79. Sino-American detente-entente provides yet more fuel to the basic antipathy. On the geopolitical roles of the U.S.-led maritime alliance, see Gray, The Geopolitics of the Nuclear Era, Chapter 4.
80. Soviet (Russian) political culture is not merely ill-fitted to accommodate Western ideas, it is fundamentally suspicious for reasons that have nothing to do with the performance of the current generation of Western leaders. Although very imperfectly balanced by a largely romantic myth of the virtues of the Russian peasant, and his ties to the soil of Mother Russia and to the Orthodox Church, Russian/Soviet commentators continue to be afflicted with a deep sense of inferiority vis à vis "the West". This assessment, necessarily, is difficult to document. Readers are recommended to read deeply in Russian cultural history. For example, see James H. Billington, The Icon and the Axe: An Interpretive History of Russian Culture (New York: Knopf, 1966).
81. This point refers to the fact that the Soviet Union, quite aside from the more local elements deriving from the Mongol memory and the rest, has a distinctive "continental", as opposed to "insular," strategic culture. Since there is, as yet, no literature of direct comment on the continental perspective, readers are recommended to

- approach this perspective via its Anglo-Saxon obverse. See Michael Howard, The Continental Commitment: The Dilemma of British Defense Policy in the era of the two world wars (London: Temple Smith, 1972).
82. See Norman Friedman, "The Soviet Bomber Force: Two 'Revolutions in Military Affairs'," unpub. paper (Hudson Institute), 1980.
83. There is no evidence worthy of note which would suggest either that the developers of MIRV in the 1960s considered rigorously the implications of this technology when married to the superior throwweight of Soviet ICBMs; or that the official proponents of MX/MPS have given very much thought to possible Soviet reactions. For reasons developed in detail in Gray, The MX ICBM and National Security, I believe that MX/MPS is competition-viable.
84. See the prepared testimony of Donald G. Brennan in U.S. Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, The SALT II Treaty, Hearings, Part 4, pp.369-376.
85. See Keith B. Payne, "Are They Interested in Stability: The Soviet View of Intervention," Comparative Strategy, Vol.3, No.1 (1981), pp.1-24.
86. A noteworthy feature of U.S. campaign politics in 1980 was that no one was willing to assail the SALT process per se. Then Secretary of Defense Harold Brown felt sufficiently confident of popular endorsement of the SALT process that he was willing to link, as a debating point, Reagan's insistence upon SALT II renegotiation, to the damage and postponement ("perhaps indefinitely") of the SALT process. See "Brown Urges SALT 2 Ratification," Aviation Week and Space Technology, Vol.113, No.17 (October 27, 1980), p.21.

87. Evaluation of Soviet motives vis à vis the ABM issue in 1972 continues to be controversial. However, a consensus appears to be emerging to the effect that the Soviet Union judged itself unable to compete effectively, at that time, with the United States in that area. Also, Soviet leaders may have believed that their ABM system could not cope with the offensive prowess of MIRVed Minuteman III and Poseidon C-3.
88. Notwithstanding ten years of public and private SALT diplomacy, this author has yet to hear a plausible item of evidence, or even candidate-evidence, suggesting Soviet endorsement of the Western idea that it is strategically desirable for both superpower societies to be totally vulnerable.
89. See Colin S. Gray and Keith B. Payne, SALT: Deep Force Level Reductions, HI-3195-RR, prepared for OASD SALT/Arms Control Support Group, (Croton-on-Hudson, New York: Hudson Institute, March 1981).
90. This central theme of Soviet policy logic has not been concealed, but it continues to lack a knowledgeable Western audience.
91. See Col. B.Byely et al., Marxism-Leninism on War and the Army (A Soviet View). Soviet Military Thought Series of the U.S. Air Force, No.2 (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1974, first pub. Moscow, 1972), p.217.
92. This, basically, is the thesis of Blechman, "Do Negotiated Arms Limitations Have a Future?"
93. In the Fall of 1980, Governor Reagan and his intimates were prone to promise a "new" approach to SALT--without specifying what it was that they had in mind.

94. Christoph Bertram, The Future of Arms Control: Part 2: Arms Control and Technological Change: Elements of a New Approach, Adelphi Paper No.146 (London: IISS, Summer 1978). The naivete referred to pertains to the strong implicit requirement that the U.S.S.R. alter some of the firm tenets of its military science.
95. See Burt, "Reassessing the Strategic Balance," passim.
96. Studies of SALT, and of arms control more generally, have yet to address issues as basic as this.
97. The true seriousness of this charge tends to elude official comprehension. Unless one is trained to think strategically, one cannot easily understand that the United States has no business negotiating in SALT: (A) if it lacks a stable strategic direction for weapon acquisition; and (B) if there is no fixed and authoritative doctrinal criteria for allocating funds for research and development.
98. The beneficial ethos of general staff work is near-totally alien to the American defense environment. To be specific: unlike the Soviet case, there is no American official organ charged with designing authoritative answers to important military questions.
99. This probably is a futile counsel of perfection, since it seems very unlikely that the United State will abandon its opposition to a Russian-style General Staff.

Chapter 8

STRATEGIC SUPERIORITY

The Concept

Superiority, like leprosy, is something which folk dare not touch. In the presidential campaign of 1980, Ronald Reagan chose to refer, often, to the need for a "margin of safety," while his principal defense advisor, William Van Cleave, felt moved to endorse publicly only the idea of a "selective superiority."¹ "Selective superiority," of course, is indistinguishable intellectually from the erstwhile authoritative concept of "essential equivalence."² For the better part of fifteen years, American officials and strategic commentators profess to have had difficulty comprehending the meaning of the concept of strategic superiority. I have no such problem. Without prejudice to arguments suggesting that superiority is or is not attainable, I affirm that strategic superiority should mean that the United States could, not implausibly:

- deter arms race challenges.

- deter crisis challenges.

- deter military crisis breakouts.

- take the military initiative.

- enforce escalation discipline on an adversary.

- impose defeat (in his terms) on an adversary and physically defend essential Western assets.³

While discussion of strategic superiority may focus most Western eyes upon the undesired event of actual nuclear conflict, it is worth repeating Paul Nitze's judgment that "[t]he Kremlin leaders do not want

war; they want the world."⁴ Since the mid-1960s, the United States' defense community has accepted as a fact the proposition that it cannot achieve and maintain strategic nuclear superiority. It is necessary, first, to clear the air and proclaim that the concept of strategic superiority does have meaning in the nuclear age. As specified above, one can identify exactly what strategic superiority should mean in terms of freedom of foreign policy decision.⁵

The United States government never decided, explicitly, to move from a condition of strategic superiority to one of parity; rather, such a shift was permitted to occur through the mechanism of freezing the number of strategic missile launchers at the levels attained in 1967, and deliberately eschewing investment in weapons prospectively capable of enforcing damage limitation on a major scale:⁶ the momentum in the Soviet strategic-force modernization program did the rest. It is only fair to observe that the demise of a condition of American strategic superiority was so unduly unlamented in good part because many commentators and officials believed that acceptance of parity or sufficiency entailed, really, only making a virtue of necessity. Even in the early 1980s, there are many people, including not a few defense professionals, who believe that strategic superiority is uninteresting as a concept because it is unattainable. Busy, pragmatic people do not waste their time on theoretical exploration of an impossible dream.

For reasons that have to do with a change, perhaps even a permanent change, in American political culture in the late 1960s--or which may pertain to a temporary, though major oscillation between sub-cultures--the concept of strategic superiority ceased even to be respectable among

policy commentators. Few people appear to be comfortable with the concept of superiority. Although the United States largely has recovered from the collective identity crisis substantially triggered and fed by the Vietnam War, the idea that strategic superiority is both feasible and necessary for Western security has yet to stage a truly convincing comeback.

The proposition central to this chapter is that strategic superiority refers to the ability to win arms competition, crises, and wars. The concept is clear, even if the detail of effective, high-confidence implementation may not be. In his prepared testimony on the SALT II Treaty for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in 1979, Henry Kissinger offered some much-quoted wisdom on the subject.

After an exhausting negotiation in July 1974, I gave an answer to a question at a press conference which I have come to regret: "What in the name of God is strategic superiority?" I asked "What is the significance of it....at these levels of numbers? What do you do with it?" My statement reflected fatigue and exasperation, not analysis. If both sides maintain the balance, then indeed the race becomes futile and SALT has its place in strengthening stability. But if we get out of the race unilaterally, we will probably be faced eventually with a younger group of Soviet leaders who will figure out what can be done with strategic superiority.

It was one thing to believe, as most American defense officials did in the mid-1960s, that damage-limitation--which, if sufficiently expansive in scale, is synonymous with superiority--would not be feasible for inescapable technical reasons. However, it was quite another to make a virtue of that believed necessity to the point where, retrospectively, it is legitimate to wonder whether the loss of United States strategic superiority was not, to a noticeable degree, a self-fulfilling prophecy. This suspicion is strengthened when one reads the following

historical assessment, written by one of the High Priests of parity,

Jerome Kahan:

The stated policy of Presidents Kennedy and Johnson was to consider the effect of U.S. strategic weapons decisions on the Soviet Union's programs and the overall stability of the balance. This was explained by Assistant Defense Secretary John McNaughton as early as 1962 and later formalized by Secretary McNamara in his description of the action-reaction phenomenon. The decisions to eliminate vulnerable systems, limit the number of U.S. strategic vehicles to the levels of the mid-1960s, and emphasize assured destruction rather than damage limitation were influenced by a desire to avoid stimulating Soviet reactions or disrupting the stability of the balance, and fight against the deployment of a large U.S. ABM system was increasingly motivated by arms race concerns.⁸

There can be no doubt that through most of the 1960s and 1970s, the United States' defense community, at policy-making levels at least, did not want to pose a major threat to the pre-launch, or penetration, survivability of Soviet strategic forces.⁹ Whether or not such a threat could have been posed in another matter. As was explained in Chapters 5 and 7, the theories of crisis and arms race stability to which Kahan makes reference have to be judged, today--on the historical evidence and in the light of careful study of Soviet style--to be very severely flawed.¹⁰ In short, the doctrinal basis for opposing the concept of strategic superiority is demonstrably false (or, to be generous, extremely fragile).

Superiority and Strategy

As noted above, superiority carries with it a burden of largely substantively irrelevant negative baggage which inhibits intelligent discussion. The case for a meaningful measure of strategic superiority is functionally identical to the case for strategy, properly defined.¹¹

As strategy should relate, in a purposeful way, military power to political objectives, so superiority is the means for providing that freedom of action essential if policy-makers are not to be paralyzed into inaction, or driven to take paths of unpromising action in case of acute need. All too often, strategic commentary in the United States remains mired in the bog of static indices of relative strategic power. This prevalent inclination to count defense inputs (launchers, warheads, equivalent megatonnage, and so forth) is understandable, because it places little intellectual strain on the commentator. However, defense professionals should not encourage such shallow "analysis" even though the temptation can be strong in the heat of a highly politicized debate over a defense issue. Although it is sensible to argue that the United States should not endorse, for example, prominently visible unfavorable asymmetries in permitted force levels in arms control agreements, it is not sensible to argue that perceptual criteria should play a very noticeable role in United States' strategic postural design. The principal advocate of such a development, Edward Luttwak, has rendered a good idea a bad idea by taking it too far.¹² The concept of strategic superiority has been cheapened and degraded by a succession of annual Defense Reports which failed to elevate strategic balance analysis beyond the level of the political perception of strategic inputs. Year after year in the mid-to-late 1970s it was asserted in annual Defense Reports that "essential equivalence," the contemporary conceptual leitmotiv, pertained to perceptions by unsophisticated Third World politicians and officials of which side was ahead or behind on crude input comparisons of strategic inventories.

Parity, inferiority and superiority have all come to be favored with the brush of operationally meaningless input comparison by virtue of association with the way in which essential equivalence has been explained over the past five years. Richard Burt was very close to the mark when he claimed that

"Parity", a political definition of force sufficiency, is not an adequate measure of military effectiveness because it fails to provide any operational requirements for long-range forces.¹³

Similarly, superiority could be defined in crude input terms that bear not at all upon operational issues. The problem here is that the American defense community has come to accept as fact a largely implicit distinction between political/perceptual and operational analysis. Many, and probably most, commentators who deplore conservative arguments for strategic superiority are persuaded that conservatives really are arguing only for optically relevant, as opposed to operationally meaningful, superiority. This author, for example, is friendly to the following argument advanced by Abram Chayes:

The efforts of strategic analysis to demonstrate that numerical superiority remains meaningful or that present force levels can be justified in terms of plausible missions--for example, damage limitation or war fighting capability--have become increasingly labored and unconvincing. Countries should have little difficulty in drawing the political conclusions. The political value of weapons is ultimately derived from their military significance. If numerical or technical advantage at present levels doesn't convey the one, it will soon lose the other.¹⁴

Inferiority, parity and superiority seems, near-universally, to be concepts appropriated by commentators bent upon drawing far-reaching political conclusions from essentially static relative assessments.

The way in which essential equivalence has been defined and defended of very recent years does, indeed, reflect the fact that the

Secretary of Defense focuses upon the supposed importance of third country perceptions in his Harold Brown's advocacy of essential equivalence because he does not consider strategic superiority or inferiority to have any military significance.¹⁵

Strategic superiority, to my mind has meaning first in prospective operational terms, and then, by way of positive feedback, in terms of probable pre- and intra-war deterrent effect. A defense debate should not be conducted around such a question as "the desirability of strategic superiority." Superiority is a codeword for the ability to prevail in arms competition, crisis, and war. Perceptual issues are important very largely insofar as they impact on judgments on operational issues. When a conservative, or defense-minded strategic analyst claims that strategic force relationships can have political meaning, he should be referring not merely to static indices, but also to the political shadow cast by a militarily more, as opposed to less, capable strategic force posture.

For much of the 1970s, and perhaps even today to some degree, the debate over the meaning of strategic inferiority/superiority has been "owned" by people who held, as an a priori assumption, the belief that nuclear war could only be lost. Hence, there could be no operationally significant debate over superiority. This chapter, in keeping with the thrust of the study as a whole, endorses no such assumption.

It has to be said, though it should be obvious, that strategic superiority is a composite concept. It need not imply a crude numerical preponderance on any particular indices of relative military power. However, one should be suspicious of commentators who offer superiority, or freedom

of action, at little or no additional cost. There is danger, as well as sense, in Sun Tzu's dictum that

In war, numbers alone confer no advantage. Do not advance relying on sheer military power.¹⁶

Clever strategy is inherently desirable, but--ceteris paribus (including clever strategy)--the larger side tends to win. Strategic superiority implies not only an amassing of additional weapons, also it implies, or should imply, search for excellence in strategic ideas. To summarize some of the work conducted on targeting doctrine over the past few years, the United States should exploit the fact that the Soviet Union: is grossly over-centralized as a state structure; is a colonial empire unloved by its subject peoples; and is a state fundamentally nervous of its legitimacy, even among Great Russians. However, there probably are no "clever" ways of attacking the Soviet state, as opposed to Soviet society, which can sidestep, or finesse, the need to defeat, or impose stalemate upon, the Soviet armed forces.¹⁷ Soviet political control at home will be restored, almost no matter how badly it is damaged, provided the Soviet armed forces are successful.

Strategic superiority continues to be undervalued because few people are willing to consider strategic nuclear weapons as to be usable. This author shares at least a good measure of that incredulity (and indeed plain horror), but he is obliged to take explicit account of the following considerations:

-- Soviet military science, the foundation for Soviet military strategy, considers nuclear weapons to be not merely usable, but also to be potentially decisive in their effect.¹⁸

- If strategic nuclear weapons truly are not usable, then a significant fraction of United States' and NATO strategy is no more than a bluff.
- Nuclear war could happen. Policies of pre-war deterrence cannot be guaranteed to succeed forever.
- Usability and credibility for deterrence are one and the same.

Although strategic superiority easily is defensible conceptually in terms of the familiar Western logic of arms-race, crisis, and the management of sequences of wartime escalation, it is defensible also with reference to a hypothetical case of total deterrence breakdown (pre-, and intra-war). Ignoring doctrinal labels, "countervailing strategy", essential equivalence, a margin of safety, and the rest, Harold Brown in reality called for a strategically superior United States' defense condition when he specified the requirement that

...if they [our potential adversaries] were to start a course of action which could lead to war, they would be frustrated in their effort to achieve their objective or suffer ^{so} much damage that they would gain nothing by their action.¹⁹

In short, the United States and her allies would defeat the U.S.S.R., or, at the least impose a stalemate ("frustrated in their effort to achieve their objective"), and would hold at risk the essential assets of the Soviet state. Brown's broad-brush conceptualization of the problem was sensible, but his analysis did not proceed to identify the kind of American force posture which might give credible effect to his "countervailing strategy." A similar problem besets the new thinking of Henry Kissinger. Kissinger has stated that

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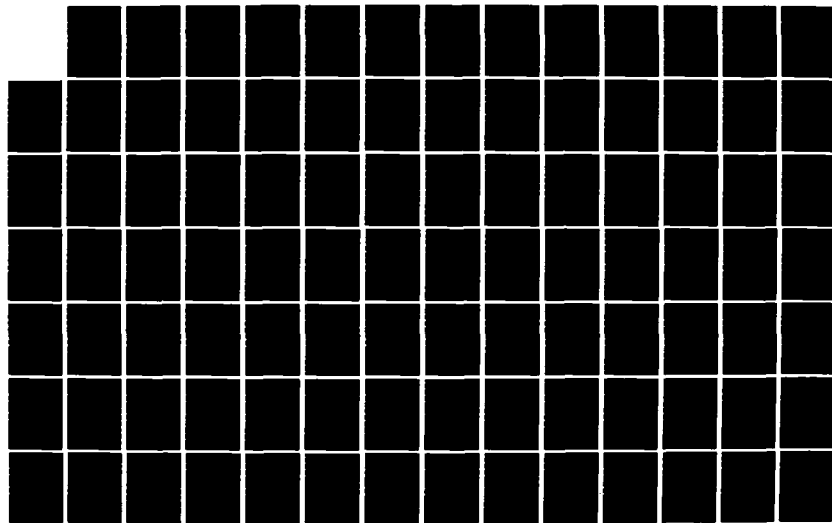
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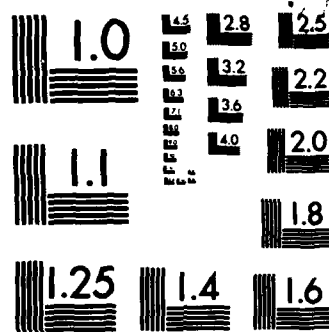
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...I define strategic superiority as the ability by the United States to pose a risk, or at least a perceived risk, to the Soviet Union that it might lose most of its strategic retaliatory force if it pushed a crisis beyond a certain point.²⁰

Notwithstanding his "born again" comprehension of the concept of strategic superiority, Kissinger does not, at least to date, recognize the essential connection between counterforce threats and homeland defense.²¹ To have any potential meaning for an American government, a concept of strategic superiority has to embrace the idea of damage limitation.

Typically, as noted above, assessment of the Soviet-American strategic balance is conducted almost solely in terms of the gross static inputs to the "balance". Instead, commentators should be encouraged to consider the dynamic prospect for each side of achieving its war aims. In the case of the United States, this involves the novel requirement that war aims for a World War III be identified and promulgated. In the absence of war aims, there could be no strategy--because, very simply, one would not know what one was trying to accomplish. However, if one were totally pessimistic concerning the ability of the United States to limit damage to its homeland, then one might argue that although war aims might have some meaning for a central war that was conducted with a major degree of reciprocated targeting restraint, and a willingness (and physical ability) to negotiate an early termination to a war, the "end-game" could be of no operational significance because the scale of certain catastrophe would assuredly overwhelm any consideration of political advantage.

Superiority has meaning for strategy only when it is translated into operational terms. If the Soviet Union is judged to be strategically superior to the United States, that judgment subsumes and transcends

such strategic force inputs as quantities and quality of weapons and communication/assessment assets, and makes reference to a believed ability on the Soviet part to conduct conflict processes (including wars) with a very good prospect of achieving success. I am not convinced that Harold Brown was correct when he asserted that

[t]he need for essential equivalence reflects the fact that nuclear forces have a political impact influenced by static measures (such as numbers of warheads, throw-weight, equivalent megatonnage) as well as by dynamic evaluations of relative military capability. It requires that our overall force be at least on a par with those of the Soviet Union, and also that they be recognized to be essentially equivalent. We need forces of such a size and character that every nation perceives that the United States cannot be coerced or intimidated by Soviet forces. Otherwise the Soviets could gain in the world, and we lose, not from war, but from changes in perception about the balance of nuclear power.²²

Richard Betts has offered very sensible judgment on the "perceptual impact" dimension of the argument over essential equivalence. He claims that

[t]he politics of strategic planning preclude astronomically expensive investments that are rationalized by public relations criteria that diverge from military logic. It is fine to have a strategic force that appears impressive to Third World or European leaders who lack a serious understanding of nuclear strategy, but only if it is consistent with what impresses the most important group of perceivers who are not untutored: the Soviet General Staff and Politburo. (Emphasis in the original).²³

When one discusses the political meaning of relative strategic nuclear power, one is not leaving behind consideration of probable operational effectiveness. Confusion has been created by all sides to the 1970s debate over the foreign-policy implications of parity, inferiority, superiority and essential equivalence. In particular, proponents of the thesis that perceptions of an unfavorable strategic nuclear imbalance can be

important may well not have been as explicit as they should have been concerning the military-operational assumptions underpinning their arguments.²⁴ Much of the audience for this debate may have believed, and perhaps may still believe, that the debate was about appearances only. "Dovish" spokesmen were correct in arguing that it is foolish to expend scarce resources for militarily meaningless weapons. "Hawkish" spokesmen should have made it very clear that their doctrinal opponents were assailing a position that was not defended.

The static measures of strategic capability--and particularly missile throw-weight--were, and remain, of great consequence because they are the raw material for capability output. In and of themselves, disparities, even large disparities, in launcher numbers and missile throw-weight, though undesirable on political perceptual grounds, should not promote expensive efforts at postural correction. Those disparities have been, and are, important because--when married to navigational improvements permitting CEPs that approach 0.1nm--they translated into a unilateral, Soviet ability to conduct a preclusive hard-target counterforce strike. Dr. Kissinger, on one of his less defense-minded days in the mid-1970s, asserted that "throw-weight is a phony issue." The world, and Dr. Kissinger, was to learn that throw-weight, far from being a "phony issue," was instead the key to the growing, unmatched, Soviet hard-target counterforce competence.

Debates on strategic issues have an unhealthy tendency to focus upon substantively the least important issues. In 1979 American strategists, so-called, were obsessed with such questions as: "is SALT II truly equitable?;" and "is SALT II verifiable?"--instead of such strategic questions as

"does the existence of a particular SALT II regime usefully reduce the risk of war (and if so, how)?" and "what kind of a military balance, on all levels, projecting from 1979 to 1985 and beyond, are we likely to have vis a vis the Soviet Union?" Similarly, in 1980-81, debate was initiated on the merits of "strategic superiority" and on the issue of whether or not victory is possible in nuclear war.²⁵ These are the wrong questions.

Parity and superiority cannot be debated intelligently unless they are understood to be codewords for particular kinds of capability. Strategic forces have meaning only in terms of their contribution to the support of foreign policy--one cannot sensibly debate the political or strategic merits of such summary concepts as parity or superiority in an intellectual context innocent of foreign policy considerations.²⁶ Similarly, some strategic commentators seem determined to debate the feasibility, or infeasibility, of achieving victory in nuclear war, without acknowledging the true character of historical circumstances. When commentators, such as this author, seek to spell out just what they mean by victory, and endeavor to explain that American and NATO freedom of choice may well be severely restricted,²⁷ they are often assailed with arguments which amount to the accusation that they have been guilty either of indecent doctrinal exposure (of things best left hidden), or of nostalgia or romanticism "for the golden age of U.S. superiority".²⁸ This study is founded, inter alia, on the twin beliefs that a country with a foreign policy heavily dependent upon implicit nuclear threats cannot responsibly avoid nuclear war campaign analysis, and that there is nothing romantic about nuclear war (even a nuclear war that the United States might win).

Beyond Essential Equivalence

The case for strategic nuclear superiority has to embrace both a persuasive rationale and a persuasive theory of feasibility. It is virtually a definitional truth that a doctrinal leitmotiv of essential equivalence cannot be appropriate for a country, and alliance, which structures its strategy such that strategic nuclear compensation is required in order to offset local deficiencies in Eurasian theaters of potential combat. This doctrinal, intellectual truth does not mean, necessarily, that essential equivalence will not be "good enough." It may be that the prospect of the catastrophe of nuclear war is so deterring a fear that gradations in anticipated general-war prowess may be irrelevant to foreign-policy decision-making. However, such a thought, if translated into policy terms, constitutes a grave (and unnecessary) risk, is not sensitive to the possibility of history surprising us (and perhaps, the Soviet Union), and is dangerously asymmetrical with known Soviet doctrinal beliefs. In short, the West might muddle through with theoretically inadequate forces, but how can one justify conscious acceptance of such a policy path? This study cannot, and will not, endorse the taking of such a risk.

Stripped of the unhelpful rhetoric which tends to surround the subject, the case for strategic superiority amounts to the claim that arms competition, acute crises, and wars are either a reality or a non-trivial possibility, and that these event-sequences can have a range of unpleasant outcomes which we can influence--and probably influence decisively. Moreover, given the healthy new American recognition that deterrence

and defense are very intimately related,²⁹ the (perceived or anticipated) ability to do well in arms competition, crisis, and war, should--logically--have a benign impact upon the probability of some of those event-sequences occurring. That is not a universal truth, because arms competition, de profundis, is inherent in the character of East-West political relations, and some crises and wars may occur regardless of the quality of Western defense doctrine and posture.

The American need for strategic nuclear superiority is a function both of geopolitics and of the character of Soviet imperial dynamics. It is a fact, regrettable but inescapable, that the Soviet Union is placed geographically with relatively easy access to American vital interests around the Eurasian littoral. The Western Alliance, notwithstanding its economic/technological strength and defense mobilization potential, tends to lack political cohesion for a firm and steady containment policy and adequate depth of territory for high confidence local military resistance. Even though history might surprise us pleasantly, it is all too easy to design scenarios wherein the maritime alliance, led by the United States, suffers an unfolding military catastrophe in Eurasia and, ergo, needs United States' strategic nuclear intervention to "restore deterrence"--as the saying goes.³⁰ Unfortunately, the American defense community has not, of recent years at least, recognized the merit in the argument that one cannot, responsibly, initiate (what is intended to be only) a small central nuclear war, unless one has a very good story to tell concerning the course of a large central nuclear war.³¹

The fundamental character of the Soviet Empire also has to help drive the direction of United States' strategic policy. It is paradoxical

that when such a distinguished British commentator as Michael Howard seeks to take fairly direct issue with the defense policy recommendations of this author, among others with similar views, his supposedly (more) reassuring characterization of Soviet national style is fully compatible with the analysis presented in this study. In addition, Professor Howard claims that

...no amount of argument or evidence to the contrary will convince a large number of sincere, well-informed, highly intelligent and, now, very influential people that the Soviet Union is not an implacably aggressive power quite prepared to use nuclear weapons as an instrument of its policy.³²

This thumbnail sketch does violence both to the tone and to the content of arguments such as those presented in this study. It has been argued here that the Soviet Union:

- is trapped in the dynamics of Empire.³³ Retreat anywhere is impossible for fear of the political consequences for the integrity of the whole; while the security of the extant imperial holdings requires an expanding degree of control over the external environment.
- has a strategic culture, born of historical experience, which anticipates and presumes hostility abroad. Such anticipation tends to generate the external referents which then function in a system of positive feedback.
- does not view her foreign policy demarches as aggressive. Soviet foreign policy is about the business both of fulfilling the prudent security goals of a state surrounded by actual, or potential, enemies (the United States, NATO-Europe, China,

Japan), and of forwarding the essential missionary purpose of Soviet power.

-- while viewing nuclear weapons as a form of super-efficient artillery, has no difficulty understanding their unique properties and would employ them only in a condition of dire military necessity (in Soviet estimation).

Professor Howard proceeds to argue that

....it would take a great deal to shift me from my own view, that the leadership of the Soviet Union, and any successes they may have within the immediately foreseeable future, are cautious and rather fearful men, increasingly aware of their isolation in a world in which the growth of Marxian socialism does little to enhance their political power, deeply torn between gratification at the problems which beset the capitalist world economy and alarm at the difficulties which those problems are creating within their own empire; above all conscious of the inadequacy of the simplistic doctrines of Marx-Leninism on which they were nurtured to explain a world³⁴ far more complex and diverse than Marx or Lenin ever conceived.

Howard is almost certainly correct in his characterization of the Soviet leadership. But, advocates of an American "war-fighting" strategic posture have not not sought to deny the obvious sources of weakness in the Soviet system.³⁵ Indeed, some of the weaknesses and frustrations identified by Howard (and others that he did not cite) are, assessed cumulatively, worrying rather than reassuring. Paradoxically, a major danger in the 1980s flows from the known and probable fragility of the Soviet system--as likely to be identified in Moscow. It would be very easy indeed for a Soviet defense planner to design a pessimistic briefing on long term security trends. Such a briefing would note: the demise of detente and the quite evident reawakening of interest in the United States in defense programs; the new modernization program of the Chinese

People's Republic (and the growing quasi-security ties between Beijing and Washington); the potential for defense mobilization in Japan and Western Europe; the enduring fragility of Soviet control over Eastern Europe; the continuing inefficiency of the Soviet economy; the political instability/policy-paralysis consequences of a protracted succession crisis in Moscow; the complex "time bomb" of the nationalities problem within the U.S.S.R. itself...and so on.³⁶

Unfortunately, the leading item on the plus side in Soviet assessment, in addition to the politically fractured nature of the hostile external world, is the reality of a multi-level Soviet military preponderance which should endure through much of the 1980s. Whatever else may be developing unsatisfactorily, the Soviet Union, under Leonid Brezhnev, has noted, rejoiced in, and exploited the "third stage" in the shift in the correlation of forces--the American loss of strategic superiority.³⁷ Soviet leaders have a dynamic view of the relationships of influence among competing power centers. While they may be genuine in asserting that strategic nuclear parity is all that the Soviet Union requires,³⁸ they can never assert that they require only an essential equivalence in all of the factors, assessed comprehensively, which comprise the correlation of forces. Geopolitically, rough parity in strategic nuclear forces translates into political advantage for the Soviet Union. While Soviet leaders would, undoubtedly, welcome any measure of strategic nuclear advantage granted by American program deficiencies, their fundamental requirement is for a strategic nuclear counterdeterrent.

This argument, though logically sound, could easily mislead if taken too far. One should not assert that "the Soviet Union wants parity."

Instead, one should argue that the Soviet Union, prudently, anticipates the possibility, perhaps even the probability, of war occurring, is attentive to the necessity of homeland damage-limitation, but is reconciled to the long term prospect of being unable to secure an enduring strategic nuclear advantage. It should not be forgotten that although it is plausible to argue that the Soviet Union probably is pessimistic concerning its ability to establish a lasting measure of strategic nuclear superiority, Soviet defense programs proceed on the basis of no known algorithm of sufficiency.³⁹

The author anticipates that some readers although perhaps willing, in principle, to grant the (near self-evident) desirability of the United States reestablishing a condition of strategic superiority, may be intensely skeptical over the feasibility of such an enterprise. The argument in this study is to the effect that superiority (the ability to wage arms competition, crises, and wars to outcomes that would merit characterization as politically successful) will be neither cheap nor easy to accomplish, but that it is both possible and is well worth attempting. Indeed, it is so desirable, and necessary, that the burden of persuasive analysis really should fall most heavily on the shoulders of those who seek to argue that such a capability cannot be achieved, or, if achieved (briefly), sustained. Nonetheless, without preempting too much of the kind of program identification specified in Chapter 9, it is incumbent upon the author to outline the practical basis for his argument that superiority is feasible.

An American strategy with a war-waging focus (for improved deterrent effect) would accommodate the fundamental principle that defense of the

American homeland is more important than is damaging the enemy. Above all else, the American political system has to appreciate that one need not, and should not, curl up and play dead in the face of society-wide catastrophe. Courageous peoples have faced prospective nuclear-war level casualty lists in the past, and have survived and recovered. England in the mid-1340s, and again in the mid-1660s, took casualty lists from disease which were unambiguously of the catastrophic genus (say one-third and above)--yet England survived. Similarly, Central Europe (particularly Saxony, Siberia, and Bohemia) suffered a war/disease death rate in the Thirty Years War (1618-1648) which far exceeded anything likely to be imposed by nuclear employment--yet survival and recovery occurred. Of more recent vintage, American skeptics are invited to examine the casualty lists of Poland and Yugoslavia in World War II, to see just how much a loss a society can stand ("there is a great deal of ruin in a nation").

There probably is some point of damage beyond which a society truly is definitively "out of business". However, it is worth recalling the fact that many societies have survived and eventually recovered from casualty lists well in excess of one-third of the prewar population level. While we tend to flatter ourselves that the nuclear threat is unprecedented--such flattery is not entirely well deserved. The multi-generational threat of nuclear warfare (i.e., the long-term genetic damage) is indeed unprecedented, but the total character of the threat believed to be posed has several historical precedents: consider first, the threat posed by the Huns to European civilization, and second--in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries--the threat posed by the Mongols (or Tartars) to the Near East and to Europe. The "civilized world" survived the Huns

and the Mongols, and there is good reason to believe that it can survive the worst that nuclear war planners can devise.

In the American context, nuclear war should not be thought of as an Act of God, to be endured as best may be possible. The amount of damage likely to be suffered by North America is, significantly, dependent upon the quantity and quality of the preparations effected. When an American defense analyst argues for "strategic superiority," behind that recommendation should lie a structure of offensive and defensive force postural proposals such that his concern to damage the enemy is balanced fully by his determination to enforce a severe limitation upon the amount and kind of damage that the United States should suffer at home.

American defense planners face an apparently intractable moral-philosophical-strategic problem--"what is (un)acceptable damage?" Pessimism over the ability of the U.S. defense community to limit damage to a noteworthy degree is so ingrained that it is close to heretical to suggest that a nuclear war could be waged, for sound political purposes, in expectation of suffering only acceptable casualties. War, nuclear or otherwise, against a first-class adversary is going to involve a horrific casualty rate.

The advocate of American superiority is neither blind to the potentially catastrophic scale of casualties that may be involved, nor to the whole range of casualty-attenuating policy measures that can and should be taken. In common with the Soviet defense authorities, the American damage-limiter places but qualified faith in any one instrument for defense. By way of summary, looking to the very late 1980s and early

1990s, damage limitation programs for the American homeland could comprise the following:

- strategic nuclear counterforce attrition of the threat--at source.
- two waves of exoatmospheric attrition of the ballistic-missile threat.
- two waves of endoatmospheric attrition--one high, one low level.
- air defense
- civil defense protection of key target sets.

It is well understood today that the key to damage limitation is multi-layering: Faith is not placed in one magically proficient intercept system. Furthermore, realistically it is not assumed even that a BMD system with three or four intercept "layers" would be totally leak-proof. However, the leakage through such a complex BMD system, in the context of U.S. (and Canadian) civil defense preparation, would be easily compatible with U.S./Canadian societal survival. For deterrence, and actual defense purposes, the key to effectiveness lies in the multi-layering. Even without discussing the possibility of "exotic" (directed energy) active defense technology, this author can envisage, realistically, that the defense could have up to four shots at an incoming warhead. This is a situation wherein, certainly, some warheads penetrate--but, given U.S. urban-area evacuation, blast and fallout protection, it is not a situation wherein urban-industrial America is destroyed.

The amount of urban-industrial damage taken by the United States would depend upon the degree of targeting restraint shown by the U.S.S.R., and the quantity of warhead allocation the Soviet General Staff

felt obliged to dedicate to American non-urban-industrial target sets (e.g., MX/MPS with 4600-9000 shelters--with or without LoADS BMD protection). The details have to remain imprecise, given the major "unknowns" in the equation, but no great optimism is required for the claim that urban-industrial America, essentially, can survive a World War III.

Everyone, so it seems has his favorite damage-limitation study. Many defense commentators will assert that they can find no good grounds for anticipating less than 100 million prompt fatalities for the United States. At the opposite extreme, readers will find some Boeing studies which envisage American losses (prompt fatalities) only at a very low level.⁴⁰ Everybody is honest, they just employ different assumptions. When this author claims that "victory" is possible in a nuclear war, he envisages the kind of damage-limitation system layering specified above. There is nothing here that is beyond the theoretical scope of 1980s United States' defense technology. Indeed, the prospects for damage-limitation are so promising, and the potential costs of failing to attempt to make such provision could be so terminal, that--to repeat--the burden of proof really should be judged to fall on those who argue against superiority.

The Use of Strategic Superiority

There is no discernible enthusiasm for war in Moscow. The Soviet Union is a heavily militarized, but not militaristic, society. The current Soviet leadership, though the beneficiary of the most successful peacetime military buildup in Russian/Soviet history, do not appear to be at all eager to precipitate a "day of reckoning" with the West.

Whether or not we choose to emphasize such issues publicly, there can be no denying the possibility that in the course of a general nuclear war, the U.S.S.R. might disintegrate as a centralized political structure. That possibility is enhanced by the fact that contemporary U.S. strategic-nuclear targeting design is directed to seek to exploit the unique weaknesses in the political-bureaucratic architecture of the Soviet Empire.

Strategic superiority, as employed in this section of Chapter 8, means--quite literally--if pressed, the ability to win a war. This means the ability to defeat the military power of the Soviet state and to hold down to a tolerable level the quantity and quality of damage that the Soviet state might inflict upon North America. In short, as noted in detail above, the concept of superiority has fairly clear implications pertaining both to offensive and to defensive capabilities.

The political benefits of strategic superiority have been much underplayed in the defense literature of the 1970s. This author has no wish to engage potential critics, yet again, in retrospective historical arguments over the value of strategic superiority in the 1950s and early-to-mid 1960s. Whether or not many Western commentators agree, it is a fact that contemporary Soviet leaders were unwilling to press local crisis claims (over, say, Berlin and Cuba) to a point where U.S. central strategic nuclear power might plausibly have been invoked. To repeat a controversial point made much earlier in this study, it seems very probable indeed that the United States could forcibly have disarmed the U.S.S.R. of strategic nuclear weapons in the late 1950s and early 1960s. That period should be judged not to have been a mythical Golden Age, but rather to have been a Golden Age in prospective operational terms.

The fact that American politicians did not so understand it at the time is neither here nor there.

Considering the explicit and implicit reliance of the United States upon nuclear threats in the crises of the 1950s and early 1960s, there is much to recommend Richard Betts' judgment that

...if this reliance was a bluff, the Soviets never chose to force the issue, and allowed the crises to be settled on political terms at least minimally acceptable to Washington.⁴¹

Earlier, again with reference to the crises of the 1950s and early 1960s, Betts offered the pertinent thought that

...although no one can prove that such threats [of U.S. nuclear employment] were effective, there is enough circumstantial evidence that Communist leaders took them seriously to invalidate any confident dismissal of the political utility of superiority.⁴²

If it adopts a genuinely balanced offense-defense force posture, a U.S. administration in the 1980s can aspire to restore a strategic relationship which should have the functional merits identified earlier with strategic nuclear superiority. Such a condition requires both an unusual American willingness to think strategically about its defense postural needs, and a willingness to consider damage-limitation to be the dominant defense concept. The leitmotiv for the determinant of U.S. strategic-force requirements cannot, prudently, be the need to ensure that the U.S.S.R. would suffer a great deal of damage by way of U.S. retaliation: such an objective is almost trivially easy to guarantee, given the character of nuclear weapons. Instead, the U.S. leitmotiv should be the need to pose a credible threat of intolerable damage, in Soviet terms, all the while rendering it very unlikely that the Soviet Union would be able to effect intolerable damage upon the United States.

Many, and probably most, commentators recoil from the idea of superiority because they hold to notions of acceptable/unacceptable damage which are wholly inappropriate vis à vis nuclear war. In common with some generic critics of nuclear strategy, I am not indifferent to the moral, immoral, or plain amoral, aspects of the subject. What after all, could be "worth" tens of millions of lives? It is morally repugnant even to pose the question. Nonetheless, there is no nuclear posture and strategy likely to be available to the United States which would not, by way of a net assessment in prospective operational terms, cost American society 10-20 million fatalities--and that refers to a hypothetical war wherein the United States fares very well indeed. The problem is really one wherein choice is severely restricted. I believe that the range of real choice embraces survivable and non-survivable catastrophe. Also, quite probably, many of the survivors of a World War III would judge the political issues supposedly at stake to have been as trivial, relative to the casualty list, as were the issues that underlay the 1914-18 war.

The fact remains that East and West are locked into a threat and counterthreat system from which the nuclear-weapon element cannot be removed. Indeed, for reasons of elementary geopolitics the NATO Alliance is more dependent upon nuclear threat for security than is the U.S.S.R. It appears to be a fact that for good Russian/Soviet historical reasons, Moscow takes an amoral instrumental view of the value of its citizens. Western strategists have to contend with the unfamiliar fact that the Soviet adversary does tend to take a nuclear cannon-fodder approach to its civilian dependents. This is not to say that Soviet leaders are

indifferent to the prospect of a catastrophic level of civilian casualties, but it is to say that such a level is deemed "acceptable" given the political issues anticipated to be at stake. As was outlined in Chapter 1, the United States has no choice other than to play in the threat system, and that, today, means the nuclear threat system. International politics has not changed its nature from Ancient China and Ancient Greece to the present day. Affluent societies unwilling to act responsibly in defense of their own interests inevitably go down before the Barbarians. There is every good reason to reject the Greek tag that "the Barbarians, after all, were some sort of solution."

The uses of strategic superiority may be summarized as the possession of freedom of diplomatic action in peacetime; the ability to wage crises in expectation of acceptable political outcomes; and the capability, if need be, to wage and survive war at any level. On the last point, it is not a very telling argument to claim--accurately enough, in all probability--that the societal survival envisaged encompasses acceptance of perhaps twenty million casualties. I do not find the prospect of twenty million, one million, or indeed any number of casualties any more "acceptable" than does the next person. But, war may occur for reasons that currently are unpredictable, or are only dimly appreciated, and--historically--the United States could, and would, recover from such a catastrophe. The problem is that there is no wide range of choice. The United States could vastly reduce the geopolitical extent of its security perimeter, but that would not alter the character of the international threat system--only the role and influence of the United States within it. An America which seeks to withdraw into a continental bastion, laagered against

a hostile world, far from improving its security condition would merely guarantee that the Soviet Union truly would dominate Eurasia-Africa--and such a Soviet Union, still bound to the dynamics of Empire, could never feel truly secure in Eurasia-Africa until it had secured hegemony over the external (U.S.) threat.

The case for strategic superiority virtually makes itself once one succeeds in discarding the astrategic dicta that were popular from the mid-1960s until the late 1970s. For example, the following propositions summarize the mind-set which continues to enervate the U.S. defense community. These propositions are all either false or irrelevant:

-- "...parity is the only criterion on which political agreement--both internal and external--can be built."⁴³ (Comment: Of course the U.S.S.R. will negotiate no less than parity, but that admitted fact does not mean that strategic nuclear parity should be, or has to be, negotiated. An American administration should have no difficulty whatsoever explaining both to its domestic public and to its NATO allies just why strategic superiority is essential).⁴⁴

-- Strategic superiority is unattainable.⁴⁵ (Comment: Not merely is this claim untrue as a theoretical proposition, it is in the process of being falsified by Soviet programs today. The vital qualification is the recognition that there are no cheap [in absolute terms] victories in nuclear war. If it so chooses, the United States could construct a strategic posture which would both defeat Soviet military power and--no less important--

very substantially attenuate, though not totally preclude, the ability of Soviet military power to damage the United States).

-- Perception or anticipation of strategic nuclear advantage has no relevance to political life. (Comment: This proposition appears to be false vis a vis the American crisis experience of the 1950s and 1960s, and--no less--appears especially to be false in the context of Soviet foreign policy behavior since the age of strategic parity dawned in approximately 1970. Over Berlin, from 1958-1961, and over Cuba in October 1962, the U.S.S.R. seems to have learnt that small local crises may become large general crises, and that there is a political unity to prospective military performance. In short, one should not knowingly accept the risks of small-scale local conflict unless one has a very plausible theory of victory relevant to the war which might ensue.)

In the early 1980s, the Soviet Union is in the enviable, though well-merited, position of being able to eavesdrop on a Western strategic debate confined to the issue of whether the United States retains rough parity or is slipping into a condition of strategic inferiority. Looking realistically at what Western high-technology industry could produce, if unleashed by alarmed governments, the U.S.S.R. must be delighted by the apparent policy fact that the uppermost threat discernible today in Western debate is restricted to the concept of rough parity--or selective superiority.⁴⁶

Soviet leaders appear to view the central strategic nuclear relationship in two quite distinctive--though fully compatible--contexts. First, they see the strategic nuclear balance (to have to resort to a Western concept) in terms of its peacetime function as a major scene-setter for diplomacy. Behind every clash of diplomatic notes, and representations by Ambassadors, is mutual knowledge that the U.S.S.R. would certainly deny victory to the United States should a major war ensue, and that the U.S.S.R. might just secure victory on its own terms.

Reduced to its essentials, the attainment of a condition of strategic nuclear superiority (which, admittedly, will always be a matter of degree, and will be subject to more or less severe analytical uncertainties)⁴⁷ means that a country need not engage in bluff when it affirms, or reaffirms, a crisis stand. Without meaning to detract from the strength in that claim, this author would remind readers that no country--regardless of the tenor of the net assessments provided by its general-staff--would lightly accept the risks of nuclear war. So, to claim that the U.S.S.R. either has achieved, or is about to achieve, strategic superiority is not to claim that the U.S.S.R. would welcome the outbreak of war. The Soviet leadership knows, courtesy of first-hand experience in the fall and winter of 1941-42 that military operations can be a close-run thing.⁴⁸

To reassert the case for strategic superiority probably is impossible for any U.S. administration. The reason, simply, is that under pressure of appropriately skeptical questioning, such an administration would have to anticipate being compelled to specify its expectations regarding American casualties--and those have to appear to be unacceptably high.⁴⁹

Ultimately, the case for strategic superiority descends to the level of stating that a time, or times, may come in the 1980s when the United States will want to say either "thus far, and no further" or, in extremis, "go back", to the U.S.S.R. The detail of the local geography almost certainly will be less significant than will be the timing of the potentially arresting challenge. Like Great Britain over the Polish Corridor in the late Summer of 1939, the issue will not be "Germany must not be permitted to achieve the conquest of Poland (over the pretext of the Corridor)," rather will it take the form that "we have determined to resist the next (Soviet) act of aggression"--whatever the local detail may be.

If truly determined to deny the Soviet Union success in the next peripheral crisis, the United States requires a theory of conflict management, or escalation control/dominance, which embraces all levels of conflict interaction from sub-crisis maneuvering up to, and including, military resolution in a central war. Pending programmatic specification in Chapter 9 below, this author claims the following: strategic superiority

- is required strategically, given the enduring deficiencies in U.S./NATO theater capabilities.
- is attainable, and sustainable, given U.S./NATO manpower and defense-industrial potential.⁵⁰
- should not be thought of as foreclosing upon arms control possibilities. As Edward Luttwak has argued, we should not "seek partial solutions without considering their effect on the general equilibrium of power."⁵¹ In short, the West should negotiate over arms control in a forum, or in forums, where its total slate of assets is considered. Negotiations confined to so-

called "central" strategic nuclear systems are bound to favor the Soviet Union--no matter how equitable the agreement secured.⁵²

Provided one is willing, along with the Soviet leadership, to contemplate with some equanimity a casualty list in the range of 10 or 20 percent of the population, strategic superiority has real meaning today. Unfortunately, even if the U.S. body politic cannot cope with such grisly arithmetic, there is every reason to believe that the Soviet Union can.

Conclusions

Strategic superiority does not mean war without pain. It has been contended above, theoretically, that arms races, crises, and wars, can be won--even in the nuclear age. Moreover, painful though nuclear victory might be, there is no good reason to suppose that such a victory would either be virtually indistinguishable from defeat, or that such victory would not be worth attaining. In practice, at some time in the 1980s, Western political-military options may narrow to a point where fine-drawn considerations of political merit are all-but irrelevant. The issue may be, should Soviet forward diplomacy be halted here (wherever "here" happens to be in 1984 or 1985)?

The U.S.S.R. certainly publicly would resist an American bid to regain strategic superiority just as vigorously as its propaganda instruments permit. Soviet "scholars" from the various Institutes of the Soviet Academy of Sciences would travel extensively to spread the word. Almost above all else, perhaps, Westerners should learn to disdain the argument that the U.S.S.R. somehow is owed strategic parity. The U.S.S.R. is

owed nothing. On its record, the U.S.S.R. is not to be trusted with parity--let alone with marginal, and above, superiority. American arguments to the effect that rough parity is a fact of technological life are simply wrong. Soviet missiles and manned bombers can, by and large (though not one hundred percent), be kept out of North America.

Arms races, crises, and wars can be won in the nuclear age. A United States which settles for essential equivalence is a United States which settles, ipso facto, for policy paralysis in time of direst need. Unfortunately, strategic-logical truths lack for persuasiveness in the absence of real-world, hands-on evidence in their support. Probably the best that can be hoped for in the early 1980s is a humiliating, but survivable, acute Soviet-American crisis, from which bitter experience American policymakers will come to learn, first hand, what they should have learned from history--that "escalation dominance" is not an "optional extra," to be acquired if budgetary circumstances permit (which they never seem to), instead it is a prerequisite for a robust chance for survival.

Inexact terminology can impede productive discussion. Virtually the entire U.S. defense community agrees that it is essential for the Soviet Union to be denied victory (in prospect--for a robust deterrence regime). However, it is important to recognize that the denial of Soviet victory is not, logically, necessarily identical either with Soviet defeat or with the denial of American defeat (in American terms). For example, the Soviet union might be denied achievement of its political goals through effective NATO-U.S. military action, but Soviet military power may be checked rather than defeated, and the price exacted of U.S. and U.S.-allied societies might be incompatible with the pertinent strategic-cultural

definitions of victory. U.S. multi-level military superiority, as defined functionally at the beginning of this chapter (in terms of different kinds of conflicts [arms races, crises, escalation sequences]), should bear the plausible promise of: denying Soviet leaders victory on their own terms; defeating Soviet arms and perhaps--in extremis--defeating the Soviet state structure; and ensuring the survival and recovery of American society.

REFERENCES

1. See William Van Cleave's discussion of the superiority issue in "A Debate: Are U.S. Defenses Ready, Rusty, or Adequate?" The New York Times, October 12, 1980, p.E-5.
2. The one quality that virtually all of the officially popular defense slogans of recent years have had in common has been imprecision. During the 1980 election campaign, Mr. Reagan succeeded in avoiding indicating just how broad, or narrow, a "margin of safety" he favored.
3. This daunting list of functional attributes cannot, of course, be achieved as a consequence of physical capabilities alone. Deterrent effect is a product of capabilities and perceived determination. The quality of determination displayed will vary from issue to issue.
4. Paul Nitze, "Strategy in the Decade of the 1980s", Foreign Affairs, Vol.59, No.1 (Fall 1980), p.90.
5. Which is not to claim, necessarily, that such freedom of action is either required or feasible.
6. This is not to neglect the fact of the major U.S. initiative in moving rapidly to deploy MIRVs, but it is to assert that the warhead yields selected for Minuteman III and Poseidon clearly were not chosen for their prospective efficacy in hard-target counterforce. See Aaron L. Friedberg "A History of the U.S. Strategic 'Doctrine'-1945-1980," The Journal of Strategic Studies, Vol.3, No.3 (December 1980), pp.54-55, particularly fn.83.

7. U.S. Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, The SALT II Treaty, Hearings, Part 3, 96th Cong., 1st sess. (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1979), p.169.
8. Jerome Kahan, Security in the Nuclear Age: Developing U.S. Strategic Arms Policy (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1975), pp.133-4.
9. "In the interests of stability, we avoid the capability of eliminating the other side's deterrent, insofar as we might be able to do so."
Harold Brown, Department of Defense Annual Report, Fiscal Year 1980 (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, January 25, 1979), p.61.
10. See Richard Burt, "The Relevance of Arms Control in the 1980s" Daedalus Vol.110, No.1 (Winter 1981), pp.162-3.
11. For an outstanding discussion, see Edward N. Luttwak, "On the Meaning of Strategy...for the United States in the 1980s," in W. Scott Thompson, ed., National Security in the 1980s: From Weakness to Strength (San Francisco, Cal.: Institute for Contemporary Studies, 1980), pp.259-73.
12. See Edward N. Luttwak, "Perceptions of Military Force and U.S. Defense Policy," Survival, Vol.XIX, No.1 (January/February 1977), pp.2-8.
13. Burt, "The Relevance of Arms Control in the 1980s," p.170.
14. Abram Chayes, "Nuclear Arms Control After the Cold War," Daedalus, Vol.104, No.3 (Summer 1975), p.27.
15. Keith B. Payne, Deterrence in American Strategic Thought: Inadequacy and Self-Delusion. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation (Los Angeles: School of International Relations, University of Southern California, November 1980), pp.212-13.
16. Sun Tzu, The Art of War (trans. Samuel B. Griffiths) (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), p.122.

17. For a strong statement of this thesis, see Norman Friedman and Colin S. Gray, Soviet Vulnerabilities and U.S. Strategic Employment Policy, (unpublished paper, December 1978).
18. See the useful discussion in Joseph D. Douglass Jr. and Amoretta M. Hoeber, Soviet Strategy for Nuclear War (Stanford, Ca.: Hoover Institution Press, 1979); and John P. Rose, The Evolution of U.S. Army Nuclear Doctrine, 1945-1980 (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1980), Chapter 7.
19. Department of Defense Annual Report, Fiscal Year 1981 (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, January 29, 1980), p.65.
20. "Kissinger's Critique," The Economist, February 3, 1979, p.18.
21. Instead, he adopts the popular position that the problems created by total societal vulnerability can be alleviated, if not solved, by revisions to targeting doctrine. See Kissinger's testimony in U.S. Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, The SALT II Treaty, Hearings, Part 3, pp.163-4.
22. Department of Defense Annual Report, Fiscal Year 1981, p.69.
23. Richard Betts, "Elusive Equivalence: The Political and Military Meaning of the Nuclear Balance." Unpublished paper (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, October 29, 1980), p.35.
24. This author offers a tentative guilty plea. See Colin S. Gray, "Foreign Policy and the Strategic Balance," Orbis, Vol.XVIII, No.3 (Fall 1974), pp.706-27.
25. Together with Keith Payne, I published an article in the Summer of 1980 with the title "Victory Is Possible," (in Foreign Policy). The title was selected by the editors, without consultation with the authors.

26. However, it would not be true to claim that all, or even most, strong proponents of strategic parity in the late 1960s and early 1970s ignored foreign policy considerations. As Richard Betts has observed, it seemed to many people that "the apparent growth of political stability: detente, the SALT I Treaty, CSCE and East-West agreements on the status of Berlin, and MBFR...." reduced the West's need to be able to threaten nuclear escalation. "Elusive Equivalence: The Political and Military Meaning of the Nuclear Balance." P.16. A similar point has been argued in Richard Rosecrance, Strategic Deterrence Reconsidered, Adelphi Papers No.116 (London: IISS, Spring 1975), p.36.
27. See Gray "Nuclear Strategy: The Case For a Theory of Victory," International Security, Vol.4, No.1, (Summer 1979), pp.54-87.
28. Betts, "Elusive Equivalence," p.23. Also see the remarks in Brown, Department of Defense Annual Report, Fiscal Year 1981, p.68.
29. Harold Brown, Speech at U.S. Naval War College, Newport, R.I. (mimeo), August 20, 1980.
30. Hudson Institute has designed many such scenarios of recent years.
31. One would imagine that a defense community capable of producing PD 59 would also be capable of analyzing the possible character of the protracted campaign which is envisaged in PD 59.
32. Michael Howard, "On Fighting a Nuclear War," International Security, Vol.5, No.4 (Spring 1981), p.7.
33. See Richard Pipes, "Militarism and the Soviet State" Daedalus. Vol.109, No.4 (Fall 1980), pp.1-12; and Luttwak, "On the Meaning of Strategy...for the United States in the 1980s," in W. Scott Thompson ed., National Security for the 1980s: From Weakness to Strength (San Francisco,

- Ca.: Institute for Contemporary Studies, 1980), pp.272-73. Those intrigued by Luttwak's claims that "the Russians have a strategy, and it is an imperial strategy of classic form..." could do worse than consult his book The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire: From the First Century A.D. to the Third (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976).
34. "On Fighting a Nuclear War," pp.7-8.
 35. Many of Howard's arguments have close parallels in Colin S. Gray: "The Most Dangerous Decade: Historic Mission, Legitimacy, and Dynamics of the Soviet Empire in the 1980s," Orbis, Vol.25, No.1 (Spring 1981), pp.13-28; and idem., "Soviet Strategic Problems and Prospects," Air Force Magazine (August 1981), forthcoming.
 36. A useful survey is Prospects of Soviet Power in the 1980s, Parts I and II, Adelphi Papers Nos. 151-2 (London: IISS, Summer 1979).
 37. A detailed examination of Soviet views of the shifting correlation of forces and of the implications for Western security is Payne, Deterrence in American Strategic Thought, passim.
 38. For an analysis of Soviet views which concludes that Soviet leaders do not believe that nuclear war can be won in any meaningful sense see Robert L. Arnett, "Soviet Attitudes Towards Nuclear War: Do They Really Think They Can Win?" The Journal of Strategic Studies, Vol.2, No.2 (September 1979), pp.172-91.
 39. A useful survey is John A. McDonnell, "The Soviet Weapons Acquisition System," in David R. Jones, ed., Soviet Armed Forces Review Annual, Vol.3, 1979 (Gulf Breeze, Fla.: Academic International Press, 1979), pp.175-203.

40. See Industrial Survival and Recovery After Nuclear Attack: A Report to the Joint Committee on Defense Production, U.S. Congress (Seattle, Wash.: The Boeing Aerospace Company, November 18, 1976).
41. "Elusive Equivalence," p.28.
42. Ibid. p.19.
43. Betts, "Elusive Equivalence," pp.28-9.
44. In the context of conventional and theater-nuclear inadequacy.
45. For a recent presentation which is pervaded by this thesis, see George Rathjens and Jack Ruina, "Nuclear Doctrine and Rationality," Daedalus, Vol.110, No.1 (Winter 1981), pp.179-87.
46. Even the Reagan Administration, favorably disposed as it is towards the kind of arguments advanced here, is unlikely to give effect to a bid to restore U.S. strategic superiority until adverse foreign policy events actually demonstrate the true costs of parity-minus.
47. From time to time in the past, technical deficiencies in particular kinds of equipment would have produced catastrophic failure rates. For example, EMP and gamma radiation effects would have had devastating consequences for unhardened equipment. Of course, once the problem is discovered, the technical fix required often is quite simple to effect. War planners and JSTPS targeting teams have to worry that there may be weapon effect problems that not merely are underappreciated, but which may be totally unknown today.
48. Particularly inappropriate is Michael Howard's historical analogy where he compared some American (and perhaps Soviet) nuclear 'war-fighting' theorists with those 'European strategists who in 1914 promised their political masters decisive victory before Christmas.'

"On Fighting a Nuclear War," p.14. No recognized strategist in the United States today is promising victory--let alone a victory that could be considered cheaply purchased. Professor Howard's misrepresentation was unintentional, but it demonstrates how difficult it is for strategic thinkers to conduct a dialogue on this subject.

49. James Schlesinger walked into this particular minefield in 1974-75 when he chose to initiate a public debate over the dangers, and possibility, of limited-purpose counterforce attacks. See U.S. Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, Subcommittee on Arms Control, International Organization and Security Agreements, Analyses of Effects of Limited Nuclear Warfare, 94th Cong., 1st sess. (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, September 1975).
50. This need not be a matter of "technological hubris" on the part of the United States. Strategic superiority embraces the idea of strategic-intellectual as well as material preponderance.
51. "On the Meaning of Strategy...for the United States in the 1980s," p.270.
52. This logical point was advanced quite forcefully, with subsequent diplomatic embarrassment (and "clarification," as the saying goes), by Helmut Schmidt in his 1977 "Alastair Buchan Memorial Lecture" at the IISS in London.

Chapter 9

NUCLEAR STRATEGY: THE RANGE OF CHOICE

The Setting: The Functions of Nuclear Strategy

As this study has noted already, in Chapter 2, there are cyclical trends, or oscillations, in the character of the dominant strain of American strategic thought. Following Harold and Margaret Sprout,¹ this author endorses the idea that the historically and culturally rich setting for United States defense policy provides a wide range of possibilities. American strategic culture, here, is viewed not as a constraint, but rather as a quite tolerant license. The "American way of war" appears to endorse both strategies of annihilation (Vernichtungskrieg) and attrition (Ermattungskrieg)--to have resort to the enlightening distinction drawn by the German military historian Hans Delbruck.² In the American Civil War, Sherman's march through Georgia and the Carolinas exemplified the former, while Grant's painful campaign before Richmond illustrated the latter. (This is not to criticize Grant; there are circumstances wherein maneuver and annihilation are precluded by geography.) In World War II, General Eisenhower pursued a strategy of attrition in a broad-front advance in Europe (for reasons both of Anglo-American accord--or tolerable discord and logistic convenience),³ while General MacArthur pursued the theme of maneuver-annihilation in his island-hopping campaign (his Inchon landing during the Korean War was a further illustration of the American capacity for pursuit of the maneuver-annihilation choice).

Although one may speak, accurately enough, of fairly distinctive American cultural proclivities with respect to strategy,⁴ it is somewhat

reassuring to appreciate that the American military experience does, in fact, point to a usefully wide range of policy options. Nonetheless, a close observer of the American defense debate of the past ten years could not help but notice the doctrinal rigidity which appears to have characterized different schools of thought.⁵ This is a somewhat bizarre phenomenon for a country, and culture, which prides itself on its pragmatism. In principle, at least, Americans should be the least likely people to coalesce into doctrinally dogmatic, apparently exclusive groups.⁶ Bernard Brodie wrote, accurately, that

Strategic thinking, or "theory": if one prefers, is nothing if not pragmatic. Strategy is a "how to do it" study, a guide to accomplishing something and doing it efficiently. As in many other branches of politics, the question that matters in strategy is: Will the idea work? More important, will it be likely to work under the special circumstances under which it will next be tested?

It is fashionable to argue that a thousand flowers should be encouraged to bloom and that one person's theory is as good as the next. This study prefers to hew closely to the ideal of American pragmatism and to argue that many of the candidate nuclear postural/doctrinal concepts for the United States in the 1980s and 1990s have already been tested (though short of battle, of course), have been found wanting, and should be identified clearly as inferior ideas. Policy options that have been demonstrated by history, with reasonable plausibility, not to "work," should be identified as such. There is no virtue in showing respect for ideas that are demonstrably incorrect.

I believe that the discussion in this concluding chapter, resting as it does upon the myriad of detail and proposition which precedes it,

should take due account of politically noteworthy postural/doctrinal options, but should not hesitate to identify insupportable options as such. This study is not written solely from the perspective of the scholar eager to demonstrate his grasp of all arguments regardless of merit. Instead--while committed firmly to the mission of comprehending each school of thought on its own sub-cultural terms--this study is directed towards the identification of a United States strategic-force posture and doctrine which most nearly matches the foreign policy duties predictable for the 1980s and 1990s.

In descending order of concern, the strategic nuclear forces of the United States are charged with: the deterrence of massive counter-urban/industrial strikes; the deterrence of massive counterforce/counter-politicial strikes; and the ability to exercise coercive influence on behalf of forward-placed allies, or exposed American forces, by way of extended deterrence. In fine-grained detail, these tasks were outlined by Herman Kahn in the early 1960s in his books On Thermonuclear War⁸ and On Escalation.⁹ Nonetheless, the fact remains that the functions of strategic nuclear forces are quite remarkably ill-appreciated today.¹⁰

While some alternative strategic force postures do come with "optional extras," depending upon how much insurance one feels moved to purchase, the fact remains that the required character of the strategic force posture, and the doctrine that it expresses, largely is (or should be) determined by the character of the American foreign policy that it is required to support and the political-military capabilities and nature of likely adversaries. For a leading contemporary example, the official in-house,

and public, debate over the MX ICBM and its basing mode is being conducted in what often appears to be a near-vacuum with respect to foreign policy supportive duties, strategy, and Soviet strategic culture--all three of which are of central importance to the debate.

As this study has noted on several occasions already, the simplest task for the United States defense community is to design a strategic force posture capable of deterring a tolerably rational (in American terms) enemy from launching a massive attack against American cities. Unfortunately, the U.S. strategic-nuclear defense planning problem cannot sensibly be restricted to such a task. Because the United States has global interests, its strategic forces have to be relevant, in the first instance, to the restoration of deterrence vis à vis some unfolding political-military catastrophe in a theater far from home. In short, it is more likely than not that it will be the United States which first feels moved to threaten and execute a central nuclear strike--meaning that the question "are we deterred" will be asked first, and perhaps subsequently, in Washington, rather than in Moscow. This would be a reversal of the situation in the Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962, when the Soviet Union had to decide whether or not to attempt to run the U.S. naval blockade.

This author is willing to respect the logical integrity of a policy/doctrinal opponent who marries, for an obvious example, his recommendation for a minimum U.S. strategic force posture (designed almost exclusively to assure the destruction of perhaps the 100 largest Soviet urban areas) to a recommendation for the drastic retrenchment of American foreign policy duties and interests. If the United States were to decide that

it had no vital foreign policy interests beyond the Western Hemisphere, then a far less expansive definition of force-postural adequacy would be quite appropriate.¹¹ Also, were a policy/doctrinal opponent to recommend, with plausible accompanying detail, a general purpose force posture (including tactical aviation, maritime assets, and theater-nuclear strength) that should, given good judgment and only a minimum of good fortune, be capable of defeating most reasonable, and even some unreasonable, local challenges, then the deterrent and war-fighting burdens placed upon the U.S strategic nuclear force posture would be noticeably diminished.

The responsible and prudent defense analyst is not totally at liberty to select a personally favored strategic posture and doctrine. The United States does have global commitments. The policy arguments with reference to the balance of power in Eurasia-Africa, vis à vis American security in the long term, that were persuasive in 1917 and 1940-41, are no less valid today. The United States could function, minimally, as a Festung Amerika, with the Soviet Empire dominating the rest of the world (outside the Americas), but that is not a world in which Americans should choose to live, and such a security condition of embattlement would have profound negative implications for the quality of American domestic life.¹² On the defense postural side, although the United States could choose to stress general purpose force capabilities, there are some enduring problems of geopolitics. The U.S.S.R. happens to enjoy interior lines of communications vis à vis theater conflict around Eurasia (if not Africa)¹³; and--scarcely less significant--the Eurasian allies of the United States have proved in practice to be exceedingly nervous of defense postural/

doctrinal "improvements" which appear to make the international political system safer for local or theater wars.¹⁴ In extremis, a favorable sea-change in the capability of U.S. (and U.S.-allied) non-nuclear forces may serve to augment the incentives to nuclear employment on the Soviet side. As Richard Burt has argued:

Although emphasizing conventional forces will tend to raise the "threshold" in local conflicts for the Western use of nuclear weapons, a conventional-emphasis strategy could actually provide the Soviet Union with incentives to escalate in time of war.¹⁵

Among the worst sins committed by policy-contending defense analysts is an inability to listen to the arguments of "the other side." This study offers a preferred policy option, but that option is offered on the basis of characterizations of alternatives that doctrinal opponents should acknowledge to be fair. All too frequently policy debaters choose not to hear the arguments of "the other side" (after all, why should the devil be accorded his day in court?). This author has a clearly preferred strategic posture and strategic doctrine in mind, which is advanced in this chapter, but he is open to the logic of alternative perspectives. Opponents of the preferred option may cavil over the logic of the argument, but they should not be able to allege that their arguments have not been presented fairly.

The Range of Postural and Doctrinal Choice

This section discusses in detail five postural options for the United States. These are

- (1) mutual assured vulnerability
- (2) mutual assured vulnerability with flexibility

(3) counterforce and counter-control preeminence with recovery
denial

(4) damage limitation for deterrence and coercion

(5) damage limitation with defense dominant.

The United States, today, following PD 59 and its associated NUWEP, is at (3) in terms of declaratory policy. This study recommends strongly a move to (4) "damage limitation for deterrence and coercion." As will be demonstrated below, such a shift should affront relatively few current official shibboleths and is on the ragged edge of being technically feasible in the late 1980s; it is certainly feasible for the 1990s. This author claims that his preference for "damage limitation for deterrence and coercion" lies squarely in the center of American strategic culture. It can be advanced as a desideratum today not only as something attractive in the abstract, but also as the only concept (plus postural details) that matches fully the foreign-policy supportive duties that continue to be placed upon the strategic nuclear forces. Moreover, it is technically and politically feasible.

It is sad but true to observe that generally careful, and certainly honest, scholars have a distressing tendency to debate cardboard adversaries.¹⁶ It is often easier to debate preferred, largely fictitious doctrinal adversaries, than real ones. This study has a clear bias in that, by this late stage, the author (and most readers) knows very specifically what posture and doctrine he is going to recommend. However, in the analysis which follows of different postural and doctrinal ideas there will be no conscious tailoring of opposing arguments for the purpose

of easy demonstration of (believed) error. As noted already in this chapter, I do not believe that it is a proper mark of scholarship to attempt to be even-handed between truth and error, but I do believe, very strongly, that each case should be presented in terms acceptable to its proponents. The proponents of different beliefs concerning the U.S. strategic-nuclear force posture may, very substantially, be judged to be in error, but their motives, patriotism, and so forth are not in question. No one has any hands-on knowledge concerning bilateral nuclear war, we are all rank amateurs, while virtually everything that we may think we know concerning what has, or has not deterred, has its basis in inferential, deductive reasoning.

To return to a theme raised above, this vitally important section is respectful of the motives of individuals, but it is not particularly respectful concerning arguments that are easily refuted with regard to historically well-referenced evidence. This subject is so important that folly, and fools, should be exposed when necessary. Nuclear strategy, and deterrence more generally, tends to be taught in universities and war colleges in a doctrinally permissive mode. That is to say, students are exposed to rival theorists and are educated to believe that there really is no source of authority on the subject. For example, at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard, students are asked to compare and contrast this author's opinions with those of Professor Robert Jervis.¹⁷ The idea that there may be a "correct" theory is inimical to contemporary liberal scholarship.

Braving the charge of hubris this chapter offers not merely a preferred posture and doctrine, but also a posture and doctrine that the author claims is objectively correct, given U.S. foreign policy, the nature of the enemy, and what is technically feasible. Among the more debilitating features of the American defense debate is the fact that truly fundamental doctrinal issues, seemingly, are never resolved. For example, seven years from its inception, the MX ICBM debate, today, continues to be plagued by arguments that betray themselves as being innocent of understanding of why the United States might require the services of a land-based ICBM force with its distinctive characteristics. In the very early 1980s, many people seem to believe that the mere allegation/demonstration of environmental damage certain to be caused by MX/MPS is a strong argument against the system. Strategists, properly so-called, have always recognized the certainty of environmental damage, that is not the issue; the issue is how substantial are the strategic benefits of MX/MPS deployment likely to be to the United States.

Although this study prefers option (4), as detailed below, it should not be imagined that the other options will be slighted as a consequence of that prior choice. If anything, the other options will be taken more seriously than truly they merit, lest a charge of cardboard targeting be filed.

(1) Option One: mutual assured vulnerability

The United States could decide that nuclear war-fighting and intra-war deterrent ideas were an illusion and that security could best be forwarded by advertising, and acting programmatically upon, the basis

of that decision. The matching U.S. strategic posture would be designed to hold at risk, under all circumstances of attack, a very large number of Soviet urban areas and other economic targets believed to be essential to recovery from war. That number might be 100 or even more. U.S. strategic forces could be designed and sized for extravagant redundancy, in that one might require that each leg of the strategic triad be capable, independently, of effecting the identified level of damage.

Although this posture and doctrine often is termed one of finite or minimum deterrence, and not infrequently, when advocated, is accompanied by the opinion that even a handful of nuclear weapons on a handful of cities would, in all likelihood, suffice to deter and would certainly, if executed, be viewed as a societal catastrophe,¹⁸ the implementing posture identified typically is quite substantial. The United States has never had war plans that even approximated the idea discussed here. Defense Department spokesmen in 1967 and 1968 often spoke and wrote in very prominent terms of the merits of mutual assured vulnerability, but critics (and admirers) of the idea of mutual assured vulnerability should not confuse rhetoric with operational policy.¹⁹

Nonetheless, the central core of reasoning which is the heart of mutual assured vulnerability arguments remains as significant in terms of the public discussion of nuclear policy issues as it is insignificant (and of declining importance) in terms of recent defense planning. Although the defense intellectual and policy trend in the United States has been moving away from finite deterrence ideas, those ideas constitute both an important and enduring landmark on the defense debate landscape, and

continue to have a place, albeit frequently underrecognized, in the schemes of advocates of other, more complex, postures and doctrines.²⁰

In the interests of civility and accurate communication, rival debaters from contrasting schools of thought should be discouraged from debating caricatures of their opponents' arguments and public relations' acronyms and pejorative slogans that are inaccurate. Nuclear strategy is a difficult enough subject when discussed fairly, without the added complications of deliberate or careless misrepresentation. Quite often, the first victim of the telling oversimplified caricature is the author himself. For example: advocates of a finite deterrence approach to the quality and size of the strategic force posture are interested in mutual vulnerability, not in executing mutual destruction. The politically effective acronym, MAD--for mutual assured destruction--is not helpful for constructive debate. Similarly, proponents of a counterforce strategy (with or without homeland defense) do not constitute a school, or schools, of nuclear war-fighting, or nuclear-use theory.²¹ Nuclear war-fighters, so miscalled, are no more interested in actually fighting a nuclear war than are miscalled "MADvocates." This kind of pejorative shorthand does not facilitate genuine debate. Theorists of different doctrinal persuasions are arguing over theories of deterrence and over what could and should be done in the event that deterrence fails. This author assumes that all theorists are morally equal, though they are not all equally prudent or competent in their logic and prescriptions.

This first postural option rests upon the following beliefs:

1. Nuclear war would be a catastrophe unparalleled in world history.

2. Nuclear war could not be controlled or limited
3. Probably the greatest risk of nuclear war will not stem from Soviet leaders who are insufficiently deterred, but rather from Western nuclear war-fighting theorists who may mislead policy-makers into believing that nuclear weapons can be employed, like other weapons, as a political instrument.
4. Most of the Western strategic literature which focuses upon the need for credibility in deterrent threats and which worries about the alleged delicacy of the balance of terror,²² fails to understand how and why nuclear deterrence "works." Nuclear deterrence "works" because all (or nearly all) sensible people, policy-makers and people-in-the-street alike, are terrified by the prospect of nuclear war per se. Virtually no matter how large the escalatory leaps from a theater-conventional conflict to large scale theater-nuclear war and then, most probably, to large-scale central war, any logical fragility in the credibility of the threat of such leaps is more than compensated for by the generalized fear of nuclear war. Statesmen, unlike theorists of nuclear strategy, do not confuse the logic of the real world of political responsibility for the abstract, consequence-free logic of the strategic theorist's seminar room.²³
5. Nuclear weapons deter not only the employment of nuclear weapons by an enemy, they also deter the kinds of actions that would, or could, create a political-military situation wherein the

use of such weapons would be judged to be much more likely.

All men fear nuclear war and, moreover, they fear it to roughly the same degree.

6. Cultural nuance is not important in the nuclear deterrence system. A very large nuclear war means the same thing to all cultures.²⁴ In principle, there is some political-analytical merit in pointing to possible cultural distinctions between countries which may affect deterrent reasoning. But, in practice, the sheer scale of damage that widespread nuclear war would impose renders discussion of operational nuclear strategy largely moot.
7. Nuclear war, should it occur, would hold the participants (and many bystanding states) open to a limitless liability. Mutual assured vulnerability is not a posture and doctrine of choice--there is no choice.²⁵ This posture and doctrine attempts to make a virtue of necessity. Those strategists who insist upon seeking out operationally interesting nuclear employment options in pursuit of an improved quality of pre-war deterrence, intra-war deterrence, and/or damage limitation, simply have not come to grips with the certain nature of nuclear war. There are no plausible theories offering a reasonable promise of bearable, survivable, recoverable (let alone winnable) nuclear conflict.
8. Nuclear weapons cannot be tamed--there cannot be a nuclear strategy with a human face. However, by choosing a nuclear arsenal which manifestly lacks the capability to threaten even

a generous Soviet definition of its second-strike retaliatory force-level requirements, the United States can diminish both crisis and arms race instabilities. The quest for the chimera of damage limitation is the fuel of the arms competition.

The above characterization is offered here as an intellectual anchor to one end of the policy thought spectrum. It is not offered as representing accurately the contemporary beliefs of any particular individual or group of individuals. Strong critiques of the mutual assured vulnerability thesis have been developed for well over ten years²⁶—not to mention the arguments hostile to the thesis that one can locate in the strategic literature of the Golden Age of 1955-65.

The strategic debate today is not assisted by the fact that different schools of thought tend not to risk weakening the force of their own cases by conceding ground to rival ideas. This, generally speaking, is a mistake. By way of a terse critique of the mutual assured vulnerability thesis, this author offers the following considerations:

1. Nuclear war may or may not prove to be a catastrophe unparalleled in world history, but it is highly unlikely to be the functional cataclysmic equivalent of the biblical flood. In the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries, the Mongols and bubonic plague were viewed in much the same eschatological terms in which many people today view nuclear war. Those "visitations from God" were terrible, but mankind remained in business. As Herman Kahn sought to establish more than twenty years ago, catastrophe can come in different sizes and with very different consequences.²⁷

Not merely is it uncertain that nuclear war would be an unparalleled catastrophe, but this author is prepared to defend the proposition that such an outcome is unlikely--always provided some prudent measures for self-defense are taken.

2. Pessimists, or realists, may be correct in claiming--on the basis of no more evidence than the people they criticize--that nuclear war cannot be controlled or limited.²⁸ As a professional strategist, trained to assume bad (if not worst) cases, this author is not totally unfriendly to this belief. Any nuclear strategist who offered limited and controlled nuclear wars as the wars that would happen were his vision of the requirements of deterrence to break down, should be shown the door very promptly. Mutual assured vulnerability theorists often do not appear to understand that their caricatured opponents are not offering nuclear wars of a (pseudo-)guaranteed nature. Theorists who believe in intra-(nuclear) war deterrence are gambling, perhaps not unreasonably, on the Soviet High Command, in time of central nuclear war, making decisions on the basis of an ethic of consequences that is functionally analogous to the American. They could be wrong. Counterforce/damage limitation theorists do not exclude the possibility of catastrophe occurring should the Soviet leadership either choose, or be unable, to cooperate. Their argument is to the effect that mutual assured vulnerability guarantees unlimited catastrophe, while their preference holds open at least the hope of containing the scale of potential damage.

3. Competent and honest Western theorists do not promise political advantage from controlled nuclear employment. Those theorists note that nuclear threats are integral to NATO strategy, that war could occur regardless of the quality of NATO's posture and doctrine, and that a theory of limited nuclear war is preferable to no such theory. Even the severely constrained nuclear campaigns envisaged by defense-minded Western analysts are acknowledged to be very likely to entail a casualty rate so high as to give pause to, if not deter, any reasonable American President.²⁹ So, to dispose of the myth, no one is offering cheap nuclear wars, or guarantees of limited societal liability. All prudent commentators, regardless of doctrinal affiliation, are properly skeptical of the possibility of controlled nuclear war. However, what should be one's response to such skepticism--to throw up one's hands and turn a strong possibility of unlimited catastrophe into a certainty, or to work to hold open the option of war limitation?
4. Western politicians are, no doubt, frightened by the prospect of nuclear war per se. Some American strategists have not questioned this general truth, rather have they argued that Soviet governments, historically, have approached domestic human loss in a rather different perspective than have their Western counterparts. In the 1920s and 1930s, Soviet governments killed close to twenty million of their own people--and the current leadership group was, admittedly barely, a party to, and a survivor of that process.³⁰ While it is possible that

Soviet leaders are deterred (from what?) by the prospect of nuclear war writ large, the available evidence on the U.S.S.R. should lead one to a different conclusion. To be specific, while the Soviet Union does not want nuclear war, and would not likely court the risk of its occurrence for reason of positive gain, there is reason to believe that Soviet leaders would view nuclear war, not as the end of history, but rather as an experience to be survived and from which a fundamentally healthy society recovers. Moreover, if history is any guide, it is very likely that Soviet leaders fear nuclear war not so much for the amount of human and property damage it would cause, but rather for the risk it would pose to Soviet political control at home. Sensitivity to individual, or even large scale, human loss has not been a prominent feature of Soviet political culture. Anyone who believes that nuclear war should mean the same to Americans or to Great Russians should reflect deeply on the contrasting histories of the two societies.³¹

5. While, undoubtedly, it is true to claim that all men fear nuclear war, it is not necessarily the case that all men fear nuclear war equally. Soviet military science teaches that nuclear-missile weapons should be decisive in modern war, and that although a bilateral nuclear war will place unprecedented burdens on military organizations, also it will offer unprecedented opportunities for swift success.³² However much we may deplore the fact, it is nonetheless the case that authoritative Soviet military opinion sees nuclear firepower in the context of long-

range artillery.³³ Where Western analysts tend to err is in their appreciation of the dynamics of an acute crisis. Soviet leaders are both obliged by party doctrine to believe that their system will survive a nuclear war, and also believe it genuinely for reason of the prudent provisions that have been made over the past twenty years. Mutual assured vulnerability, insofar as it refers to the U.S.S.R., is not a part of the Soviet strategic credo.³⁴ It would be incorrect to assert that the Soviet leadership is confident that it can wage and win a central nuclear war. But it is correct to assert that Soviet leaders believe that victory is possible (and important).³⁵

6. The level and kind of damage likely to be suffered in a central nuclear war cannot be assumed to constitute a given. Targeting "withholds" and other technical details such as yields selected, heights of burst, and so forth, would be critically important to the scale of the catastrophe effected. Although it is true to claim that nuclear weapons come in inconveniently large packages of prompt energy release, it is also true to claim that careful weapon design, extreme accuracy, and concern for unwanted collateral damage can reduce potential societal damage by many orders of magnitude.³⁶ Soviet targeting style may not lend itself easily to the idea of waging nuclear war in a severely constrained manner,³⁷ but the technical possibility cannot and should not be discounted.
7. Nuclear war could, indeed, prove to be a non-survivable, non-recoverable catastrophe. However, one can design war plans

which should not lead to that dire result. No one is offering guarantees of nuclear war with strictly limited liability, but controlled and limited nuclear war is more likely to be a reality if it has been considered long ahead of time. The mutual assured vulnerability school of thought both discounts the Soviet evidence (to the effect that Soviet society is unlikely to be in a condition even close to total vulnerability), and forecloses, a priori, on the prospect of Western damage limitation in war. This author, for one, can see an enormous difference between, say, twenty and one hundred and twenty million U.S. fatalities. Both are catastrophes, but the United States could recover from the former, while it could not from the latter.

8. American self-restraint in the region of strategic nuclear forces has had either no, or an encouraging, effect upon Soviet defense planners. Soviet strategic force developments over the past five to six years have shown no sensitivity to American crisis or arms-race instability concerns. While Western theories of stability show, very clearly, for example, that hard-target counterforce capability is destabilizing,³⁸ Soviet weapon deployments do not betray any sensitivity to this concern. In the Soviet view, the prevention of war is totally a political function, it is the task of the armed forces to prepare efficiently for the actual conduct of war.³⁹ The idea that the detail of military posture could be important for political decisions on the dynamics of crisis and perhaps even for military mobilization decisions relevant to the determination of war or peace, remains alien

to the Soviet mind-set. A Western analyst profoundly concerned about a strategic stability that he believes can be impacted decisively by the details of posture, is an analyst who may have difficulty understanding Soviet ideas and behavior.

Mutual assured vulnerability, though a vital part of American official defense thinking, even today, has yet to dominate official thinking. An important issue not discussed above is whether or not the U.S. defense community can enforce a mutuality of societal vulnerability. As is well known, the Soviet Union has provided a plethora of very hard bunkers for its political leadership cadre, blast shelters for its essential work force, and evacuation plans plus fall-out shelters for its general urban population. These plans may not work very well in practice, but can a prudent Western defense analyst assume that they would fail catastrophically? More to the point, perhaps, can a prudent Western defense analyst afford to assume that Soviet leaders would lack confidence in their preparations for war-survival? It is not good enough to argue by assertion, as does Glenn Buchan, that

[n]o decision-maker can have confidence that any preparations for war, in case deterrence fails, would be successful or that any recovery plans are realistic.⁴⁰

(2) Option Two: mutual assured vulnerability with flexibility

This second option corresponds roughly and generically to where most of the policy refugees from mutual assured vulnerability have evacuated intellectually. It is probably no exaggeration to claim that this second option is the "thinking person's" version of mutual assured vulnerability. There is no need to reproduce here, yet again, the general arguments typically advanced in favor of mutual assured vulnerability. This policy option is particularly important because it represents an apparent way-station on the nuclear war-fighting course. Western analysts and commentators devastated by criticisms of their view in the assured vulnerability vein have tended to seek to find shelter in a doctrinal bunker that offers the least compromise with their former opinions. As in the discussion above, what follows is a generic characterization of this option, not a representation intended to be accurate in all details of one or more person's opinions. It is perhaps worth noting that many people formerly quite strongly associated with mutual assured vulnerability thinking will argue, perhaps with good reason, that they have never been opposed to flexibility in strategic employment planning; that they have known since 1961 that SIOP planning provided several pre-planned options (albeit very large ones);⁴¹ and that, in general terms, the conviction that mutual societal vulnerability is both a technological fact and desirable as a dampener of arms competitive urges carries no particular implications vis à vis the size and sequencing of targeting options. However, there are potential tensions between mutual assured vulnerability and flexibility in targeting. The following are the essential characteristics of Option Two:

1. Because mutual vulnerability is considered the ultimate basis for deterrence stability, neither country should seek to acquire, physically, the means to limit damage to its homeland--through active and passive defenses, or through the development of offensive forces which threaten the survivability of the strategic forces of the other side.
2. Because of the suicidal consequences of actually executing a major attack option against, for example, the Soviet recovery economy, the credibility of such a threat is not high under most circumstances. Therefore, both to augment perception of a link between theater forces and strategic forces, and to provide a President with employment options which might serve to restore deterrence in the course of a war without necessarily producing mutual holocaust, targeting flexibility is desirable.⁴²
3. Flexibility should enhance deterrence, while its potential for damage in the realm of crisis and arms race stability can be minimized through the endorsement of a posture which manifestly would be incompetent in fulfillment of preclusive counterforce missions. Moreover, the absence of BMD, and of serious air defense and civil defense, should reinforce declarations to the effect that strategic flexibility is not, in any real sense, a move towards what is termed a war-fighting strategy.

4. Small nuclear strike options would be intended both to provide a deterrent shock and to carry the clear threat of "more to come, unless...." By executing a limited nuclear option, one would have signaled determination through actions in that two major thresholds would be crossed (use of central nuclear forces, and employment most probably against the homeland of a superpower.)⁴³ But, the small scale and the nature of the attack would also signal unambiguously a willingness to exercise restraint and would constitute an invitation for the restraint to be reciprocated. In short, such limited employment would be a part of a political bargaining process rather than constituting military action.

Proponents of mutual assured vulnerability with flexibility have not been unmindful of the perils of this option (in terms of their core beliefs about stability and "what deters."⁴⁴) The technical requirements for the execution of limited nuclear options plausibly could drive one towards endorsing deployment of very accurate ICBMs--which, so the argument goes, would be destabilizing for reason of its counterforce potential. Manned bombers and cruise missiles inherently are inappropriate for most (though not all) LNO missions, because Soviet air defenses would not have been suppressed in advance. Also, SLBMs would be inappropriate because there may not be submarines "on station" to execute such a mission; communication may not be adequate (or even possible); and an SSBN comes with a number of SLBM warheads and an SSBN betrays its position by launching even a single missile.

With respect to the flexible and small-scale employment of nuclear weapons, extreme accuracy--as can be provided, in this context, only by ICBMs--is desirable because the use of small warheads, creating the least possible collateral damage, is therefore feasible.

In the immediate context of this discussion, flexibility implies very small-scale employment. However, there is no inherent reason why flexibility need refer only to the very limited end of the employment spectrum. Flexibility is a strategy-neutral concept, long appreciated as a political and military desideratum. Soviet military science, too, endorses flexibility, though with specific referents that are far removed indeed from the context of the American debate of the mid-1970s.⁴⁵ Strategic flexibility at the level of principle is a difficult concept to oppose or resist. It is no easy matter to argue for inflexibility. Critics of nuclear war-fighting strategies, so-called, appreciate very well that endorsement of flexibility and the idea that central nuclear use might be controlled and limited, places them on the upper reaches of a doctrinal-postural slippery slope. Agreement to some kinds of flexibility may well open the flood-gates to theories of controlled nuclear war: theories which generic adherents to Option Two emphatically do not endorse.

Option Two is dangerous in the eyes of adherents to classical mutual assured vulnerability doctrine because it might encourage the (believed strongly to be mistaken) view that nuclear weapons are usable, as political instruments and that nuclear war, in some very dire circumstances, would be a sensible course to pursue and would remain limited. By way of an itemized critical commentary, Option Two:

1. Suffers from the same fundamental weakness as does Option One. Should war occur, and should the deterrent shock effect of initial flexible strategic nuclear use not function as hoped, the United States could well suffer a limitless catastrophe.⁴⁶ Moreover, as is very generally appreciated today, the Soviet Union--although not at all eager to engage in nuclear combat--does not endorse the concept of mutual assured vulnerability.
2. Does not really solve the American President's self-deterrence problem. In principle, perhaps, it should be more credible for him to threaten small as opposed to large-scale nuclear strikes, but he would have to be profoundly fearful of the consequences of such action. Option Two does not contain a theory of escalation dominance of any kind. If a political-military situation is sufficiently grave for a President to order the very limited employment of central nuclear forces, it is reasonable to assume that both parties to the conflict have a truly major stake in the political outcome to the conflict. It is just possible that the shock of homeland-to-homeland nuclear use would restore deterrence, but it is hardly very likely. It is far more likely that the Soviet Union would respond by beginning to execute its central nuclear war plan. Should the Soviet Union--contrary to what the U.S. defense community thinks that it understands about Soviet strategic culture--respond more or less in kind, what does the President try next? Among the more

persuasive criticisms of limited nuclear options is the charge that they are very unlikely to succeed in restoring deterrence.⁴⁷

3. Far from enhancing deterrence, could set in train a process of escalation that the United States could not discipline or win. A posture that, for reason of determination not to enhance possible crisis and arms-race instabilities, was obviously counterforce-incompetent, would virtually invite a counterforce-dedicated Soviet Union to escalate rapidly in search of victory or, at the least, "useful advantage."⁴⁸
4. Would more likely signal weakness than strength of will and capability. The Soviet Union, given its quite well-appreciated conflict style, probably would be more impressed by what the United States did not do, or was unable to do, than by what actually was effected. Very limited nuclear options, instead of signaling determination, would more likely be read in Moscow as signaling an extreme fear of nuclear war. Such fear is reasonable and sensible, but it is not the message that an American President would want to transmit when he was engaging in what Thomas Schelling has termed a competition in risk-taking.⁴⁹

By way of summary judgment, and perhaps unjustly, the addition of flexibility of strategic employment to a mutual assured vulnerability posture and doctrine seems more likely to produce defeat on the install-

ment plan than effective intra-war deterrence. It would be profoundly imprudent to begin a small nuclear war unless one had to hand a capability for waging, surviving, and recovering from a large nuclear war.

(3) Option Three: counterforce and counter-control preeminence with recovery denial

Option Three is U.S. defense policy today.⁵⁰ The U.S. defense community, coerced by the continuing adverse trend in the (im)balance of forces, has addressed the vital strategic question of "what do Soviet leaders find most deterring?"--and has decided, correctly in the opinion of this author, that the most fearsome threat in Soviet anticipation is the attenuation or loss of political control over the Soviet Empire at home and abroad. In addition, it is well-appreciated in the United States that a fully effective strike against the Soviet political control system is highly improbable, meaning that there are no easier options to the initial need to blunt Soviet military power directly.⁵¹

The most impressive defense-intellectual pyrotechnics may have occurred in the Golden Age of 1955-65, but the most valuable thought probably was registered over the three years 1977-80. Just as the prospect of hanging in the morning is supposed wonderfully to concentrate the mind upon essentials, so the genuine appearance of the prospect of strategic (inter alia) inferiority--in the immediate context of the manifest failure of an erstwhile popular theory of strategic stability--stimulated the U.S. defense community to think through its evolving Soviet deterrence/war-fighting problem.⁵² Unfortunately the intellectual task, in part for terms-of-reference reasons, was severely flawed with respect to its overall policy integrity.⁵³ However, for the first time in the nuclear age the

United States has a SIOP design which reflects a sophisticated view of the distinctively Soviet adversary/enemy.

Option Three, current United States policy, has the following characteristics:

1. It seeks to promise the kind of damage that the Soviet Union should find most painful. The Soviet Union is deemed not so much to fear damage per se, but rather damage of particular kinds. Today, American targeteers recognize that the relationship between state and society in the two superpowers is almost diametrically opposed. In the United States the state is, and ideologically is held to be, the servant of society, whereas the reverse is true in the Soviet Union. U.S. strategic targeting policy now has come to reflect this fact.
2. The essential assets of the Soviet state must be held at nuclear risk. These assets are preeminently (though by no means exclusively), military in character. In short, the United States requires a strategic force posture which can inflict major damage upon Soviet military power of all kinds. Above all else, there is a need to be able to effect second-strike counterforce missions which would offset, or more than offset, any benefit the Soviet Union might gain from a counterforce first strike (survivable U.S. strategic forces, in the second round of the war, would neutralize, or more than neutralize, whatever gains Moscow had achieved in round one). Military power is the backbone and fundamental form of expression of the Soviet state, but it does not encompass the total area of "essential

assets." Because a war may be relatively long (say, up to six months), and because one should worry about the postwar balance, (directly) war-supporting industry also has to be considered a prime target set.⁵⁴

3. The single most essential asset of the Soviet state, dependent though it is upon the power of the Soviet armed forces, is the political control structure. The United States should hold at prompt risk Soviet political leaders, the nomenklatura at large,⁵⁵ the means of communication and command from Moscow to the provinces, and critically important elements of the KGB.⁵⁶ If Soviet leaders know that their political system, as opposed to their society, is targeted reliably, they know that the United States has the capability to change the course of history as predicted by Karl Marx and partially effected by V.I. Lenin.
4. A determination to deny victory to the Soviet Union, in Soviet terms.⁵⁷ The countervailing strategy of the last years of the Carter Administration was dedicated to the mission of assuring effective deterrence through the promise of denying victory to the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union, so it was (and, to a large extent, is still) reasoned, would not initiate a central war that it was convinced it could not win with high assurance. Through intelligent targeting design the United States could deny the Soviet Union victory, even in Soviet terms.
5. Appreciation of the fact that relative (to the U.S.S.R.) U.S. strategic-force capability, on all important measures of merit,

either has slipped already into the inferior category, or soon will do so. As with the U.S. Army's characterization of its operational problem, the issue here is how to "fight outnumbered and win."⁵⁸ The idea central to former Secretary of Defense Harold Brown's concept of the countervailing strategy was that of superior strategy. Even if the Soviet Union purchased a more impressive quantity of (qualitatively not-too-dissimilar) strategic capability, a more intelligent (than the Soviet) U.S. defense community would design targeting plans for deterrence which, in the quality of fear they should produce, would offset-- or more than offset--gross U.S. strategic muscular deficiencies. If, for example, U.S. strategic nuclear forces could hold at risk (at least in paranoid Soviet perspective) the most essential of Soviet state (as opposed to societal) assets, that should suffice to offset--through its prospective denial of Soviet victory in war--any advantage Soviet leaders might anticipate as a well merited consequence of their newly acquired advantages in the gross figures of merit of strategic capability.

6. If all else fails, the United States will retain, to the last moment, the ability to strike with devastating effectiveness against the Soviet recovery economy. Survival and a superior recovery potential are vital aspects of Soviet military science. In terms of putative deterrent effect, the United States would be able, in extremis, as its ultima ratio, to promise credibly to the Soviet Union that its ability to recover from World

War III on a timetable likely to be politically acceptable could be fatally impaired.⁵⁹

Option Three represents the kind of thinking one should expect of a very bright undergraduate student. If one were to be compelled to grade and comment upon PD 59 (of July 25, 1980), one would say "very good as far as it goes, but it does not go far enough." Contrary to the sense of a number of very strongly worded hostile Soviet commentaries, PD 59 (and its associated NUWEP document) is not a nuclear war-fighter's manual. PD 59, reflecting quite accurately the two to three years of detailed research that preceded it, addresses adequately (as opposed to impressively) the question of "what prospective damage do Soviet leaders fear most?" To risk pre-empting later discussion, PD 59 has two very major deficiencies--one internal, the other external.

First, it outlines a vision of American counterforce and counter-political control activity in the SIOP which is the better part of ten years away from physical possibility (i.e., U.S. strategic forces cannot do the job in the 1980s). Second, PD 59, as with its preceding strategic targeting review process, ignores totally possible, and very plausible, connections between putative freedom of strategic offensive action and the ability to limit damage to the American homeland. Current nuclear policy is not so much wrong on strategic-logical grounds as incomplete. PD 59 was not a misstep, unless strategists choose to view it, alone, as the high-level doctrinal basis for strategic-force development over the years ahead.⁶⁰

By the end of the Carter Administration, the very, small community of strategic targeting (for deterrence) aficionados was, by and large, agreed that sub-SIOP level LNOs were uninteresting;⁶¹ that massive counter-economic (recovery) strike options were not obviously useful either for "up front" declaratory-policy-for-deterrence purposes, or for operational reasons; and that World War III, should it occur, could be either very short or relatively long (perhaps six months). Genuinely strategic thinkers, a category always in very short supply, have some severe reservations over the plausibility of long World War III campaign scenarios.

Over the past three years many defense analysts have come to be excited over the issue of the endurance of strategic forces and the National Command Authority, but--somehow--the idea that (relatively) long wars are possible moved from the status of idea to that of driving planning assumption without benefit of very close strategic analytical scrutiny. On close inspection, one discovers that although six-month wars are possible, six-day or six-week wars are no less possible, and are indeed probably rather more plausible.⁶² The problem here, as so often, is that the American defense community is dominated by technicians and not by strategic thinkers. Strategic technicians, say, in the brilliant mode of a Richard Garwin or a Sydney Drell, tend to have scant appreciation of likely operational issues,⁶³ let alone of genuinely strategic considerations. Save in very exceptional cases, it is difficult to intrude strategic arguments into supposedly strategic policy decision processes. Typically, the major forces contending for preponderance are "technical fix" advocates, managerial expediency considerations, and the weight of vested bureaucratic interests in one, as opposed to an alternative, weapon system. Somehow,

the official American defense community is ill organized either to generate, or to respect, truly strategic arguments.

Option Three, the contemporary condition, warrants the following commentary:

1. To the extent either (or both) that Soviet leaders can persuade Soviet citizens that the state interest is really their interest, or that American targeting policy, in practice, cannot distinguish adequately between Soviet state and society--the fear and actual experience of war may serve to mobilize rather than fracture patriotic sentiment in the U.S.S.R. The proposition that the Soviet leadership fears most for the continuity and effectiveness of its political tenure almost certainly is correct. But, many unanswered, and perhaps even unanswerable questions remain with respect to the real vulnerability of the Soviet state to externally imposed shock. Even when they come with high accuracy and low yields, nuclear weapons inherently are weapons of mass destruction.⁶⁴ Much of the contemporary American speculation about the possibility of forcing the regionalization of the Soviet Union is really fanciful.
2. The idea of the second-strike counterforce "equalizer" is attractive, and has some theoretical merit,⁶⁵ but it appears to promise stalemate, which may or may not constitute a denial of Soviet victory. If the Soviet Union is faring well in a theater conflict, it is a little difficult to see quite why it should launch the first counterforce strike to which the United States needs to provide an offsetting reply.

3. It is healthy for deterrence that the Soviet leadership be told that it, and its means for enforcing domestic and imperial political control, are targeted reliably. However, counter-control targeting has some severe problems. The United States does not: have a fully comprehensive understanding of the workings of the control structure in peacetime, let alone in wartime; know, again comprehensively, what are and what are not essential targets; wish to foreclose totally, very early in a central war, on the possibility of negotiated war termination; or have the ability to neutralize or blunt the Soviet retaliatory strike which should be expected to follow as a consequence of U.S. execution of a major counter-control strike option. The U.S. defense community has not decided whether a large counter-control strike should be delivered "up front" as a bid for damage-limitation--hopefully to destroy or paralyze the Soviet chain of political-military command--or whether the counter-control strike option should be retained as "the threat of last resort" to protect American cities.
4. Denying victory to the Soviet Union prospectively is very important--indeed essential. Unfortunately, a focus upon victory denial is compatible with Western defeat. In practice, an American President venturing up the escalation ladder in, or towards, central nuclear war, is very likely to be much more interested in precluding American defeat than he is in denying victory to the Soviet Union. American officials and strategic theorists have tended to commit the somewhat elementary logical

error of assuming that the problem is to determine what it is that Soviet leaders find most deterring. That question is exceedingly important, but it is no more important than is its logical strategic corollary: what deters an American President? One should not design a U.S. strategic force posture, and matching doctrine, that cannot cope with the self-deterrence problem. If, as seems plausible, it were to be the United States that felt moved to consider initiating a central nuclear war, for reason of impending theater defeat, the major deterrence problem would be American rather than Soviet.⁶⁶

5. Superior strategy is always desirable. It is an acknowledged fact that the strategic competition between the superpowers embraces a dimension of doctrinal rivalry. The countervailing strategy is very important, historically, in that it both recognizes the value of strategy and it seeks, explicitly, to exploit distinctive Soviet vulnerabilities. However, the countervailing strategy, for all its genuine sensitivity to Soviet culture, neglected to consider a dominant reality of American culture. Namely, an American President could not, intelligently, hurt others, if the certain consequence of such infliction of pain would be the delivery by the Soviet Union of a nuclear strike certain to inflict 100 million or more American casualties. The United States could never effect a major attack option against the Soviet recovery economy, a somewhat elusive target set,⁶⁷ because such action would result in a Soviet retaliatory strike that the United States could not survive. What is wrong

with former Secretary of Defense Harold Brown's idea of a "counter-vailing strategy" is not that it promises to effect an inappropriate quality of damage upon the Soviet Union, but that it neglects entirely the problem of American self-deterrence.

It is frustrating to recognize that Option Three, where the United States is today, already has fractured the most important strategic cultural barrier: that is to say, Option Three recognizes the Soviet Union as a culturally distinctive target and tailors its posture and doctrine accordingly. The source of frustration lies in the appreciation that the United States, having broken free at the official level from strategic-cultural mirror-imaging, seems unable or unwilling to proceed logically the required additional mile to identification of a robust posture and doctrine. Having elected to take proper account of the uniquely Soviet aspects of the Soviet Union, U.S. officials are resistant to the required further step of recognizing distinctively American problems.

Any American official, or extra-official defense analyst, should know that his country is and has always been acutely sensitive to American human loss. Save in the Civil War, high casualties have not been the American military experience--and they have not been politically acceptable. Hence, the traditional American preference for profligate firepower to reduce (American) casualty rates. Behind Option Three is full recognition of Soviet rejection of the concept of a strategic stability reposing upon the basis of mutual assured societal vulnerability. But, Option Three, or PD 59, accepts prospectively in perpetuity the assured vulnerability

of American society. The drafters of PD 59 did not so much reject American homeland damage limitation, rather did they ignore it as a possibility.

(4) Option Four: damage limitation for deterrence and coercion

Option Four, which is preferred by this study, constitutes an evolution from the current posture and doctrine. It provides plausible answers to the more telling charges that can be levelled at Option Three. Option Four, in essence, would add a multi-faceted homeland defense capability to the U.S. strategic posture. The title of this option was selected with care. The fundamental purpose of the strategic forces is to deter, or help deter, hostile acts against vital American interests. The posture and doctrine outlined here should offer maximum discouragement to adventure and risk-taking on the Soviet part. However, deterrence is not sufficient a statement of the mission of U.S. strategic forces. Those forces, in addition to the negative task of dissuasion, also have laid upon them by foreign policy a range of possible "compellence" duties.⁶⁸ In other words, there may be occasions when the United States will have urgent political need to compel or coerce the Soviet Union to do things that she is most unwilling to do (for example, to recall armies that are fighting successfully in the Persian Gulf area or in Western Europe). Such a coercive mission is compatible with a broad definition of deterrence⁶⁹--it is separated here for the purpose of emphasis.

Mis-characterization of Option Four as a war-fighting posture is politically damaging, because the obvious elements of truth in the overall mis-characterization tend to obscure the misleading items. It is true that damage limitation, obviously, entails making preparation for the conduct of nuclear war--which is hardly a novel activity; the Soviet

and American defense communities have been making such preparations for more than thirty years. A proponent of a damage limiting strategy, as with this author, believes that the United States has no sensible choice other than to attempt to implement this idea in planning practice. In fact, it is no exaggeration to claim that this is one task that is even worth doing badly.

Damage limitation is far from being a new idea. Prior to the nuclear age, armed forces provided damage limitation by serving as a hard shell around a society. To damage an enemy's society, one had first to defeat his army and navy; long-range aircraft, ballistic missiles and nuclear weapons appeared to change the situation drastically. Henceforth, it was believed, intolerable damage could be inflicted, whether or not an enemy's armed forces were defeated in the field (the bomber and missile would always get through).⁷⁰

In their (doctrinal) "revolution in military affairs" in the late 1950s, Soviet military theorists accommodated the new technology by deciding that, far from overturning the existing wisdom of Soviet military science, nuclear-missile weapons would enable traditional tasks to be accomplished more swiftly and decisively. Neither then, nor since, did Soviet theorists accept fatalistically the proposition that nuclear weapons and their long-range means of delivery meant that Soviet (and American) state and society must be totally vulnerable. The massive air defense program developed in the United States in the mid to late 1950s--though largely abandoned subsequently--in the context of very serious official interest in passive civil defense, and of the evolution of a prospectively very

impressively competent counterforce capability, all reflected endorsement of the common sense logic of damage limitation.⁷¹

Damage limitation, briefly, was doctrinally preeminent in the United States in the very early years of Robert McNamara's tenure as Secretary of Defense. However, it was relegated, year by year, increasingly to a back-stage role, as Soviet strategic forces proliferated and were hardened and dispersed, and as the U.S. government embraced the theories of crisis and arms race stability (resting upon the presumption of the desirable mutual vulnerability of societies) discussed at length much earlier in this study.⁷²

Nonetheless, the idea of damage limitation persisted from the early 1960s to the present day in the form of an aspiration for the functioning of restraint in targeting reflecting the operation of an intra-war deterrence mechanism. The United States, for the past twenty years, has been massively in the damage limitation business with respect to the scale of allocation of SIOP--assigned assets to counterforce missions. But, since the mid-1960s, and sensibly, there has been no expectation that truly effective damage limitation could be enforced through offensive counterforce action alone. Since active and passive defenses were aschewed for a mix of financial, technical, political, and strategic theoretical reasons, the enduring hope for the limitation of damage has reposed in the belief in the possibility of reciprocated targeting restraint. By strong implication, since the subject, surprisingly, is not raised explicitly, even PD 59 of July 25, 1980 endorsed the theory of damage limitation through the functioning of an intra-war deterrence mechanism. The flaws in this theory, and the lack of prudence in its desired policy advice,

leads this study to identify Option Four as a superior posture and doctrine.

What is the logic of Option Four?

1. In the absence of the ability to hold down American casualties (and economic damage) to a level "acceptable" in the context of the most important political interests being at stake, American strategy is either a bluff or is heroically irresponsible.⁷³
2. It is essential that the United States have a SIOP designed, and selectively advertised publicly in general terms, so as to be able, in prospective execution, to promise denial of victory to Soviet leaders on their own terms. PD 59, in other words, was a positive and necessary if belated development.
3. But, no matter how intelligent or clever U.S. strategic nuclear offensive targeting design may be, the credibility of execution of such design is very low so long as the United States makes no noteworthy provision for the protection of its homeland against (near) inevitable Soviet retaliation.
4. If the sole problem were the deterrence of a massive Soviet assault upon North America, then the case for homeland damage limitation would be far less persuasive. Unfortunately, virtually every one of the more plausible, or less implausible, scenarios that involve possible employment of central nuclear systems, has to be structured--for reason of the very probable geography of conflict--such that it is the United States that most needs to restore deterrence through the issuing of credible threats and, if need be, the implementation of nuclear strike plans. The absence of protection for the American homeland, in these

most likely circumstances, should literally prove to have a paralyzing impact upon the freedom of action of a desperate U.S. president.

5. No one can predict with any high degree of assurance the course of a central nuclear war. Intra-war deterrence may function as hoped (if not expected). However, there is a very significant chance that the superpowers would prove to be incapable of controlling a central war; while there is also a strong prospect that the Soviet Union would not be interested in any idea of control likely to prove tolerably congruent with American wishes or interests. In short, for the extant official American theory of strategic deterrence to prove robust in its hours of real test (acute crisis and war itself), a quite extraordinary degree of good fortune would have to bless its endeavors. Above all else perhaps, the Soviet war plan, in practice, would have to violate virtually every known precept of Soviet strategic culture.⁷⁴ Moreover, and scarcely less relevant, the superpowers would have to be willing and able to communicate, for tacit and explicit negotiations, in the most physically, administratively, and psychologically stressful environment that the world has ever known.⁷⁵ They might succeed, given extraordinary resilience and redundancy of equipment, historically unusual qualities of statecraft, and a great deal of luck. However, a prudent defense posture and doctrine can hardly be constructed on the basis of such an expectation.

Ideologically, the Reagan national security bureaucracy is not at all opposed to the logic of points 1-5 above. But, in practice, the shift from offense dominance to offense-defense balance would strain any national security system. The American problem today, as always, is strategic-conceptual at root. Defense decision-makers wish to do the right things, but they do not know what those things are. The Secretary of Defense may, or may not, be persuaded that the low altitude defense system (LoADS) would work adequately, at the level of a "technical fix," but he may not be open to argument on the subject of basic American deterrent philosophy. The Reagan Administration entered office with a mandate to correct the adverse trend in relative military preparation, but not with a mandate to adopt one, or another, alternative national security strategy. For Option Four to be adopted officially, the U.S. government would need to address, and be educated concerning, fundamental defense issues.

This study has argued the value of strategic considerations. The case for strategy is as strong in relation to the expanding Reagan defense budgets of the 1980s as it was in relation to the declining defense budgets of the 1970s. The Reagan Administration is committed to rebuild U.S. military power, but it needs also to rethink the conceptual basis of that power. The Administration is willing to pour funds into new programs, but it may also have to be willing to engage long-standing domestic adversary constituencies in direct debate. For example, MX/MPS basing does as little environmental damage (in all aspects) in Utah/Nevada as it could do anywhere, yet somehow advocates of MX/MPS increasingly are being accused of favoring a crime against the environment. Officials

should tell these American people the truth. There is no good substitute for a land-based ICBM force, and that force is going to have a net negative environmental impact somewhere, wherever and however it is based. The problem very much is one of political culture--for strategic culture and national style must reflect political culture. Consideration of the options discussed in this chapter should be informed by a clear awareness of the strategic arguments, but countries tend not to adopt defense postures and doctrines solely, or even substantially, for genuinely strategic reasons.

Both Option Three and Option Four require deployment of a survivable land-based missile force: some of the most important counter-military and counter-political missions cannot credibly be threatened or reliably executed by any other means. Concerns over the environmental impact of new ICBM deployment are entirely legitimate, but so are the strategic concerns which prompt the government to seek such deployment. American political culture in the early 1980s may well contain a mixture of competing values so weighted in favor of environmental protection and the well-being of relatively very small groups of people that a very exceptional quality of external menace is required before domestic discomfort is acceptable. Although the American public, by and large, is pro-defense today, even to the point apparently of being willing to endorse painful cuts in domestic programs at the same time that the military establishment is augmented, the opposition to MX/MPS, for example, demonstrates that public tolerance of pain has a fairly low threshold.

Possible objections to Option Four include the following:

1. Casualties and economic damage in nuclear war cannot plausibly be held down to "acceptable" levels. In the words of Bernard Brodie, "[w]hether the survivors be many or few, in the midst of a land scarred and ruined beyond all present comprehension, they should not be expected to show much concern for the further pursuit of political-military objectives."⁷⁶ Even if the United States were to endorse the multi-layered damage limitation instruments favored by Option Four, it is very probable indeed that casualties vastly would exceed the estimates of damage limiting (for improved deterrence) proponents. Moreover, even should such proponents be proved correct, how could a casualty list of twenty million be politically or morally "acceptable"?
2. Denying victory is all very well, but some not inconsiderable doubt remains over the real authority of the (alleged) Soviet official belief that victory is possible in nuclear war.⁷⁷ Also, denying victory encourages the atavistic urge on the part of a few potentially influential American strategists to press a "theory of (U.S.) victory" on the U.S. Government.⁷⁸
3. The strategic logic of damage limitation is sound enough as strategic logic, but political decisions are not made totally in the light of abstract strategic logic. In practice, "our" leaders (and "theirs") would, quite properly and understandably, be terrified of the possibility of nuclear war. Strategic analysis promising "only" twenty

million casualties, even if believed--which it would not be--would not strengthen Presidential resolve. A President would not need to be told by the Congressional Office of Technology Assessment that "the effects of a nuclear war that cannot be calculated are at least as important as those for which calculations are attempted."⁷⁹

Proponents of damage limitation through intra-war deterrence do not claim that such a deterrent mechanism will work, only that it might. They do not choose the possibility of limiting central war through targeting restraint, as opposed to limiting such a war through measures of damage limitation, because they do not believe that the choice is real. Opponents of Option Four deny that a worthwhile measure of damage limitation is feasible, and they worry that the implementation of programs for (ineffective) damage limitation may mislead U.S. policy-makers into believing that nuclear war can be waged and survived at "acceptable" cost.

Persuasive sounding arguments can be designed pro and con on a wide range of strategic postures and doctrines. No one's theory of intra-(nuclear) war deterrence or damage limitation has yet been road-tested, while the possible reasons why war is prevented or does not occur are so various, and impossible to assay, that one cannot sensibly point to the evidence of nuclear peace since 1945 as clear and unambiguous proof of the merit of any particular theory of

deterrence. Option Four is designed to cope with an unusually stressful set of circumstances--where deterrence is particularly difficult to effect or simply does not apply. American diplomacy, day-by-day, certainly does not need the support of Option Four, but this author believes that in the event of the true "war is in sight" crisis nothing less than Option Four would be adequate--while even this option may not suffice to deter or to hold wartime damage down to an acceptable level.

(5) Option Five: damage limitation with defense dominant

The reasoning behind Option Five is more prudential and ethical than it is strategic. As the late Donald Brennan wrote in 1969:

I do not believe that any of the critics of BMD have even the beginnings of a plausible program for achieving major disarmament of the offensive forces by, say, 1980. Many of them seem committed to support a strategic posture that appears to favor dead Russians over live Americans. I believe that this choice is just as bizarre as it appears; we should rather prefer live Americans to dead Russians, and we should not choose deliberately to live forever under a nuclear sword of Damocles.

Since the mid 1960s, the United States has endorsed a theory of strategic stability which holds that the active and passive defense of a superpower homeland is not merely infeasible, it is undesirable. Nuclear peace was judged to rest, most reliably, upon the accurate perception by all policy-makers, and policy-relevant publics, that in the event of war catastrophe could and probably would be unlimited. In keeping with this (American) belief, SALT I and the abortive SALT II licensed an offense-dominant (and unchallenged) strategic nuclear environment.

It is not implied here that the dominance of the offense was chosen solely for reason of a particular strategic ideology (deterrence through mutual assured vulnerability). Proponents of offense-dominance have political, technical and ethical, as well as strategic-theoretical, cases to advance. Option Five, "damage limitation with defense dominant," rests upon the following points:

1. Defense is possible. A defense dominant world might be enforced through unilateral American changes in posture, but it would be accomplished far more readily were strategic offensive arsenals to be reduced drastically by formal arms control agreement.⁸¹
2. There is nothing inevitable about the occurrence of major war, but July-August 1914 did happen. An international order enforced, in part, by latent (and irregularly explicit) nuclear threats, is a world which one day will see a nuclear war. Good management and good luck have seen us to 1981 without a nuclear war, but the problem is the prevention of nuclear war forever. In an offense dominant strategic world, it would take only one major failure of the deterrence system for the United States to be out of business permanently. It is worth noting the judgment that the policy-makers of Summer 1914 were not noticeably less competent individuals than are the policy-makers of today. It is intolerable that Western (and Soviet) civilization should forever be totally vulnerable to a single sequence of major crisis mismanagement.

3. Nuclear deterrence would not cease to function in a defense-dominant world. Active defenses, though very impressive, would not be totally leak-proof--and residual doubts would remain in the minds of politicians over just how efficient their untested defenses would prove to be in combat. Nuclear war would remain a terrible prospect, but it would not remain a total society threatening prospect.
4. The quantity and quality of societal damage that could be imposed on the Soviet Union would be reduced (assuming a bilateral superpower move to a defense dominant posture) to the point where the United States and her friends and allies would worry about the feasibility of the extended deterrent duties that traditionally had been charged to the strategic offensive forces.⁸² The argument probably would proceed as follows: the credibility of American offensive action would be very high, because of the limited liability to which American society could be held in a defense dominant world, but the quality of nuclear deterrence would certainly be reduced by virtue of the same condition. (In effect, this world is "safe" for war, nuclear and otherwise). Aside from the residual uncertainty about the real, operational effectiveness of heavily deployed active defenses, the Soviet Union should be compelled by American and NATO-European (and Chinese) conventional, and battlefield nuclear deployment to doubt its ability to prevail in the theater.

5. Proponents of Option Five should grant that they have a serious problem in the area of extended deterrence, but argue that that problem needs to be set against the prospect of removing the danger of unlimited nuclear catastrophe from the human race.

I am sympathetic to the motives of those who favor Option Five, but am not persuaded that a defense dominant world is either technically feasible or strategically desirable. For example, it is just possible that the current research on directed energy weapons will produce a preclusive, truly leak-proof, defense against ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, and manned bombers, but such a prospect would serve to direct military research into the region of countermeasures (including directed energy weapons intended to shoot first at "their" directed energy weapons) and offensive weapons impervious to such defenses. Skeptical commentary on Option Five takes the following form:

1. It is not at all obvious that a defense dominant world, as opposed to a useful level of defense for damage limitation, is technically feasible. Even if it is feasible, the pertinent time horizon for full operational capability probably is on the order of fifty years (or more). Furthermore, although the Soviet Union is known to favor assured survival, it is not known to favor mutual assured survival. There are some good reasons for the drastic reduction in strategic offensive arsenals, but those reasons are not easily compatible with Western ideas concerning a more stable international order.

2. Of course a breakdown could occur in the existing system of nuclear threat--that is not at issue. What is at issue is whether such a breakdown would, or would not, be far more likely to occur should the major powers effect the postulated transition to defense dominant strategic arsenals. It may be accurate to paint a glowing picture of a world freed from dread of the nuclear sword of Damocles, but such a world--by definition--would offer vastly reduced painful consequences for folly, adventure and mismanagement. Such a reduction could well have a very marked negative impact upon the incidence of major crises and wars.
3. It is all very well to argue that nuclear deterrence would still function in a defense dominant world, but such a major reorientation in posture and doctrine could only be accomplished by means of very strongly phrased arguments to the effect that society would no longer fatally be at risk to the consequences of deterrence breakdown. If Soviet military theorists, today (in an offense dominated world), can argue that "victory"--embracing survival and recovery--is possible, how would the prospects of victory appear in a world where the balance of strategic armaments deliberately had been tipped massively in favor of defense?
4. Proponents of damage limitation through dominant defenses really cannot cope with skeptical questions concerning the feasibility of extended deterrence. A residual fear of nuclear war certainly would exist in a (supposedly)

defense dominant world, but the risk calculus of a potential aggressor logically would have to be impacted very negatively (for stability) as he considered the range of possible painful consequences of his actions. It is an exaggeration to claim that strategic defense dominance would make the world "safe for theater conflict" (from the perspective of the superpowers), but that exaggeration does point very usefully to a certain crisis in U.S.-allied relations. Whether intended by the United States or not, the transition to a defense-dominated U.S. strategic nuclear posture would require a revolution in agreed NATO strategic doctrine. MC-14/3 of 1967, with its endorsement of the concept of flexible response, would be rendered obsolete.

5. It is highly improbable that the friends and allies of the United States would be willing to consider the possible merits of Option Five against the certain, potentially catastrophic implications of this option for their own national security. It would be argued by NATO-European officials and commentators that the United States foolishly was choosing to destroy the structure of mutual nuclear deterrence which helped to preserve peace. For fear of the possible ultimate consequences for American society, the United States was designing an international military order wherein, de facto, her allies would be expendable. However remote this reasoning would be from the reality

of American motivation, it would have more than a little logical merit.

Option Five was advocated very strongly by Donald Brennan in the late 1960s, but it has no significant following today.⁸³ In essence, Option Five is correct--notwithstanding the moderately hostile commentary provided above. It really is intolerable, and foolish, to choose to live under a nuclear sword of Damocles indefinitely. One day, that sword will surely fall. However, if advocates of Option Five in the 1980s, are to command a respectful hearing, they must give evidence of awareness of, and sensitivity to, at least the more obvious strategic logical objections to their postural/doctrinal preference. I have not seen any recent analysis favorable to a defense dominant strategic posture which even begins to approach adequacy vis à vis obvious criticism.

Conclusions

There may seem to be a theoretical artificiality about the discussion of five discrete postural-doctrinal options in this chapter. After all, the U.S. Government makes its strategic program decisions incrementally--there is never a right time for shifting gears to a different posture. Each administration is the legatee of the program decisions of its predecessors and inherits weapon programs, and strategy and targeting choices, that cannot feasibly be terminated or very substantially reoriented for reason of very large sunk costs. Notwithstanding these considerations, the case for strategy reappraisal is overwhelming. The American public has a right to expect that defense policy should be treated, inter alia, as an economic problem--that is to say as a

problem in the efficient allocation of scarce resources. It should not be politically acceptable to testify before Congress to the effect, simply, that more effort is required across-the-board.

Individual weapon programs should make strategic sense within the framework of a coherent theory of war--for improved deterrent effect and as insurance should war occur nonetheless. The lead-time on weapon development may well pose very serious problems for senior officials attempting to compose a coherent military posture, but at the least those officials should have a clear vision of whither they are intending. If strategic debate, worthy of the name, is not a dominant feature of discourse concerning contentious weapon systems, the Department of Defense only has itself to blame.

The five postural-doctrinal options outlined in this chapter provide but one framework for strategic-theoretical discussion. If some readers do not like them, they are at liberty to invent their own. The important point, which should be non-controversial, is that money should not be expended upon defense programs in the absence of plausible strategic rationales.

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12. See Donald G. Brennan, National Security in Fortress America, HI-1974-P (Croton-on-Hudson, N.Y.: Hudson Institute, May 2, 1974).
13. But, see Albert J. Wohlstetter, "Illusions of Distance," Foreign Affairs, Vol.46, No.2 (January 1968), pp.242-55.
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15. Richard Burt, "Reassessing the Strategic Balance," International Security, Vol.5, No.1 (Summer 1980), pp.49-50.
16. This point is central to Glenn C. Buchan, "The anti-MAD mythology," The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, Vol.37, No.4 (April 1980), pp.13-17.
17. In particular, students are asked to compare and contrast my article, "Nuclear Strategy: The Case for a Theory of Victory," International Security, Vol.4, No.1 (Summer 1979), pp.54-87, with Robert Jervis, "Why Nuclear Superiority Doesn't Matter," Political Science Quarterly, Vol.94, No.4 (Winter 1979-80), pp.617-33.

18. See McGeorge Bundy, "To Cap the Volcano," Foreign Affairs, Vol.48, No.1 (October 1969), p.10.
19. See Henry S. Rowen, "The Evolution of Strategic Nuclear Doctrine," in Laurence Martin, ed., Strategic Thought in the Nuclear Age (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979), pp.131-56.
20. Glenn Buchan is correct in asserting a distinction between finite deterrence and MAD--in that the former implies a relatively modest scale of nuclear weapon deployment, while the latter need not. However, like it or not, MAD is a theory of finite deterrence. See Buchan, "The anti-MAD mythology," particularly p.15.
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25. Ibid., passim.
26. For example, see Donald G. Brennan, "The Case for Missile Defense," Foreign Affairs, Vol.43, No.3 (April 1969), pp.633-48.
27. Kahn, On Thermonuclear War, particularly Chapter 2.
28. See Buchan, "The anti-MAD mythology," p.14.
29. See Colin S. Gray and Keith Payne, "Victory Is Possible," Foreign Policy, No.39 (Summer 1980), particularly pp.25-6.

30. Some critics of U.S. so-called "war-fighting" theorists (like this author) have come to believe that "we war-fighters" are arguing that because the U.S.S.R. took twenty million casualties in the Great Patriotic War, it would be willing to take casualties on a comparable scale again. My argument, and I believe the argument of those with whom I tend to be associated, has the following elements: the Soviet state has a patrimonial view of its human and (other) economic "property"; is indifferent to individual human suffering or loss; knows that the loss of 20-40 million people, in addition to vast economic devastation and dislocation, and is "survivable" in "state entity" terms. I do not extrapolate Soviet self- and other-imposed human losses from 1917 to 1945 into a putative nuclear war case in a simple-minded fashion. However, it has to be a very difficult exercise to seek to deny the qualitative difference between the American and Soviet views of human loss. For a good recent example of a poorly framed argument in this area, see Buchan, "The anti-MAD mythology," p.17.
31. Great Britain's mercenary Hessian soldiery of the 1770s may not have behaved like boy scouts, but the character and extent of their wickedness was light-years removed from the Russian experience of Mongol conquest and the subsequent "Tartar Yoke."
32. See Joseph D. Douglass, Jr., and Amoretta M. Hoeber, Soviet Strategy for Nuclear War (Stanford, Cal.: Hoover Institution Press, Stanford University, 1979), Chapter 2.
33. Which is scarcely surprising given the fact that the Soviet ballistic missile programs in the 1940s and 1950s delivered operational weapons

to the artillery reserves of the Supreme High Command. The first commander in chief of the Strategic Rocket Troops was Marshal of Artillery M.I. Nedelin. See Harriet F. Scott and William F. Scott, The Armed Forces of the U.S.S.R. (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1979), pp.133-41. Also see John Erickson, "The Soviet Military System: Doctrine, Technology and 'Style'," in Erickson and E.J. Feuchtwanger, eds., Soviet Military Power and Performance (Hamden, Conn.: Archon, 1979), pp.28-31.

34. Ibid., p.25.

35. See Robert Bathurst, "Two Languages of War," in Derek Leebaert, ed., Soviet Military Thinking (London: Allen and Unwin, 1981, forthcoming), p.48; and Henry Trofimenko, Changing Attitudes Toward Deterrence ACIS Working Paper No.25 (Los Angeles: Center for International and Strategic Affairs, UCLA, July 1980), pp.22-23.

36. This is not to claim that nuclear war will be survivable, only that it is more likely than not that it will be--particularly if the United States invests in multi-layered protection of American society. This argument should have been settled definitively by Kahn's On Thermonuclear War, more than twenty years ago. It is not helpful or sensible to argue, as does Glenn Buchan, that "the burden of proof must be on any decision-maker who would consider a general nuclear war to convince himself ...that the risks of a nuclear war are manageable, and that the outcome could be predicted with sufficient certainty to make war a viable policy option." "The anti-MAD mythology," p.14. Nuclear war is very important as a set of options in U.S. defense

planning. It simply has to be a viable policy option. Critics of counterforce, damage-limiting strategies often gives the appearance of believing that they are saying something tolerably original and significant when they cite the horrors of nuclear war. Nuclear strategists do not need to be reminded of the penalty society would, or could, pay should deterrence fail.

37. See Trofimenko, Changing Attitudes Toward Deterrence, p.25; and Leon Goure and Michael J. Deane, "The Soviet Strategic View," Strategic Review, Vol.VIII, No.4 (Fall 1980), pp.79-84.
38. This theme is developed in detail in Chapter 5 above.
39. Henry Trofimenko makes this point very clearly indeed in Changing Attitudes Toward Deterrence. "But if the mission of the military is to fight successfully and to win wars, then the mission of contemporary politicians is to prevent a nuclear war that can result in disaster for mankind." P.23.
40. Buchan, "The anti-MAD mythology," p.14.
41. On which subject see Henry S. Rowen, "Formulating Strategic Doctrine," in Commission on the Organization of Government for the Conduct of Foreign Policy, June 1975, Volume 4, Appendix K: Adequacy of Current Organization: Defense and Arms Control (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1975), particularly pp.226-33.
42. This was the basic thrust of James Schlesinger's argument in the period 1973-75. A useful period-piece, sympathetic to Schlesinger, was Richard Rosecrance, Strategic Deterrence Reconsidered, Adelphi Paper No.116 (London: IISS, Spring 1975).

43. LNOs could, of course, be executed against very discrete target sets in Eastern Europe.
44. See Jerome H. Kahan, Security in the Nuclear Age: Developing U.S. Strategic Arms Policy (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1975), particularly pp.223-37.
45. See John Erickson, "The Soviet View of Nuclear War," Transcript of talk on BBC Radio 3, June 19, 1980, p.10.
46. I have made this argument in "Victory Is Possible," pp.17-18.
47. James Schlesinger was criticized in 1974-75 on virtually every ground save the correct strategic one--that LNOs would be very unlikely to "work." Critics waxed indignant over his alleged underestimation of likely U.S. casualties in a severely constrained counterforce exchange, but they tended, overwhelmingly, to neglect the point that U.S. LNOs would be very unlikely to succeed in their policy purpose unless they were supported by a robust "backstop" theory of escalation dominance.
48. Erickson, "The Soviet Military System: Doctrine, Technology and 'Style'," p.28.
49. See Thomas Schelling, Arms and Influence (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1966), Chapter 3.
50. At the declaratory level only.
51. See Jeffrey T. Richelson, "The Dilemmas of Counterpower Targeting," Comparative Strategy, Vol.2, No.3 (1980), pp.223-37.
52. See Desmond Ball, "Counterforce Targeting: How New? How Viable?," Arms Control Today, Vol.11, No.2 (February 1981), pp.1-2, 6-9.

53. See Colin S. Gray, "Presidential Directive 59: Flawed But Useful," Parameters, Vol. XI, No.1 (March 1981), pp.29-37.
54. Note the comments in Harold Brown, Department of Defense Annual Report, Fiscal Year 1982 (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, January 19, 1981), pp.40, 42.
55. The nomenklatura are the holders of positions at the direct discretion of the Central Committee of the CPSU--in short, a system of highly centralized patronage.
56. See William F. Scott and Harriet F. Scott, The Soviet Control Structure, Final Report, SPC 575 (Arlington, Va.: System Planning Corporation, April 1980).
57. Brown, Department of Defense Annual Report, Fiscal Year 1982, pp.38-40.
58. For example, see United States Army, FM (Field Manual) 100-5, Operations (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, July 1, 1976).
59. Harold Brown was very emphatic in his last Annual Report to register the point that Soviet economic targets have not been removed from the U.S. SIOP. Department of Defense Annual Report, Fiscal Year 1982, pp.42, 43.
60. A useful brief survey of the strategic doctrinal distance covered by the Carter Administration (prior to PD 59) is Desmond Ball, Developments in U.S. Strategic Nuclear Policy Under the Carter Administration, ACIS Working Paper No.21 (Los Angeles: Center for International and Strategic Affairs, UCLA, February 1980).
61. See Burt, "Reassessing the Strategic Balance," p.50.
62. However, there is an important case to be made for defense mobilization planning as an integral part of U.S. (and NATO-allied) defense policy.

See Paul Bracken, "Mobilization in the Nuclear Age," International Security, Vol.3, No.3 (Winter 1978/1979), pp.74-93; Richard B. Foster and Francis P. Hoerber, "Limited Mobilization: A Strategy for Preparedness and Deterrence," Orbis, Vol.24, No.3 (Fall 1980), pp.439-57; and Colin S. Gray, High Level Conflict: Short and Long War Scenarios--Implications for Force Structure and Mobilization, HI-3335-P (Croton-on-Hudson, N.Y.: Hudson Institute, April 1981).

63. The latest Garwin-Drell contribution to the U.S. national security debate is the SUMS concept (for originally Shallow Underwater Missile System). For an appropriate review of this concept, see Norman Friedman, SUMS and its Limitations, HI-3322-DP (Croton-on-Hudson, N.Y.: Hudson Institute, April 1981).
64. Shocked, fearful and possibly sick, Soviet citizens are more likely to be desperate for the reassuring presence of Soviet authority (faute de mieux) than they are to be angry to the point of revolt.
65. This theme was developed in Paul H. Nitze, "Deterring Our Deterrent," Foreign Policy, No.25 (Winter 1976-77), pp.195-210.
66. See Chapters 4 and 5 above.
67. Gray, "Nuclear Strategy: The Case for a Theory of Victory," pp.65-7.
68. Schelling, Arms and Influence, pp.69-91.
69. A limited exercise of strategic nuclear power could be effected for the purpose of "compelling" a Soviet withdrawal--in short, it would be intended to "restore deterrence."

70. This belief pervaded Bernard Brodie's contribution to The Absolute Weapon: Atomic Power and World Order (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1946), pp.21-110.
71. On the fall of damage limitation from official favor, see Kahan, Security in the Nuclear Age, Chapter 2.
72. See Chapter 5 above. It is, at best, a half-truth to assert, as does Glenn Buchan that "[o]nce the Soviet Union decided to develop a credible strategic nuclear force, MAD was the inevitable result. There was nothing else that the United States could have done, short of taking the extreme course of risking an early nuclear war to stop the Soviet build-up." "The anti-MAD mythology," pp.14-15. The history of U.S. nuclear targeting policy is well told in Aaron L. Friedberg, "A History of the U.S. Strategic 'Doctrine'--1945 to 1980," The Journal of Strategic Studies, Vol.3, No.3 (December 1980), pp.37-71.
73. See Gray and Payne, "Victory Is Possible."
74. See Jack L. Snyder, The Soviet Strategic Culture: Implications for Limited Nuclear Operations, R-2154-AF (Santa Monica, Cal.: RAND, September 1977), pp.39-40.
75. See Donald G. Brennan, "Soviet-American Communication in Crises," Arms Control and National Security, Vol.1 (1969), pp.81-88.
76. Quoted in Michael Howard, "On Fighting A Nuclear War," International Security, Vol.5, No.4 (Spring 1981), p.14.
77. See Robert L. Arnett, "Soviet Attitudes Towards Nuclear War: Do They Really Think They can Win?" The Journal of Strategic Studies, Vol.2, No.2 (September 1979), pp.172-91.

78. I am criticized by Michael Howard for proceeding from a "denial of (Soviet) victory" to a "theory of U.S. victory" focus. Howard, "On Fighting a Nuclear War," p.10.
79. United States Congress, Office of Technology Assessment, The Effects of Nuclear War (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1980), p.3.
80. Donald G. Brennan, "The Case for Population Defense," in Johan J. Holst and William Schneider, Jr., eds., Why ABM? Policy Issues in the Missile Defense Controversy (New York: Pergamon, 1969), p.116.
81. It is more than ten years since any substantial argument has been advanced in favor of a defense dominant strategic environment. See ibid., particularly pp.107-16. For a much more recent replay of the defense dominant argument, resting upon some highly dubious technological premises, see Malcolm Wallop, "Opportunities and Imperatives of Ballistic Missile Defense," Strategic Review, Vol.VI, No.4 (Fall 1979), pp.13-21.
82. Critics of U.S. BMD are correct in assuming that BMD is a two-power-or-none phenomenon. See Albert Carnesale, "Reviving the ABM Debate," Arms Control Today, Vol.11, No.4 (April 1981), p.8.
83. In very good part because U.S. officials and commentators are not able or willing to engage in basic strategic doctrinal discussion.

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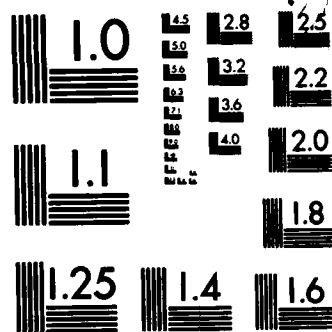
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Chapter 10

NUCLEAR STRATEGY AND NATIONAL STYLE

This study has argued that:

- Nuclear weapons have made a difference, but not a fundamental difference, to statecraft.¹
- The discernible national styles of the two super-powers are quite clearly apparent, even with reference to theories, tactics, and strategies pertinent to nuclear-weapon policy.
- There is a preferred posture, (perhaps) compatible with American values, which meets the unique needs for military support of U.S. foreign policy²

This study has functioned at two reasonably distinct levels. First, the level of policy-neutral analysis; and, second, the level of policy commentary and advocacy. A noteworthy fraction of the more important elements in the Western strategy debate tends to require that close attention be paid to the quality of Soviet-area evidence. Chapter 5 discussed the concept of stability in considerable detail, yet a case can be advanced and supported to the effect that while it has been American commentator-theoreticians who have talked about strategic stability, it has, actually, been Soviet defense officials who have practiced strategic stability over the past ten years. Crisis instability problems over the next few years pertain to the American strategic nuclear posture, not the Soviet. The lightning rod for preemptive (or preventive) attack is the U.S., not the Soviet ICBM force. Soviet command, control, communication and

intelligence (C³I) facilities are hardened, dispersed and redundant--those of the United States, as yet, are not.³

Admitting the risks of possible ad hominem analysis, probably the single most useful avenue of approach to the differences in strategic culture, or national style, in strategic thinking between the super-powers is that of a sociological review of the professional character of the leading strategic thinkers in the two societies. Thumbnail descriptions can be dangerously misleading, but--on occasion--they can identify pervasive truths which easily are subsumed and shunted to one side in lengthy and detailed analyses. This study has offered a myriad of historical detail, and has not shrunk from advancing sweeping propositions. However, it is possible that the whole may amount to considerably less than the sum of the parts. With that possibility in mind, it is suggested here that in order to understand Soviet and American approaches to questions of nuclear strategy the following points be kept firmly in the forefront of attention. First, Soviet strategic thinking:

- Is almost wholly a concern of the Soviet military professional (and the General Staff in particular).
- Has a stable political backcloth provided courtesy both of the ideological underpinnings of the regime (which provide logical consistency at the least), and of the realpolitik wisdom inherited from centuries of semi-European Great Power experience.
- Reflects (in Western eyes) a curious bifocal quality. Soviet strategic thinking can be traced at the "grand strategy" level of "correlation of forces" analysis, and at the level of tactical

detail of implementation, but "strategic theory", Western-style, is notable by its absence.⁴

-- Draws heavily upon historical experience.⁵

Second, U.S. strategic thinking:

-- Is very largely the product of civilian theorists who have been intrigued by conceptual problems, but who have little if any "feel" for likely operational realities.

-- Has tended to focus upon the area that substantially is missing from the Soviet literature--namely, strategic theory. American strategic thinking is virtually silent at the level of "grand strategy" and is scarcely less active with respect to military operational details.

-- Draws scarcely at all, explicitly, upon historical experience.

Superficially, it may be tempting to assert that many of the more important differences between the dominant stable of strategic ideas of the two superpowers have to do not so much with the deep-seated cultural differences which divide the two societies, but rather with the identities of the pertinent strategic thinkers--though one might argue that these two are not unrelated. Strategic missile doctrine in the Soviet Union was formulated initially by artillerymen, while in the United States it was formulated by civilian university professors or "think-tank" analysts. However, as Soviet commentators are fond of observing, "it is no accident" that in the U.S.S.R. nuclear-weapon doctrine is firmly in the hands of the professional General Staff, while in the United States a Harvard

professor of economics and a physicist on the staff of RAND can exercise a very great deal of intellectual influence.⁶

Soviet nuclear strategy is designed and debated only by those who are properly licensed. Those so licensed are restricted to members of the appropriate organs of the General Staff and, very occasionally, possibly, to full members of the Council of Defense (i.e., some Politburo members).⁷ The Soviet defense commentators most familiar personally to Western strategists--such people as Henry Trofimenko, Mikhail Milstein and Alexei Arbatov-- almost certainly have no role in Soviet defense policy formulation. Those people are variably expert on the details of American strategy, not Soviet strategy. By way of analogy, CIA analysts are permitted only to study other countries, they are not entitled to engage in net assessment.

Although opinions will, of course, vary among individuals, it is nonetheless valid, on the evidence, both to talk of the Soviet approach to nuclear strategy, and to relate that approach to a distinctive strategic culture and, back one step, to a distinctive political culture. The professional military domination of Soviet strategic thinking is a product of political expediency (on the part of the CPSU), historical experience, and what may best be termed common sense.

To explain: in most possible, and certainly most plausible, circumstances, there is no question but that the Soviet Armed Forces are loyal to the regime. However, the armed forces--albeit vastly penetrated by Party organs and personnel--does constitute the one (and only) organization that could challenge CPSU authority with a very fair prospect of success. Too much should not be made of this argument, but a historic, tacit, bargain has been struck between the Party and the Armed Forces--of the

"rendering unto Caesar" variety. In other words, the Armed Forces are a loyal and reliable executive organ of the state, provided they are permitted virtually a free hand in seeing to the national defense. As a general rule there is little Party-Armed Forces tension because both agree on the primacy of making very muscular provision for national defense. Soviet soldiers would not take kindly to being criticized on military matters by civilian amateurs--be they university professors or members of the Politburo. So, although the Party has found it expedient to support the predominance of the uniformed military in military matters, that expediency also reflects the belief that soldiers are indeed the experts on defense issues.

Historical experience, writ large, also argues, in Soviet perspective, for military domination of military questions. Russian and Soviet military experience, successful and otherwise, has been the most vital single thread in the (multi-) national experience. Russian/Soviet survival and expansion over the centuries, up to the present day, has not been a function of diplomatic skill or attractiveness of culture, rather has it depended upon generation after generation of peasant conscripts willing to die for Mother Russia. In an increasingly complex and dangerous world, Soviet leaders know that the one element that is very unlikely to fail them is the Russian/Soviet soldier.

Finally, in Soviet perspective it is no more than common sense to allow soldiers to determine military questions. The conduct of war is not a game, nor--for a centrally located, substantially land-locked power--can war be approached with a view to achieving some desirable measure of limited national liability. Soviet leaders learn from their history,

some of it at bitter first hand, that war tends to be a matter of national survival or extinction. While soldiers, in peacetime, may make terrible mistakes in planning, on balance they are more likely to design militarily sensible plans--since they themselves will have to execute them--than are civilians.

Quite unintentionally, this study may help to promote a pervasive fallacy. Specifically, while theories and theorists can be important, not infrequently the world is driven not so much by ideas as by the multitude of details of implementation of ideas--and those details may have a connection with the master ideas so tenuous as virtually to be non-existent. Western strategists are prone to quote Clausewitz On War to the effect that

[i]ts [war's] grammar, indeed, may be its own, but not its logic.

and to stress the non-(militarily)autonomous (political) logic of war. This is sensible, but it could be fatal if it betrays an inadequate understanding of the "grammar" of war. It is virtually certain that a U.S. President, in peacetime, has no realistic understanding of just how the United States, let alone NATO, "goes to war." The operational details of going to war (what happens at DefCon2?, or DefCon1?) are a mystery to civilians. This is not totally their fault, let it be added. For sound reasons of security (as well as clannishness) the U.S. military does not share the details of readiness and mobilization with civilians. The point of this discussion is to indicate that there is a military logic to the conduct of war which is considerably different from the

logic of intra-war deterrence as advanced typically by American civilian strategic theorists. Much of American declaratory nuclear strategy, as explained in successive annual posture statements, for example, simply makes no military sense and would, one should expect, be disregarded "in the event." The political logic of deterrence in the West argues for a central nuclear war to be conducted, initially, with very great targeting restraint. Military logic, by way of sharp contrast, argues very strongly for extremely large initial strikes--while forces and C³I are still intact.

Soviet officials tell us that the Soviet Union does not believe in limited central nuclear war--although nuclear war limited to a particular geographical theater of operations may be something else. This claim should be taken at face value.⁹ The United States (in the [British] insular tradition) has in its strategic theory a strain of belief in voluntarism-- that "he that commands the sea is at great liberty and may take as much or as little of the war as he will."¹⁰ The Soviet Union, in the continental tradition of strategic thinking, does not agree: war is war. In practice a Soviet Politburo might seek to impose targeting restraint upon its military machine, but such should not be expected with high confidence. Soviet military science says that the military character of a war is dictated by its political meaning--a consideration which is hardly conducive to restraint, in this context--Soviet war plans, and even the ideas behind those war plans, are the product of Soviet soldiers, not of Soviet civilian professors. This does not imply a lack of restraint in Soviet nuclear targeting; only that such restraint as

is exercised will likely accord more with military than with (Western) political algorithms.

On the evidence available, it is prudent for the American government to assume that in the event of central nuclear war the Soviet Union will not seek only to deny victory to the United States; to terminate the war (on any terms) as rapidly as possible; or, generally, to engage in coercive nuclear diplomacy. Instead, the evidence suggests that the Soviet Union will seek political victory through military victory. They will attack U.S. forces, U.S. command and control, and essential U.S. war-supporting industry. Even if the Politburo would like to conduct the war with a view to the deterrent-restoring effect of particular, constrained targeting options, most probably it would find that the military would resist successfully such attempted political subversion of orderly war-plan execution.

This author admits to being uncertain as to whether his advocacy of a balanced offense-defense strategic posture in Chapter 9 can fairly be termed an appeal to traditional American pragmatism, or whether he is asking more of the United States, as an insular democracy, than should be expected in peacetime. This study has two distinct, though closely related, aspects. First, it has sought to analyze the cultural roots of the principal strategic ideas which have served to frame both debate and policy design in the United States in the nuclear era. Second, proceeding beyond analysis, in the light of extensive discussion of Soviet strategic culture as manifested in programs, plans, and attitudes towards nuclear

weapon policy, this study has identified, in Chapter 9, a preferred U.S. postural-doctrinal response.

The postural-doctrinal response specified here requires that the United States take seriously the now, and belatedly, fairly general belief that deterrence and defense are but one and the same. It is strange to observe that although center-conservative opinion is almost desperately eager to endorse U.S. strategic offense designs and capabilities that carry the promise of denying victory to the U.S.S.R.,¹¹ that opinion seems to have a mental block with regard to the limitation of damage to the U.S. (and allied) homeland. Time and time again this author has sought to explain to practicing strategic analysts the near-sophomoric point that the quality of the deterrent threat posed in the SIOP is irrelevant if the United States cannot cope with the kind and quantity of strategic reply that is anticipated.¹² The problem, in short, is one of self-deterrence.

The problem appears to be as much intellectual as technical. American strategists, by and large, seem to be resistant to the idea that most likely it will be the United States, not the Soviet Union, which "goes first" (or very seriously considers "going first") with central nuclear systems, for reason of the enduring planned insufficiency of forward-deployed theater forces. In other words, the principal U.S. strategic problem is not the deterring of a Soviet first strike, rather is it the design of a total nuclear war campaign capability such that a first strike could be executed backstopped by a robust theory of sequential escalation dominance. The authors of PD 59 should have thought through the protracted nuclear campaign problem, but--predictably--they did not.

Also, today it is popular to preface even very defense-minded analysis with the observation that the U.S. problem, first, foremost, and possibly exclusively, is deterrence. In other words, many people who are arguing, objectively, for so-called "war-fighting" capabilities, find it politically expedient to remind their audience that the name of the game is deterrence. Such pre-emptive surrender on the part of nuclear strategists may be politically intelligent, but it is not strategically sound. Quite aside from the major qualification, noted above, to the effect that the deterrent problem may be one of self-, rather than other-, deterrence, it is as likely as not that should a nuclear war occur it will occur with a sequence of outbreak events to which deterrence is irrelevant.

The most likely political scenarios for World War III entail, first, a truly desperate Soviet Union, convinced that its Empire is collapsing, seeing no alternative to military action (nuclear vistas regardless). Second, World War III could erupt out of an unplanned crisis that evolved according to the "grammar of war" and was not orchestrated by the strategic scenarists of either side. In short, by implication, the United States needs a defense posture that assures national survival both in cases where very high quality deterrence can make the difference to national policy decision-making, and in cases where deterrence simply does not apply.¹³

It is important that the arguments in this study should not provide further grist to the "scholarly fallacy" mill. This fallacy is to the effect that understanding is analogous to the solution of a problem. It is not enough that American policy-makers acknowledge the strategic-

cultural distinctiveness of themselves and their Soviet counterparts. What is required is that they consider carefully both the impact of strategic culture upon defense programs and ideas, and--above all else--the probable fate of the two strategic cultures if ever they should find themselves locked in combat. How well would we do?

REFERENCES

1. This was discussed in considerable detail in Chapter 1. Many people are convinced that the advent of nuclear weapons have made a fundamental difference to world politics.
2. Such a posture was advanced in Chapter 9.
3. There is an element of sophistry in this argument in that the instability which pertains today to the U.S. strategic force posture, and to U.S. C³I, is the product of prospective Soviet offensive-force prowess.
4. See Robert Legvold, "Strategic 'Doctrine' and SALT: Soviet and American Views," Survival, Vol.XXI, No.1 (January 1979), pp.8-13.
5. Particularly the experience of the Great Patriotic War of 1941-45 and, to a lesser extent, upon the experience of the period of "war communism," 1918-22.
6. To be specific, Thomas Schelling and Herman Kahn. The influence of these two theorists may easily be exaggerated, but it would be difficult to deny that each of them contributed very noticeably to the parameters of nuclear policy debate. At the very least they both made large, obvious, and enduring contributions to the language of nuclear policy debate.
7. See Harriet F. Scott and William F. Scott, The Armed Forces of the Soviet Union (Boulder, Colo: Westview, 1979), pp.97-99.
8. Carl von Clausewitz, On War, (Michael Howard and Peter Paret, eds.) (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1976, first pub. 1832), p.605.

9. I have debated targeting restraint with Soviet officials and commentators on several occasions and have, somewhat reluctantly, come to believe (A) that they genuinely mean what they say, and (B) that they are probably correct.
10. See Michael Howard, The British Way in Warfare: A Reappraisal (London: Jonathan Cape, 1975), p.5.
11. It is slightly curious to note that the Carter and Reagan Administrations agree at the level of strategic theory--if not at the level of defense program practice.
12. See Colin S. Gray and Keith Payne, "Victory Is Possible," Foreign Policy, No.39 (Summer 1980), pp.14-27.
13. The "irrelevance of deterrence" argument, advanced here, is a rank heresy--even among defense conservatives.

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VII Corps
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Naval Surface Force, Pacific
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Pacific Fleet
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US Naval Air Forces
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