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TARGETING NATIONAL SECURITY: THE TRUE  
MECHANISM BEHIND EFFECTIVE NATIONAL COERCION

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## *Abstract*

The military instrument of national power is commonly called upon to settle international disputes. The military can settle these disputes in many different ways ranging from total military defeat to coercion or intimidation. Military coercion occurs both in and out of combat. In combat, coercion is used to obtain favorable conditions to end the conflict without requiring total military victory over the adversary. Military coercion outside of war elicits concessions from an adversary without the high cost usually associated with conventional military action. Therefore, other things being equal, successful coercion is usually less costly than total military victory. Many theories have arisen to describe how best to use the military as a coercive tool. This thesis develops another of these coercive theories. This is a security-based model that I believe describes the actual mechanism behind effective military coercion. This theory—Targeting National Security (TNS)—is based on the nation’s need for security and how security erosion can begin a sequence of events that leads to coercion. To develop this theory, this thesis uses a case study approach involving Japan's surrender in W.W.II, the Rolling Thunder and Linebacker air campaigns in the Vietnam War, and Operation El Dorado Canyon, the 1986 US airstrike on Libya. These cases span the spectrum of conflict from total war to retaliatory raids. These cases also span the spectrum of demands from unconditional surrender to modifications in the subject nation’s behavior. As this theory is developed, TNS is also compared to denial, a theory proposed by Robert Pape in *Bombing to Win*. This comparison allows us to determine if TNS or denial best describes the mechanism behind national coercion.



The results of this study show that while TNS does provide the descriptive power necessary to help us better understand coercion, denial has some significant shortcomings. These shortcomings are significant enough, in fact, that denial fails to provide the level of descriptive power necessary to make it a useful tool for policy makers or military strategists.

### *About The Author*

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

*War is the continuation of policy by other means . . .*

Carl von Clausewitz

International conflict has been around for as long as nations have existed. Conflicts occur when one nation believes that another's interests, desires, or goals impinge upon its own. Nations can use any of a number of methods to resolve their problems, but while there may be numerous tools at a nation's disposal, the military is increasingly called upon to resolve such disputes.<sup>1</sup> There are two basic approaches to using the military to resolve international conflict. The first is victory through combat. In this scheme the military defeats the adversary, resolving the conflict when the victorious nation's government imposes its will upon the vanquished. The second use of the military relies on the *threat* of military action.<sup>2</sup> This method uses the military as a coercive tool to force a change in the adversary's behavior. When the adversary believes that the potential price of resistance is greater than the cost of conceding, then the adversary gives in and accepts the coercer's demands.<sup>3</sup>

Military coercion can occur with or without warfare. Military coercion during war is used to get an adversary to accept one's demands prior to complete military defeat. Military coercion outside of war may elicit concessions from an adversary without the high cost usually associated with large scale conventional military action. Therefore, other things being equal, successful coercion is less costly than total military victory.<sup>4</sup> Because of these potential savings in both lives and national treasure, the military has become increasingly involved with developing coercive strategies. As Thomas Schelling states:

Military strategy can no longer be thought of . . . as the science of military victory. It is now equally . . . the art of coercion, of intimidation and deterrence. Military strategy, whether we like it or not, has become the diplomacy of violence.<sup>5</sup>

This thesis investigates the use of the military, specifically the use of airpower, in this “diplomacy of violence” to determine what actually generates effective coercive leverage.<sup>6</sup> Understanding the mechanism behind effective coercion should enable us to better harness this power to use it efficiently in the future. This desire to understand how best to use airpower in coercion has spawned many theories and models. This study examines two such theories. The first theory that I will investigate is “denial,” proposed by Robert Pape in *Bombing to Win*. Pape defines denial as the defeat of an adversary’s strategy.<sup>7</sup> Pape argues that defeating the adversary’s military strategy is the key to effective coercion.

I will compare Pape’s denial to my theory of military coercion. This theory, targeting national security (TNS), explains the value that nations place on their security and how this valuation can provide the avenue to effective coercion. TNS proposes that placing an adversary in a position where its security is eroded faster than its ability to replenish it creates a condition in which the adversary is susceptible to coercion.

Chapter 2 of this thesis describes the methodology that I use to determine which theory best explains coercion. I begin this chapter by describing denial and TNS and explaining their similarities and differences. Once I describe these two theories, I outline how, through a series of case studies, I will determine which of these theories provides the most explanatory power.

Chapter 3 contains the first of these case studies. In this chapter I detail the surrender of Japan in World War Two. This case study begins with a brief historical summary and a timeline, describing when and why key events happened. I then identify Japan’s strategy. I detail how Pape describes the mechanism of denial in relation to Japan’s strategy and how he believes this case supports his argument. Once I have examined Pape’s argument for denial and any significant shortcomings with his argument, I then address the case from the perspective of TNS and attempt to determine which theory better describes what actually took place.

Chapter 4 describes the Rolling Thunder and Linebacker campaigns of the Vietnam War. In this case study, I provide some historical information surrounding this conflict, develop a timeline of key events, and then describe North Vietnam's war strategy. Once I have outlined the North's strategy, I present Pape's explanation for Rolling Thunder's failure and then describe Rolling Thunder in the context of TNS. I use the same methodology for Linebacker as for Rolling Thunder. This chapter concludes with a comparison of Pape's argument for denial and my argument for TNS in relation to both these air campaigns.

Chapter 5 details coercion beyond the spectrum addressed by Pape:<sup>8</sup> the coercion that occurs in limited conflict. This case study deals with Operation El Dorado Canyon, the US airstrike against Libya in April 1986. After presenting a chronology of events, I detail Libya's strategy and the US response. I then detail how Pape views Operation El Dorado Canyon in the context of his denial theory. Finally, I describe how this operation relates to TNS and compare denial and TNS in an attempt to determine which, if either, fully explains what actually occurred. By establishing a methodology proceeding from major to minor conflict, this thesis will hopefully reveal if either of these theories provides a model that is useful for limited uses of force as well as major wars.

Chapter 6 concludes the thesis by providing a summary of the argument. In this chapter I briefly review the lessons learned from the case studies, and then go on to discuss the implications that the results of this study may have for future air strategists.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Brooks L. Bash, *The Role of United States Air Power in Peacekeeping*, Master's Thesis, School of Advanced Airpower Studies, June 1994, p.1.

<sup>2</sup> This is the threat of beginning military action or of continuing or escalating any military actions that are already underway.

<sup>3</sup> Presumably the level of force used must, in the adversary's mind, create costs greater than the concessions we demand. From this it follows that it should require less force to coerce an adversary into relatively minor concessions, and greater force to coerce an adversary into concessions of greater relative value.

<sup>4</sup> Robert A. Pape, *Bombing to Win* (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), pp. 32-33.

<sup>5</sup> Thomas Schelling, *Arms and Influence* (New Haven CT: Yale University Press), p. 34.

<sup>6</sup> The term "effective coercive leverage" simply describes a level of coercion that is sufficient to make the opponent do as we ask.

## Notes

<sup>7</sup> Pape, p. 7.

<sup>8</sup> Pape briefly addresses Operation El Dorado Canyon in *Bombing to Win* (pp. 355-356), but does not use this as a major study to support his argument for denial.



## Chapter 2

### Methodology

*The central tenet of western military thought for at least the last two hundred years has been to attack or put one's forces in a position to attack an enemy's center of gravity, thus destroying the enemy's ability to resist, causing coercion or capitulation.*

Professor Dennis Drew

This chapter establishes the framework for the remainder of this thesis. In this chapter, I will describe Robert Pape's theories of punishment and denial, and why Pape believes denial has more coercive power than punishment. Next, I will explain my security-based theory of effective national coercion and detail the similarities and differences between Pape's theory and my own. Finally, I describe the methodology that I will use to determine which of these theories better explains the true mechanism behind effective coercion.

### Pape's Theory of Military Coercion

Pape expresses the logic of coercion in the following equation:

$$R = Bp(B) - Cp(C)$$

Where R = value of resistance

B = potential benefits of resistance

p(B) = probability of attaining benefits by continued resistance

C = potential costs of resistance

p(C) = probability of suffering costs

He explains that it is through this relationship that an adversary becomes susceptible to coercion. Coercive vulnerability occurs when the value of resistance (R) becomes less

than zero.<sup>9</sup> Mathematically there are only two ways to move the value of resistance below zero: one, by reducing benefits and the other, by increasing costs. Pape believes that the benefits of resistance (B) are relatively immune from manipulation by the prospective coercer. This is because he sees the principal cause of most serious international disputes to be control over territory, and the benefit of controlling this territory should remain relatively constant.<sup>10</sup> Since the potential benefits are immune to manipulation, then the only means left to lower the value of resistance is either through increasing the cost or reducing the chances that the adversary will prevail.<sup>11</sup>

Pape believes there are two fundamental types of military coercion: coercion through punishment and coercion through denial.<sup>12</sup> While punishment and denial both seek to generate coercion, they do so through different mechanisms.

Pape defines punishment as a military campaign directed towards civilians.<sup>13</sup> This punishment can take many forms, from direct attack designed to kill, injure, or dislocate, to indirect methods where, through attack or blockade, civilians are deprived of food, water, electricity or other essential services.<sup>14</sup> Punishment works by raising the expected cost of further resistance to prohibitively high levels. When the target government realizes that the societal cost of resistance is greater than the value of the concessions being demanded, then the target state will concede to the coercer's demands.<sup>15</sup> The Soviets executed a type of punishment strategy in 1948 when they blockaded Berlin in an attempt to cut off food and fuel. They believed this would make the cost of West Berlin's resistance prohibitively high, forcing the citizens of the city to choose between resisting Soviet domination or death from starvation and the cold of the German winter.

Unlike punishment, denial strategies do not target civilians but rather target "the opponent's military ability to achieve its territorial or other political objectives."<sup>16</sup> Denial works through attacks on the opponent's military strategy.<sup>17</sup> Pape believes that effective coercion only occurs when the opponent realizes that its strategy is defeated and it no longer has any hope of attaining its goals.

Pape argues that conventional punishment strategies<sup>18</sup> fail because they can not provide the "coercive leverage" required to have a significant impact on national leadership. He believes that this is because nations usually fight over territory, and that they

desire this territory for powerful nationalistic reasons such as increasing the state's security. Because nationalism motivates these wars, the nation is willing to endure great sacrifice to get or retain the disputed territory.<sup>19</sup> Pape asserts that conventional ordnance does not have sufficient destructive power to effectively hold a population at risk when the stakes are this high. Because of this lack of firepower, instead of creating coercion, bombing civilians actually solidifies their resolve to continue resisting.<sup>20</sup> While Pape views punishment as a consistently ineffective strategy, he believes that denial, on the other hand, can be quite successful.<sup>21</sup>

Pape states that by attacking and defeating the adversary's strategy, you have an impact on his expected probability of attaining benefits by continued resistance (p (B) in Pape's coercion equation). By defeating the adversary's strategy you deny him the chance to prevail, and to defeat the adversary's strategy you must defeat his fielded forces. Pape asserts that the defeat of these forces thus is the key to coercion. When the adversary realizes that there is no longer a chance to prevail, then the value of resistance goes away.<sup>22</sup>

While Pape believes denial is much more effective than punishment, denial has some limitations. The first of these is that the adversary only concedes the territories that he believes are already lost. The adversary will not be willing to concede territories that he believes he can still retain. Second, the military pressure put on an adversary must remain until there is a settlement. Pape believes that relaxing military pressure only allows the adversary to regain strength. Once the adversary regains this strength it requires more military pressure to force a change in his behavior. Third, denial is expensive, because while you might get what you want without paying the full price of complete military victory, if denial fails you must be prepared to fight to a conclusion on the battlefield.<sup>23</sup>

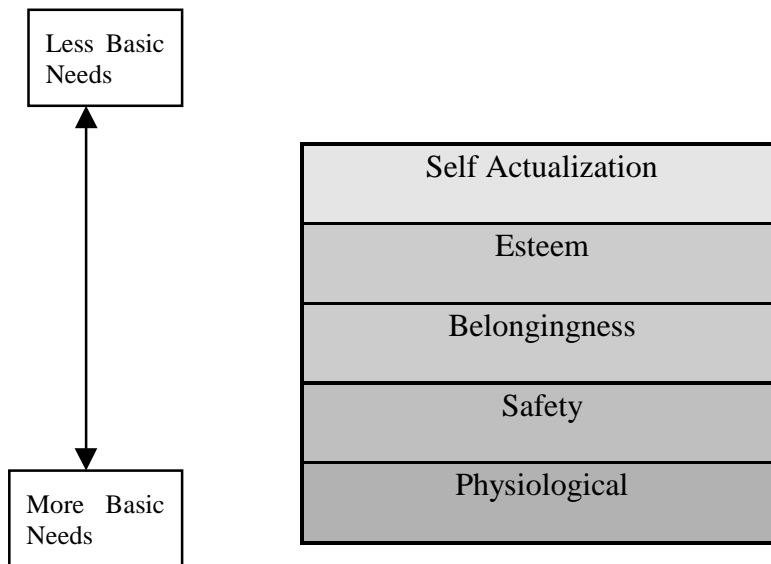
## **Targeting National Security**

Pape's theory has merit, but it also has some significant shortcomings. Denial is focused on the coercion involved in wars over territory. What of coercion in wars that are not fought for territorial concerns? Can we generate coercion in these cases? Also, denial describes the coercion that occurs in large scale combat. What if there is no combat,

or if the war is fought for relatively small stakes? How do we generate coercion in these cases? Yet another shortcoming of denial is the need to attack the adversary's fielded forces. What if the adversary has no fielded forces, but you still need some coercive leverage?

Unlike Pape, I do not believe that simply attacking the adversary's fielded forces generates effective coercion. Rather, I propose that there is a mechanism behind effective coercion that Pape fails to describe. This mechanism is closely tied to the adversary's sense of security. The underlying reasoning behind this assertion is twofold: First, the nation is a mirror of its individual constituents. Like the individuals that comprise it, the nation has needs and desires that the state attempts to fulfill. Second, the most powerful of these national needs, and the one that the nation must address above all others, is the need for security.

Abraham Maslow described a concept of individual needs and the interaction of behaviors to fulfill these needs.<sup>24</sup> This need structure, or hierarchy, appears in Figure 1, below. According to Maslow's theory, individuals meet lower order needs before addressing those further up the hierarchy.<sup>25</sup> While the structure of this hierarchy is fixed, an individual's position is not. Individuals continually move within this hierarchy, moving up as needs become fulfilled and down when needs are unmet. Individuals shift within the hierarchy when they sense that the majority of their needs from a particular level are not being fulfilled. For example, if the individual is on the "esteem" level of the hierarchy, and a situation arises that leads him to feel that he no longer belongs to the group, then he regresses to the level of belongingness to regain what was lost.



**Figure 1. Maslow’s Holistic Dynamic Needs Hierarchy.**

Manipulating the environment and affecting the components of need fulfillment at selected levels allows us to force the individual down the hierarchy. For instance, if we make the individual feel as though he no longer belongs to the group then he is forced to regress back to the safety level of the hierarchy. Thus, we can in effect alter the environment and manipulate what the individual seeks.<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, what an individual seeks will in some ways dictate his behavior. So in essence, by altering his environment we can alter his behavior.

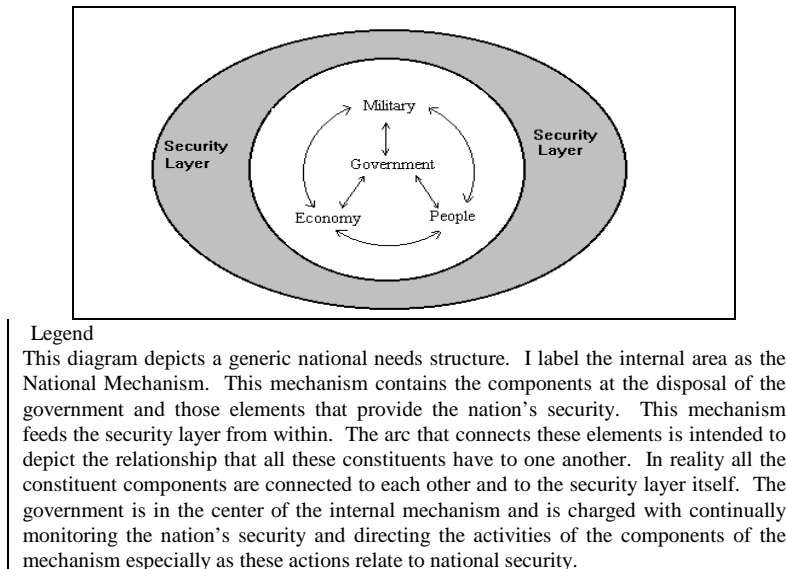
Like the individuals within the nation, the nation itself can also be said to exist within a finite needs structure. As in the case of the individual, we may be able to alter the environment of a nation and consequently change the nation’s behavior. There is one critical feature of the nation’s environment, that if altered, changes the nation’s needs and elicits a powerful response. This is national security.<sup>27</sup> By manipulating a nation’s security we can alter its behavior and make it susceptible to coercion. To more fully explain this concept, I will describe how the state views the importance of security in the context of realist thought.

Realists believe that the absence of an international sovereign is a distinguishing feature of international life. This generates a need for states to provide for their own security. Because security is crucial to states, they develop rational policy to gain power and maximize their security. Realists also understand that nations will use the military

and threats of military force to achieve their goals.<sup>28</sup> Supported by the realist belief of the primacy of national security, I have developed the following national needs relationship (Figure 2). Unlike Maslow's Holistic Dynamic Needs Hierarchy, my national model is a more cellular depiction that shows security as a layer that envelops and protects the essential elements within the nation. The concept that security is all-encompassing comes from the realization that without security the economy, government, and military would cease to exist. This layer of security is essential to the well being of the mechanism it protects. It is a symbiotic relationship: the internal structure needs this security to exist, while inputs from this mechanism actually form this security layer.

While all nations seek to assure their security,<sup>29</sup> in reality there is a finite limit to the amount of security the nation can obtain. Because of this, each nation defines an individual level of security that it feels is essential. This is a sort of security "comfort" zone. In addition to this comfort zone, each nation has a specific sensitivity to security loss. Nations develop these concepts from their own particular circumstances such as culture, geography, type of government, and national history. It is understandable that some nations, because of these considerations, may require greater relative security or will be more sensitive to security loss than others. For example, a nation that has a history of being invaded by its neighbors may need a greater relative sense of security than a nation that has never been invaded, consequently this type of nation may be very sensitive to changes in its security layer. Cultures or religions that have been historically persecuted may also require a greater sense of relative security than those who have not. Once a nation defines the level of security that makes it comfortable<sup>30</sup> then any erosion to this layer elicits one of two possible responses.<sup>31</sup> The first possibility is for the nation to simply to adjust a lower level of national security and become comfortable there. While this may sound simple enough, in practice it can be very difficult. This difficulty arises because the nation has already defined what level of security it must maintain to be comfortable and established its own sensitivity to security erosion. To change this perception would require a different perspective on national security. The current perspective, built over years, is difficult to change. The second possibility is for the nation to increase the tempo of output from the constituent components that make up its national mechanism to

replenish its security structure, again building it up to an acceptable level. It is through this mechanism that nations reinforce their eroding security.



**Figure 2. National Needs Model**

To illustrate, if a target nation's leadership perceived a threat to its national security (the security layer had been eroded to an unacceptable level) then it could do any of a number of things to reinforce or restore this level of security.<sup>32</sup> Table 1 depicts some of the things a national actor may do to reinforce their security layer.

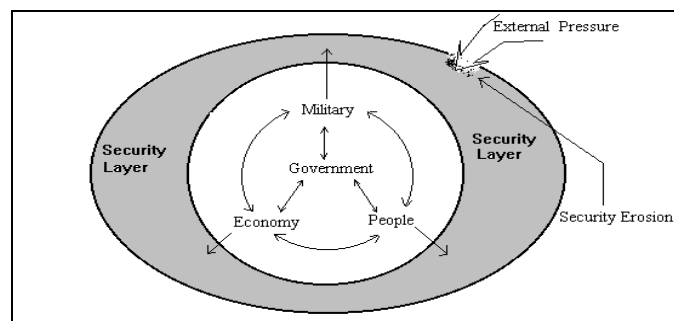
**Table 1. Actions that Rebuild Security**

National Component	Action
Government	Sign mutual protection treaty
Government	Concessions made to adversary short of surrender
Economy	Produce more defense-related goods
Military	Growth/better training and equipment
Civilians	Increased support for government, allowing martial law

Just as each nation establishes its own security requirements and its sensitivity to security erosion, each nation also tailors its national mechanism. Unlike the generic model provided in Figure 2, where the roles of the government, the economy, the military, and the people all appear relatively equal,<sup>33</sup> actual national mechanisms may appear

quite different. For example, if a nation were at war, the military component might be much more dominant than in peacetime.

Figure 3 provides a graphic depiction of this process. As the external stressor affects the target's security layer, the government senses this security erosion. The government then decides what components of the national mechanism are best capable of dealing with the problem and energizes them. For example, if a nation found itself on the verge of a significant military loss, the government might energize its own diplomatic element in hopes of soliciting external military aid to stave off this defeat. In this case, the government may also choose to mobilize the people to rebuild troop strength in the army. Regardless of the component that the government chooses, the desired result is security homeostasis at a level where the nation is comfortable. In this model an adversary is



**Figure 3. National Reaction to Loss of Security**

susceptible to coercion when its security layer is eroded at a faster rate than he believes he can replenish it. It is the *perception* of security eroding faster than the national mechanism can shore it up that generates the opportunity for coercion according to this theory.

To fully exploit this opportunity there are some fundamental issues that must first be addressed. First, the coercer must understand the relative value of what he is demanding. This means that he must first determine the value the adversary places on what he is after, and how much the adversary values his own security. Next, it is necessary to degrade the adversary's security to a level where his feeling of vulnerability outweighs the concessions being demanded. It is also logical to assume that, other things being equal, a coercer can force an adversary into relatively minor concessions with less security erosion than it takes for major concessions. For example, coercing the adversary to



concede on a relatively minor issue such as navigation rights should require less security pressure than coercing the adversary to give up large areas of territory.

In this model there are several factors that appear essential to generating effective coercion. The first is that the adversary has to understand what is happening. In particular, the adversary government must be capable of realizing that its security is eroding and that you can stop this erosion. Second, to guarantee success the coercer must be able to affect all the components of the adversary's internal mechanism if need be.<sup>34</sup> If any of the national components are off limits to attack, the coercer may leave a possible avenue through which the adversary can recapture lost security. Third, for efficient coercion the coercer should be able to see inside the adversary's national mechanism.<sup>35</sup> This will allow him to exploit any weaknesses that already exist and will also allow him to monitor what the adversary is doing in response to the pressure being imposed. Fourth, coercion should use time to its advantage by eroding the adversary's security through multiple means in rapid succession. The rapidity of the assaults on the adversary's security compresses the time he has to respond through his national mechanism. The combination of time compression and fewer viable options should work to make the adversary feel that security is being lost faster than his ability to restore it. Finally, the coercer should leave the adversary with a single option to restore his security layer. This is the option of accepting the coercer's demands so that the unacceptable erosion of the adversary's security will stop.

Large scale wars tend to accentuate the importance of the military in a nation's internal mechanism. Because of this, major military defeats during these wars generally erode the nation's security layer. The target nation's leadership identifies this erosion and attempts to energize the other available components of the national mechanism to correct this problem. If the war effort has all of the components of the national mechanism operating at full capacity, then the nation may not be able to energize any component enough to sufficiently reinforce its security. If this happens then the nation will be susceptible to coercion. Because of this, TNS and denial may often resemble one another during large scale combat. On the other hand, during smaller scale conflicts the differences between

TNS and denial should be more pronounced, because in these cases the military's role is not necessarily as significant as it can be during wartime.

To determine if TNS actually describes coercion better than denial, I will examine three cases of coercion that span the spectrum of conflict from World War to coercion outside war. In each of these case studies I will first provide a brief historical background, then attempt to define the adversary's strategy. Once I have defined this strategy, I will make a subjective assessment whether the adversary's strategy was actually defeated. If the adversary's strategy is defeated and there was coercion, then the case supports Pape's argument for denial. Even if the case appears to support denial I will examine the same evidence in the context of TNS. This examination will describe not only the military situation but also the dynamics of all the components of the adversary's internal national mechanism. Specifically, I will investigate whether other components within the adversary's mechanism were affected and what these affects were. If I can show that the adversary attempted to use other components of its internal national mechanism to reinforce its eroding security and that these attempts were stymied, then the case also supports the argument for TNS. Once the case is described through both denial and TNS, I will compare how both theories illustrate what happened and make a subjective assessment of which theory provides the best description of the outcome. For any cases where the adversary's strategy was not yet defeated yet there was coercion, or his strategy was defeated and he remained uncoerced, then the denial mechanism becomes suspect. I will also examine these cases through TNS and attempt to determine if this model better describes the outcome. Through this methodology I believe that we can compare denial and TNS across the spectrum of conflict. Comparing these theories in this fashion will help us determine which if either of these models describes the true mechanism behind effective national coercion.

#### Notes

<sup>9</sup> Robert A. Pape, *Bombing to Win* (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), p. 16.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

## Notes

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 19.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., pp. 10-15. These attacks are made on the adversary's fielded forces.

<sup>18</sup> Pape acknowledges that conventional and nuclear war so differ that they spawn very differing theories about coercion. For further discussion of his views about these differences see *Bombing to Win*, ch. 2.

<sup>19</sup> Pape, p. 21.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., pp. 21-24.

<sup>21</sup> Pape concedes that punishment may produce coercion but only in cases where the stakes are extremely small.

<sup>22</sup> Actually the value of resistance is negative if  $C > 0$ .

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., pp. 32-33. Pape makes the point that if you indeed desire to coerce an adversary you may become involved and then realize that coercion will not work. If this happens you must be willing to fight for military victory. If you do not fight, the power of your future coercive efforts could be jeopardized.

<sup>24</sup> Abraham H. Maslow, *Motivation and Personality*, 3rd ed. (New York: Harper and Row, 1987).

<sup>25</sup> Maslow's theory actually states that not all but simply a majority of the behaviors within a specific level must be met before the individual can proceed up the hierarchy.

<sup>26</sup> Maslow, pp. 20-45.

<sup>27</sup> This concept that national security is a core interest to all nations is founded in realist thought. For a discussion of realism in international relations see: Roger D. Spegele, *Political Realism in International Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

<sup>28</sup> Spegele, p. 85-87.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Comfort describes a nation in security homeostasis.

<sup>31</sup> There is yet another response but this is external to the nation and out of its control. This third possibility is that the source of the security erosion will simply go away or be removed by a third party.

<sup>32</sup> This is only a representative sample of the actions available to National Actors. This in no way constitutes all the possible actions that a National Actor may take.

<sup>33</sup> This equality is depicted by the relative size with which each is shown.

<sup>34</sup> I am not advocating attacking everything, far from it. To be effective you must understand what is going on in the adversary's nation. For example, a nation that rules its people through terror may not require any additional pressure on your part. Their government may in essence doing part of your job for you.

<sup>35</sup> I do not expect perfect intelligence but rather that the coercer must be cognizant of the adversary's reactions to his efforts and why the adversary chose that response.

## Chapter 3

### The Surrender of Japan

*The end of World War II in the Pacific provides the most successful case of modern military coercion. . . . Japan's surrender represents a rare instance in which a great power surrendered its entire national territory to an opponent that had not captured any significant portion of it."*

Robert Pape, *Bombing to Win*

The Japanese surrender on August 15, 1945, provides the most successful case to date of modern military coercion.<sup>36</sup> Japan surrendered unconditionally to the United States while still possessing an army and militia in excess of 2 million men<sup>37</sup> on the home islands that were prepared to defend against an American invasion.<sup>38</sup> What caused the Japanese to surrender under these conditions? The answer to this question should provide us with some valuable insights into what generates effective coercion.

To better understand how Japan was coerced into surrender, we must first understand Japan's national decision-making process, how this process evolved, and how it influenced the decision to surrender. Once we uncover the national decision making process we will examine Japan's strategy and how the nation planned to obtain its goals. Then we can discuss Pape's argument and why he believes denial explains Japan's coercion. Following the recap of Pape's argument for denial, I will describe Japan's surrender in the context of targeting national security (TNS), describing how TNS provides a more complete explanation of how Japan was coerced. This chapter concludes with a comparison of denial and TNS detailing the similarities and differences of these two theories.

## Japan: The Road to War

In 1853, American Commodore Matthew C. Perry sailed into Edo (Tokyo) Bay, opening up the isolated medieval empire to modern life.<sup>39</sup> Japan embraced the concepts of the modern, industrialized, Western world and rapidly became an industrial power. Soon the need for raw materials and market access for its products led Japan to develop a strong army and navy. As the nation's needs grew, it resorted to force of arms to capture the territories it believed it needed. By 1894, Japan had taken Korea, Formosa, the southern tip of Manchuria, and the Liaotung Peninsula.<sup>40</sup> Japan's population explosion further fueled the nation's hunger for land. By 1920, the four main Japanese islands (an area smaller than California) already contained 80 million residents and the population was increasing by over one million per year.<sup>41</sup> This was too much for the economy to absorb and soon there were hundreds of thousands out of work.<sup>42</sup>

This population explosion coincided with social revolution. The collapse of many autocratic governments in Europe following World War One led many in Japan to demand that their government also change. It did change but this came too quickly, as widespread corruption soon infected the fledgling government. The people became disenchanted with politics and this disenchantment was exacerbated by several highly publicized scandals that rocked the nation.<sup>43</sup>

Nowhere was the demand for change greater nor the disillusionment with the government stronger than among the nation's youth. Many of these young people, the children of shopkeepers and farmers—some of those hardest hit by Japan's growing economic problems—found themselves in the officer corps of Japan's growing military. These officers became more politically charged as the blame for Japan's national woes fell squarely on the nation's political leaders. Many of these officers began to join secret organizations demanding governmental change. Some groups advocated change through dialog while others advocated assassinating political figures that stood in the way of reform.<sup>44</sup>

In 1928, political activism in the army graduated from rhetoric to action. This action—precipitated by two officers in the Kwangtung Army—called for the assassination of Marshal Chang, the Chinese warlord who controlled the Manchurian province where

they were assigned. These two believed that eliminating Chang would help create an autonomous state allowing the economic growth and expansion necessary to pull Japan out of what they believed was a national tailspin. On June 4, 1928, their plan came to fruition as a Kwangtung Army engineer regiment dynamited Chang's train killing him.<sup>45</sup>

The Tokyo government attempted to rein in the Kwangtung Army. This proved to be a difficult task as a substantial segment of the population believed that the Army was right in executing Chang and in their 1931 invasion of Manchuria. The government's actions only solidified many people's belief that both politics and business were irreparably corrupt. The people hailed the Kwangtung Army as proponents of the common man. Consequently, the Kwangtung Army grew in stature and the Japanese military benefited by gaining increased power within the nation's political hierarchy.<sup>46</sup> By 1938, Japan's government was dominated by the military as the Japanese became more absorbed in a war of attrition with China.<sup>47</sup>

The US and Japan went to war in large part because of irreconcilable differences in their national strategies, especially concerning issues over China.<sup>48</sup> Both nations desired access to China's raw materials and potential markets. The Japanese maintained that control over parts of China was essential not only to provide Japan the economic boost it needed to repair its ailing economy, but also to provide the required territory to relieve Japan's overcrowding. A Japanese-controlled buffer on China's mainland would also provide additional security against the Soviet Union. By the mid-1930s Japan began to strengthen ties with the Axis powers. Because of this and her 1937 invasion of China, Washington moved to quarantine Japan. The US even threatened a naval blockade and tensions heightened between Washington and Tokyo.<sup>49</sup>

Despite these threats, the Japanese continued their expansion. The US continued to aid the Chinese nationalist resistance to Japan by providing economic and military assistance. On September 27, 1940, the Japanese signed the Tripartite Pact with Germany and Italy and became part of the Axis. Because of this and continuing Japanese expansion, including the occupation of Indochina, the US soon began a series of economic embargoes against Japan.<sup>50</sup> These embargoes covered many strategic materials, the most significant of which was oil. These moves could not have come at a worse time as Japan

was bogged down in the war in China and was in greater need of these materials to help break what had become a stalemate.<sup>51</sup> On July 26-27, 1941, just as Japan was moving into southern Indochina, the United States, Britain, and the Netherlands froze Japanese assets and demanded that the Japanese withdraw its forces from China.<sup>52</sup> The US and Japan were moving toward the brink of war.

### **Japan's Strategy**

Japan felt compelled to regain access to raw materials and increase its influence throughout Asia. To do this, Japan would expand its war. In 1941, Japan's war plans called for the capture of the Southern Resources Area in South East Asia and Indonesia and the establishment of a defense perimeter in the West Pacific.<sup>53</sup> The Japanese military envisioned this defense perimeter as a series of fortified island outposts. The Japanese planned to develop and supply these outposts to protect their access to the Southern Resources Area. Japanese military leaders believed that these outposts would make American intervention in this area of the Pacific so costly that it would effectively repel or deter US interference in what Japan was doing.

The Japanese obviously viewed US expansion into the Pacific, and its meddling in China as a threat. The Japanese were also concerned that the US might respond to a Japanese invasion of the East Indies with military action. Because of these fears, Japan planned an attack on US naval forces in Pearl Harbor. Japan's military leaders believed that if the attack did incite America into war, it would be limited, and that by the time the US could prepare adequate forces, Japan's defense perimeter would be strong enough to repel an American counter attack.<sup>54</sup> Because of the military's domination of Japan's national decision making mechanism, military strategy was now—and for quite some time had been—dictating national policy.

Despite the attack on Pearl Harbor and the crippling of much of the Pacific Fleet, by 1942 the momentum of the war began to shift in favor of the US. Following the Battle of Midway, the US began a march toward the Japanese home islands. This march would end in Japan's surrender. Table 2 depicts some additional significant military events leading up to the end of the war.

Table 2. Events Preceding the Surrender of Japan

Date	Event
July 1944	Marianas fall
October 1944	Leyte Gulf: Japan's navy no longer an offensive force <sup>55</sup>
November 1944	Marianas used as US bases for bombing Japan
March 1945	Large scale fire raids on Japanese Homeland
April 1945	Okinawa invaded
June 1945	Okinawa falls
August 6, 1945	Hiroshima suffers atomic attack
August 9, 1945	Atomic bomb dropped on Nagasaki
August 9, 1945	Soviets defeat Kwangtung army in Manchuria
August 15, 1945	Japan surrenders

### **Pape's Theory of Denial and the Surrender of Japan.**

Pape argues that Japan's surrender supports his theory of denial.<sup>56</sup> To prove his case he describes the vulnerabilities of the civilian leaders, the military, and the Emperor. From these vulnerabilities he determines which of these entities were the most susceptible to coercion.<sup>57</sup>

Pape believes that the Emperor was susceptible to coercion and that he played a role in the decision to surrender, but that this role was not as significant as some have suggested.<sup>58</sup> Pape argues that the Emperor, unlike the army, was concerned about the atomic attack on Hiroshima. However, Pape does not believe that the Emperor's fear of more nuclear punishment was a major factor in the nation's decision to surrender.<sup>59</sup> Pape views the Emperor's concerns as minor because he considers the Emperor powerless to overrule the military leadership of the nation.<sup>60</sup>

Instead, Pape believes the only new vulnerability that really had a significant bearing on Japan's decision to surrender was that generated as a result of the Soviet attack into Manchuria. Pape asserts that this attack, and the rapid subsequent defeat of the of Kwangtung Army, made the Japanese realize that they could not defend their home islands against an American invasion. Pape argues that this realization made the Emperor, the civilian leadership, and the entity that mattered most, the military, feel vulnerable. It



was this development that made the Japanese susceptible to coercion. In Pape's opinion the principal cause of Japan's surrender was the "ability of the United States to increase the military vulnerability of the home islands sufficiently to persuade Japanese leaders that their defense was highly unlikely to succeed", thus there was no reason to continue to resist.<sup>61</sup> Pape believes the key factors that led to this realization were the successes of the US naval blockade, which had virtually crippled Japan's ability to produce equipment for its forces, and the Soviet attack in Manchuria. This attack and the subsequent defeat of the Kwangtung Army—still viewed as Japan's premier fighting force—forced Japan to realize that they could not repel an American invasion. The reasoning behind this was that if the Soviets could defeat the Kwangtung Army in such short order, then how could a poorly armed militia repel the Americans? After all, the Americans were thought to be much stronger than the Soviets, and the poorly armed and supplied militia forces were not nearly as capable as the Kwangtung Army. Pape argues that this made the Japanese realize that their military was indeed vulnerable for it could easily be defeated.<sup>62</sup>

### **TNS and the Surrender of Japan**

While Pape believes that the surrender of Japan supports his theory of denial, I believe that a more thorough review of the circumstances behind Japan's surrender will show that targeting national security (TNS) more fully explains what actually occurred. To build my case for the mechanism of TNS and the Japanese decision to surrender, we will need to examine the nation's decision-making apparatus as it existed in August, 1945.

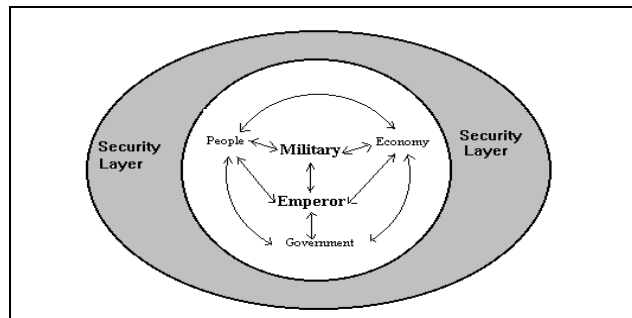
For many reasons, the Japanese internal mechanism is somewhat different from the generic national mechanism described in Chapter 2. Because of Japan's lack of domestic raw materials, most of the items needed for the war had to be imported. This need for massive amounts of imports and the nation's relatively small merchant fleet, resulted in a commercial shipping system that was already working at near-capacity before the beginning of the war.<sup>63</sup> This over-tasked system was an easy target for US naval blockade and submarine warfare.<sup>64</sup> This, combined with the destruction of industry as a result of the United States' strategic bombing campaign, had by the summer of 1945, all but de-

stroyed the Japanese economy.<sup>65</sup> With the economy in such disarray, its status as a viable contributor to the national mechanism also suffered. By 1945, the economy played only a minor role in Japan's internal national mechanism. We can find evidence of this in the reduction of the Zaibatsu's power in Japan's governmental affairs. The Zaibatsu, a powerful national force when they represented a viable pre-war economy, were by 1945 stripped of most the power and prestige they had once possessed.<sup>66</sup> Consequently, there was little the crippled economy could do to help shore up national security.

The people were also of little help in reinforcing national security. Despite the fact that the average citizen subsisted on a 1200 calorie per day diet, the people were already heavily mobilized and willing to give their lives to defend the Emperor and the nation.<sup>67</sup> Since they were already willing to make this sacrifice, they were giving all they could. Despite this, the nation was still experiencing an unacceptable security imbalance. In other words, despite the fact that the people were willing to endure the firebombings, the starvation and the dislocation, and still fight to the death to protect the Emperor, this was not enough to restore an acceptable level of national security. It would be impossible to get more from the people.

The Emperor, despite being the spiritual and moral leader of the nation, had become little more than a figurehead. While loved and revered by the people, he had in many ways become a puppet of the military.<sup>68</sup> The Emperor did retain the title of supreme commander of the army and navy, but throughout the war he had failed to exercise control over his forces. When the Emperor agreed with his military council, the military gladly implemented their plans. When the Emperor's ideas differed from the military's, the military politely ignored the Emperor and the difference was simply attributed to bad counsel offered by the Emperor's civilian advisors.<sup>69</sup> The Emperor's only remaining source of true power over the nation resided in his ability to rally the people.<sup>70</sup> The Emperor, with a word, could control the actions of millions—millions that had already shown that they were willing to sacrifice their lives to protect and obey him. This power over the people allowed the Emperor, if need be, to make a decision counter to the military and to have his commands obeyed.

The military had become the strongest component within Japan's national decision making structure, and because of both the loss of a majority of the navy, and the nation's perceptions of the army, the latter became the predominant force within the military. Despite the fact that the army had disobeyed the Emperor over matters in Manchuria and that the Emperor had in many ways become its pawn during this war, the army's leaders realized that the Emperor remained powerful in a very significant way—through the devotion of his subjects. It was because of this power that open refusal of the Emperor's demands could lead to popular revolt against the military. The military had but two options to reinforce the nation's security layer. The first was to accept surrender and stop the erosion caused by the US war effort. The second was to devise some way to increase their combat effectiveness and rebuild security by military victory over the Americans. Figure 4 illustrates the Japanese TNS model of 1945, accounting for the reduction in power of the economy and the people.



**Figure 4. Japanese TNS Model in 1945**

This depiction shows the relative strengths of the military (by 1945 essentially the army) and the Emperor. The government, although depicted with the same relative size as the people and economy would play a significant role but only as a catalyst for the Emperor and a intermediary for the army. This role will be described in further detail later in this chapter.

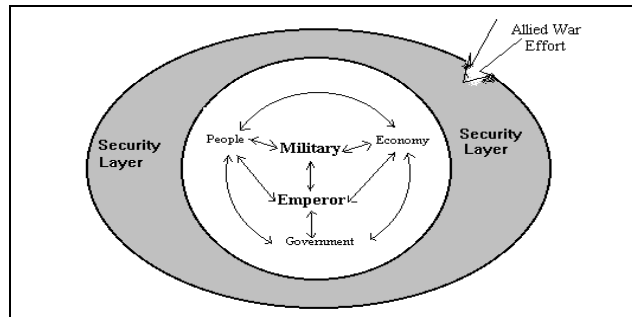
If it is true that this was the structure that existed in Japan in 1945, what made the Japanese surrender on August 15 when they had been seemingly preparing for a last-ditch defense of the home islands only one week earlier? The answer lies in the interrelationship of events and national leaders, how these events eroded these leaders' perceptions of

Japanese national security, the significance of these events in the minds of these leaders, and the tempo at which these events occurred.

Long before August 15, 1945, many in Japan's decision-making mechanism understood that the nation's security layer was quickly eroding and that extreme measures would be needed to reinforce this security.<sup>71</sup> This realization came as a result of the mounting defeat of Japan's naval and ground forces at the hands of the Americans. However, it had become excessively difficult to express these concerns because of the army's domination of Japan's national mechanism. The army, the embodiment of patriotism and nationalism, was virtually immune to criticism. Criticizing the army was tantamount to treason.<sup>72</sup> Because of this, ideas put forth by the army generated a kind of inertia all their own. Army domination, the effectiveness of propaganda on the civilian population, and the Emperor's refusal to forcefully intervene, anesthetized the nation's collective sense of vulnerability. However, by February 1945, even the leadership of the army understood that unless they could get external support, defeat was inevitable.<sup>73</sup> Figure 5 depicts Japan's national security situation in 1945.

US military action had eroded Japan's national security. It did this through the ceaseless string of military defeats that it handed Japan in the Pacific. Japan would now need to find some way, through its internal national mechanism, to reinforce this erosion. However, most of the components of Japan's internal national mechanism had become ineffective because of the war. The government resorted to one of the last viable components that remained—diplomacy. They directed diplomatic efforts at the Soviets in hopes they would come to Japan's aid. There were two aspects of this diplomatic effort. The first was to get the Soviets to unite with Japan and help her fight off the impending American invasion. The other was to have the Soviets diplomatically intervene on Japan's behalf to get better terms for surrender than those outlined at Potsdam.

The army sanctioned these diplomatic efforts for Soviet aid. The army believed that if the Soviets would align themselves with the Japanese then Japan could better arm and supply its forces to defend against a US invasion. Because the army had come to provide virtually all the capability of the Japanese national mechanism, the army again provided the solution to the unacceptable erosion of national security.



**Figure 5. Japanese TNS Model 1945 and Security Erosion**

This solution was to rearm with Soviet assistance, and then fight to the death to protect the home islands from invasion.<sup>74</sup>

This plan to fight to the death with Soviet aid changed the perceptions of many within Japan’s national mechanism. The plan to defend Japan further spurred nationalism by allowing the country to rally for a cause—to retain their beloved Emperor and their traditional form of rule. However, most of the nation’s leaders—both military and civilian—realized that even with Soviet aid, this plan would only make invasion more costly, it would not repel an invasion. The issue soon became not one of victory, but rather an issue of how best to force the Americans into allowing Japan to retain the Emperor after the inevitable surrender.<sup>75</sup> The military believed that if it could raise the cost of invasion high enough, then the US would allow the Emperor to remain the leader of the nation. In this way, this defense plan provided the Japanese with a fragile measure of hope, the hope of retaining their form of governance and in a large part their culture.

The illusion that Japan’s army had developed a viable plan to repair the nation’s ailing security vanished in August, 1945. On August 6, the United States bombed Hiroshima with an atomic device, resulting in the near-instant deaths of eighty thousand people and the complete destruction of the city.<sup>76</sup> This level of death and destruction, while less than that caused by conventional incendiary bombing, had two features that made it entirely different from the destruction caused by the incendiary campaign. The first of these features was shock. The destruction caused in Hiroshima resulted from the release of **one** weapon, not from hundreds of incendiaries, and this destruction came instantly. The second feature that made the atomic weapon different than incendiaries was fear. Where incendiary bombings were quite horrible, the people had seen incendiaries’

effects, and the Emperor had come to accept this horror. The effects of the nuclear bomb, on the other hand, remained relatively unknown. This event had a pronounced effect on the Emperor and the civilian leadership in the government.<sup>77</sup> However, the military leadership, in a failing attempt to retain dominance of Japan's national mechanism, downplayed Hiroshima's bombing, claiming that the weapon was not a nuclear device, and even if it was, that the United States did not have enough nuclear material to produce many more of these devices.<sup>78</sup> Despite the military's attempts to reassure the Emperor, he remained gravely concerned. This concern was justified for on August 9, the US dropped a second nuclear device, this one on Nagasaki.

Subsequent events also had a profound impact on the Japanese. Although the Japanese retained a non-aggression treaty with the Soviets and had been negotiating with them to provide some form of aid, the Soviets gave no clues to what level of help they could offer. Finally, during the first week in August, the Soviet Union told the Japanese that they would not join with them to repel the American invasion. This dashed any hopes of military assistance to shore up the army's defense plans. In the days that followed, the Soviets also made it clear that they would not intervene diplomatically to secure better terms of surrender than those offered at Potsdam. On the heels of this announcement, and the bombing of Hiroshima, the Soviets nullified their non-aggression treaty with the Japanese, declared war on August 8, and attacked the Kwangtung Army in Manchuria. The Soviets defeated the Kwangtung Army within hours.<sup>79</sup>

Literally as the Soviets were defeating the Kwangtung Army, Japan's Council for Direction of the War was in session. This six-member council was charged with making all substantive policy regarding the war. They began their meeting with an argument over the bombing of Hiroshima. The army chief of staff had received a message that stated "the whole city of Hiroshima was destroyed instantly by a single bomb" and that the bomb was dropped by one or at most two aircraft.<sup>80</sup> Despite this, a heated debate ensued as to whether this had been a nuclear attack. Navy Chief of Staff Toyota pooh-poohed US President Harry S. Truman's threat to use atomic bombs on other Japanese cities. Toyota did not believe that the US, or any nation, had enough nuclear material to mount the level of attack that Truman had threatened. He also believed that even if the US did

possess enough weapons to mount a widespread nuclear attack that world opinion would force them to stop.<sup>81</sup> Army leaders, stating that they did not have all the facts surrounding the Soviet advances in Manchuria, refused to believe that the war was being lost in China until they could get some kind of conformation. Just as this discussion was proceeding, one of Premier Suzuki's aides interrupted and handed him a note. It read: "Nagasaki City was struck this morning by a severe attack of Hiroshima type. Damage is extensive".<sup>82</sup>

Now everyone at the council meeting realized that the US did have more than one weapon. What they did not know though was how many more they had, and if world opinion could stop further nuclear attack. Suzuki said solemnly "This, added to the previous barbaric attack on Hiroshima compounds the impact on the Russian attack on Japan. I wish the foreign Minister to introduce the discussion of the Potsdam terms."<sup>83</sup> The discussion that ensued would result in Japan's unconditional surrender.

Through the TNS framework we can see how the Japanese realized their security was in jeopardy. Their security was initially eroded when they realized that they could not maintain their defensive perimeter. When the US breached this perimeter, then they had two fundamental choices; redefine their security needs to a lower level—a level that they could now maintain—or find some way to reinforce their eroded security. Since, as discussed in Chapter 2, the nation's security requirements are influenced by culture, history, geography and a host of other factors, and as such, this perception of national security need is very difficult to change. Consequently, the Japanese were forced to go to the components of their national mechanism to find some way to replenish the security they had lost, for only in this fashion could they return to security homeostasis. When they went to their national mechanism they found few viable options, and the situation was deteriorating rapidly. They were now a nation near starvation, racked with massive fire-raids, with an impotent army and no naval forces. Add to this the atomic attacks on Hiroshima followed by the denial of Soviet aid, the declaration of war, and the subsequent short-order defeat of what they had believed to be their premier fighting force at the same time as another terrifying atomic attack was underway. This is what made Japan susceptible to coercion: not the denial of their strategy that Pape espouses, but the multitude of events, in their totality. The nation was trapped, like a trapped animal, the nation at-

tempted every possible means for escape. It was only when all these avenues of escape were cut off that Japan surrendered.

When examining coercion through TNS, the issue is not one of *which* straw breaks the camel's back, but rather that it takes *many* straws. In the case of Japan, it was combination of the nuclear attacks, the lack of aid by the Soviets, the unknowns associated with the United States nuclear arsenal, the Soviet declaration of war, and the defeat of the Kwangtung Army, in combination with the temporal compression in which these events happened that made the Japanese susceptible to coercion. Japan became susceptible to coercion when their security was eroded and the components of their national mechanism was incapable of adequately reinforcing it.

### **Denial and TNS in the Surrender of Japan**

There are many differences between Pape's denial theory and TNS in relation to the surrender of Japan following W.W.II. One difference is that Pape takes a more simplistic view of the causes of coercion. In the case of the coercion of Japan, Pape attempts to discover the single cause, or the single most important cause of coercive leverage. Discovering a single cause is difficult, for there may not be one. Rather, coercion may be caused by a combination of events and how these events generate the perception of deteriorating national security, a security that the nation can no longer repair with its own devices. Robert Butow identified this complex interaction of events, perceptions, and actions in *Japan's Decision to Surrender*. He writes:

Japan's formal acceptance of the Potsdam ultimatum in August 1945 represented much more than just a hasty reaction to the atomic bomb and the Soviet Union's entry into the war. The capitulation was actually the climax of the behind-the-scenes activities of those Japanese whose thoughts and actions produced Japan's decision to surrender . . . The promotion of schemes to negotiate a settlement favorable to Japan, the launching of peace feelers in Sweden and Switzerland, the quest for Soviet aid and later for Soviet mediation, and the final reliance upon the influence of the Emperor and the Throne record the steps by which a small faction within the ruling elite committed the Japanese government to salvaging, through negotiation, a part at least of what the military could no longer maintain by force of arms.<sup>84</sup>



Pape states that denial is the defeat of the adversary's strategy and that this defeat provides effective coercive leverage.<sup>85</sup> If Pape is correct then the Japanese should have been susceptible to coercion several times throughout the war. For example, after Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, it never intended to enter into a total war with the US. Rather Japan planned instead to fight a limited war against the US and continue its war efforts in China.<sup>86</sup> By waging total war, the US in essence defeated Japan's strategy of limited warfare. This, however, did not coerce the Japanese into any concessions. That the US defeated Japan's limited war strategy, yet Japan remained uncoerced, challenges Pape's denial theory. The next Japanese strategy was defeated by the US at the Battle of Midway. After Midway, the US held the strategy of a robust Japanese defense perimeter at risk. If the US breached this perimeter, then Japan's strategy was once more defeated. The US did breach this defensive perimeter, thus again Japan's strategy lay defeated. Yet, even though the US defeated this strategy, the Japanese still were not coerced. In 1943, Japan's military leadership established an "absolute national defense zone."<sup>87</sup> This zone included Japan proper, the Kuriles, the Marianas, the Carolines, most of Indonesia, and Burma. In July, 1944, the US captured the Marianas. Taking the Marianas breached Japan's "absolute defense zone" yet defeating **this** strategy still failed to coerce Japan.

In this case Pape argues that the Japanese strategy to raise the cost of invasion by the United States was the strategy that had to be defeated before coercion could be effective. What Pape fails to understand, however, is that the Japanese strategy to defend the home islands was not expected to succeed. In other words, Japanese leadership knew that ill-equipped army and militia units, with only Kamikaze attacks to project power, were not going to repel an invasion. The Japanese army designed the concept of home island defense simply to raise the cost of invasion. This they hoped, would force the United States to reduce the demands that it had defined in the Potsdam agreement.<sup>88</sup>

Denial fails to identify which of the adversary's strategies we must defeat in order to coerce them. Since the adversary is reactive—as in the case of Japan—they quite possibly will have several strategies throughout a conflict. Denial fails to describe how to identify the one critical strategy from this plethora of possibilities. The lack of this prescriptive feature forces the coercer to defeat all the adversary's strategies for it is the de-

feat of the adversary's *last* strategy that causes coercion. Because of this shortcoming, Pape's denial theory fails to adequately explain the coercive mechanism behind the surrender of Japan.

In the next chapter we will investigate coercion in a more limited conflict with different stakes. The next case study, the war in Vietnam, will concentrate on the use of airpower to coerce the North Vietnamese to accept negotiated peace with the United States. In this case study we will again attempt to explain what happened in the context of both denial and TNS and determine which if either of these theories explains what actually occurred.

### Notes

<sup>36</sup> Robert A. Pape, *Bombing to Win* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), p. 87.

<sup>37</sup> Thomas B. Allen and Norman Polmar, *CODENAME DOWNFALL* (New York: Simon and Shuster, 1995), appendix A.

<sup>38</sup> Lester Brooks, *Behind Japan's Surrender* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1968).

<sup>39</sup> John Toland, *The Rising Sun: The Decline and Fall of the Japanese Empire 1936-1945* (New York: Random House, 1970), p. 87.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 87.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>47</sup> D. Clayton James, *Makers of Modern Strategy from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, Peter Paret, ed. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986), chap. 24, p. 705.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 704.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 704-709.

<sup>50</sup> Shigenori Togo, *The Cause of Japan* (New York: Simon and Shuster, 1956), pp. 44-60.

<sup>51</sup> Paret, pp. 706-708.

<sup>52</sup> Saburo Ienaga, *The Pacific War, 1931-1945: A Critical Perspective on Japan's Role in World War II* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), pp. 130-134.

<sup>53</sup> Paret, p. 707.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 707.

<sup>55</sup> Butow, p. 41. After the Japanese defeat in the "Victory Operation" Japan could no longer replace fleet offensive forces faster than they were destroyed.

<sup>56</sup> Pape, pp. 87-136.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 126.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 124-126.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 131-132.

## Notes

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., p. 134.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., pp. 134-135.

<sup>63</sup> Many sources have stated that the Japanese commercial fleet was operating at 85% of capacity before the attack on Pearl Harbor on the 7th of December 1941.

<sup>64</sup> Karl Launtenschlager, "The Submarine in Naval Warfare, 1901-2001," *International Security* (Winter 1986-87), p. 121.

<sup>65</sup> Butow, pp. 1-41.

<sup>66</sup> This assessment is based on the analysis found in Cohen, *Japan's Economy in War and Reconstruction*.

<sup>67</sup> Toland, pp. 126-145.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., pp. 97-100.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., p. 98.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., pp. 94-100.

<sup>71</sup> Butow, p. 48.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., p. 46.

<sup>74</sup> The Japanese hoped that if the plan could not stop an invasion than at least they hoped to increase the states so that the Japanese way of life and method of government could be retained after the war had ended.

<sup>75</sup> Butow, p. 46.

<sup>76</sup> Pape, p. 105. Many more died later as a result of radiation.

<sup>77</sup> Butow, pp. 150-159.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> David M. Glantz, *August Storm: Soviet Tactical and Operational Combat in Manchuria, 1945*, Leavenworth Papers no. 8 (Fort Leavenworth KS: U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1983).

<sup>80</sup> Brooks, p. 56.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., p. 57.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Butow, p. 150.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., Ch. 2.

<sup>86</sup> Makers, p. 708.

<sup>87</sup> Ienaga, p. 146.

<sup>88</sup> Opinions regarding the ability of Japan's forces varied among the members of Japan's decision making mechanism. The definition of their goal however did not. Japan had no illusions of defeating the Americans on the beaches of the Japanese home islands. Japan's leaders wanted to decisively engage the Americans in the hopes that the US would reduce their demands from unconditional surrender to terms that the Japanese could find more palatable. Evidence of this comes from the statements made by two of the staunchest supporters of continuing the resistance, the Japanese War Minister, and the Japanese Army Chief of Staff. The Japanese War Minister, Korechika Anami stated on the 8th of August 1945 that the final defensive of the home islands (primarily Honshu)

### **Notes**

would provide a decisive battle from which to gain *better terms for surrender*, where promptly the army chief of staff agreed.

## Chapter 4

### The Case for Coercion in the War in Vietnam

*As an instrument of power, military force has not been limited to actual armed conflicts, but has frequently been used as a threat to influence the behavior of another state. In the threat environment, it is proposed or potential damage that could be inflicted by a nation's armed forces rather than the actual defeat of an opposing military force that provides the basis for attaining the diplomatic objective.*

Peter Karsten, *Military Threats: A Systematic Historical Analysis of the Determinants of Success*

The Vietnam War provides a very interesting case study in the mechanism of military coercion. The conflict between the United States and North Vietnam was an amalgam of many different conflicts that at times, for the United States, had differing goals, and generated many differing strategies.<sup>89</sup> The conflict began with the North primarily waging a guerrilla war and then progressing in what many assert was a classic Maoist fashion into more conventional warfare.<sup>90</sup> Unlike the war against Japan, in Vietnam the United States fought a limited war for limited aims. Also unlike W.W.II, Vietnam was fought against the nuclear backdrop of what had become a bipolar world with the United States as a combatant, and the Soviet Union and the Peoples' Republic of China (PRC) as North Vietnam's sponsors.

Because of these differences, the study of military coercion in the Vietnam conflict should provide a glimpse into how coercion works in a constrained environment short of total war.<sup>91</sup> If we can identify an effective coercive mechanism in limited war, we may get one step closer to determining if there is a model that describes what generates effective military coercion across the spectrum of conflict.

However, before we begin our examination of coercion in the conflict in Vietnam, we must first establish a brief chronology of the events that led to the fall of South Vietnam in 1975. After presenting the events that led up to the war, I will detail North Vietnam's strategy. Once the North's strategy is outlined, I will describe Rolling Thunder in the context of denial and TNS and then compare the similarities and differences of these two theories in relation to this campaign. After discussing Rolling Thunder, I will examine the Linebacker air campaigns, once more detailing these campaigns through denial and TNS. I will then compare how these two models explain Linebacker's outcome and assess which better explains what actually happened.

### **Vietnam: The Road to War**

The roots of the Vietnam war can be traced back to before W.W.II. Indochina, long viewed by imperialist powers as a cornucopia of labor and raw materials, was eventually caught up in the middle of an international tug of war. A French colony prior to the onset of W.W.II, the French returned to Vietnam following Japan's surrender. China's lapse into communism, and the subsequent US policy against communist expansion, would eventually force the US and communist North Vietnam into conflict. The war that followed would span a decade and would affect the US military for years to follow. Table 3 lists some of the key events surrounding the war in Vietnam.<sup>92</sup>

**Table 3. Events preceding the fall of South Vietnam**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Description of the Event</b>
1949	Chinese Nationalists collapse. US policy firmly directed toward blocking further Communist expansion.
1954	Dien Bien Phu Falls. Almost 1 million refugees flow from North to South. The communist Vietminh regime formally takes control of Hanoi and North Vietnam.
February 1955	US takes over responsibility for training South Vietnamese forces from French.
1965	Three US Division equivalents ordered into ground combat.
2 March 1965 - 31 October 1968	Rolling Thunder

**Table 3 (cont.). Events preceding the fall of South Vietnam**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Description of the Event</b>
1968	Tet Offensive
February 1969	Tet Truce signed
1969	Vietnamization begins
30 March 1972	Easter Offensive begins
10 May 1972 - 23 October 1972	Linebacker I
18-29 December 1972	Linebacker II
January 1973	Paris accords signed
1973	US ground troops depart Vietnam
1975	North Vietnam attacks and reunifies nation

### **North Vietnam’s Strategy**

The strategy employed by the North Vietnamese closely resembled Mao’s doctrine of “Revolutionary Warfare.”<sup>93</sup> British insurgency expert Robert Thompson states:

Revolutionary war was designed both to be immune to the application of conventional military power and, unlike guerrilla or resistance campaigns in support of conventional armies, to be decisive on its own. It is total war in that it involves everyone within the threatened country and embraces every aspect of human endeavor and thought—military, political, economic, social, and psychological. It is also total in the sense of Mao Tse-tung’s dictum that there should be no concern for “stupid scruples about benevolence, righteousness and morality in war.”<sup>94</sup>

Mao viewed Revolutionary War as a two-part strategy of guerrilla tactics and political activity.<sup>95</sup> This political activity is subdivided into three distinct phases. The first phase is the defensive or organizational phase. During this phase the revolutionaries establish a political infrastructure within the victim’s population. This period is marked by political propaganda to win popular support while terrorism is used to intimidate the government and to “coax” those who remain reluctant to join the cause.

The second phase is marked by guerrilla warfare. This begins in relatively remote areas with low intensity attacks against government holdings. These at-

tacks then begin to grow more potent as the insurgents begin to strengthen the political and military machinery that they developed in phase one. In other words, the insurgents consolidate and increase strength in the areas that most embrace their cause.

In the third phase—the conventional offensive—the insurgency becomes a full-blown civil war. The guerrillas are now converted into conventional war-fighters as the insurgency actively seeks confrontation with the enemy's most capable units.<sup>96</sup> In this final stage the insurgents oust the government and take charge of the nation.

Although this type of warfare is often viewed as serial—progressing from guerrilla to conventional war—it is actually quite flexible. The insurgents can move about quite freely from one stage to another. North Vietnam demonstrated the ability to orchestrate this cyclical pattern throughout the war.<sup>97</sup>

The US used a multitude of tactics and tools to counter this strategy during the Vietnam War. Two of the most discussed, described, and debated—at least by the USAF—are the Linebacker and Rolling Thunder air campaigns. While both obviously utilized airpower, these campaigns were quite different and had significantly different results.

### **Denial and Rolling Thunder**

Pape views Rolling Thunder largely as a type of civilian punishment campaign designed to increase the costs and risks to civilians in the North; as such, he believes that this campaign was destined to fail. Pape describes the tactics of the first phase of Rolling Thunder, the period encompassing spring and summer 1965, as a lenient Schelling strategy.<sup>98</sup> The design of this part of the campaign elevated risk to the industrial capacity of the North by a gradual and methodical escalation of bombing. This escalation was as much an increase in bomb tonnage and the number of sorties flown as a systematic movement of the target areas further North toward major industrial centers. This escalation, closely tied to diplomatic efforts, at least in theory, was designed to coerce the North into concessions by placing their industrial centers at risk.<sup>99</sup> While Pape believes that this



phase was faithful to Schelling's precepts, he states that the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) could not be coerced by this type of strategy. He reasons that since their desires for the territory in the South were so strong, and their industrial capacity so small, this strategy could not create risks great enough to change the "North's political calculus."<sup>100</sup>

Pape describes the second phase of Rolling Thunder, the period of summer 1965 through the winter of 1966, as a period dominated by an interdiction strategy.<sup>101</sup> This interdiction campaign was designed to disrupt the flow of supplies and men from the North into South Vietnam. This effort failed because of the nature of the war. The war during this period was largely a guerrilla war, as such the required flow of supplies and men was marginal.<sup>102</sup> Because of the limited amount of men and supplies required from the North, traffic on the supply routes was sporadic at best. This sporadic movement, the numerous routes available, and the ability of the North to conceal their movements under jungle canopy or the dark of night, made interdiction extremely difficult.

Pape believes that the third phase of Rolling Thunder, from spring through fall 1967, involved a Douhetian strategy.<sup>103</sup> The strategy during this part of the campaign provided a "sharp knock" on the remaining industrial targets in the North. This strategy also failed because of the inability of conventional ordnance to provide the level of punishment required to weaken North Vietnam's desire for territory.

Because of the popular backlash against the war in the United States, the final phase of Rolling Thunder was a de-escalation. This was, however, a geographic de-escalation only. Because of bombing restrictions in the North, more sorties were actually available for interdiction missions. These interdiction missions were again ineffective because of the limited amount of supplies and personnel that had to flow into the South for the guerrilla war. Pape acknowledges that in this situation his denial model is impotent, as are the Douhet and Schelling models.<sup>104</sup> Rolling Thunder, in Pape's mind, was destined to fail because during the period of Rolling Thunder's execution, the North was immune to coercion.<sup>105</sup> He writes:

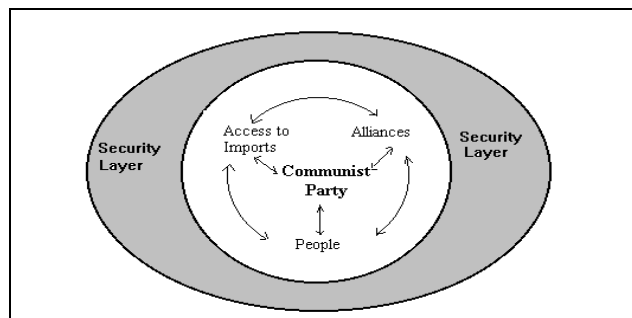
It seems clear that Rolling Thunder failed not because coercive strategies were poorly executed but for the fundamental reason that during the Johnson years North Vietnam was largely immune to conventional coercion.<sup>106</sup>

## TNS and Rolling Thunder

Pape's assertion that Rolling Thunder was not effective in generating coercion is essentially correct, but his reasoning in making this statement is flawed. The North may have been susceptible to coercion, but the methods that the US used were not well matched to the situation at hand. This mismatch occurred because the US had first failed to understand what made the North Vietnamese government feel secure, and how the North's internal national mechanism worked to maintain its security. This understanding would be required if the US was to develop an effective campaign strategy to coerce the North.

As in the case of Japan's surrender, as outlined in Chapter 3, the internal mechanism in the DRV differed from the generic internal national mechanism that I presented earlier. Figure 6 depicts the TNS model for the DRV from 1964 to 1972. This model depicts the increased role of the Communist Party, and the critical role of the people, imports, and allies.

The communist party had come to dominate the national mechanism of the North. The people, while required to carry on the war effort, were little more than pawns of the party as communist and nationalist fervor swept the nation. The North, lacking industrial capability, was dependent on allies and the imports that these allies brought to the under-developed nation.



**Figure 6. DRV TNS Model 1964 thru 1972**

Rolling Thunder failed to provide the coercive leverage that the Johnson Administration had hoped for, not because the North was invulnerable as Pape argues, but rather because it failed to be true to the concepts of TNS. Specifically, for Rolling Thunder to

have been effective, the North's security had to be threatened. To effectively threaten the DRV's security, the US would have needed to understand *what* made the North feel secure in the first place, and how much the North wanted to keep what the US was after. If the US could have identified what made the DRV feel secure, then they could determine how to best erode this security. The level of erosion would have to be so significant that the DRV would be willing to accede to US demands. As the North's security was being eroded to this level, the US would have had to ensure that the components of the enemy's internal national mechanism were made incapable of reinforcing their security. This could have been done by either direct military attack or through diplomatic or other means. These attacks, whether diplomatic or military, would have needed to occur in rapid succession against all viable components of the North's national mechanism. In this way the US could have, as it did against Japan in 1945, developed a sense of helplessness as all avenues available to the government were cut-off. The object would be to leave the DRV with a choice between accepting US demands or suffering from unacceptable security erosion.

Rolling Thunder did little if any of this. First, the US failed to identify what made the DRV feel secure. Without first identifying what made the North feel secure, it would have been by coincidence alone that Rolling Thunder would have affected this sense of security. This is not to say that Rolling Thunder did not damage the North—it did—but this damage had little if any impact on the DRV's sense of security.<sup>107</sup> In fact, not only did Rolling Thunder fail to effectively threaten the North, North Vietnamese officials did not even equate Rolling Thunder with American *resolve* to prevent a takeover of the South, but rather viewed Rolling Thunder as a limited effort to improve the US bargaining position.<sup>108</sup> Rolling Thunder also failed to effectively target the North's national mechanism because direct attack on the people, government, and the imports needed for war were in large measure, off limits.<sup>109</sup> Additionally, bombing pauses during the campaign made it difficult, if not impossible, for the US to effectively generate the sensation of time compression in the North's government.<sup>110</sup>

If the air campaign had eroded the North's security, or disabled the North's ability to rebuild its security, then the DRV might have been coerced. This is precisely what

happened during Linebacker. Events leading up to Linebacker I eroded the North's security while the Linebacker air campaign nullified the DRV's ability to effectively use its military to restore this security loss. However, before we discuss Linebacker in the context of TNS, let us examine what Pape has to say about this campaign.

### **Denial and Linebacker**

While Pape views Rolling Thunder as a failure, he believes that Linebacker was a coercive success. He asserts that the reason for this success was that the nature of the war itself had changed. With the start of the DRV's 1972 conventional offensive (the Easter Offensive), Hanoi had transformed the war from guerrilla combat, whose forces needed little if any external re-supply, into a conventional mechanized war where logistics were now critical and hence susceptible to interdiction.<sup>111</sup>

Pape believes that Linebacker I's successes in interdicting and destroying the DRV's combat material was the cause of coercion that compelled the Hanoi government to accept US terms for peace. Pape also argues that Linebacker I was a much larger coercive success than its successor Linebacker II.<sup>112</sup>

Pape asserts that Linebacker II only provided the minimal level of coercive power required to force the DRV to accept the cosmetic changes in the peace plan demanded by the South Vietnamese. He does grant, however, that Linebacker II did force the DRV to adhere to the deal that they had previously made. But this was all that Pape believes Linebacker II could do. Pape states that Linebacker II could not have forced the DRV into any substantially greater concessions, it was merely able to insure compliance with the agreement that had already been made.<sup>113</sup>

### **TNS and Linebacker**

Pape is correct in his assertion that Linebacker I produced some coercive effect. He is wrong, however, in his assertion that the sole, or even the most important, cause of coercion during Linebacker I was the vulnerability of the DRV's military strategy. It was not this military vulnerability that caused coercion but rather a series of events, working in concert that made coercion possible. Before I discuss what I believe are the true

mechanisms behind Linebacker's coercion, let me first address how the situation in Vietnam had changed since the end of Rolling Thunder.

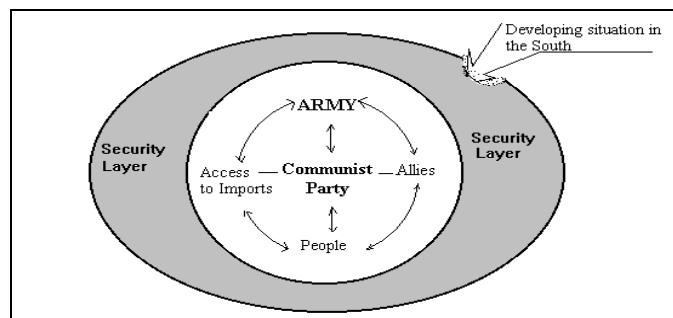
By 1972, Vietnamization was well underway. Vietnamization was the process by which the South Vietnamese were gradually taking on more responsibility for fighting the war. Eventually, the South had taken on a majority of the ground combat functions as the US began reducing troop strength. Through Vietnamization, the South Vietnamese army had become a much more potent fighting force. This was not just the result of US training and equipment, but also in large measure due to the passage of time. The years that passed had allowed the South Vietnamese to develop a professional officer cadre, leadership had historically been provided by the French and then the Americans. While this force was better prepared and led than ever before, it was still no match for the DRV's forces. Because of the relative power of the North, South Vietnam remained heavily dependent on US airpower.<sup>114</sup>

South Vietnam's government, while still corrupt, was becoming more legitimate. Support for the communists began to drop in the South. One province reported that less than 6 percent of the population now supported the North's cause as compared to 75 percent that had supported it earlier.<sup>115</sup>

The situation that had developed in the South had begun to jeopardize the national security of the North.<sup>116</sup> As the DRV watched the South become stronger, they also understood that not only would it become more difficult to reunify the nation under communist rule, but that their efforts at re-unifying the nation might indeed fail altogether.<sup>117</sup> The DRV realized that the increases in combat capability that resulted from Vietnamization, the South's growing economy, and the growing control that the South's government had over the territory were a threat to the North.<sup>118</sup> This threat caused an unacceptable erosion to the North's security layer.

When the government of the North turned to its national mechanism, it now had a limited number of options to choose from to reinforce its security (see figure 7). The people were of little value as the nation was already fully mobilized. The government could get little more from the people. The DRV could not hope for diplomatic intervention from its allies as the Americans had made great diplomatic inroads with the Soviets

and the PRC.<sup>119</sup> Consequently, North Vietnam could not count on its allies to intervene so there was no chance for diplomacy to help reinforce the nation's security. Because of the nation's lack of industrial capacity and its reliance on imports, the economy would not be able to help rebuild security. The only viable tool remaining in the North's national mechanism was the military. This forced the DRV to begin a conventional offensive. In doing this, the North hoped to defeat the South before they became too powerful.<sup>120</sup> If the North could defeat the South, this unacceptable erosion to the North's security would obviously cease. However, this conventional ground campaign was extremely vulnerable to air attack.<sup>121</sup>



**Figure 7. TNS Model During Linebacker Campaigns**

Because of this, airpower was able to destroy much of the DRV's combat power and halt the offensive.<sup>122</sup> With the defeat of the North's military, the last viable component of the national mechanism had been rendered impotent. The North now had to accept the US peace proposal.

These demands were much easier to accept than before as the stakes had been reduced. During the Rolling Thunder campaign, the US had demanded that a cease fire be established, all DRV troops return to the North, and that the sovereignty and independence of the South be maintained.<sup>123</sup> During Linebacker, on the other hand, President Nixon simply demanded a cease-fire in place, allowing DRV troops to remain in the South, and the return of US POW's.<sup>124</sup>

This deal, however, was not satisfactory to South Vietnam's President, Nguyen Van Thieu. Thieu demanded changes to the accords that the North Vietnamese were not willing to accept.<sup>125</sup> Soon the US and North Vietnam were once more at the negotiating

table attempting to reach an agreement that would address some of Thieu's concerns. The North, however, was not negotiating in good faith but was rather using the negotiations as a means to stall for time in hopes that the US Congress would stop funding the war. If the funding stopped the North believed that the US would be forced to withdraw.

Linebacker II was designed to provide the pressure needed to break the stalemate in negotiations with the North. President Nixon believed that the time had come to apply military force and that this force would come through airpower.<sup>126</sup> The plan that eventually emerged called for large-scale B-52 strikes north of the 20th parallel. These strikes would target North Vietnam's will to continue the war. Nixon reflected "only the strongest action would have any effect in convincing Hanoi that negotiating a fair settlement with us was a better option for them than continuing the war."<sup>127</sup> It did this, and more. Rear Admiral James B. Stockdale—who had been a prisoner in North Vietnam for more than seven years—contrasted Linebacker II with prior bombing campaigns. He said:

A totally contrasting atmosphere swept the city on that December night in 1972 when the raids didn't last ten minutes but went on and on—when the B-52 columns rolled in, and the big bombs impacted and kept on impacting in the distance—when the ground shook and the plaster fell from the ceiling, and the prisoners cheered wildly, and the guards cowered in the lee of the walls, cheeks so ashen you could detect it even from the light of the fiery sky. Some of this light was from burning B-52s (I'm told that the losses were almost as predicted—low, but the important fact was that they kept coming). This was commitment. This was victory for the United States and doomsday for North Vietnam, and we knew it and they knew it. By day, interrogators and guards would inquire about our needs solicitously. The streets were silent. The center of Hanoi was dead—even though like our prisons, thousands of yards from the drop zones. We knew the bombers knew where we were, and felt not only ecstatically happy, but confident. The Vietnamese didn't. Night after night the planes kept coming in—and night after night the SAM's streaking through the sky were fewer and fewer . . . The shock was there—the commitment was there—and the enemy's will was broken. You could sense it in every Vietnamese face. They knew they lived through last night, but they also knew that if our forces moved their bomb line over a few thousand yards they wouldn't live through tonight. Our planes were transmitting the message of the ultimate futility of further resistance. That is what war is all about.<sup>128</sup>

Unlike Pape, I believe that Linebacker II provided a great deal of coercive leverage. This is because Linebacker II demonstrated that the North's security was seriously jeopardized. The North had been cut off from its source of war supplies and the depletion of its surface to air missile (SAM) stocks had resulted in a situation where the US could strike when and where it pleased and the North was incapable of resisting. This sensation of vulnerability created an additional security erosion above that caused by the growing strength of the South. This increase in security erosion came at a time after the North's military advance had been halted and their army defeated. The North now had absolutely nothing left in its national mechanism with which to rebuild its security. Linebacker II left the North extremely vulnerable to coercion.

### **Denial and TNS in the War in Vietnam**

There are many differences between Pape's denial theory and TNS in relation to the war in Vietnam. One of the most significant differences is that, just in the case of the surrender of Japan following W.W.II, Pape takes a much more simplistic view of the causes of coercion. In the coercion generated by Linebacker, Pape attempts to discover the single cause, or the single most important cause of coercive leverage. Again, just as in the study of Japan, coercion may not be caused by a single action but rather by a combination of events and how these events generate the perception of deteriorating national security that can not be repaired. Pape states that denial is the defeat of the adversary's military strategy and that this defeat provides effective coercive leverage.<sup>129</sup> If Pape is correct, then the DRV would have been susceptible to coercion when the Tet Offensive was defeated.

In the 1968 Tet Offensive, Hanoi lost 30 percent of its top-ranking junior officers. The North's casualties as a result of Tet exceeded half a million men.<sup>130</sup> This defeat was so significant that it broke the Vietcong as a military threat and degraded the North Vietnamese army so significantly that they would not recover for two years.<sup>131</sup> Tet was obviously a significant defeat of North Vietnam's military strategy. Yet as significant as this defeat was, there was no coercion. All that followed Tet was a return to the guerrilla war



as the North once more built up forces for a future conventional assault. Pape's denial theory fails to explain the coercive void following Tet.

In the case of Linebacker I it was not the denial of the DRV's military strategy that caused coercion as Pape asserts. Rather, coercion was generated as a result of the erosion of the DRV's sense of security and their inability to repair it. This initial erosion came not as a result of Linebacker, but rather as a result of South Vietnamese actions. When this erosion occurred, the North was forced to go to its national mechanism in attempts to find some way to reinforce its eroding security. Because of the overtaxing of its population and the diplomatic isolation caused by the Americans, it was forced to use the military instrument as the only remaining viable part of their national mechanism. Linebacker I merely negated the DRV's military ability to repair its damaged security layer. Once the military was defeated, the DRV had no means available to rebuild its security to an acceptable level and consequently it was susceptible to coercion.

Linebacker II, on the other hand, caused an additional erosion to the North's security layer. This erosion happened as a result of the North's inability to protect itself from US air attack at a time when these attacks were being escalated. This erosion occurred when the North's military—the sole remaining viable component of its national mechanism—had already been defeated. Linebacker II could have generated coercive leverage that far outweighed the concessions that the US demanded.

Because of denial's failure to explain why the US and South Vietnamese victory in the Tet Offensive did not generate coercion, denial is of limited value. This is the same fundamental weakness that denial exhibited in the case for coercion in Japan. Namely, denial fails to adequately explain *which* military strategy one has to defeat to generate effective coercion.

Now that we have examined coercion during large scale armed conflict and limited war, what of the coercion that exists outside of war. This is the domain of coercion outside that described by Pape's denial theory. To determine if denial proves valid in these cases, we will examine one instance of coercion in a truly limited conflict. This is the coercion that resulted from Operation El Dorado Canyon, the 1986 US airstrike against Libya.

## Notes

<sup>89</sup> The differing goals that I mention here relate to both the US and Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV-North Vietnam) goals. While goals did change for both sides of this conflict during the course of the war, the United States exhibited the greatest shift in goals. This change in US desires and the impact these changes had on the ability of one nation's attempts to coerce the other will be more fully discussed later in this chapter.

<sup>90</sup> From the DRV's perspective the war did have many characteristics of Mao's "peoples war." The final conventional assault however was delayed until 1975 when the United States was no longer involved in the conflict.

<sup>91</sup> Total war in this context refers to W.W.II and how many have described that war as at least an approximation of the concept of total war as explained by Carl von Clausewitz in *On War*.

<sup>92</sup> This chapter is not designed to provide an all inclusive history of US involvement in Vietnam. It is however designed to provide a discussion of coercion in this conflict. I believe that before we can explore *why* events happened we must first understand *what* events happened. It is for the purpose of establishing this type of a chronology that I have included this table.

<sup>93</sup> Douglas Pike, *Viet Cong* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1966)

<sup>94</sup> Robert Thompson, "Revolutionary War in Southeast Asia", *Orbis* (Fall 1975), p. 958.

<sup>95</sup> Richard Shultz, "Coercive Force and Military Strategy: Deterrence Logic and the Cost-Benefit Model of Counterinsurgency Warfare", *Western Political Quarterly* (December 1979), pp. 444-446.

<sup>96</sup> *Lessons From an Unconventional War: Reassessing US Strategies for Future Conflict*, ed Richard A. Hunt and Richard A. Shultz, Jr. (New York: Pergamon Press, 1982), p. 51.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Pape, p. 182.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., pp. 180-185.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., p. 189.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., p. 183.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., p. 191.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., p. 183.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., p. 195.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>107</sup> Wallace J. Thies, *When Governments Collide: Coercion and Diplomacy in the Vietnam Conflict, 1964-1968*, (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1980), p. 395.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> Clodfelter, pp. 76-83.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., p.120.

<sup>111</sup> Pape, pp. 195-210.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., pp. 174-210.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., p. 205.

## Notes

<sup>114</sup> Ulysses S. Grant Sharp, *Strategy for Defeat: Vietnam in Retrospect* (San Rafael, CA: Presidio Press, 1978), pp. 220-250.

<sup>115</sup> Timothy J. Lomperis, *The War Everyone Lost and Won: America's Intervention in Vietnam's Twin Struggles* (Baton Rouge, LA: LSU Press, 1984), pp. 80-81.

<sup>116</sup> Sharp, p. 244. In his discussion on this topic Admiral Sharp states that the Vietnamization program was a significant threat to the DRV.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 224.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 241. President Nixon also viewed the Easter Offensive as a desperate measure by the DRV to forestall Vietnamization.

<sup>121</sup> Clodfelter, pp. 167-174.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 4-12.

<sup>124</sup> Snepp, Frank, *Decent Interval: An Insider's Account of Saigon's Indecent End Told by the CIA's Chief Strategy Analyst in Vietnam* (New York: Random House, 1977) pp. 1-91.

<sup>125</sup> Clodfelter, p. 177.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 182.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>128</sup> Sharp, p. 258.

<sup>129</sup> Snepp, chapter two.

<sup>130</sup> Nguyen Cao Ky, *How We Lost The Vietnam War* (New York: Stien and Day, 1978), pp.162-163. This half million men also accounts for desertions as well as combat casualties.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*

## Chapter 5

### **Military Coercion Outside of War: Operation El Dorado Canyon**

*Coercive diplomacy . . . offers an alternative to reliance on military action. It seeks to persuade an opponent to cease aggression rather than to bludgeon him into stopping. In contrast to the blunt use of force to repel an adversary . . . If force is used in coercive diplomacy, it takes the form of an exemplary or symbolic use of limited military action to help persuade the opponent to back down.*

Alexander L. George, *The Limits  
of Coercive Diplomacy*

Having examined the coercive mechanism in both total war and limited war, we can now examine military coercion outside of warfare.<sup>132</sup> The realm of coercion outside of war differs from the other cases that we have previously examined. The one major difference is that coercion during war generally attempts to get the adversary to concede on major issues such as surrender or the return of territory. Concessions of this magnitude could require significant force. On the other hand, coercion outside of war generally demands concessions of less relative value, and these less valuable concessions should require less relative force.<sup>133</sup>

While the stakes and the force requirements may differ, there remain some striking commonalities about coercion across the spectrum of conflict. The first is that regardless of the level of conflict, coercion seeks a change in the adversary's behavior. Second, the threat of military action provides the force that generates this change. And third, these demands are made of a national actor with some definable decision making mechanism. Because of these similarities it would stand to reason that there may be a common mechanism through which coercion works both within and outside of warfare.

The study of Operation El Dorado Canyon, the 1986 US bombing raid on Libya, may provide us with the necessary insights to determine if there is a common mechanism applicable across the spectrum of conflict, and if denial or targeting national security (TNS) adequately describes this mechanism.

To better understand Operation El Dorado Canyon and the impact it had on Libya's leadership we must first know something of the government and contemporary history of this nation. We must also understand Libya's leader Colonel Muammar al-Qaddafi. Qaddafi's dominance over both Libya's internal and foreign policies is so complete that to a considerable degree to understand Qaddafi is to understand Libya.<sup>134</sup> Once we have established a historical framework and analyzed the events that led to El Dorado Canyon, we will define Qaddafi's strategy and what the US hoped to accomplish with its air strike. Next we will examine Pape's arguments as he presents them in *Bombing to Win* and examine how Pape views the US attack on Libya, the attack's impact on Qaddafi's strategy, and Pape's perceptions of El Dorado Canyon's success. We will then examine the air strikes in the context of TNS and attempt to determine if the TNS model adequately describes the events and their results. Comparing these two models in this fashion will allow us to determine if either adequately describes El Dorado Canyon's outcome.

## **Contemporary Libyan History**

At the turn of the 20th century, Libya was an administrative sub-unit of the Ottoman Empire. In 1911 Italy invaded Libya and met with fierce Libyan resistance. After twenty years of fighting and the deaths of a large portion of its population, Libya finally succumbed to Italian rule.<sup>135</sup> Italy's defeat in World War Two ended Italian colonization and stemmed the flow of Italian settlers. For the next eight years the British and French ruled Libya. The Italian conquest of Libya, and subsequent fighting by European armies on Libyan soil, left millions of unexploded land mines in their wake. These mines continued to wreak havoc on the people in the years to follow, this and the memories of European domination planted the seeds for what would become powerful anti-Western sentiment.<sup>136</sup>

Libya became an independent monarchy in 1951. King Idris, a moderate by Middle Eastern standards of the time, made great economic strides that significantly enhanced the standard of living throughout the nation. Despite this, however, Idris had fallen out of favor with a segment of the population.<sup>137</sup> By the 1960s, unrest over British and US bases on Libyan soil and massive government corruption caused many to believe that Idris would soon fall in a coup d'état.<sup>138</sup>

On September 1, 1969, Muammar al-Qaddafi, a 27 year-old captain in the Libyan army, led a coup that overthrew Idris. Following the coup, Qaddafi began to purge the military and solidified his rule by establishing the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC). The RCC was an organization made up of Qaddafi's friends and fellow conspirators, which Qaddafi claimed to be the only true representative of the Libyan people.<sup>139</sup> Qaddafi and his new regime began to issue militant Arab nationalist rhetoric dealing with internal issues such as foreign basing rights and oil profits as well as international issues such as the status of Israel and support for Palestinian causes.<sup>140</sup> With the removal of British and US bases by 1970, Qaddafi began to become a more dominant figure both within Libya and in the larger Arab world. His rise to prominence at home was sparked by a carefully planned public relations campaign and by the success of the regime's economic programs.

On the economic front, Qaddafi's government accomplished two very important feats. The first was the concessions he won from international oil firms over the issues of revenue and cost sharing. The second was economic redistribution made possible by these increases in oil revenue. Qaddafi was quickly becoming a hero in the eyes of his nation, and in the eyes of the desperate Islamic masses within other Arab nations.<sup>141</sup> As his stature in the Arab world increased, Qaddafi became increasingly outspoken about his hatred of the "Imperialists". His radical statements and actions would put Libya and the United States on a collision course.

### **Libya as a Rogue State**

The following chronology outlines the events that preceded the US air strikes against Libya:<sup>142</sup>

**June 11, 1972.** In his annual speech commemorating the 2nd anniversary of the American evacuation of Wheelus Field in Tripoli, Qaddafi declared “Britain and the United States will pay dearly for the wrongs and perfidy they inflicted on us” and announced the intention to “fight Britain and the United States on their own lands.” Furthermore, Qaddafi stated that any Arab who so desired could volunteer for Palestinian terrorist groups at any Libyan embassy throughout the world and Libya would insure that they were trained.<sup>143</sup>

**1976.** Qaddafi states: “Those bombs which are convulsing Britain and breaking its spirit are the bombs of the Libyan people. We have sent them to the Irish revolutionaries so that the British will pay for their past deeds.”

**Mid-1980.** David D. Newsome, the United States Under Secretary for Political Affairs, explains in testimony before Congress how Qaddafi has publicly called for attacks on American, Egyptian, and Israeli targets in the Middle East.

**August 1981.** The US Sixth Fleet initiated well publicized maneuvers in the Gulf of Sidra. The stated intent of these exercises was for US missile training and as a means to challenge Libya’s nautical claims. Confrontation soon ensued resulting in the shootdown of two Libyan Su-22s. Qaddafi called for active Arab attacks against the US and threatened to attack NATO nuclear depots if the US ever again entered the Gulf.<sup>144</sup>

**June 11, 1984.** Qaddafi blames a coup attempt against him on United States and goes on to say, “We are capable of exporting terrorism to the heart of America. We are also capable of physical liquidation, destruction, and arson inside America . . . as for America which has exported terrorism to us, we will respond likewise.”

**September 1985.** Libya expels over thirty thousand Tunisian workers and ten thousand Egyptian workers, forcing many of them to leave their passports, money, and possessions behind. After harsh criticism appears in the Tunisian press, Qaddafi threatens military action. Libyan aircraft then violate Tunisian airspace, a Libyan diplomat smuggles 100 letter bombs addressed to journalists into Tunisia where several exploded wounding postal workers. Libya freezes nearly \$10 million in Tunisian assets.

**November 23, 1985.** Hijacking of an Egyptair airplane on a Cairo-to-Athens flight by Abu Nidal terrorists.<sup>145</sup> The airplane is forced to land in Malta. Hijackers singled out and killed American and Israeli women.<sup>146</sup>

**December 27, 1985.** Near simultaneous attacks occur at the Rome and Vienna airports. The Israeli El Al ticket counters are attacked at both air-

ports, in Rome the TWA counter is also targeted. The grenade and AK-47 attack results in the death of 20 and the wounding of 110. Of the five Americans killed, one was an eleven year old girl who was blasted to her knees then shot in the head. The Abu Nidal group claimed responsibility for this attack. This action enrages President Reagan and the American people.

**March 23, 1986.** US naval forces enter the Gulf of Sidra and cross the Libyan “Line of Death” to begin a series of naval maneuvers violating Libya’s self declared 150 NM defensive exclusion area. This operation resulted in the firing of numerous<sup>147</sup> Libyan SA-2 and SA-5 missiles as well as the launch of American HARMs. The HARMs were effective in disrupting the targeted radars. The US also destroyed two Libyan missile patrol boats and severely damaged a third.

**April 4, 1986.** United States intelligence agencies intercept a cable sent to Tripoli from the East Berlin’s Peoples Bureau (a Libyan sponsored terrorist organization) reading, “We have something planned that will make you happy. . . it will happen soon the bomb will blow, American soldiers will be hit.” Although US officials attempted to alert American soldiers in Berlin, they were 15 minutes too late because at 1:49 A.M. a bomb exploded at the La Belle discotheque killing two American soldiers and wounding 79 others,<sup>148</sup> along with 150 civilians.

### **Libya’s Strategy**

By now it was quite obvious that Qaddafi had embarked on an unconventional war—a war of terrorism—and little would stop him from achieving his objectives. While many view Qaddafi as a madman,<sup>149</sup> he has always had a definable agenda. This agenda has seven independent subcomponents that are in many ways complementary and mutually reinforcing. The first is his desire to preserve his regime and insure his survival as the leader of the nation and the Arab nationalist movement.<sup>150</sup> The second is to make once-forgotten Libya great again. The third is to fight for Islam. He vowed to use Libya’s oil wealth to fight the enemies of the faith. The fourth is promotion of Arab nationalism. He supports unification of all Arab states with him as their leader. The fifth is opposition to Israel. The sixth is “anti imperialism,” Qaddafi’s hatred for the West. His final motivation is his love of revolution and his determination to upset the international status quo.<sup>151</sup> While we may never know why Qaddafi finds these seven interests so important, we do know that without forces large enough to fight the nations he op-



posed in conventional combat, he chose instead to wage a war of terrorism.<sup>152</sup> Qaddafi's strategy was to finance, train, and sponsor international terrorists to punish the United States, Britain, and Israel. In doing this, Libya had become one of the world's leading sponsors of international terrorism.<sup>153</sup> The question that now emerged for the United States was what to do about it.

## **The US Response**

A number of factors influenced the American decision for a military response against Libya. The United States had already tried to use diplomatic and economic pressure to change Libya's behavior, but these efforts had little, if any, effect.<sup>154</sup> The La Belle discotheque bombing increased the American public's demands for stronger action against Libya. Despite these demands, Libya continued planning and executing terrorist acts against the United States and US interests worldwide.<sup>155</sup> Because of these factors, the Reagan Administration believed that it was time to strike a military blow against Libya and make it pay a price for what it was doing.<sup>156</sup> This military blow would come by way of a US airstrike code named Operation El Dorado Canyon.

On the evening of April 14, 1986, Washington initiated Operation El Dorado Canyon, a joint airstrike by the US Navy and Air Force. The strike package contained twenty-four F-111 fighter-bombers and five EF-111 jamming support aircraft from USAF bases in England. As the Air Force aircraft were launching, the US aircraft carriers *Coral Sea* and *America* made a dash from Sicily toward Libya to launch the naval counterpart of the strike force. The Air Force and naval air armada approached the Libyan coast at 2:00 A.M. Libyan time. With defense suppression from the Navy's EA-6Bs and F/A-18s as well as the Air Force EF-111s, the strike package entered Libyan airspace.<sup>157</sup>

The airstrike hit five preplanned targets. Nine F-111s carrying four 2000-pound bombs each targeted the Bab al-Aziziyya compound, one of Qaddafi's command and control centers. Because of numerous problems ranging from equipment malfunction to crew error, only two of the F-111s actually released their bombs on Bab al-Aziziyya. While the bombing failed to completely destroy any of the buildings in the compound, the damage was still quite impressive.<sup>158</sup>

Three F-111s targeted Libya's naval commando training center in the area of Sidi Bilal, fifteen miles west of Tripoli with twelve 2000-pound laser-guided bombs. Despite difficulties caused by smoke from the lead aircraft's bomb blasts, the training complex and three adjacent military targets sustained direct hits.<sup>159</sup>

Of the six F-111s targeted against the military ramp of Tripoli airport, five each dropped their twelve 500-pound Snakeye bombs, destroying two Soviet-made Il-76 transport aircraft and severely damaging a third.<sup>160</sup> This attack also severely damaged several buildings and numerous Libyan helicopters.<sup>161</sup>

Navy A-6s struck the Jamahiriyah Barracks in Benghazi. Planners believed this barracks was an alternate terrorist command and control center and provided housing for Qaddafi's palace guard. Although originally designated to be attacked by seven aircraft, one A-6 aborted onboard the carrier. The other six struck the target with 500-pound Snakeyes, destroying crated MiGs and collapsing half of the barracks.

The second Navy target was the Benina airfield east of Benghazi. With two of the intended strikers aborting, this combined cluster bomb and Snakeye attack destroyed a SA-5 site, numerous aircraft and helicopters, as well as several buildings.<sup>162</sup> By 2:13 A.M., less than 15 minutes after it began, the strike had ended.

### **Pape's Theory of Denial and El Dorado Canyon.**

Even though El Dorado Canyon was a retaliatory raid and not part of a conventional war fought for territorial interests, Pape provides his insight into this operation as an appendix to *Bombing to Win*.<sup>163</sup> Pape believes that his denial theory would have forecast El Dorado Canyon to be the "failure" that he states it was.<sup>164</sup> Pape asserts that this operation was a failure because Qaddafi did not abandon terrorism. Instead, he argues that Libya remained active in terrorism worldwide and that the airstrikes only forced Libya to better conceal its involvement.<sup>165</sup> Pape believes that El Dorado Canyon failed for two reasons. First, the vulnerability of Libya's citizenry to such an air attack was low. While there admittedly was risk to some individuals, the operation was not a threat to any major part of the population. All the raid did was threaten to increase the costs of terrorist activity because of the vulnerability of Libya's leadership and industry to further air

strikes.<sup>166</sup> Second, El Dorado Canyon failed to disrupt Libya's military strategy, the strategy of terrorism. Libya's ability to sponsor and train terrorists was relatively immune to air attack, because of the number and dispersion of bases and their relative ease of repair.<sup>167</sup> Because of these factors Pape believes that it would have been difficult to develop an effective denial campaign against Libya using air attack. From Pape's perspective, an effective attack on Libya's strategy would require many more sorties striking many more targets. In any case, the five targets struck during the El Dorado Canyon operation fell well short of the number needed to produce effective denial. Because of this poorly executed denial strategy and the failure of El Dorado Canyon to even place Libya's population at risk, the operation was, according to Pape, a failure.<sup>168</sup>

### **Problems With Pape's Assessment**

Unlike Pape, I believe that El Dorado Canyon was at least a limited coercive success. The reason for this is that Pape applies his own measures of success, discounting the operation's stated goals. Pape states that El Dorado Canyon was a failure because it failed to coerce Qaddafi into abandoning terrorism.<sup>169</sup> While he is correct in this assertion, this was not the Reagan Administration's stated goal. While the administration would have welcomed Libya's abandonment of terrorism, Washington had never envisioned that El Dorado Canyon could provide this kind of leverage.<sup>170</sup> Instead, it intended this attack to send a message to Qaddafi that the US would deal with terrorism with military action.<sup>171</sup> The overall goal of El Dorado Canyon was to provide a more limited level of deterrence against Libya's terrorism and to demonstrate to the American public that the administration was willing and able to strike back.<sup>172</sup> This strike, in Reagan's words, was designed to "make the world smaller for terrorists."<sup>173</sup> The goal for this attack was to provide a deterrent effect upon terrorists and upon Qaddafi himself by providing high visibility damage to the five selected targets.<sup>174</sup> President Reagan himself had "no illusions that [the] action [would] bring down the curtain on Qaddafi's reign of terror." He expressed only his hopes that this effort would "bring closer a safer and more secure world."<sup>175</sup> In many ways, the operation accomplished these goals. Although there was a rash of terrorist activity in the early autumn of 1986, these events were followed by a pe-

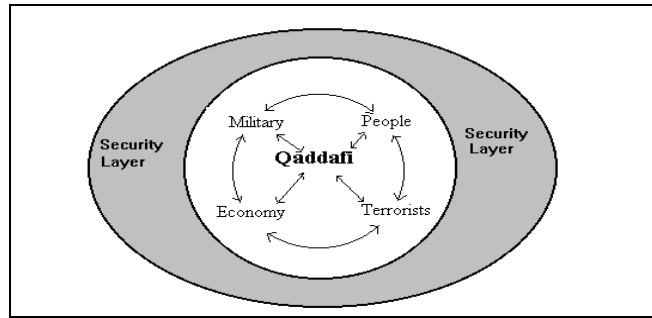
period of relative calm. The Abu Nidal group—notorious Libyan clients—lapsed into a period of inactivity that endured through 1987.<sup>176</sup> During 1987, international terrorist acts in western Europe actually declined by 28 percent. Middle Eastern terrorism in Europe dropped by 50 percent and international terrorist attacks on Americans declined by 25 percent. The reduction of the number of attacks on Americans resulted in a corresponding reduction in the number of American fatalities, down from 38 in 1985 to seven in 1987.<sup>177</sup>

### **TNS and El Dorado Canyon.**

One may better describe El Dorado Canyon's limited coercive success by examining this operation in relation to targeting Libyan national security. Libya is unique from our other case studies because the security that the nation required was in large part the security that Qaddafi himself required. This is because he dominated Libya's national mechanism.<sup>178</sup> Qaddafi created such a cult of personality, in fact, that he was the embodiment of Libya. A TNS model for Libya depicting the relative influence of the constituent members of the national mechanism appears in Figure 8. (The relative influence of the constituent components of Libya's national mechanism is depicted by the relative sizes in which they appear in this figure.)

Unlike the models for Japan and Vietnam, both of which were involved in large scale conventional wars, Libya's internal national mechanism was dominated by Qaddafi, not by the military. Qaddafi had come to dominate the nation's internal national mechanism as a result of many factors, but to a large extent because of the policies that he himself had designed and instituted. The most striking of these policies resulted from his "Third Universe Theory."<sup>179</sup> Qaddafi hailed his theory—a mixture of Islam, Bedouin culture, Marxism and Fascism—as "the new gospel" that would sweep the world.<sup>180</sup> This theory denounced capitalism, communism, man's law and a host of other concepts that embody national governance.<sup>181</sup> Instead Qaddafi advocated direct citizen participation in the government through small congresses and committees. What resulted was not a state governed by the masses but rather governmental chaos with Qaddafi the only leader of

any import, thus Qaddafi had actually devised a method to make himself more dominant yet.<sup>182</sup>



**Figure 8. TNS model of Libya on 14 April 1986**

Despite his consolidation of power under these Green Book policies, Qaddafi's consolidation efforts had also increased his vulnerability. The strict control he had placed on private ownership of property<sup>183</sup> jeopardized what remained of the economic elite.<sup>184</sup> The result was that his regime, plagued since its birth by coup attempts,<sup>185</sup> had become yet more unstable as the dissatisfaction of the educated and propertied continued to increase.<sup>186</sup>

Qaddafi also found the lack of revolutionary spirit among the Libyan people to be especially worrisome. Despite his rhetoric and the programs he instituted, he failed to inspire the conservative Libyan masses to fully embrace his philosophy of revolution and assume the role he had defined for them.<sup>187</sup> This lack of revolutionary fervor and growing discontent among the population led to more tyrannical rule as he attempted to force the population to act according to his demands. In 1977, he instituted "revolutionary committees" in an attempt to reign in the population.<sup>188</sup> These were groups of young revolutionary-minded men who spied on the populace and corrected their behavior to insure that few went astray. Given significant power, these groups were charged with all manners of civil concerns from arbitrating property disputes to executing opponents of the regime.<sup>189</sup>

Not only did Qaddafi have trouble with the population and the elite, he also feared his military, which had long been dissatisfied with his leadership. This dissatisfaction stemmed from the military incursions into Chad and Uganda.<sup>190</sup> While these wars resulted in high Libyan casualties, many in the army believed these incursions were not

borne of military necessity but rather because of Qaddafi's political aspirations. Qaddafi also distrusted his army and advocated abolishing it in favor of a civilian militia. The military's dissatisfaction with Qaddafi manifested itself in a series of mutinies, coup attempts, and attempted assassinations.<sup>191</sup> The distrust Qaddafi had for many within the military had forced him to rely for his safety on members of his own tribe and 200 East German security experts.<sup>192</sup>

By the mid 1980s Qaddafi was isolated. Instead of standing as the leader of the revolution, he was reduced to living behind walls, protecting himself with bodyguards and tanks and changing locations nightly. The extent of his fears is demonstrated by his habit of employing decoy convoys to mask his movements, wearing bulletproof vests even while at home, and employing food tasters to ensure against poisoning.<sup>193</sup> Qaddafi's domination of Libya's national mechanism, and the resultant conflict that it caused, would prove costly when Libya's security became threatened.

### **El Dorado Canyon's Effect on Libyan Security**

As in the other cases that we have examined, El Dorado Canyon affected Libyan security through multiple, interrelated mechanisms. The first was the fear that the raid must have generated in Qaddafi when he realized that the United States, one of his avowed enemies, could strike with near impunity. Strike aircraft flew through an air defense system that had been touted as one of the most capable outside of the Soviet Union with only one loss.<sup>194</sup> The air raid had also targeted and destroyed a portion of one of his primary residences.<sup>195</sup> Many accounts placed Qaddafi at this compound during the raid. Although he was reportedly some 500 feet underground in a bunker, he would likely have still been shaken by the attack.<sup>196</sup>

Second, because of Qaddafi's poor relationship with his own military, the attacks made him more vulnerable. Following the airstrike, the military attempted to oust him.<sup>197</sup> These attempts were so serious that the Libyan air force had to bomb dissident troop columns before they could get to Tripoli and to Qaddafi.<sup>198</sup>

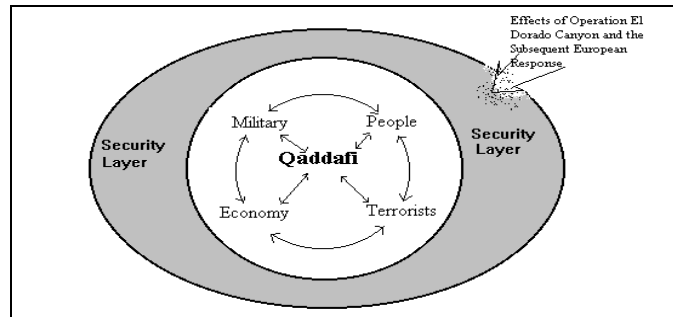
Third, the extent of the regime's control over the people also resulted in a backlash. Instead of a rally to arms, the El Dorado Canyon bombing raid caused many to flee

Tripoli, fearing further US reprisals.<sup>199</sup> To a great extent the city became a ghost town interrupted only by spontaneous outbreaks of street fighting.<sup>200</sup> Feeding this sense of panic was the absence of Qaddafi himself. He remained hidden for the next two days,<sup>201</sup> emerging from his hideout a noticeably subdued man.<sup>202</sup>

Finally, as if the nation's internal problems were not enough, Libya also began to suffer diplomatically and economically from increased pressure abroad. One of the first blows dealt to the regime came from the Soviet Union, when Mikhail Gorbachev privately expressed his displeasure with Qaddafi and advised him to avoid provoking any further US response.<sup>203</sup> The raid "galvanized" European support to punish the Libyans both economically and diplomatically.<sup>204</sup> European Community (EC) countries reduced Libyan diplomatic representation in their capitals and restrictions were placed on remaining Libyan diplomats. West Germany not only withdrew its ambassador from Tripoli but also expelled more than half of Libya's diplomats.<sup>205</sup> Spain, Ireland and Great Britain followed suit as Libyan student programs were canceled. Additionally Europe reduced its oil imports from Libya and also reduced other economic ties.<sup>206</sup> Figure 9 depicts this process in relation to the TNS model.

### **Libya's Options**

In the aftermath of Operation El Dorado Canyon, Libya had few options to rebuild its eroded security. As discussed in Chapter 2, once a nation senses an unacceptable erosion of its national security it has but two options. The first is to lower the level of security that it needs to remain comfortable. This, as I previously discussed is not easily done, for the level of security that a nation requires is dictated by perceptions built from history, geography, and a host of other factors, and these perceptions are difficult to change. The only other choices that Libya had were either to reinforce its security using its internal national mechanism or to bow to US demands.



**Figure 9. Libyan National Security and the Impact of El Dorado Canyon**

Let us examine each component within Libya’s national mechanism to determine which if any could have been effective in rebuilding Libyan security to an acceptable level. The military was not able to assist the nation in rebuilding its security. This is primarily because of two factors. The first is that Libyan military forces, while credible by Third World standards, were no match for the military power of the United States and the Libyan air defense system was incapable of stopping future attacks. The second factor is that even if Libya’s forces had been sufficient to aid in the reconstruction of the nation’s security layer, the loyalty of the military was questionable.

Terrorist groups were also unable to rebuild Libya’s sense of national security. The United States government had threatened to continue these attacks, and was willing to do so if terrorism continued, and far from alienating US allies, the raid seemed to strengthen their support for US policy.<sup>207</sup> Also, Libya’s ability to use terrorism as a tool to raise the cost to America by attacking its citizens abroad had been reduced by the actions of the Europeans.<sup>208</sup> The expulsion of large numbers of Libyans from Europe had reduced the terrorists’ ability to wage attacks. Because of this, it would be difficult for terrorism to punish the Americans enough to make them stop future attacks.<sup>209</sup>

The economy could not reinforce Libyan security. Qaddafi’s economic policies had ruined the Libyan economy except for the sale of oil and the imports that oil revenues enabled.<sup>210</sup> The reduction of Libyan oil imports by the EC reminded the Libyans that they were indeed an exporting nation that depended on trade for economic viability.

The Libyan people could not help Qaddafi in his quest to restore the nation’s security to a level that he could accept. The only short-term support that the people could have provided would have been their willingness to withstand future attacks. But, instead



of aiding the nation by helping shore up security, the people actually posed a problem. Because of their lack of revolutionary spirit, and the panic that ensued in the aftermath of the bombings, Qaddafi could not count on them to accept even this level of sacrifice, let alone more. He actually may have felt an obligation to protect the people from further attack, if for no other reason than to protect his regime from overthrow.

This brings us to Qaddafi himself. By his own actions, Qaddafi put himself in a position where he was the only component of Libya's national mechanism that could change the nation's security situation. In light of his desire to remain in power and the fact that he was becoming more diplomatically isolated, Qaddafi had two alternatives. The first was to redefine his own personal limits of security. I do not believe that he could do this, however. The situation in his nation had become so grave because of his eroding relationships with his people, the affluent that comprised the economy, the military, and the outside world, to accept less security may have resulted in chaos and an overthrow of his regime. His only other choice was to accede to US demands.

The TNS model suggests that Libya was susceptible to coercion in 1986. The nation became vulnerable when its security layer was eroded to a level that it could no longer accept, and the nation as a unitary actor realized that it could not repair this erosion. This inability to repair this eroded sense of security with any of the components of the national mechanism, and the reluctance or inability to accept a reduced level of security led Qaddafi to the only rational choice that he had. He reduced the level of overt support for terrorist activities to a level that would not invite further air attacks.

### **Differences Between Denial and TNS in Operation El Dorado Canyon**

There are many differences between how denial describes El Dorado Canyon and how TNS depicts this same operation. The first and most striking difference is that under denial, Pape views El Dorado Canyon a coercive failure, while under TNS this same operation is seen as at least a limited coercive success. Since I have already described how Pape and I came to these differing conclusions earlier in this chapter, I will not belabor the point here. There are, however, two additional critiques of Pape's denial theory that should be noted.

The first is that denial's validity is limited to large-scale conventional conflict.<sup>211</sup> Pape believes that these conflicts usually result from the desire for territory.<sup>212</sup> Given this, if a dispute arises between nations that has nothing to do with a desire to obtain territory as in the dispute between the US and Libya, then denial may not be a useful model. When someone desires territory, their strategy at some point in the conflict will result in the capture of that territory. Using denial theory if you can thwart the adversary's military strategy to gain this territory, then you have generated coercive leverage. In the case of an adversary that has no territorial demands, it may be much more difficult to determine the adversary's strategy. If you can not determine the adversary's strategy and then defeat it, you can not deny him. So without the capability to determine the adversary's strategy and the means to defeat it, you will not be able to generate coercion.

To generate coercion through TNS you do not have to necessarily determine the adversary's strategy or possess the means to defeat it. With TNS you do have to understand the adversary's internal national mechanism and be capable of generating or taking advantage of pressures on this mechanism. By eroding the adversary's security layer faster than it can reinforce it, you can generate coercion.

The second critique arises out of Pape's assertions of the failure of El Dorado Canyon: Pape's denial theory only defines coercion as a success or failure. In this case it became quite obvious that there is a wide range of possible outcomes, ranging from complete success to utter failure. Operation El Dorado Canyon fell somewhere within this spectrum well short of either of these extremes. Pape discounts limited success in cases that fall short of complete success, and by doing so I believe that he may have overlooked some possible mechanisms that may also produce effective coercion. This is because Pape only addresses coercion in war. In war there is a more clearly defined success criteria for coercion. The adversary either accepted your demands or they did not. In coercion outside of war, the response can be more subtle.

This case, as the others that we previously examined, illustrates how denial seeks a single cause to coercion, the defeat of the adversary's strategy. Without a defeat of the adversary's military strategy there can be no denial, and thus for Pape, no coercion. TNS on the other hand examines the specific constituents of the nation's internal national

mechanism and defines the relationship between these components. TNS then describes how coercive leverage is generated. This leverage arises from eroding a nation's sense of security by numerous events that generally occur in quick succession. These events must come at a time when either by your own efforts, or perhaps pure coincidence, the adversary can no longer effectively utilize the components of its national mechanism to shore up its eroded security to a level where he feels comfortable. When this happens the adversary has only one option, to accede to the demands of the coercer so that the pressure will be removed.

This is what happened in El Dorado Canyon. While denial fails to adequately describe what actually happened, TNS is a much more descriptive tool. Because of this, TNS appears to be a more useful model than denial when examining cases of coercion outside of combat.

#### Notes

<sup>132</sup> The term "total war" refers to the concept of total war as described by Carl von Clausewitz in *On War*. I use the term total war to describe W.W.II. I use this term only as a means to contrast the level of conflict between the war effort in W.W.II as compared to that of Vietnam (the previous case studies).

<sup>133</sup> Tim Zimmerman, *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy*, 2nd ed. Alexander George, ed. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1994), p. xi.

<sup>134</sup> John Wright, *Libya: A Modern History* (Baltimore, Md: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), p. 217.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 22-42. Libyan nationalists assert that this war resulted in the deaths of 750,000 Libyans, one-half of the nation's entire population.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>137</sup> Idris fell out of favor because of his soft stance on the issue of Westerners in Libya. Many believed that all Westerners should be expelled from the country and they did not believe that Idris would make this happen.

<sup>138</sup> Brian L. Davis, *Qaddafi, Terrorism, and the Origins of the U.S. Attack on Libya* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1990), pp. 67-68.

<sup>139</sup> Davis, p. 2.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 2-6.

<sup>142</sup> The following information is drawn from the appendix and Chapter 3 of Davis' *Qaddafi, Terrorism, and the Origins of the US Attack on Libya*.

<sup>143</sup> While not specifically stated, it was implied that Libya would provide this training.

<sup>144</sup> P. Edward Haley, *Qaddafi and the United States Since 1969* (New York: Praeger, 1984), pp. 226-227.

## Notes

<sup>145</sup> Abul Nidal, widely known as a “subcontractor of terrorism” had links to Libya. Nidal had moved part of his operation into Libya and had frequent, publicized meetings with Qaddafi. Davis, p. 68.

<sup>146</sup> Men were also killed but this marked the first time that women had been singled out for death by this terrorist group. The weapons used by these terrorists were traced to Libya.

<sup>147</sup> Somewhere between 6 and 12 surface to air missiles were fired, all missed.

<sup>148</sup> Davis, p. 116. One American soldier was killed instantly and the other, mortally wounded, died two months later. The total number wounded was 229, but of these wounded only 79 were US soldiers.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid., p. 21.

<sup>150</sup> Qaddafi was only the leader of Arab nationalism in his own eyes, yet to him this position was extremely important. Davis pp. 2/5/8/21.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid., pp. 150-168.

<sup>153</sup> Zimmerman, pp. 201-204.

<sup>154</sup> Davis, pp. 38-65.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid., p. 121.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid., p. 136. 48 antiradiation missiles were fired, destroying more than a dozen Libyan air defense sites.

<sup>158</sup> Davis, p. 136. Qaddafi left it unrepaired as an outdoor museum of the U.S. aggression.

<sup>159</sup> Davis, p. 137.

<sup>160</sup> One aircraft was forced to abort the mission before arriving at the airport because of a terrain following radar malfunction.

<sup>161</sup> Davis, p. 137.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid., p. 138.

<sup>163</sup> Robert A. Pape, *Bombing to Win* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), p. 355.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid. This actually made El Dorado Canyon a poor Risk strategy. Risk is a subset of punishment, a subset that Pape believes is a much less compelling coercer than punishment.

<sup>167</sup> Pape, p. 355.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid.

<sup>170</sup> Zimmerman, p. 216.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid., pp. 212-216.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid.

<sup>173</sup> “In the Dead of the Night”, *Time*, 28 Apr. 1986, p. 28.

<sup>174</sup> Davis, p. 120.

<sup>175</sup> Zimmerman, p. 216.

## Notes

<sup>176</sup> Davis, p. 166.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid.

<sup>178</sup> This domination comes from the fact that he has led the nation through tyranny for so long a period

<sup>179</sup> Davis, p. 4.

<sup>180</sup> David Blundy and Andrew Lycett, *Qaddafi and the Libyan Revolution* (Boston: Little Brown, 1987), p. 100.

<sup>181</sup> Davis, p. 4.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid.

<sup>183</sup> Private ownership of property was limited to the ownership of a family dwelling and \$34,000 in additional assets. Citizens were forbidden from owning property valued at more than this limit, furthermore the private ownership of income property was also forbidden.

<sup>184</sup> Wright, pp. 196, 264-265.

<sup>185</sup> Davis, pp. 2-6.

<sup>186</sup> One tabulation in November of 1985 counted 22 attempts to assassinate or overthrow Qaddafi. Davis, pp. 4-26.

<sup>187</sup> Davis, pp. 2-6.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid. These incursions were extremely unpopular among the military.

<sup>191</sup> See note 46 above.

<sup>192</sup> John H. Cooley, *Libyan Sandstorm* (New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston, 1982), pp. 282-283.

<sup>193</sup> Davis, p. 8.

<sup>194</sup> Ibid., p. 135.

<sup>195</sup> Qaddafi would later claim that destruction of portions of the Bab al-Aziziyya complex resulted in the death of his fifteen month old daughter Hana and injury to two of his sons. It would later be discovered however that Qaddafi had no adopted daughter Hana and that if either of these two sons were injured they were only superficial wounds. David Blundy, "The Man We Love to Hate", *Sunday Times Magazine*, 2 Mar 1986, p. 30. Lisa Anderson, "Libya's Qaddafi: Still in Command?", *Current History* 86 (Feb 1987)

<sup>196</sup> Davis, p. 136.

<sup>197</sup> Zimmerman, p. 216.

<sup>198</sup> Davis, p. 144.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid., pp. 140-145.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid., p. 144.

<sup>201</sup> Zimmerman, p. 216.

<sup>202</sup> Davis, p. 144.

<sup>203</sup> Zimmerman, p. 216.

<sup>204</sup> Ibid.

<sup>205</sup> Ibid.

<sup>206</sup> Ibid., pp. 216-217.

<sup>207</sup> Ibid.

### Notes

<sup>208</sup> Davis, pp. 144-145, Zimmerman, pp. 214-218.

<sup>209</sup> The bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 is such an example. The Libyans hid their involvement in this attack to a much greater extent than they had hidden past terrorist activity.

<sup>210</sup> Davis, p. 6.

<sup>211</sup> Pape, pp. 1-38.

<sup>212</sup> Ibid.

## Chapter 6

### Conclusions and Implications

*The first, the supreme, the most far-reaching act of judgment that the statesman and commander have to make is to establish . . . the kind of war on which they are embarking; neither mistaking it for, or turning it into, something that is alien to its nature.*

Carl von Clausewitz

This thesis has shown that Targeting National Security (TNS) provides a model that may help us better understand the mechanism behind effective national coercion. In the case of Japan's surrender in World War Two, coercion in the Vietnam conflict, and Operation El Dorado Canyon, the first step to effective coercion was the erosion of the adversary's sense of national security.

A major consideration when examining an adversary through TNS is that many different things may cause this initial security erosion. The specific target of your attacks will depend on the adversary and how it has developed its own sense of security. However, despite the need to tailor your efforts to each situation, the best way to erode a nation's security appears to be through attacking what the target nation believes makes it secure in the first place. To explain, during W.W.II, Japan believed that its mighty army provided the bulk of the nation's security. The US, by defeating the Japanese military in the Pacific, challenged this security beginning what would eventually become an unacceptable security erosion.

North Vietnam on the other hand, did not derive its security from its military, but rather from its belief that the nation would be reunified. Reunification provided fuel for the North's nationalistic fervor. This nationalism was a great source of strength. When the South began to grow powerful enough to jeopardize this reunification, the power of

nationalism was placed in jeopardy, consequently, the North's security layer also suffered.

On the other hand, Libya's national security was in large part created by what the nation believed was a formidable air defense system. By penetrating this system and bombing what it pleased, the US critically eroded Libya's national security.

However, security erosion, by itself, was not enough to cause coercion. Rather, in each case eroding the adversary's security only forced it to go to the components of its national mechanism for a means to rebuild the security that had been lost. When there was no longer any means to do so available, and the nation's leadership had determined that the concessions being demanded were worth less than the need to regain security, then they became susceptible to coercion. The following is a synopsis of the TNS mechanism for the three cases that this thesis addressed.

In the case of the surrender of Japan in W.W.II, US military victory in the Pacific had eroded Japan's security layer. This erosion resulted from Japan's mounting military defeats and the expressed intention of the US to invade the Japanese home islands. When the Japanese government reached into the national mechanism in an attempt to discover some way to reinforce the nation's security layer, it found that few viable components remained. The economy was in ruin, the people were already tasked to capacity and could give no more, the military was on the verge of total defeat, and the government's efforts at diplomacy had failed.

This realization came at a time when the nation was rocked by multiple assaults, including the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, the Soviet failure to intervene on Japan's behalf, the subsequent Soviet declaration of war and their defeat of the Kwangtung Army, and the nuclear attack on Nagasaki. These events sealed off all of Japan's options, save one. The only viable option that remained was for Japan to surrender, for only through surrender would the unacceptable erosion of the nation's security be halted.

The war with North Vietnam differed from the war with Japan. From the US perspective, Vietnam was a limited war fought for limited goals. Rolling Thunder failed to coerce North Vietnam, not because the North could not be coerced during this period, but rather, because this campaign was poorly matched to the situation at hand. Rolling



Thunder could only have been effective if the campaign had eroded the North's security layer to a point where regaining security was worth more than the concessions that the US demanded.<sup>213</sup> This security erosion would have to have coincided with pre-empting the government's use of the constituents of its national mechanism so that the North could not rebuild its security. Rolling Thunder, however, failed to do this.

Linebacker, on the other hand, was a coercive success because it impacted the North through the TNS mechanism. The growth of the South's military capability coupled with the gains in their governments legitimacy made the North realize that if unchecked, these developments would complicate its plans to consolidate the nation under communist rule. This realization caused the initial erosion of the North's sense of security and forced the government to go to its national mechanism to find a solution to its security crisis. Because of the warming diplomatic relations between the US and the North's allies, their dependence on imports from these same allies, and the overburdening of the population, the North was forced to use the only remaining viable component of its national mechanism—the military—in an attempt to restore security. The Easter Offensive was in large part a result of the North's security loss and the fact that when it went to its national mechanism the military was the only viable component that remained. Linebacker was able to halt the North's military advance, and by doing so nullified this sole remaining part of the nation's internal mechanism. Once this last component was nullified, there was no way for the North to reinforce its deteriorating security layer. The only remaining option was for the North to concede, for after conceding, the US would cease military action.

The final case that this thesis investigated was Operation El Dorado Canyon, the 1986 US airstrike against Libya. El Dorado Canyon was at least a limited coercive success as it reduced the level of Libyan involvement in international terrorism. This coercive success can also be explained through TNS.

The airstrike itself eroded Libyan security. This erosion resulted from the relative ease in which the strike package penetrated what Libya believed was a formidable air defense system. This strike conducted with relative impunity, made Libya's leader, Colonel Muhamar Qaddafi—the embodiment of the nation—feel vulnerable. When Qaddafi went

to his national mechanism to reinforce the nation's security, he came up empty-handed. The economy, because of Qaddafi's own actions, had little to offer. As an oil exporting nation, the economy was susceptible to the reduction of European oil imports. This reduction was soon to follow the airstrikes. Libya's own military would provide little assistance. The nation's air defense system, despite its sophistication, had proven impotent against the US. The army was also of no use in reinforcing the nation's security. While Libya's army was quite capable by Third World standards, it was no match for the United States. The army's loyalty was also in question, as it had been implicated in several prior coup and assassination attempts. Following the airstrike, Libya's air force had to bomb dissent troop formations that were enroute to Tripoli to depose Qaddafi. The people could not be used to shore up the nation's ailing security. Qaddafi could not ask the people to endure more punishment as they had to a great extent already been terrified by the airstrike. Terrorism, previously Qaddafi's weapon of choice, was also now of little use. Libya's support of terrorism had elicited the airstrike in the first place, and any terrorist retaliation could obviously make the situation worse. Even if Libya had wanted to use terrorism to retaliate against the US, Europe's expulsion of large numbers of Libyan's following the strike would make this retaliation much more difficult to carry out.

Because of the inability of Libya's national mechanism to shore up the nation's eroded security, Qaddafi only had one viable option. Qaddafi was forced to concede, for through concession the airstrikes would stop and a sense of security homeostasis could return.

While TNS does explain what happened in these three cases, what of Pape's denial? Denial failed to adequately explain what happened in any of these case studies. Pape explains that denial is the defeat of an adversary's military strategy. Yet in the case of Japan's surrender and in the war in Vietnam, the adversary's strategy was defeated *several times* before coercion actually occurred.

In the case of the surrender of Japan, at least three Japanese military strategies had been defeated before the nation was coerced. This first defeat came when the US entered into a total war with Japan. Japan had planned on waging a limited war with the US. By waging total war, the US had in essence defeated Japan's strategy of limited warfare.

This defeat of Japan's military strategy, however, failed to coerce the nation. The second defeat of Japan's strategy occurred following the Battle of Midway when it became obvious that the US had defeated Japan's strategy for a robust defensive perimeter. This defeat, however, did not produce effective coercion. Finally, the US defeated Japan's strategy of maintaining an "absolute national defense zone."<sup>214</sup> This zone included Japan proper, the Kuriles, the Marianas, the Carolines, most of Indonesia, and Burma. In July, 1944, the US captured the Marianas. Taking the Marianas, breached this "absolute defense zone" yet defeating **this** strategy, still failed to coerce Japan.

These same shortcomings are evident in the case study of Vietnam. The US military defeat of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam's (DRV's) Tet Offensive, failed to coerce the North. All that resulted from Tet was a return to guerrilla war in anticipation of the final conventional assault.

In war, the adversary is not static. For each move the coercer makes, the adversary will respond. This dynamic situation results in the development of many strategies throughout a conflict. Denial fails to adequately describe which of these enemy strategies we must defeat to generate effective coercion. This significant shortcoming renders denial quite useless to the policy maker or military planner.

On the other hand, if TNS describes the actual mechanism behind national coercion, how do we use this model to more effectively coerce an adversary? The key to using TNS lies in understanding the target nation.

This need to understand the adversary is nothing new. Sun Tzu identified the primacy of this understanding, in 400 BC. While perfect intelligence on the adversary is desirable, it is never possible. That is not what I am advocating. Rather, to effectively use TNS the military planner must understand the adversary's nation. This understanding must include the adversary's perception of its own security and how sensitive it is to security erosion as well as what would make the adversary feel as though its security were in jeopardy. The planner must also understand the adversary's internal national mechanism for this is the only "tool kit" that the enemy has to shore up its security. To fully exploit the adversary you must not only know this mechanism but also how the components within this mechanism relate to one another. This is not a familiarity of enemy

transportation or power grids, but rather an understanding of the adversary's society and culture, as well as the strengths and weaknesses of their national mechanism. This level of understanding may be difficult to obtain from reference material alone. If so, then the military should consider assigning intelligence officers to overseas duty so that they could better gain this level of understanding.

The US Army currently has a Foreign Area Officer (FAO) program that assigns Army officers to overseas duty so these officers can learn about foreign cultures, but this program has some significant shortcomings. Instead of exclusively using military intelligence officers, those with the specific training required, the Army's FAO program is opened to all specialties. Also, following a FAO's overseas training, they are not necessarily assigned to planning staffs. Instead, the FAOs are scattered to the four winds and absorbed back into the branches of Army service from which they came. Thus, the current FAO program does not adequately address the military's need for this type of intelligence.

While this thesis has specifically addressed the coercion of nations, what of the coercion of non-state actors? Non-state actors such as Somalia's warring factions, or the different groups involved in the current conflict in the Balkans—while not recognized nations, should also exhibit many of the same behaviors as states. The reason for this assertion is simple. These non-state entities still possess an economy of sorts, a population, an armed contingent, and some form of leadership. These groups also provide one thing above what the individual can provide for themselves—collective security. If this is true, then these groups may also be vulnerable to coercion through the TNS framework. This will further complicate the need for quality intelligence as we strive to understand the numerous non-state actors that we may come into conflict with. Additionally, situations involving these non-state actors may require quite different coercive pressure than that required in conventional warfare.

Because these situations may be vastly different, the prospective coercer must develop a force structure that is capable of meeting a variety of demands. This force must be able to penetrate the most formidable of enemy defenses and strike with relative impunity. The cases that this thesis investigated have shown that challenging the adversary's

air sovereignty can greatly affect its sense of security. The reason for this is quite simple. If the adversary cannot defend its people from air attack then it fails to provide the most basic of national functions, this function being collective security. Nullifying the adversary's ability to provide this security in essence challenges the reason for the nation's being, for if the nation cannot provide security then the individuals are no better off as members of the group than they would be on their own. Moreover, if he can shoot down some attackers, at least he seems to have a chance to defend himself—if he's truly impotent to halt your attacks then there is nothing that air defenses can do to help restore lost security. The advent of stealth technology greatly aids the coercer by doing just this—for until effective countermeasures are developed—stealth allows the coercer to strike at will where, when, and what it chooses. Currently, the adversary is relatively defenseless against these attacks.

While obviously not the only game in town, airpower is especially suited to TNS. This is because airpower can attack virtually any element in an adversary's national mechanism without the type of serial operations usually associated with ground combat. This capability, and the intuitive value of the components of the adversary's national mechanism, have provided the building blocks for airpower theory. However, previous theories have only “nibbled at the edges” of what makes airpower effective as an instrument of national coercion. These theories have all fallen well short of the mark as they have merely addressed airpower's ability to destroy a given national component, failing to identify the underlying concept of how to best affect the entire mechanism. Because of this oversight, most airpower theories have advocated a single target type as the key to victory, independent of the specific situation at hand.

Italian airpower theorist Giulio Douhet, whom many consider to be the father of airpower theory, advocated attacks on the adversary's population.<sup>215</sup> He believed that these attacks would result in mass discontent that would both cripple industry and incite the populous to rise up and force the government to accept defeat.<sup>216</sup> On the other hand, US Army Air Corps General William Mitchell and the US Air Corps Tactical School (ACTS) both advocated precision attacks on the adversary nation's industrial web.<sup>217</sup> They proposed that these attacks would cripple the adversary's ability to wage modern

industrial combat and that the adversary when faced with these attacks would be forced to accept the attacker's demands. More recently, retired USAF Colonel John Warden detailed his theory of decapitation. Decapitation entailed attacks on an adversary's leadership.<sup>218</sup> Warden believes that these attacks will begin a sequence of events in which the adversary's leadership would be deposed and replaced with a government that would be more willing to accept our terms.<sup>219</sup> More recently yet, Robert Pape brought forth his theory of denial.<sup>220</sup> Pape's denial theory advocating attacks on the adversary's military strategy as the key to effective coercion.<sup>221</sup>

The shortcoming with all of these theories is that they all center on a single component within the adversary's internal national mechanism. Because of this, they all have three fundamental flaws. The first is that by advocating a single target within the national mechanism, these theories fail to tailor the strategy to the specific situation. For example, Douhet advocates attacks on the adversary's population or using the threat of these attacks to coerce an adversary.<sup>222</sup> However if these attacks are directed at the population of a non-industrialized tyrannical regime they may have little if any effect. If, on the other hand, this same type of attack were waged on a more industrialized society with a different system of governance, the results may be quite different. The ACTS philosophy describes the adversary's industrial web as the target for effective aerial attack. These attacks are also extremely dependent upon the specific situation within the targeted nation and the nature of the war. An agrarian society with relatively little organic industrial capacity would not be as susceptible to industrial web attack as an industrialized nation. Also, a short duration war or an expeditionary war would most likely benefit less from this type of attack than would a long duration conflict involving a nation that needed its industry to maintain the war effort. Warden's advocacy of decapitation also exhibits these same shortcomings. Decapitation would be less effective against a nation with a participatory form of government and an established procedure for succession than it might be against a tyrannical regime with absolute control over the population.

The second flaw with these single target approaches is that they disregard the ability of the adversary to use other means within its national mechanism to make up for

what has been destroyed or threatened by attack. This leads us to view the adversary as a non reactive static target, a contrast to the reactive enemy that Clausewitz describes.<sup>223</sup>

The third and final flaw with these mono-causal theories is that they fail to address the fundamental reason for the existence of nations and what all nations provide. Regardless of culture, and how a nation's internal nation mechanism may be tailored to fulfill that nation's particular needs, the one thing that all nations value most is their security. The concept that all nations require security and will go to great lengths to protect this security disregards contemporary realism as a model for international relations.

There is no prescription for target sets that apply to every nation in all situations. Each situation will be different than the last. Suffice it to say, however, that airpower is best used after a thorough understanding of the political goals that the nation wants to achieve. Once you understand these goals then you can investigate what provides the target nation its sense of security and how the components of its internal national mechanism operate. After this is done you can then target the adversary's security, eroding it to a level where regaining this lost security is worth more to the adversary than what you demand. To know how to best generate this effect, you first must understand the adversary's culture and how he views his own security. You must also have some idea of the relative value of what you are asking him to concede. In conjunction with this security erosion you will need to cause significant effects to all the important components of the target nation's national mechanism. These effects should be significant enough that the adversary can no longer effectively use these components to reinforce his security. Remember, it is only through the components of this mechanism that he can reinforce his security when you begin to erode it. Your intent is to ensure that the adversary has no viable option but to concede, for only through concession will you stop this unacceptable security erosion.

In summary, while many other theories single out a particular component of the adversary's national mechanism, TNS describes the entire coercive process. This process begins with understanding the adversary, how it views its security, and how its national mechanism rebuilds security erosion. I believe that if the military strategist is faithful to

the concepts of TNS that he will be more successful in future attempts to use the military as a coercive tool.

#### Notes

<sup>213</sup> This likely would have required a significant erosion to the North's security, as reunification of the nation under communist rule was the principle goal of the North while the US was demanding that the nation remain divided.

<sup>214</sup> Ienaga, Saburo, *The Pacific War, 1931-1945: A Critical Perspective on Japan's Role in World War II* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978). p. 146.

<sup>215</sup> Giulio Douhet, *Command of the Air*, trans by Dino Ferrari (New York: Coward-McCann, 1942) pp. 43-68.

<sup>216</sup> Ibid.

<sup>217</sup> William Mitchell, *Winged Defense* (New York: Putnams, 1925) pp. 16-17.

<sup>218</sup> Robert A. Pape, *Bombing to Win* (Ithica, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996) p. 79.

<sup>219</sup> Ibid.

<sup>220</sup> Ibid., ch. 2.

<sup>221</sup> Ibid.

<sup>222</sup> Douhet, pp. 43-68.

<sup>223</sup> Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans. Michael Howard and Peter Peret, rev. ed. (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1984),



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