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PRESIDENTS AND DETENTE: A CASE STUDY OF JOHN
F. KENNEDY AND THE SOVIET UNION, 1963.

CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK, PH.D., 1979

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PRESIDENTS AND DETENTE:
A CASE STUDY OF JOHN F. KENNEDY AND THE SOVIET UNION, 1963

by

BERNARD J. FIRESTONE

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate
Faculty in Political Science in partial fulfillment
of the requirements of Doctor of Philosophy,
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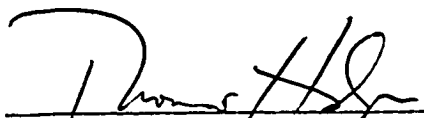
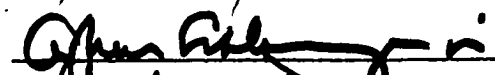
This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty
in Political Science in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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FOREWORD

This dissertation examines the role of presidents in the formulation of American foreign policy toward the Soviet Union and concentrates on President John F. Kennedy's test ban efforts as a case study. While the study, relying principally on the policies of one administration, does not purport to offer a general theory of presidential power, it does indicate the types of constraints and opportunities that the specific issue of Soviet policy presents in relation to presidents. As such, it attempts to develop some tentative conclusions about the interaction between presidents, on the one hand, and bureaucracies, the domestic political system and the external environment, on the other hand.

The study is divided into two sections. Chapters 1 and 2 explore the recent literature on bureaucratic politics and attempt to find a place for presidential initiative within the context of this important theoretical contribution to the analysis of American foreign policy. It is not the purpose of this dissertation to attack the bureaucratic school. On the contrary, the present writer views the bureaucratic approach as a useful way to understand the policy-making process. At the same time, the bureaucratic perspective can be

expanded to understand both the limitations to bureaucratic power and the significant interaction between the executive branch and the larger political system. This study argues that the president, as nexus between the governmental policy-making system and the domestic political arena, plays a singular role in developing and legitimizing foreign policy.

Section II focuses on Kennedy's detente efforts and his general approach to arms control. While there have been notable studies published on the Test Ban Treaty, such as Mary Milling Lepper's Foreign Policy Formulation: A Case Study of the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and Harold Jacobson's and Eric Stein's Diplomats, Scientists and Politicians: The United States and the Nuclear Test Ban Negotiations,¹ this dissertation unearths some original primary material and, furthermore, integrates the test ban case into a larger theoretical framework that the others do not offer.

Source material includes a wide array of readily available secondary literature along with the personal memoirs of those involved in the policy-making process and voluminous records of Congressional hearings. Most valuable was the contribution of the John F. Kennedy Library, located in

¹Mary Milling Lepper, Foreign Policy Formulation: A Case Study of the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (Columbus: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co., 1971); Harold Karan Jacobson and Eric Stein, Diplomats, Scientists and Politicians: The United States and the Nuclear Test Ban Negotiations (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1966).

Waltham, Massachusetts and its very capable and cooperative staff. The Library provides a rich lode of original sources including interviews with governmental and non-governmental personages and archival material of an especially useful nature. Some of the archival material was made available to this researcher in August 1978 under the guidelines of the Freedom of Information Act. Unfortunately, other potentially valuable material was denied on the basis of national security considerations. My special thanks are extended to Ambassador Averell Harriman and Benjamin Read who allowed me to cite passages from their oral history interviews.

If I may be permitted a personal note, I would like to express my deep gratitude to Professor Howard H. Lentner, whose dedicated assistance and guidance made this study a reality. His manifold questions and generous support not only enhanced the quality of the dissertation but gave me the incentive to complete this work. I would also like to express my appreciation to Professor Abraham Bargman, who contributed greatly in clarifying my thoughts on nuclear strategy, and to the Political Science Department at Hofstra University which provided me with the time to write this manuscript. I owe a great personal debt to Sheila Kurtzer who generously gave of her time and energy to type this thesis. Her masterful work is testimony to her outstanding skill. She is a most valued friend.

Finally, I would like to thank those who have been most responsible for allowing me to reach this stage in my life. My brother Nathan has always represented to me a model of decency and excellence. My aunts Cillie and Judith have dedicated themselves, both emotionally and materially, to the well-being of my family. My parents have been unstinting in their love and support and have inculcated in me a respect for basic human values. My wife Dedi has been steadfast, never once deflecting me from my goals and never once complaining about the uncertainties of my chosen profession. By supporting me financially during the early years of our marriage and by relieving me of some of the duties of parenthood during the most crucial year of this dissertation, Dedi has been as responsible for the completion of this work as I. For that and for her companionship I will always be grateful.

PART I

PRESIDENTIAL POWER AND
FOREIGN POLICY PROCESSES:
A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

CHAPTER I

THE "BUREAUCRATIC" APPROACH AND THE STUDY OF FOREIGN POLICY

In recent years, a great deal of attention has focused on the role of public bureaucracies in the formulation of American foreign policy. Most outstanding in this respect is Graham Allison's Essence of Decision, published in 1971.¹ Allison consolidates a variety of approaches to the study of foreign policy into three distinct models: the rational actor model, the organizational process model and the governmental politics model. After describing each paradigm from a theoretical perspective, he applies the three approaches to a concrete case--the Cuban missile crisis of October 1962. Allison demonstrates that a scholar's understanding of a particular foreign policy event is shaped by his theoretical apparatus. A critical evaluation of a potential model, including an assessment of its strengths and weaknesses, is, therefore, an indispensable prerequisite to empirical study.

¹Graham Allison, Essence of Decision (Boston: Little, Brown, 1971) and "Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis," The American Political Science Review 65 (September 1969): 689-718.

Allison's major critique is leveled at Model I, the rational actor paradigm. Because the "classical" approach has enjoyed widespread currency among a number of distinguished political scientists, including Hans Morgenthau, Raymond Aron, Arnold Wolfers, and Thomas Schelling,² Allison's discussion is especially significant. The rational actor model posits the state as a monolithic, unitary actor on the international stage. It assumes that actions taken by a government toward its external environment represent purposive calculations of the national interest. Most extreme in this formulation are Morgenthau, who sees "power" as the universal determinant of foreign policy, and Schelling, whose abstract game theory virtually discounts variables internal to the state. Aron, while recognizing that governments pursue a number of conflicting values, nevertheless portrays the state as a monolithic actor juggling these values in a rational manner. Wolfers criticizes Morgenthau directly by citing the variety of goals that a state might pursue, including the goal of national self-abnegation. Nevertheless, he argues that in cases of national security, the "pole of power," decision-making is purposive and unitary.

The ability of the scholar to identify and evaluate rational behavior and hence to impute rational attributes

²See Hans J. Morgenthau, Politics Among Nations, 5th ed., revised (New York: Knopf, 1978); Raymond Aron, Peace and War: A Theory of International Relations (Garden City: Doubleday, 1966); Thomas Schelling, The Strategy of Conflict (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960); Arnold Wolfers, Discord & Collaboration (Baltimore, John Hopkins University Press, 1962).

to international actors has long been a concern of political scientists. Stanley Hoffmann, a protege of Aron, asserts that any evaluation of political rationality is dependent on a coincidence of goals between the decision-makers of a particular state and the observer. The scholar is capable of recognizing rational conduct only if he can identify the goals that a state will pursue. Reified theories such as Morgenthau's, which assume the existence of universal goals, are incapable, according to Hoffman, of identifying rational behavior directed toward different, multiple, or ambiguous goals.³

Hoffmann's concern for the observer's ability to ascertain rational behavior is echoed by Sidney Verba in his comprehensive discussion of rational and non-rational models of decision-making.⁴ Because rationality entails a synchronization of means and ends, it is possible, according to Verba, that the decision-maker is acting rationally with reference to operative goals unknown to the observer. In reality, the scholar is in no better position than the policy-maker, because,

³Stanley Hoffmann, The State of War: Essays in the Theory and Practice of International Politics (New York: Praeger, 1965), p. 12.

⁴Sidney Verba, "Assumptions of Rationality and Non-Rationality in Models of the International System," The International System: Theoretical Essays, eds. Klaus Knorr and Sidney Verba (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961), pp. 93-117.

in predicting the "rational" decision, he, the scholar, must undertake the same means-ends calculation that rules the behavior of the decision-maker. In fact, the scholar is at a disadvantage, since the policy-maker is generally aware of the multiplicity and priority of goals that motivate him, while the scholar is not. According to Verba, the observer is claiming to know the "right" decision, even if it eludes the statesman.

While questioning the capacity of the foreign policy analyst to assess correctly rational behavior, neither Hoffman nor Verba postulates that decision-making is non-rational. Hoffmann, in essence, argues that what appears to be irrational in relation to heuristic models, might in fact be perfectly rational. Verba, adhering to his means-ends definition of rationality, asserts that, by and large, rational decision-making models are relevant to foreign policy analysis.⁵ Non-rational behavior, according to Verba, is characterized by the unconscious projection of idiosyncratic variables into the decision-making process.⁶ Nevertheless, Verba argues that the conditions under which these non-rational factors will appear are so rare, that, in general, decisions are rational.⁷

⁵Ibid., p. 114.

⁶Ibid., pp. 96-110.

⁷Ibid., pp. 99-103.

Verba, however, is not content to rely exclusively on the rational model. Recognizing that collective decision processes often produce sharp conflicts over goals, he challenges the universal applicability of the rational paradigm. Furthermore, Verba acknowledges that the policy struggle among competing elements of the decision-making unit often involves a clash among parochial interests that inhibits overall value maximization.

Allison is not, by and large, concerned with the influence of idiosyncratic variables in the decision outcome. On the contrary, the role of the individual's psychological baggage, as portrayed by the alternative foreign policy models provided by Allison, is subsumed underneath the organizational processes and interests that determine behavior. Allison's critique of the rational actor model does not challenge the essential rationality of the foreign policy actor; rather, it questions whether the important actor(s) has (have) been properly identified. The key to understanding the weakness of the rational actor model is in its assertion of unity. Those who reify the state organize their theories around a single decision-maker or a group of decision-makers with one set of specified goals, one set of perceived options and a "single estimate of the consequences that follow from each alternative."⁸ The gist of Allison's critique is that the decision process must be organized around multiple decision

⁸Allison, op. cit., pp. 32-33.

units with contradictory goals, numerous sets of perceptions and clashing assessments of the consequences of action. While each unit might behave according to a rational calculation of means and ends, the ultimate policy, representing the actions of a number of organizations, need not represent the optimal rational behavior that could be taken by the overall, decision-making unit.

Allison's objection to the rational actor model is contained in his formulation of alternative foreign policy paradigms. Rather than engage in a direct critique of the traditional approach, he describes its theoretical content in great detail and demonstrates how it can be employed to understand both American and Soviet behavior during the Cuban crisis.⁹ He then introduces two other approaches: Model II,¹⁰ the "organizational process paradigm" and Model III, "the governmental politics paradigm."¹¹ He organizes his discussion so that each approach can be compared to the other. By pinpointing each model's attention to units of analysis, organizing concepts and inference patterns he allows the reader to recognize the theoretical distinctions that produce different insights into the same case study. Moreover, he effectively demonstrates the importance of these distinctions

⁹Ibid., Chapters 1-2.

¹⁰Ibid., Chapters 3-4

¹¹Ibid., Chapters 5-6.

in the ultimate analysis of foreign policy. Allison's brilliant blending of the theoretical and the concrete is a strong indictment of the rational actor paradigm. By demonstrating not only what it fails to consider but also what it fails to show, Allison has produced a major critique of the classical model.

A survey of "Organization" theory

While it is a call for reassessment of the traditional approach to the study of foreign policy, Essence of Decision builds a strong case for a particular alternative. Allison argues for an understanding of the role of government organizations in the formulation of foreign policy. While drawing two distinct models around the central, bureaucratic concept, he implicitly links them with two fundamental assumptions. First, he elevates process, whether it is organizational or political, over the substance of deliberation. Second, he assumes that decisions are factored, necessarily involving a multiplicity of decision-units. While there are other common strains between models I and II, the aforementioned are basic to all similarities:

Model II, the organizational process model, asserts that:

Governmental behavior can be understood...less as deliberate choices and more as outputs of large organizations functioning according to standard patterns of behavior.¹²

¹²Ibid., p. 67.

Model II designates organizations as its central foreign policy actors. Problems are factored and distributed to a number of relevant bureaucracies which operate virtually free of external direction. Each organization deliberates according to goals and procedures peculiar to it. Action results from factors internal to the organization rather than from the needs of the particular case.

Organizations, as problem solving units, are characterized by parochial interests and perceptions, sequential attention to goals and standard operating procedures and repertoires. These bureaucratic attributes determine that actions are seldom the product of overall value maximization and rarely represent radical departures from established patterns of behavior. The existence of "fractionated power," which allows each organization to pursue an independent search for policy alternatives, virtually precludes policy coordination and tends to minimize the role of the central authority.

It is impossible to understand Model II without reference to the organizational theory that gives it substance. The influence of theorists such as Richard Cyert and James March, Herbert Simon and Anthony Downs is made clear by the detailed attention Allison gives to their writings.¹³ An organization,

¹³See Richard Cyert and James March, A Behavioral Theory of the Firm (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1963); Herbert Simon, Administrative Behavior (New York: Macmillan, 1957), Anthony Downs, Inside Bureaucracy (Boston: Little, Brown, 1967).

according to Downs, is a system of "consciously coordinated activities or forces of two or more persons explicitly created to achieve specific ends."¹⁴ The pursuit of these ends takes place within a complex framework of interpersonal relationships that are regulated hierarchically. Individuals are differentiated in terms of authority, status and role so that personal interaction¹⁵ (not necessarily face to face) is prescribed by organizational rules. The purpose of this arrangement is to lend stability to the system by programming the members' anticipated reactions and by suppressing tendencies toward ambiguity and spontaneity.¹⁶

The ideal organization contains three essential components allowing it to pursue its goals with maximum efficiency. First, as suggested earlier, an organization differentiates roles according to function and status. Functional differentiation, or division of labor, prescribes the horizontal distribution of work that facilitates the overall performance of complex tasks. Scalar differentiation determines the vertical chain of command that establishes routine expectations among members in their interpersonal relationships.¹⁷

¹⁴Downs, op. cit., p. 24.

¹⁵Robert Presthus, The Organizational Society (New York: Vintage, 1962), p. 27.

¹⁶Joseph A. Litterer, Organizations: Structure and Behavior (New York: Wiley, 1963), pp. 5-6.

¹⁷William G. Scott, "Introduction," in Litterer, op. cit., pp. 14-15.

Second, an organization encourages normative unity among its subunits. Because of the need for functional differentiation, certain subgroups, known as informal organizations, will emerge. While not acknowledged in the formal, hierarchical blueprint, they, nevertheless, exert strong influences over their members and act as primary reference groups. The norms and values of the informal organization can often transcend the values of the formal organization in determining the behavior of its members. It is the organization's task to work with the informal organization so as to impose its goals on the day to day operation of its workers. While some degree of informal control is acceptable, it must be kept within the boundaries of the larger organization's values. Third, an organization strives to minimize the idiosyncratic impact on its day to day operations. An organization, by definition, is a mechanism designed to offset those forces which might undermine efficient human collaboration. The organizational structure attempts to enhance the predictability of human nature and to reduce uncertainty by placing the individual in a strictly proscribed role.

These three ingredients--functional and scalar differentiation, normative integration and the minimization of human impact--are characteristic of those organizational attributes that appear in classical administrative theory. The most prominent of the classical theorists is Max Weber whose rational-legal analysis of bureaucracy serves not only

as an intellectual antecedent to future studies of organizations but as a prescriptive model for governmental organization. Weber, in outlining the attributes of modern Western bureaucracies, paints an idealized portrait of a professional, instrumental civil service governed by rational-legal standards of conduct and operation. Weber sees six criteria as essential to a bureaucracy:

1. Fixed and official jurisdictional areas which are generally ordered by rules, that is, by laws or administrative regulations.
2. Hierarchy.
3. Management based on written documents (files).
4. Special training.
5. Full time, professional staff.
6. Management of the office follows general rules which are more or less stable, and which can be learned.¹⁸

These six criteria exist independent of the rules and attributes of the political system. Weber sees bureaucracy as impartial and apolitical governed by internal standards of rational behavior. The function of bureaucracy is to execute public policy; not to make it.

¹⁸For Weber's discussion of bureaucracy see H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (editors and translators), From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1946).

Another version of the classical model is provided by Woodrow Wilson.¹⁹ Wilson distinguishes between politics, which involves the formulation of public policy, and administration, which concerns the execution of that policy. This distinction is given force by Wilson's assertion that no matter the nature of the political system--republican, monarchical or authoritarian--there exists a universally desirable administrative model. Arguing that there is no such thing as a "democratic" administration, Wilson suggests that republican governments might strive to replicate the administrative systems designed by Frederick the Great in Prussia and Napoleon in France.

Wilson's administrative paradigm represents the ultimate idealization of an instrumental bureaucracy. While it might appear that he is drawing too sharp a distinction between politics and administration, a further reading reveals that Wilson is, in fact, cognizant of the political context that allows administrations to operate instrumentally. According to Wilson, effective administrative execution of public policy depends on the clarity and authoritative nature of the enunciated policy. This, in turn, depends on the bureaucracy's ability to identify the single source of power recognized to make authoritative decisions for a society.

¹⁹ Vincent Ostrom, The Intellectual Crisis in American Public Administration (Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1974), pp. 26-29.

Hence, a political system must establish a monolithic authority, whether it is a monarch or representative assembly, that can issue undisputed directions to its bureaucracy. Without this, it is difficult for an administrative system to operate instrumentally.

The classical approach assumes that there is a complete identification between the values defined by political leadership and those that determine organizational behavior. Hence, classical studies of public administration focus on the formal aspects of organizations.²⁰ The obvious deficiency in an approach that focuses on the formal aspects of organizations--one that is, in fact, the cornerstone for the neo-classical critique--is that organizations, at all levels, are manned by individuals whose needs and values often conflict with the idealized routines established by the classic model. The neo-classical school examines the formal organization by suggesting the impact of human determinants on its functioning. Regarding the "division of labor" aspect of the formal organization, the neo-classicists introduce factors such as worker fatigue, monotony and isolation.²¹ Furthermore, the neo-classical school studies, in depth, the impact of the informal

²⁰The study of formal organizations is divided into four "pillars:" the division of labor, the scalar and functional processes, structure and span of control. See Scott, op. cit., p. 15.

²¹Ibid., p. 16.

organization on the workings of the formal organization, particularly in relation to the informal group's resistance to internal innovation. The neo-classical approach, which can be labeled the "human relations" school, is both descriptive in its behavioral studies of organizations and prescriptive in its suggestions for linking the needs of the organization with the needs of the individual.²²

A further progression toward modern organization theory is contained in the systems orientation, pioneered by March and Simon.²³ This approach, emerging out of dissatisfaction with both the classical and neo-classical schools,²⁴ emphasizes the need to examine organizations in their totality as systems of "mutually dependent variables."²⁵ Rather than describe the parts of the organizations as independent units, an effort is made to locate and investigate the linkage processes--communications, balance and decision-making. Communication involves the manner in which messages are conveyed from one part of the organization to another. Balance refers to the ability of the organization to maintain stability in the relationship of its parts despite changes in internal and

²²For an example of this approach, see Presthus, op. cit.

²³James G. March and Herbert A. Simon, Organizations (New York: Wiley, 1958).

²⁴Proponents of the systems approach complain that the neo-classical school, even though empirically based, is prescriptive rather than theoretical.

²⁵Scott, op. cit., p. 19.

external conditions. Both these linkage processes are united in the cybernetic model which examines the effectiveness of communication mechanisms in transmitting feedback to the policy centers.²⁶ The third linkage process, decision-making, involves the way in which organizations formulate policies. It is this segment of modern organization theory which is most relevant to Allison's understanding of Model II, the organizational process paradigm. Borrowing from Cyert and March's concept of "sequential attention" and Simon's theory of "bounded rationality," Model II theorists apply modern organization theory to the study of foreign policy. Further attention to this relationship will be provided later in the chapter.

The preceding survey of organization theory is designed to demonstrate the movement away from rational models in a field that has been adapted by political scientists to challenge rational models in the study of foreign policy. There are, however, enormous pitfalls in this approach. As Donald P. Warwick writes, "despite their ubiquity, size and pervasive impact on national and international life, federal executive agencies have received scant attention in organization

²⁶Ibid., p. 22. Scott writes that the cybernetic model poses four questions: How are communication centers connected and maintained; what information is stored in the system; how conscious is the organization of the workings of its parts; what are the learning capabilities of the systems?

theory.²⁷ Most writing on organizations focuses on private firms; hence, there is a logical concentration on internal processes and structures. Nevertheless, public bureaucracies are different, both in terms of their susceptibility to public scrutiny and in their goals.²⁸ Furthermore, they operate in an environment consisting of constituency influences, bargaining alliances and internal conflicts.²⁹ Organizational literature focusing on change, for example, concentrates on what is to be changed--people, technology and structures--who is to be changed--key executives, middle level managers or supervisors--and how change should occur--specific methods and strategies to be employed.³⁰ But that theory provides little insight into how substantive organizational policies change as changes occur in the organization's environment. This is the unfortunate legacy of the classical model's refusal to link organizational attributes to the character of the

²⁷ Donald P. Warwick, A Theory of Public Bureaucracy (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975), p. 189.

²⁸ Robert L. Peabody and Francis E. Rourke, "Public Bureaucracy," in Handbook of Organizations, ed. James G. March (Chicago: Rand-McNally, 1965), p. 804. Downs writes that public bureaucracies are distinguished from private organizations in that their "output is not evaluated in any markets external to the organization in a quid pro quo transaction." Downs, op. cit., pp. 24-25.

²⁹ Downs has devised an interesting model to describe the power setting of government bureaucracies, particularly regulatory agencies. He includes in this model the sovereign, allies, suppliers, rivals, beneficiaries, and sufferers. See Downs, op. cit., p. 45.

³⁰ Warwick, op. cit., p. 195.

political system. While subsequent, revisionist approaches to the study of organizations challenge the classical focus on the formal organization, these approaches are more relevant to private firms than to public bureaucracies, whose operations are much more open to extra-organizational influences. In borrowing wholesale from organizational theory, political scientists take the risk of repeating the errors that are made by Weber and Wilson. They may challenge the "rational" assumptions of the classical school, but they retain the essential failure to observe organizations as "political" units. In other words, there is certainly value to students of public bureaucracy in the literature of private organizations; but there must be a recognition of the large differences in both types of organizations that make some organizational theory not only irrelevant but misleading.

"Organization" theory and Model II

Fundamental to the employment of organizational theory in understanding the domestic foreign policy process is the assumption that government is a large organization consisting of a coalition of semi-autonomous organizational subunits. The proliferation of subunits is designed to facilitate the large organization's capacity to meet the increasingly complex problems posed by its environment.³¹ Accordingly, most

³¹John Steinbruner, The Cybernetic Theory of Decision (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), p. 71. Cyert and March see organizations as coalitions of individuals, some of them organized into subcoalitions. By viewing

problems are dealt with by "factoring," the parceling out of segments of a problem to a number of relevant subunits.³² While this process allows for a more efficient handling of difficult problems, it, nevertheless, raises other difficulties, specifically in relation to the overall organization's ability to maximize its goals and values. According to Cyert and March, inherent in the coalition thesis of organization is the probability that elements of the coalition will have substantially different preference orderings.³³ Hence, it is inevitable that value conflicts among subunits of the organization will occur. The "entrepreneurial" solution to value conflict, which applies a rational approach to organizational fragmentation, suggests that this problem can be overcome when subunits acquire the value preferences of the centralized authority.³⁴ Another orientation, which, in fact, is the foundation for Model III, the governmental politics paradigm, argues for a consensus among conflicting goals, so that the government output represents an amalgamation of preference orderings peculiar to each subunit.³⁵

Cyert and March argue that despite the logical attractiveness of each of these two propositions, the reality

the government as a coalition of organizations, each organization can be seen as a subcoalition behaving just like subcoalitions of individuals in single organizations. See Cyert and March, op. cit., p. 27.

³²Allison, op. cit., p. 80.

³³Cyert and March, op. cit., p. 27.

³⁴Ibid., p. 28.

³⁵Ibid., p. 28.

of organizational behavior is quite different. The "entrepreneurial" model fails because it assumes the existence of a clearly articulated and sharply defined set of organizational objectives. According to Cyert and March, organizational values are generally vague and ambiguous allowing for the existence of underlying conflict and the proliferation of sub-goals.³⁶ The weakness of the consensus orientation, according to John Steinbruner's cybernetic theory, is that it depends on the subunits' capacity to identify clear goal preferences.³⁷ Steinbruner argues that each subunit posits "minimally articulated preservative goals," rather than detailed statements of its objectives. This phenomenon militates against coherent "trade-offs" which are necessary to any consensus system.

Cyert and March and, subsequently, Steinbruner opt for an approach which isolates each subunit of the organization and focuses on its internal processes. Rather than concentrate on the subunits' reconciliation of means and ends, their theories center on behavior patterns that determine outputs. Instead of focusing on the substance of policy deliberation, they observe standard decision processes that are, in their view, causally related to ultimate policies. Implicit in this approach is the rejection of what Steinbruner refers to as the "analytic paradigm" which posits

³⁶Ibid., p. 28.

³⁷Steinbruner, op. cit., p. 86.

overall value maximization as a central concept.³⁸ The impossibility of achieving this end is inherent in "factoring" and in organizational processes.

According to Cyert and March, the difficulties posed by the apparent irreconcilability of the subunits' goals are circumvented by the process of sequential attention.³⁹ Rather than confront the antithesis of goals in a direct manner, the organization distributes problems, as they arise, to "clusters" within it. Each subunit that deals with the given problem is motivated and constrained by the set of goals and values that determines its behavior. When another aspect of the same problem arises it might be filtered to another subunit, operating under another set of constraints.⁴⁰ In this manner, segments of the larger organization are prevented from joining conflict over goal differences.⁴¹ By dealing with the problem in a piecemeal fashion, the organization avoids the greater problem of aggregating the multiplicity of goals articulated by its subunits. Value maximization is obviated by the refusal or inability of the central authority to choose among goals; instead, decisions are fragmented and values are disaggregated.

³⁸Ibid., p. 36.

³⁹Cyert and March, op. cit., pp. 117-118.

⁴⁰Allison, op. cit., p. 82.

⁴¹The failure of the subunits to confront each other militates against a consensual system, which requires prior conflict.

While each subunit might theoretically behave according to standards of "local" rationality, certain organizational dynamics transcend the search for value maximizing formulas. Primary among these is the organization's natural inclination to avoid uncertainty. Steinbruner argues that in order to avoid the inherent uncertainty of particular situations, organizations rely on highly programmed responses.⁴² These responses are called "standard operating procedures" (SOP's), and they are bound together to form "programs." According to Cyert and March, the organization's reliance on SOP's leads to short-run, or "feedback-react" decision patterns.⁴³ Organizational search is problemistic rather than goal-oriented so as to simplify the employment of SOP's with clearly identified situations.

It is clear, therefore, that Model II, based as it is on modern organizational theory, directly challenges the value maximizing assumptions inherent in the rational actor paradigm. Because large organizations (governments) with formally designated central authorities (presidents) distribute aspects of problems to their constituent units, the role of the central authority, as ultimate preference orderer, is seriously constricted. This is not to say that the central authority is powerless to effect change in policies. He can

⁴²Steinbruner, op. cit., pp. 71 and 86.

⁴³Cyert and March, op. cit., pp. 119-120. More attention will be given to the effect of SOP's on policy later in this chapter.

direct a particular problem to a sympathetic organization or might threaten punishment and promise rewards for the satisfactory fulfillment of his choice.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, according to Allison, the central policy-maker is dependent on the organization for intelligence, and its routine will ultimately provide the framework for the execution of his policies.⁴⁵ Allison concludes, therefore, that the "formal choice of the leaders is frequently anti-climactic."⁴⁶

It is also clear that Allison rejects the instrumentally oriented model of public bureaucracy expressed in classical administrative theory. While acknowledging the

⁴⁴Allison, op. cit., p. 86.

⁴⁵Ibid., pp. 78-79. "Intelligence" is the first stage in Harold Lasswell's seven function, decision process model. It is understandable that whoever controls intelligence sets the stage for further action. See Harold D. Lasswell, The Decision Process: Seven Categories of Functional Analysis (College Park, Maryland: University of Maryland Press, 1956). Lasswell's model is highly rational and value maximizing, especially in categories 2-4--recommendation, prescription, and invocation. Allison is influenced by non-rational models of decision-making, particularly Herbert Simon's concept of "bounded rationality." According to Simon, there are limitations to the possibility of perfect choice among alternatives. This is because rationality requires a complete knowledge and anticipation of the consequences that will follow each choice. Since these consequences lie in the future, imagination must supply the lack of experienced feeling in attaching values to them. Also, rationality entails a choice among all possible alternative behaviors. Simon opts for a concept called "satisficing," whereby the decision-maker chooses the first alternative that meets minimum requirements. See Simon, op. cit., p. 81.

⁴⁶Allison, op. cit., p. 79.

existence of functional differentiation in the foreign policy bureaucracy, he argues that boundaries between organizations are so vague and problems so abstruse that problem solving invariably involves overlapping functional jurisdictions. Furthermore, he explicitly rejects models of scalar differentiation by defining each subunit as quasi-independent, acting according to internal standards of behavior. Leaning as he does on Cyert and March, Allison does not accept the classical model's insistence on overall normative unity; the process of sequential attention, rather than producing a consensus among goals, papers over and sustains existing value differences. Finally, rather than distinguish between policy-making and policy-execution, as do Weber and Wilson, Allison sees organizations, formally designed to execute political decisions, as policy-making units. This not only elevates the role of organizations in the decision-making process; it simultaneously minimizes the part played by political leaders. Government decisions, therefore, "reflect the independent output of several organizations."⁴⁷ To understand a government's foreign policy one must examine the internal decision-making processes of its organizational subunits, not the deliberate choices of central policy-makers.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 67.

Model III--the governmental politics paradigm

Model III, the governmental politics paradigm, while employing certain concepts borrowed from administrative theory, derives primarily from the contributions of political science.⁴⁸ Based on the assumption that problems mobilize the attention of multiple bureaucratic groups, Model III posits the foreign policy output as the result of "pulling and hauling" among relevant organizations. Each organization, whose stand is determined by a mixed-motive perception of personal goals, bureaucratic "essence" and the national interest, participates in an intragovernmental political struggle with other organizations whose differing "stands" are similarly determined. The bureaucratic debate is structured within a routinely established framework that organizes decision channels and prescribes the rules of the game. The outcome, or policy, represents either the victory of a coalition of bureaucratic groups or a consensus among values and stands articulated by all participating organizations.

The notion that policies formulated in the executive branch represent political outputs rather than hierarchically

⁴⁸ See Roger Hilsman, The Politics of Policy-Making in Defense and Foreign Affairs (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), and To Move a Nation (Garden City: Doubleday, 1967); Samuel P. Huntington, The Common Defense (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1961); Warren R. Schilling, Paul Y. Hammond and Glenn H. Snyder, Strategy, Politics and Defense Budgets (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1962); Richard E. Neustadt, Presidential Power, 2nd ed. (New York: Wiley, 1976); and Alliance Politics (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1970).

determined decisions is expressed most cogently in Samuel P. Huntington's The Common Defense. Huntington, examining the issue of strategic outlays, distinguishes between executive and legislative policy-making.⁴⁹ The former, characterized by an asymmetrical power relationship among participating units, normative agreement and a limited range of choice, resembles most closely a hierarchical structure with a clearly designated and recognized decision apex. The latter, characterized by a relatively symmetrical power relationship among decision units, an important disagreement over goals and policies and a variety of possible alternatives, resembles a legislative decision process, even though it occurs within the executive branch. Huntington argues that the limits to executive policy-making make the latter a far more realistic portrait of decision-making within the executive branch. Because the central decision-maker is constrained by the nature of administrative feedback and the exigencies of anticipated reactions, the flow of hierarchical influence is not perfectly unilinear.⁵⁰ This is true, especially when

⁴⁹Huntington, op. cit., p. 146.

⁵⁰Allison and Morton Halperin distinguish between decisions which are "authoritative designations, internal to a government, of specific actions to be taken by specific officials" and actions which are "various acts of officials of a government in exercise of governmental authority that can be perceived outside the government." Because the decision-maker must rely on the acquiescence of underlings in the execution of his decisions, he must calculate anticipated reactions. See Graham T. Allison and Morton H. Halperin, "Bureaucratic Politics: A Paradigm and Some Policy Implications,"

those involved are relatively "high up" in the administrative hierarchy. The greater difficulty in replacing top-level personnel along with their wider span of lateral association and broader fields of responsibility constricts the ability of the central decision-maker to control their activities.⁵¹

The weakness of the central policy-maker dictates that controversial issues will be resolved through a legislative process. Huntington cites four ways in which major policy disagreements are papered over. First, controversial issues can be avoided, delayed or referred to other authorities. Second, a logrolling process can occur among participating units. Third, policies can be expressed in vague generalities representing the lowest common denominator that is acceptable to all groups. Finally, policies can be based on assumptions that may or may not be realistic.⁵² The result is that policy, rather than emerging as the clearly defined choice of a central decision-maker, derives from a political process involving a number of decision units. The multiplicity of participating groups inclines the process toward compromise,⁵³ which makes the central decision-maker more of a judge, a protector of a fragile consensus, than an advocate.⁵⁴ As

in Theory and Policy in International Relations, eds. Raymond Tanter and Richard H. Ullman (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), pp. 45-46.

⁵¹Huntington, op. cit., p. 148.

⁵²Ibid., pp. 162-166.

⁵³Schilling, Hammond and Snyder, op. cit., p. 24.

⁵⁴Huntington, op. cit., p. 182.

Huntington writes:

The theory that the President /central decision-maker/ makes the decisions, in short, serves as a cloak to shield the elaborate process of executive legislation and bargaining through which the policies are actually hammered out.⁵⁵

Huntington assumes that policies emerge with a minimum degree of central orchestration, and that whatever coordination occurs is less designed to provide direction than to maintain the agreement produced by the bargaining process. Underlying that assumption is the fundamental belief that the legislative process is capable of producing a consensus. This point is the foundation of Charles Lindblom's classic The Intelligence of Democracy.⁵⁶ Lindblom is concerned with the mechanics of consensus building in a virtually leaderless decision system. Despite the existence of a "top" decision-maker, who exercises prescriptive power over his subordinates, the subordinates, because of their control over the information flow, are in a unique position to manipulate their superior. Effective centralized leadership, no matter how attractive, is, according to Lindblom, impossible to achieve. Labeling the ideal administrative model as "synoptic," Lindblom argues that a rational decision-making model, positing the leader as the ultimate source of decisions, is precluded by reality. This results from seven factors:

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 194.

⁵⁶Charles Lindblom, The Intelligence of Democracy (New York: Free Press, 1965).

- 1) The synoptic model is not adapted to man's limited intellectual capacities.
- 2) The synoptic model is not adapted to the inadequacy of information.
- 3) The synoptic model is not adapted to the costliness of analysis.
- 4) The synoptic model is not adapted to failures, which must be anticipated to construct a satisfactory set of criteria.
- 5) The synoptic model is not adapted to the closeness of the observed relationship between fact and value in decision-making.
- 6) The synoptic model is not adapted to the openness of system variables with which it must contend.
- 7) The synoptic model is not adapted to diverse forms in which policy problems actually arise.⁵⁷

By rejecting the synoptic model, Lindblom shifts the emphasis of his analysis from the mechanics of unitary policy deliberation to the internal workings of a mutual adjustment system, involving a multiplicity of decision centers. He simultaneously rejects the notion of value maximization contained in rational decision models. Nevertheless, Lindblom does not view the policy process as chaotic and aimless.

⁵⁷Ibid., pp. 138-143.

Mutual partisan adjustments among the participants, which Lindblom defines as inevitable in a "strategic" decision-making system, operate to coordinate activities without central direction. These adjustments can be either adaptive, in which X seeks no response from Y but unilaterally attempts to adjust to Y's demands, or manipulative, in which X, as a condition for making his decision, induces a response from Y.⁵⁸ The strategic system combines features of central coordination with horizontal bargaining and adjustment. The central coordinator is incapable of producing a value maximizing decision because of the limits to synoptic deliberation, but he can participate in the mutual adjustment system, employing resources that only he can command. His primary task, however, is to assure the stability of the policy consensus that arises from the self-adjusting strategic process.

The impossibility of achieving synoptic decision-making necessarily dictates the inclusion into the policy process of a multiplicity of bureaucratic groups. Lindblom argues that problem solving, instead of being perfectly rational, is disjointed and incremental.⁵⁹ This means that in analyzing a situation, a decision-maker focuses not on a whole range of considerations and policy but only on those aspects of the problem which differ from its last consideration. Because of the limited nature of organizational

⁵⁸Ibid., pp. 35-51.

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 144.

"search" procedures, only a narrow range of decision consequences are considered. Disjointed incrementalism involves three types of decision processes: reconstructive analysis, serial analysis and evaluation and remedial problem solving.⁶⁰ The first involves redefinition of a problem so that it will correspond to existing operating procedures and responses. The second is defined by a piecemeal approach to problems in which the decision-maker attacks only fragments at a time. Each fragmented consideration produces an incremental output. The third is problem rather than goal-oriented. Rather than frame a problem in terms of goals, the decision-maker approaches it in a short-term, concrete fashion. Because these procedures fail to consider the widest range of alternatives and hence fall far short of the synoptic model, it is desirable, according to Lindblom, to include in the process a multiplicity of decision-makers. By widening the circle of participants, a larger number of consequences are considered.⁶¹

⁶⁰Ibid., pp. 145-147.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 151. Alexander L. George, who sees the president as central to the policy-making process, nevertheless argues for introducing elements of a pluralistic system into the decision-making process, for the same reason that Lindblom sees widening the circle as salutary to the strategic process. George contends that by fostering "multiple advocacy" in foreign policy-making, the president will be able to avoid the pitfalls of a narrow consideration of alternatives and consequences. See Alexander L. George, "The Case for Multiple Advocacy in Making Foreign Policy," The American Political Science Review 66 (September 1972): pp. 751-785.

Despite the utilitarian value of strategic decision-making as an alternative to the unrealizable synoptic model, Lindblom refers to the strategic process as "muddling through."⁶² The inclusion of more bureaucratic groups is not enough to compensate for the weaknesses in their decision procedures, which neglect important possible outcomes, preclude alternative policies and overlook affected values. Furthermore, the necessity to appease so many groups inherently excludes any possibility of value maximization. The test of a good policy is not whether it enhances the goals of the larger organization, but whether the various bureaucratic groups are in agreement over it.⁶³

Huntington and Lindblom contribute to Model III by defining policy-making dynamics in an essentially horizontal bargaining process. Nevertheless, contemporary proponents of the governmental politics paradigm acknowledge the qualitative distinction between bureaucratic power and the power of the president, the pinnacle of the vertical chain of command. Halperin and Allison write:

Generally one of these bureaucratic players is the chief executive of the government. He may have a disproportionate share of influence on major decisions. The President of the United States, for example, has a

⁶²Lindblom, The Science of 'Muddling Through', "in Policy-Making in American Government, ed. Edward V. Schneier (New York and London: Basic Books, 1969), pp. 24-37.

⁶³Ibid., p. 27.

range of both interests and formal powers that set him apart from other players.⁶⁴

Halperin in Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy argues that the president is the central figure determining the general direction of foreign policy actions.⁶⁵ His perception and judgment of what is in the national interest are dominant in the system. Allison in Essence of Decision distinguishes between "chiefs," including the president, and "indians," lower level staffers who attempt to influence presidential decisions.⁶⁶ In other words, the "bureaucratic" school seems to recognize that the bargaining framework contains inherent power asymmetries that lend importance to formal hierarchical arrangements and hence, to the position of the president.

While acknowledging the significance of presidential power, the thrust of the bureaucratic literature is, paradoxically, to minimize the president's role. Allison's basic argument is that governmental action is a political resultant, and that the primary actors are bureaucratic players, including the president. Halperin sees the executive branch as a fragmented organization of bureaucratic groups and individuals whose interpretations of external inputs and subsequent

⁶⁴Allison and Halperin, op. cit., p. 47.

⁶⁵Morton Halperin, Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 1974), p. 17.

⁶⁶Allison, Essence of Decision, p. 176.

outputs are defined by their diverse interests and objectives.⁶⁷ While conceding to the president the ability to provide policy direction, he views this direction as vague enough to permit quasi-independent action on the part of executive subunits. Furthermore, Halperin sees the policy flow as emerging from the bottom of the hierarchy and moving upward toward the president. Thus, by the time an issue has reached the president, enough alternatives have been winnowed out to severely limit the range of presidential choice. In addition, considering the possible effects on the president's reputation, status and prestige, the cost of forcing a policy on a recalcitrant bureaucracy might not be worth the ultimate reward to the president. I. M. Destler, who is concerned with the president's ability to translate broad policy directives into action, argues that routine bureaucratic actions touch more significantly on foreign policy than do presidential "decisions:"

There are considerable grounds for believing, then, that to treat United States foreign policy primarily as the direct outcome of decisions made by the President is to distort the process considerably. Instead, one might better begin by characterizing United States foreign policy as the outcome of a stream of decisions and actions taken by officials in a range of agencies and at several bureaucratic levels.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Morton H. Halperin and Arnold Kanter, Readings in American Foreign Policy: A Bureaucratic Perspective (Boston: Little, Brown, 1973), pp. 3-16.

⁶⁸ I. M. Destler, "Comment: Multiple Advocacy: Some 'Limits and Costs'," The American Political Science Review 66 (September, 1972) p. 788. Destler's concern is similar to

The emphasis in the bureaucratic literature on the limitations to the employment of presidential influence can be attributed to the impact of Richard E. Neustadt's Presidential Power, first published in 1960. Neustadt suggests that presidents, rather than command their subordinates to execute their wishes, most frequently exercise power through persuasion. This results from the fragmented character of the executive, which forces the president to treat his subordinates in a manner similar to his treatment of members of the legislative branch. Referring to the executive establishment as a group of "separated institutions sharing power," Neustadt argues that agency administrators are not only responsible to the president, but also to Congress, their clients, their staff and to themselves.⁶⁹ At times, therefore, the cost of compliance with a presidential order might outweigh its benefits. A president, cognizant of the multiple pressures acting on his subordinates, must seek to persuade them that the rewards of compliance or costs of recalcitrance make compliance the only alternative.

a point made by Schilling, Hammond and Fox. They define a "paper" policy as one that has been duly and officially promulgated, but which lacks the support necessary for its successful implementation. See Schilling, Hammond and Fox, op. cit., p. 25.

⁶⁹ A "policy" coalition consisting of members of the House and/or Senate, members of Congressional staff, a few bureaucrats and representatives of interested private groups has been called a subgovernment. See Randall B. Ripley and Grace H. Franklin, Congress, the Bureaucracy and Public Policy (Homewood: Dorsey Press, 1976), p. 6.

The importance of Neustadt's essay is that it defines limits to presidential power in an area where, theoretically, no such limits exist. It is easy to understand why the president must persuade rather than command Congress; the constitutionally mandated "separation of powers" precludes, in most cases, direct control by one institution over another. But within the executive branch, where the president sits astride a clearly delineated hierarchical structure, the existence of quasi-independent subunits becomes a noteworthy phenomenon. Thus, Neustadt's thesis has spawned further studies into the role of these subunits in the policy-making process. The results, in the foreign policy field, are models II and III which elevate government bureaucracies to the forefront of the policy-making system and simultaneously minimize presidential impact. Both models tend to stress the limitations to presidential power articulated earlier by Neustadt. But where Neustadt clearly emphasizes the role of the president as the political system's "Great Initiator," the "bureaucratic" school, by and large, sees political initiatives and outputs as the products of bureaucratic behavior. Neustadt recognizes restraints, but views them as challenges to more imaginative uses of presidential power. The "bureaucratic" school sees these same restraints not only as restrictions on the range of presidential action, but as determining factors in the foreign policy output of the political system.

To summarize, Model III sees foreign policy, not as the result of a purposive decision made by a unitary individual or group, but as the outcome of a political process involving different individuals and groups within the government. In fact, the output, or foreign policy action, rarely represents the exact, preferred option of any one group or individual. As Allison writes, "governmental action does not presuppose government intention."⁷⁰ Different proponents of Model III emphasize different concerns. For example, Halperin is interested in the strategies employed by bureaucratic players to influence presidential decisions.⁷¹ I. M. Destler is concerned with the capacity of the president to ensure that his decisions will be faithfully executed.⁷² But all agree that foreign policy is contingent more on bureaucratic procedures and decisions than on presidential choices.

Model III is different from Model II in that it sees policy less as the result of isolated actions by quasi-independent bureaucratic subunits and more as the outcome of an intricate policy-making process in which relevant bureaucracies participate. Whereas Model II sees the multiplicity

⁷⁰Allison, Essence of Decision, p. 175.

⁷¹Allison writes, "Most problems are framed, alternatives specified, and proposals pushed, however, by indians." Allison sees the bureaucratic process as working from the bottom upward, with many options foreclosed by the time an issue has reached the president. Ibid., p. 177.

⁷²See I. M. Destler, Presidents, Bureaucrats and Foreign Policy (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972).

of participants as the function of "factoring," Model III sees each organization participating because of its stake in the game. Model II sees conflicts in values among participating units as neutralized by the process of "sequential attention." Model III sees conflicts, emerging into the open, resolved through a consensual process. Model II sees organizational behavior as the function of procedures and repertoires endemic to each organization. Model III views each organization's input into the policy process as the function of its perception of organizational, personal and national interests.

Incrementalism

While there are significant differences between the organizational process and governmental politics paradigms, both models converge on the concept of incrementalism.

Allison defines the concept as it applies to Model II:

If a nation performs an action of a certain type today, its organizational components must yesterday have been performing an action only marginally different from today's action.⁷³

Roger Hilsman explains incremental policy change in the context of Model III:

Rather than through grand decisions or grand alternatives, policy changes seem to come through a series of slight modifications of existing policy, with the new policy emerging slowly and haltingly by small and usually tentative steps, a process by trial and error in which policy zigs and zags, reverses itself, and then moved forward in a series of incremental steps.⁷⁴

⁷³Allison, Essence of Decision, p. 87.

⁷⁴Hilsman, The Politics of Policy Making in Defense and Foreign Affairs, p. 5.

The implicit assumption contained in both versions of incremental theory is that policy decisions, no matter what type, are routed through a bureaucratic process. Thus, no matter the intentions of the policy makers as to the degree of change to be effected, organizational procedures will necessarily dictate that change will be incremental.⁷⁵

The organizational inclination toward incrementalism, as explained by Model II theorists, is related to the procedures that characterize conventional organizational behavior. Steinbruner argues that the guiding force behind organizational decisions, far from being the maximization of goals, is the quest to eliminate uncertainty. As previously mentioned, the attempt to limit uncertainty leads to the establishment of standard operating procedures, or pre-existing repertoires, designed to meet standard types of problems. When an organization or organizational subunit is faced with a problem, it immediately turns to its storehouse of standard operating procedures. If a problem is new and not covered by existing procedures, the organization generally takes one of several approaches. It can employ past images and historical analogies, and apply the same response. It can engage in "wishful

⁷⁵Allison and Halperin write that while major new "departures" might emanate from central players, the details of the action taken are determined by standard operating procedures existing in the organization at the time. Thus, organizations define the degree of possible change available. See Allison and Halperin, op. cit., p. 54.

thinking" and assume that by ignoring the problem, it will eventually go away.⁷⁶ It can attack the problem in bits and pieces, thus fragmenting it into workable sections. Finally, an organization can practice reconstructive analysis, whereby a particular problem is redefined to meet existing repertoires. In each instance, the outcome is determined by previous organizational behavior. Any departure can be only slightly different from existing procedures, because the organization necessarily precludes a search for radical options.⁷⁷

The fact that the intragovernmental process is relatively open further contributes to the incremental nature of policy change. The internal political process is inclined toward compromise, or the lowest common denominator. The more groups that are involved, the less flexibility there is to innovate. Because there will be groups resisting change and because the dynamics of the system dictate a "strain toward agreement," the outcome will represent only a slight modification in existing policy.

Another source for the incremental nature of policy change lies in the cognitive processes that characterize bureaucratic groups. This has less to do with organizational

⁷⁶Cited in Halperin, op. cit., p. 22.

⁷⁷Steinbruner acknowledges that major changes can occur but only if previous bureaucratic procedures have led to disastrous failure. The search for new alternatives, under these conditions, is primarily a bureaucratic endeavor. Steinbruner, op. cit., p. 74.

procedures and bargaining outcomes, than it has to do with an organization's psychological receptivity to external stimuli and its capacity for imaginative thought. On a non-organizational level, psychologist Leon Festinger has developed the classic theory of 'cognitive dissonance' to explain the individual's natural resistance to change. According to Festinger, an individual's inclination to resist change, both in his behavior and entrenched images, results from the high psychological costs involved.⁷⁸ When confronted with external challenges to a particular behavior pattern or stereotyped image, an individual will interpret that new information in a way that conforms to his pre-existing cognitive structure. By engaging in what appears to be a self-deceiving process of selecting information and distorting its meaning, the individual maintains an internal cognitive harmony.

While the tendency of the individual is to resist change, this propensity in groups, where the pressure for conformity is significant, is even more marked. Psychologist Irving Janis in his Victims of Groupthink argues:

The more amicability and esprit de corps among the members of a policy-making in group, the greater is the danger that independent critical thinking will be replaced by groupthink, which is likely to result

⁷⁸Leon Festinger, A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1957), pp. 25-26. Among the costs involved are: 1) Change may be painful. 2) Present behavior might be satisfying. 3) Making change might not be possible.

in irrational and dehumanizing actions directed against out-groups.⁷⁹

Among the symptoms of groupthink are:

- 1) Collective efforts to rationalize in order to discount warnings which might lead members to reconsider their assumptions before they overcommit themselves to past policy decisions.
- 2) Stereotypical views of enemy leaders as too evil to warrant genuine attempts to negotiate, or as too weak and stupid to counter whatever risky attempts are made to defeat their purposes.
- 3) Direct pressure is exerted on any member who expresses strong arguments against any of the group's stereotypes, illusions, or commitments--making clear that this type of dissent is contrary to what is expected from all loyal members.
- 4) Self-censorship of deviation from the apparent group consensus, reflecting each member's inclination to minimize to himself the importance of doubts and arguments.
- 5) Shared illusion of unanimity concerning the judgments conforming to the majority view.
- 6) The emergence of self-appointed mini-guards, members who protect the group from adverse information that might shatter their shared complacency

⁷⁹Irving Janis, Victims of Groupthink (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1972), p. 13.

about the effectiveness of their decisions.⁸⁰

Janis argues that groups, whether they are formal or informal, exert strong pressures on their members to conform to existing standards of behavior, images and norms of morality. A group's cognitive and behavioral tendency is, therefore, toward stereotypical views of the world, agreement, no matter how artificial, and a conscious effort to reject information leading to change. Janis observes, however, that these overt characteristics might in fact mask authentic disagreements among the members. He concludes that an apparent consensus might be assumed but not real.

It is not necessary to take a view as pessimistic as Janis' to note the effects of group dynamics on the organization's ability to confront external stimuli. Halperin observes that bureaucracies generally assimilate information favorable to their cognitive structures.⁸¹ In a similar vein, Aaron Wildavsky sees existing organizational images and procedures as detrimental to the organization's capacity to innovate:

To the extent that members /of an organization/ share common simplifications about the world, they reinforce one another in the strength of their convictions. They block out stimuli which do not fit in their pre-conceived notions. They may define the situation in accordance with their stereotypes and drastically restrict consideration of alternatives and consequences. A stimulus may be treated

⁸⁰ Ibid., pp. 197-198.

⁸¹ Halperin, op. cit., p. 24.

as belonging to a well known type because of some partially perceived surface characteristics, thus invoking the standard responses, when it actively contains novel features requiring rather different kinds of actions.⁸²

There seems to be a consensus among 'bureaucratic' scholars that policy inertia and, at most, incremental departures from established policies, are characteristic of a decision-making process that posits bureaucratic units as the central actors. This is true, whether one adheres to the Model II analysis of policy-making or to the governmental politics paradigm. There are, however, serious problems with this concept. First, from an empirical standpoint, to what extent is incrementalism a verifiable outcome? When dealing with policy outputs such as budgets, it is relatively simple to define an incremental change.⁸³ Because the observer is dealing with quantifiable units, he can easily determine, albeit arbitrarily, what constitutes a marginal increment. When, however, the policy output represents a non-quantifiable output, such as the signing of a trade agreement or the

⁸²Aaron Wildavsky, The Revolt Against the Masses and Other Essays on Politics and Public Policy (New York and London: Basic Books, 1971), p. 140.

⁸³Even this approach is not beyond reproach. William B. Moreland, criticizing Wildavsky's study of budget outlays for 37 domestic bureaus over a 12 year period, argues that Wildavsky's interpretation of figures is arbitrary and hence, incorrect. Moreland interprets the same figures as non-incremental. See William B. Moreland, "A Non-incremental Perspective on Budgetary Policy Actions," in Policy-Making in the Federal Executive Branch, Randall B. Ripley and Grace A. Franklin (New York: Free Press, 1975), p. 47.

opening of an embassy or even a speech, how does the observer prove that the foreign policy action is or is not incremental? The observer might contrive certain arbitrary procedures but, by and large, the analysis of policy change remains impressionistic, a matter of the scholar's judgment.

This brings us to the next difficulty. Assuming that the observer notes more than an incremental departure in a foreign policy action, how can this finding be reconciled with the elaborate theory put forward by the "bureaucratic" scholars? Essentially, major change is precluded by both models II and III. Proponents of the 'bureaucratic' school acknowledge the existence of major change, but they fail to explain how it can occur within the confines of their theoretical frameworks. Their acknowledgement of the exceptional character of major change does not excuse them of their failure to incorporate that change in their models. Allison writes that "organizational persistence does not preclude shifts in government behavior." Immediately following, however, he adds that the extent of change is limited by the "range of existing organizational programs."⁸⁴ Allison and Halperin state:

Major new departures in foreign policy typically stem from some decision by central players. But the specific details of the action taken are determined in large part by standard operating procedures and programs existing in the organizations at the time.⁸⁵

⁸⁴Allison, Essence and Decision, p. 87.

⁸⁵Allison and Halperin, op. cit., p. 54.

The above corresponds to the distinction drawn by Allison and Halperin between decisions and actions. The former are authoritative decisions, internal to a government, of specific actions to be taken by specific officials. Actions are various behaviors of governmental officials exercises of authority that can be perceived outside the government. The distinction, in some cases, however, seems artificial. First, if a decision has been made but not implemented so that it can be perceived by other governments, how can it be designated a "major new departure in foreign policy." Second, if organizational procedures eventually define the limits of foreign policy action and if, by nature, they produce incremental change, then the decision of the central leaders is effectively neutralized. Third, the distinction between decisions and actions does not always obtain. If the central decision-maker decides to implement the decision himself, he can effectively short-circuit organizational procedures. This is why presidents often resort to summit diplomacy or deliver major speeches without the prior consultation of relevant foreign policy bureaucracies.

The role of values

Inherent in the bureaucratic models' criticism of the rational actor paradigm is a rejection of the assumption that states act according to coherent, unified value structures. Instead, governments are composed of a number of groups and

organizations with different and often conflicting values. Furthermore, these values do not necessarily determine behavior. According to the Model II framework, government output results from standard operating procedures of organizations. According to Model III, the outcome, representing an amalgam of bureaucratic values, does not derive from a rational consideration of the overall unit's value structure. Hence, government behavior does not necessarily optimize the goals of the larger organization.

This is not to say that certain values are not shared by all participants in the policy-making process. On the contrary, there are elements of a common ideology that pervade the fragmented policy structure. Richard Barnet, in his study of the growing American involvement in Indochina after 1954, devotes one chapter to the "operational code" of the policy-making elite.⁸⁶ A more extreme example of this type of analysis is found in Gabriel Kolko's The Roots of American Foreign Policy, which attributes American foreign policy to the monolithic, capitalistic ideology of the dominant policy-making group.⁸⁷ Bureaucratic scholars, while challenging the conclusions of these studies, do not quarrel with the notion that some common ideology obtains. They see this ideology, consisting of certain values and shared images,

⁸⁶Richard J. Barnet, Roots of War (New York: Atheneum, 1972), Chapter 5.

⁸⁷Gabriel Kolko, The Roots of American Foreign Policy (Boston: Beacon, 1969).

as constraints on the policy input of bureaucratic players. Nevertheless, they view the ideology as vague enough to permit for different interpretations of its policy application. Thus, while shared values limit the range of bureaucratic action, they cannot be seen as determining factors in the nation's foreign policy.

The extent to which values pertaining to the national interest are further limited in their influence is explained by the types of values that motivate bureaucratic behavior. Allison writes, "Where you stand depends on where you sit,"⁸⁸ meaning that a bureaucratic player's perception of a particular issue depends, in large part, on the individual's institutional role. This is particularly true in cases involving budgets and procurement decisions. Halperin has expanded on this concept by stating that:

Participants in a policy decision examine any proposal to gauge whether or not it would help their particular organization carry out its mission.⁸⁹

This leads to several generalizations about the motives that mobilize bureaucratic action. Arguing that organizations evaluate issues in terms of their relevance to the organization's "essence," Halperin notes the following rules:

⁸⁸Allison, Essence of Decision, p. 176. Allison acknowledges that "this aphorism was stated first, I think, by Don K. Price.", p. 316 n. 71.

⁸⁹Halperin, op. cit., p. 26.

1. An organization favors policies and strategies which will make it more important.
2. An organization struggles hardest for the capabilities which it views as necessary to the essence of the organization.
3. An organization resists efforts to take away from those functions which it regards as part of its essence.
4. An organization is often indifferent to functions not seen as part of its essence or necessary to protect its essence.
5. Sometimes an organization attempts to push a growing function out of its domain entirely.⁹⁰

The importance of Halperin's observation is that it further diminishes the possibility of overall value maximization in the determination of foreign policy. By noting the impact of bureaucratic values on organizational behavior, Halperin is attributing a participant's stand to a parochial calculation of ends and means. Rather than divide over perceptions of the national interest, bureaucratic players collide over opposing organizational stakes. Thus, the political resultant is less of a consensus among values that pertain to the overall organization's interest in the international arena than it is a minimal reconciliation of centrifugal interests peculiar to each organization. The

⁹⁰Ibid., p. 39-40.

primary reference point is not the national entity but the bureaucratic unit.

There is, however, a danger in emphasizing the parochial characteristics of bureaucratic debate. As I. M. Destler notes, "In fact,...one considerable reason why battles are so heated is that men have strong convictions about what the 'right' policy is."⁹¹ As Destler observes, this phenomenon is not necessarily precluded by the "bureaucratic" school. Halperin, for example, cites the policy differences in the early 1960s between Europeanists in the State Department and members of the White House staff over the MLF issue.⁹² Steinbruner's case study in The Cybernetic Theory of Decision revolves around the same point. He notes that MLF proponents were referred to by their colleagues as "theologians" because of their fanatical belief in the rightness of their stand. Nevertheless, the thrust of the "bureaucratic" literature is to portray intragovernmental conflict as the function of competing organizational interests. This derives from the emphasis in the literature on the institutional roles that determine behavior, as evidenced by the aphorism, "Where you stand depends on where you sit." While bureaucratic players, as individuals, obviously carry with them certain value systems, the interests of the

⁹¹Destler, President, Bureaucrats and Foreign Policy, p. 67.

⁹²Halperin, op. cit., p. 13.

organization are ultimately decisive. The impact of the individual in the political arena is felt primarily in his ability to play the game; the influence of his values is, in most cases, marginal. This leads to the centrality of a powerful concept such as "bureaucratic essence," which serves as a prism, filtering the assimilation of outside information and constraining the degree to which personal values are operative.

A significant problem which emerges from this approach is that it is not well equipped to explain major policy change that results from the inclusion of new players in standard bureaucratic roles. As Allison writes, "Organizational priorities, perceptions, and issues are relatively stable."⁹³ Only a major crisis or disaster mobilizes change. But often change occurs because of changes in key personnel.⁹⁴ Were new personnel to identify exclusively with the interests of their organizations, there would be little correlation between their installation and new policies. Obviously then, new personnel bring with them different value preferences that have a large impact in determining their stands. As Michael Roskin notes, policies change when new generations, conditioned by different historical influences and events, replace

⁹³Allison, Essence of Decision, p. 104.

⁹⁴Halperin, op. cit., p. 104.

old foreign policy personnel.⁹⁵ Their paradigms, or "strategic conventional wisdoms," explain shifts in policy.

Another problem that results from the linkage between bureaucratic stands and organizational "essence" is that not all players are tied to bureaucratic constituencies. The EXCOM group, which was responsible for the decision to quarantine Cuba during the 1962 crisis, consisted of ad hoc players from within and outside the government. Certain players, such as Attorney-General Robert Kennedy, came from organizations that had no vested foreign policy interests. Other players, such as Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, took positions that appeared inconsistent with the dominant values of their organizations. Furthermore, certain key, foreign policy personnel have the president as their only constituency. This is especially true with regard to chief of the National Security Council, whose existence is, in fact, designed to circumvent the conventional bureaucratic apparatus. A strong NSC chief, such as Henry Kissinger, has demonstrated conclusively that personal values play a large role in determining foreign policy.

What is, however, most troubling about the bureaucratic school's attention to values is its failure to see the importance of shared values. While acknowledging that certain values transcend bureaucratic interests and divisions,

⁹⁵ Michael Roskin, "From Pearl Harbor to Vietnam: Shifting Generational Paradigms and Foreign Policy," Political Science Quarterly 89 (Fall 1974): 563-588.

proponents of the bureaucratic approach see them as broad constraints rather than specific determinants of policy. Often these values act only to dictate the type of language that a bureaucratic player will employ in pressing a particular option. A case can be made, however, for viewing the constraints as more important than the specific policies that are framed by them. Two radical critics of American foreign policy, Marc Pilisuk and Thomas Hayden, examining the concept of a "military-industrial complex," question whether the existence of bureaucratic policy differences among members of the alleged complex, does not, in fact, negate the military-industrial concept as an important variable in the determination of foreign policy.⁹⁶ They conclude that policy differences are actually strategic in nature and are not nearly as important as the consensus that exists among the policy elite regarding the maintenance and expansion of America's capitalistic interests around the world. While this is a relatively conventional leftist analysis, framed in purely economic terms, Richard Barnett, in his Roots of War, makes a convincing and plausible argument for the importance of shared values among the foreign policy elite. Contending that a set of common attitudes toward instability, violence and communism led to the American

⁹⁶ Marc Pilisuk and Thomas Hayden, "Is There a Military-Industrial Complex Which Prevents Peace?: Consensus and Countervailing Power in Pluralistic Systems," in The Bias of Pluralism, ed. William E. Connolly (New York: Atherton, 1969), pp. 123-153.

involvement in Viet Nam, Barnet demonstrates that the policy elite actively chose options that were consistent with their values. It is possible, therefore, to view shared values, not as broad constraints, but as actual determinants of policy.⁹⁷

Consistent with its view of the chief executive, the bureaucratic approach attributes little impact to the values of presidents. As Allison writes:

Organizational outputs structure the situation within the narrow constraints of which leaders must make their "decisions" about an issue...To one who understands the structure of the situation and the face of the issue--both determined by the organizational outputs--the formal choice of the leaders is frequently anti-climactic.⁹⁸

As mentioned earlier, Halperin acknowledges that presidents can determine the general direction of policies and, in fact, influence the types of images shared by bureaucratic players. Nevertheless, keeping in mind the distinction drawn

⁹⁷This is in direct contradistinction to the view of the bureaucratic school, as articulated by Halperin and Kanter: "The set of shared images which has prevailed since World War II has established only very broad limits for policy deliberation; mutually incompatible policies and actions can and do fall within the limits set by common conceptions of the national security interests." Halperin and Kanter, op. cit., p. 5. While it is true that the Viet Nam war produced policy differences within the American government between what Egbal Ahmad calls the "punitive-militarist" and "technological-attritive" approaches, one of the major factors to produce the American commitment was the set of shared attitudes. To treat these attitudes as "broad constraints" is to miss their importance. See Egbal Ahmad, "Revolutionary War and Counter-Insurgency," Journal of International Affairs 25 (1971): 1-47.

⁹⁸Allison, Essence of Decision, p. 79.

by Allison and Halperin between policies and actions, and considering the limited impact of shared values in the bureaucratic arena, it is questionable whether specific foreign policy actions can be explained by a president's value preferences. As Allison notes with regard to Model III:

Government decisions are made, and government actions are taken, neither as the simple choice of a unified group, nor as a formal summary of leaders' preferences.⁹⁹

There is, however, considerable doubt regarding this proposition. It is based on the assumption that the degree of presidential choice is so constricted by bureaucratic factors, that his value preferences will have little chance to enter into his decisions. Even when they do, the details of a specific policy will have been conditioned by bureaucratic procedures.¹⁰⁰ Nevertheless, it is interesting to speculate on the course of action that American governments would have taken in several instances had another president, with a different set of value preferences, been in power. For example, McGeorge Bundy calculates the importance of John Kennedy's world-view in reaching a limited test ban agreement with the Soviet Union in 1963:

⁹⁹Ibid., p. 171.

¹⁰⁰Stephen D. Krasner notes an insidious corollary to this point. According to Krasner, the bureaucratic school undermines democratic notions of accountability, allowing the president to hide behind his bureaucracy in covering up his mistakes. See Stephen D. Krasner, "Are Bureaucracies Important? (Or Allison Wonderland)," Foreign Policy 7 (Summer 1972) 160.

Meanwhile, the lesson of the test ban is that no step at all can be taken in the field unless the President himself works for it. A President indifferent to arms control, or easily discouraged by Soviet intransigence, or inclined to a narrow military view of the arms race, could be a guarantee against agreed limitations or disarmament.¹⁰¹

Bundy's example demonstrates that while a president must deal with his bureaucracy, the content of his values will determine, in some part, to what extent he is willing to challenge it on a specific issue. The degree to which his challenge will succeed is the topic of the following chapter.

The wider process

I. M. Destler warns of a fundamental danger in the bureaucratic approach:

The more elaborate analyses of Allison and Halperin, however, focus their attention largely on officials and relationships inside the executive branch. But concentrating on this bureaucracy can be misleading. For though career bureaucrats may deal largely with others within the government, Presidents and Cabinet members must operate in a wider arena.¹⁰²

Destler's observation is not, on the surface, entirely accurate. Allison, in enumerating the actors involved in the governmental politics model, cites "ad hoc players," such as Congressmen, members of the press, spokesmen for important interest groups and surrogates for each of these groups.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹McGeorge Bundy, "The Presidency and the Peace," Foreign Affairs 42 (April 1964): 363.

¹⁰²Destler, Presidents, Bureaucrats and Foreign Policy, p. 66.

¹⁰³Allison, Essence of Decision, p. 165.

Halperin sees the extragovernmental environment as limiting the president's flexibility in dealing with his subordinates:

Because of his concern about maintaining the support of his principal subordinates and because of his recognition of the need for widespread support in order to gain congressional and public acceptance of a proposal and its implementation by the bureaucracy, a President is reluctant to overrule key individual supporters on major institutions such as the JCS.¹⁰⁴

Destler notes that Roger Hilsman comes closest to acknowledging the interplay between intra and extra governmental factors. Hilsman notes that there "are many more people involved in making policy than those who hold official positions, and they have more subtle ways for shaping policy."¹⁰⁵ He suggests that the policy-making process be considered as a set of concentric circles with the president and his staff at the core. While decisions are made at the center, the outer circles often determine the direction of policy.

Nevertheless, Destler's apprehension is quite legitimate. Even though Allison acknowledges the presence of "outside" actors, he fails to incorporate them into his subsequent model. Halperin, who is not as tied to a rigorous paradigm, calculates the effect of the political environment on the strength of bureaucratic players. But he pays little attention to the impact of the "outer circles" on the content of policy. Hilsman, whose scope is comprehensive, notes the

¹⁰⁴Halperin, op. cit., p. 207.

¹⁰⁵Hilsman, The Politics of Policy-Making in Defense and Foreign Affairs, p. 10.

importance of external variables, but does not really relate them to the internal political process. The thrust of these analyses is to suggest further limitations to presidential power.

The concept of concentric circles of influence, with the president at the center, establishes a multiplicity of foreign policy players, each with his own interests and varying degree of power, acting to inhibit the range of presidential choice. Halperin's recognition of environmental factors ultimately supports his notion that the policy process is fundamentally an intra-governmental affair. Government organizations develop a network of clientelistic relationships with elements of the broader political system.¹⁰⁶ These connections protect them in their internal struggles with other bureaucratic groups and the chief executive. The wider political system, therefore, enhances the impact of bureaucracies on the making of foreign policy. Its effect is to maintain the policy process within the executive branch.

There is, however, an opposite side to the same observation. First, constraints imposed by the political system as a whole can often be as compelling as those imposed by the bureaucracy. The Truman Doctrine provides an example.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁶Adam Yarmolinsky argues that certain bureaucratic groups such as the Department of Defense, with strong domestic constituencies, are more powerful in the bureaucratic political arena than others, such as the Department of State with virtually no domestic base. See Adam Yarmolinsky, "Bureaucratic Structures and Political Outcomes," Journal of International Affairs 23 (1969): 225.

¹⁰⁷See Joseph Marion Jones, The Fifteen Weeks (New York: Viking, 1955).

As a response to the deteriorating political situation in Greece, in 1947, the State Department, with impressive support from other government organizations, pressed for a major departure in terms of American involvement abroad. With the President in agreement, the next major consideration was the extent to which Congress and the public would tolerate such a massive commitment of American resources. In this case, domestic constraints against radical departures in foreign policy were perceived as greater than bureaucratic constraints. With regard to the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, offered to the Senate sixteen years later, it is clear that hesitations in government policy, leading to incremental decisions, reflected the weight of domestic factors as much as intragovernmental considerations. Bureaucracies, therefore, often lead; whereas the domestic political system applies boundaries around innovation.

Second, the existence of an extra-governmental foreign policy system can, in fact, strengthen the president's hand while simultaneously neutralizing the impact of bureaucracies. Presidents operate under a set of conflicting pressures that provide them with a broader perspective than their subordinates. They are generally more attuned to domestic constituencies, particularly in Congress, the public, and among members of their party. While these constituencies make certain demands on presidents, they are also natural political bases of support. The president's

access to these groups and, in some cases, his command on their loyalties are impressive. This allows presidents to circumvent recalcitrant bureaucracies and to press their policy options in a public arena. This is not to say that resisting organizations will abandon public debate or that their allies within the broader political system will not, at times, be significant. But it does argue that the existence of a foreign policy system outside the inner circles dilutes the reliance of presidents on the absolute support of their bureaucracies. It affords the president the opportunity to undertake independent action and, depending on the degree of bureaucratic opposition, to forego formal bureaucratic channels.¹⁰⁸ The essence of Allison's and Halperin's model, that the policy process is internal to the executive branch of government, is, in many cases, incorrect. Rather than internalize the struggle, it is often in the interest of the president to externalize it. While it is true that bureaucracies themselves will often "widen the circle" to enhance their internal positions, by and large, when the president commits his full array of powers to the battle, the outcome is heavily weighted in his favor.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁸The above serves as a brief summary of the alternative model to be presented in the following chapter.

¹⁰⁹See Neustadt, Presidential Power. While Neustadt sees "persuasion" as the pre-dominant form of presidential power, he notes that the president's resources, when properly employed, are overwhelming.

Bureaucratic politics as an issue area

Allison employs models II and III to understand the Cuban missile crisis. Halperin uses a bureaucratic approach to study the ABM decision in the late 1960s. Steinbruner examines the MLF issue as a function of bureaucratic interplay. Neustadt lends a bureaucratic perspective to both the Suez crisis of 1956 and the Skybolt decision of 1962.¹¹⁰ The above represents an impressive array of case studies involving the central "bureaucratic" approach. It seems to indicate the almost universal applicability of the organizational model. Nevertheless, Allison himself suggests a limitation to the approach:

Model II's explanation of action at t in terms of activity at $t-1$ is explanation. The world is contiguous. But governments sometimes make sharp departures. Can an Organizational Process model be modified to suggest where change is likely?¹¹¹

Allison is aware that the organizational process paradigm is biased toward an incremental, disaggregated outcome. It is, therefore, incapable of explaining aggregate governmental decisions representing major departures in policy. But the solution lies less in modifying the model to correspond to the outcome than it does in developing a typology of government actions that can be linked to specific policy processes. This is an answer that Allison does not provide,

¹¹⁰See Allison, Essence of Decision; Halperin, op. cit., Steinbruner, op. cit.; Neustadt, Alliance Politics.

¹¹¹Allison, Essence of Decision, p. 274.

but which he recognizes as a useful possibility:

A typology of actions and outcomes, some of which are more amenable to treatment in terms of one model and some to another, should be developed.¹¹²

The development of issue typologies, while difficult, is not a new endeavor; James Rosenau, for example, attempts to differentiate foreign policy as a distinct issue area.¹¹³ Rosenau argues that domestic issues mobilize greater political activity among indigenous interest groups than do issues of foreign policy. This allows the foreign policy decision-maker a greater degree of flexibility in deliberating over issues. Rosenau's basic assumption is that foreign policy generally touches less on the allocation of domestic resources than does domestic policy. When a foreign policy issue, such as the Viet Nam war, begins to intrude on a society's basic distribution of resources, it will begin to approximate a domestic issue.

The problem with Rosenau's typology is that it does not distinguish among issue areas within the foreign policy field. Rosenau argues that foreign policy generates an executive policy making process, in which decisions are hierarchically determined. He suggests that the foreign policy issue area is characterized by a fundamental agreement

¹¹²Ibid., p. 275.

¹¹³James N. Rosenau, "Foreign Policy as an Issue Area," in The Scientific Study of Foreign Policy, ed. James Rosenau (New York: Free Press, 1971), pp. 401-440.

among participating units regarding goals and values. Furthermore, the range of possible choice is limited by the existence of these values. While it is true that certain decisions, especially those involving "high" national security, might be determined by an executive policy-making process, not all foreign policy issues follow the same route.¹¹⁴ As Huntington has demonstrated, the issues of weapons allocation and defense budgets, which combine features of domestic and foreign policies, are decided through a legislative process. Certain issues, on the other hand, which fail to mobilize the attention of the chief executive, are handled at a bureaucratic level. In other words, there are too many distinctions among foreign policy issues to think of them all as a monolithic issue area linked to a particular political process.

Theodore Lowi and William Zimmerman attempt a more ambitious issue typology by arguing that executive decision-making obtains only under certain, rare conditions.¹¹⁵ Lowi contends that the "electoral subsystem" makes foreign policy decisions only during a crisis or when a problem fails to

¹¹⁴Arnold Wolfers refers to this as the "Pole of Power." Because the stakes are so high, decisions are made at the apex by a small policy-making group. See Wolfers, op. cit., Chapters 1, 2.

¹¹⁵See Theodore Lowi, "Making Democracy Safe for the World," in Domestic Sources of Foreign Policy, ed. James N. Rosenau (New York: Free Press, 1967), pp. 295-331 and William Zimmerman, "Issue Area and Foreign Policy Process: A Research Note in Search of a General Theory," The American Political Science Review 67 (December 1973): 1204-1212. Charles F. Hermann devises an issue typology that takes into account

involve, over the short run, the nation's internal resources. Zimmerman agrees but defines the issue category as one in which the domestic impact is symmetrical throughout society and in which the political goods involved are intangible. This means that a major crisis, equally affecting the security of all citizens, or a marginal issue, involving no tangible resources and producing indifference among all citizens, generates an executive decision-making process. Most issues, however, are determined by a wider process of which there are three types. The distributive process, characterized by symmetrical domestic impact and tangible goods, involves elite conflict, such as intra-service rivalry among segments of the military. The regulative process resembles pluralism in which there are various groups competing over tangible goods. The third category, the redistributive type, involves competition between elites and non-elites and takes place, according to Zimmerman, during a limited war when the impact is highly asymmetrical.

three variables: the degree of threat posed to a nation's objectives; the amount of time for a decision to be made; the extent of surprise involved. He sees eight types of policy processes emerging from different combinations of these factors: crisis, innovation, inertia, circumstantial, reflexive, deliberative, routinized and administrative. Charles F. Hermann, "International Crisis as a Situational Variable," in International Politics and Foreign Policy: A Reader in Research and Theory, revised edition, ed. James N. Rosenau, (New York: Free Press, 1969), pp. 409-421. See also Thomas L. Brewer, "Issue and Content Variations in Foreign Policy," The Journal of Conflict Resolution 17 (March 1973): pp. 91-92.

The basic difficulty with the Lowi-Zimmerman formulations is that they appear too difficult to operationalize. This stems, in part, from their failure to clarify successfully what each typology entails. What does Zimmerman mean by "symmetry," and how does he determine the impact of an issue on different segments of society? Is it really possible to distinguish between issues involving tangible and non-tangible goods? For example, the issue of military appropriations involves a basic non-tangible item--the security of the nation. Yet it cannot be divorced from the struggle over internal resources that it entails. In fact, it can be viewed as a redistributive issue, especially during a political campaign, when the question of elite versus non-elite control of resources is tied to the issue of fundamental priorities. How would one categorize major policy change toward another country? Often, the issue is a long range one that generates intense public interest. The political commodities involved are perceptions and long established images of the international arena. The effect is symmetrical, since it involves national security, yet the political process is not exclusively executive. Where do Zimmerman and Lowi fit bureaucratic politics? Bureaucratic conflict is essentially pluralistic but it takes place within the executive branch. How do they calculate non-tangible items such as bureaucratic prestige, values and "essence?"

While there are serious problems with the Zimmerman-Lowi typologies, the thrust of their effort is essentially correct. It is impossible to devise a foreign policy paradigm applicable to all cases. Instead, one must attempt to define categories of issues which generate particular processes. A broader and perhaps more workable typology is attempted by Franz Schurmann in The Logic of World Power.¹¹⁶ Schurmann distinguishes between presidential politics, the realm of ideology, and bureaucratic politics, the realm of interests. The former, involving questions of national security, allows the president to play the dominant role. The latter, involving any issue not affecting directly the strategic security of the United States, mobilizes bureaucratic and special interests. Schurmann argues that nuclear politics, because it touches symmetrically on all segments of society, transcends interests and, thus, is determined by the president, the embodiment of the entire nation's interests. This allows the president to articulate the nation's strategic "vision" and to define the role that America should undertake in the global arena. Schurmann writes:

This /development of the post World War II Roosevelt vision/ points to something that people raised in or influenced by the Marxist tradition are prone to reject: the autonomous, innovative and powerful role of the state. But one must go even further and see what was obvious at the time: that it was not from the state as whole, the aggregate of executive, bureaucratic and legislative agencies, but from the very

¹¹⁶ Franz Schurmann, The Logic of World Power (New York: Random House, 1974).

pinnacle of the state that the vision originated.¹¹⁷

Schurmann's formulation of a fundamental dichotomy between the "realm of ideology" and the "realm of interests" is not entirely clear. His definition of "ideology," referred to as the strategic "vision," is questionable. Furthermore, the line between bureaucratic and presidential politics is not always sharply delineated. Intra-governmental battles over defense budgets do not mobilize purely parochial interests. Often, they entail serious differences over perceptions of the international environment and the intentions of long-standing "enemies" and "friends." Nevertheless, Schurmann attempts to explain why, regarding issues of national survival, the presidential vision ultimately transcends bureaucratic politics. Essential to this proposition is the unique relationship between the chief executive and the public, which will be explored in the following chapter.¹¹⁸ For present purposes, it is important to note that Schurmann builds a strong case for the irrelevance of a bureaucratic approach in understanding certain key decisions.

Allison, realizing that sometimes presidential values play a large role in particular decisions, suggests combining models I and III. This approach would focus on the president "as a rational actor whose purposes nevertheless include more

¹¹⁷Ibid., p. 8.

¹¹⁸Lowi employs the term "plebiscitary Presidency" to explain the ability of the president to mobilize public opinion on "ideological" issues. See Theodore Lowi, The End of Liberalism (New York: Norton, 1969), p. 183.

than mere strategic values and whose activities require sneakers as well as boots."¹¹⁹ While this is a constructive acknowledgement of the non-exclusive character of the bureaucratic model, it is, nevertheless, an attempt to salvage some utilitarian value from the governmental politics paradigm. But, as Schurmann has demonstrated, a bureaucratic perspective, in combination with the rational actor model, does not always obtain. Instead a new model must be formulated which takes into account the role of the president in the wide political process. At times, therefore, the bureaucratic approach is not adequate.

Conclusion

Any criticism of the "bureaucratic" approach to the study of foreign policy must recognize that the bureaucratic literature does not represent a uniform statement of a theoretical construct. Instead, there are a number of models within the larger approach. As Allison has brilliantly demonstrated, the differences between models II and III produce sharply different insights into the same case study. While the "organizational process" paradigm leans heavily on "organizational" literature, the governmental politics model is influenced primarily by the work of political scientists. Furthermore, various proponents of the "governmental politics"

¹¹⁹ Allison, Essence of Decision, p. 277.

paradigm, offer different assessments of the respective role of the president, values and the wider political process that derives from a bureaucratic perspective.

Nevertheless, this chapter has demonstrated that there are certain uniform conclusions contained in the analyses of those who identify with the bureaucratic school.¹²⁰ These conclusions emerge from a basic consensus among "bureaucratic" scholars about the centrality of government organizations in the determination of foreign policy. The effect upon those who see value in the bureaucratic perspective is to focus on bureaucracies, sometimes to the exclusion of other variables. Allison's critique of the rational actor paradigm is that it neglects factors internal to the state. He has shown convincingly how a different approach can uncover some of these important variables. He has demonstrated how important a scholar's theoretical framework is in determining his selection and evaluation of facts. But Allison's criticism of the rational actor model ultimately proves the shortcomings of his own approach. By demonstrating the non-exclusive character of one model, he conclusively demonstrates the theoretical bias inherent in any approach that relies too heavily on one set of factors. This is not to say that the bureaucratic model is not valuable. On the contrary, it helps to explain

¹²⁰The possibility that further research will continue along these lines is demonstrated by the institutionalization at Harvard of the "May Group," designed to periodically review the role of "bureaucracy in the making of national security policy." See Halperin, op. cit., p. xii.

much that has been previously ignored. But it seems somewhat presumptuous, if not misleading, to build any approach on a factor so limited as foreign policy bureaucracies.

CHAPTER II

PRESIDENTS, SOVIET-AMERICAN RELATIONS AND THE NATIONAL INTEREST

In the immediate aftermath of World War II, the United States found itself pitted against the Soviet Union in what was perceived at the time as a "life and death" struggle for power. The conflict has since expanded from Europe and the Mediterranean to include Asia, Africa and Latin-America. During this interval, the United States has fought two major wars, increased the scope of its global economic involvement, intervened militarily and covertly in the affairs of sovereign states and developed a nuclear capability of enormous destructive capacity, all in some part attributable to its relationship with the Soviet Union.

At the same time, successive administrations have engineered diverse policies to deal with the Soviet threat. Included in these have been doctrines as varied as "massive retaliation" and "flexible response," "detente" and "brinkmanship." In addition to these strategic changes, major changes have occurred in the international system. The Atlantic Alliance has developed irreparable fissures, the "Third World" has achieved political prominence, the economic power of the United States has receded, first in relation to

other industrialized nations and more recently as a result of the growing scarcity in world oil reserves and, perhaps most important for America's global strategy, communism has lost its monolithic character.

Despite the significant changes of the last thirty years, American foreign policy has been characterized by an impressive degree of continuity. This, I believe, is attributable to two central facts. First, the United States, throughout this period of time, has identified the Soviet Union as its principal enemy. This perception continued through both periods of detente and the evolution of the People's Republic of China as a major world power. Second, the relationship with the Soviet Union has affected not only the goals of American policy in virtually all areas of global concern but has also been connected, in the minds of both the political elite and the mass public, with the very survival of the state.

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine the impact of presidents on the formulation of policies directed at the Soviet Union. Considering, on the one hand, the consensual nature of anti-Soviet attitudes and, on the other hand, the multiplicity of government organizations involved in the making of policy, it would be reasonable to hypothesize that the range of presidential influence in this area is limited. I will argue, however, that in response to Soviet overtures for detente, presidents are ultimately decisive in

the shaping of appropriate strategies. That this is so is attributable, in large part, to the politicized nature of the issue of Soviet-American relations. By "politicized," I refer to any issue whose scope of involvement and concern stretches beyond the executive branch of government. The greater the attention of the political system as a whole, the greater are the number of constraints on policy-makers in the executive branch. At the same time, the larger the number of external restraints on the foreign policy bureaucracy, the more compelling is the need for presidential leadership. Consequently, presidential influence on policy is greatest in those areas of the Soviet-American relationship that mobilize system-wide attention.

Attached to this broad proposition are three qualifications of great importance. First, the extent of presidential leadership in this area is a function of the interests and strengths of individual presidents. While this dissertation considers conditions that maximize the possibilities for the employment of presidential power, it does not purport to predict when or how it will be used. Second, while presidents tailor government policy toward appropriate strategies, no president can escape the basic foreign policy consensus dictating a balance between anti-communism and the avoidance of general war. The art of presidential leadership is in persuading all elements of the political system that no matter the apparent change in policy, the fundamental balance is

still in existence. Finally, because the issue area of Soviet-American relations is so enormously complex, no president can hope to establish policy that is uniform in all aspects of that relationship. He is more likely to have a decisive impact in areas that spark both his interest and the concern of groups and institutions outside the executive branch.

This chapter analyzes the development of the postwar consensus regarding Soviet-American relations, identifies the actors involved in the formulation of American policy and defines those conditions which maximize the impact of presidential leadership.

The evolution of the Cold War consensus

The term "foreign policy," according to Wolfram Hanrieder, refers to a "more or less coordinated strategy with which institutionally designated decision-makers seek to manipulate the international environment."¹ This definition corresponds to one offered by historian Ernest R. May who distinguishes between a nation's goals and the strategies employed by its leaders to achieve goals. The latter, classified as "foreign policy," can be broken down further into

¹Wolfram F. Hanrieder, "Compatibility and Consensus: A Proposal for the Conceptual Linkage of External and Internal Dimensions of Foreign Policy," The American Political Science Review 61 (December 1967): 971.

²Ernest R. May, "The Nature of Foreign Policy: The Calculated versus the Axiomatic," Daedalus 91 (Fall 1962): p. 654.

two categories:

On the one hand, there is the choice between the alternative courses of action that are open in a particular place at a particular time. On the other, there is the broad formulation that fixes priorities and provides standards by which the appropriate choices and alternatives may be made.³

Government decisions are made whenever policy-makers are called upon to choose among a set of alternatives. The most fundamental choice involves the selection or ranking of national goals. Second, are the types of decisions which arise from those situations demanding immediate or short-range attention. Third, linking national goals and problem-solving decisions, are choices among broad strategic doctrines designed theoretically to enhance the fulfillment of national objectives by providing a reference point for the formulation of specific responses to the international environment.

The range of choice available to policy-makers, as a group or as individuals, is most circumscribed in the definition of national goals. Permanent goals, variously referred to as "core values" or "interests," are broad formulations of the highest priority national objectives.⁴ These goals are distinguished both by the constancy and broad acceptance.

³Ibid., p. 659.

⁴K. J. Holsti uses the term "core value" to describe "the kind of goal for which most people are willing to make sacrifices." K. J. Holsti, The Analysis of International Relations, 3rd ed. (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1977), p. 145. Hans Morgenthau uses the term "national interest" to define the highest priority goals of the state. Hans J. Morgenthau, Politics Among Nations, 5th ed. revised (New York: Knopf, 1978).

For example, it is the goal of all policy-makers, no matter their personal ideologies or national settings, to secure the physical boundaries of the state and to maintain intact its existing socio-economic-political structures against external attack.⁵ Another goal uniting policy-makers is the assertion of some mastery over the international environment, if only to achieve the satisfaction of permanent and collateral goals. The pursuit of a national power interest, or the arrangement of the international environment in a way that is responsive to the demands of the nation-state, can thus be seen as a permanent goal. This goal and others like it depend less on the personal preferences and characteristics of individual statesmen than it does on the leadership roles which define their responsibilities and orientations.

⁵See among others Holsti, Donald E. Nuechterlein, United States National Interest in a Changing World (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1973), p. 8; and Gene E. Rainey, Patterns of American Foreign Policy (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1975), p. 5. James Rosenau argues that it is impossible to define goals which are universally accepted because all national goals are the outcomes of competing preferences or "values." This writer suggests that these types of goals transcend interests and that there are identifiable national goals to which the mainstream of society subscribes. See James N. Rosenau, The Scientific Study of Foreign Policy (New York: The Free Press, 1971), p. 242. Arnold Wolfers defines self-preservation as "all demands pointing toward the maintenance, protection, or defense of the existing distribution of values, usually called the status quo." He recognizes, however, a difficulty in the definition of this goal. "The national 'self' which states seek to preserve can undergo a wide variety of interpretations. It may be considered to include only national independence and the territorial integrity of the homeland; or it may be held to embrace a whole catalogue of vital interests from safety belts and influence zones to investments and nationals abroad." Cited in

Permanent goals provide the framework for the definition of systemic goals. While permanent goals reflect national objectives through space and time, systemic goals represent concrete applications of these broad goals as they relate to specific international environments. During most of the nineteenth century Americans identified both their physical security and political integrity with the avoidance of European power politics. The policy of isolation was designed to further that end. In the twentieth century, changes in global technology and the breakdown of the European state system made the policy of isolation increasingly untenable, at least in the opinion of many in the United States. Consequently, the United States became entangled militarily in European power politics. Both broad policies, isolation and international military involvement, were in large part, directed at the same ends--the maintenance of the physical and political security of the state. Each, however, was adopted to fit the specific international context that gave new definition to the national interest.

Self-preservation involves the protection of the national security and the maintenance of the character of the state. After World War II, a fairly comprehensive consensus developed among American policy-makers regarding the threat

Wolfram F. Hanrieder, "Actor Objectives and International Systems," in Comparative Foreign Policy: Theoretical Essays, ed. Hanrieder (New York: McKay, 1971), p. 111.

posed by the Soviet Union to both of these permanent goals. Accordingly, a more immediate goal of American foreign policy was to resist the expansion of Soviet power. In the early 1950s, when the Soviets developed their own nuclear capability, the permanent goal of physical security was no longer identified with anti-communism alone. Instead, as Seyom Brown writes in The Faces of Power, two aims evolved.⁶ First, as a continuation of the objectives developed in the initial phase of the Cold War, the United States, through successive administrations, sought to contain the expansion of Soviet power. Second, each administration, its anti-Communist rhetoric notwithstanding, attempted to avoid the outbreak of general war between the superpowers; either by moderating its anti-Soviet behavior or by seeking limited accommodation to defuse tensions. An example of this dualism is contained in the term "co-existence," which May correctly refers to as a goal rather than a policy. Preferable to such goals as surrender, conquest or suicide, "co-existence" reflected a concrete application of the broader permanent goal of national survival.⁷

Brown argues that from the inception of the Cold War through the Johnson administration (the end of his study), the goals of American foreign policy vis-a-vis the Soviet

⁶Seyom Brown, The Faces of Power (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), p. 2.

⁷May, op. cit., p. 654.

Union remained constant. This could be explained in several ways. First, from a systemic standpoint, the Soviet Union was and continues to be the only state capable of inflicting physical damage on the territory of the United States that would jeopardize the very existence of the state. Combined with its highly visible anti-capitalist ideology, the Soviet Union's physical prowess has been perceived as a threat not only to the national security but to the character of the nation's institutions and "way of life." Second, public opinion, while receptive to occasional relaxations of tensions between the superpowers, has remained, by and large, anti-Soviet in orientation.⁸ Third, the generation of policy-makers that took power after World War II, including Kennedy and Johnson, were intent on avoiding what they perceived to be the mistakes that had led to German aggression in Europe.

⁸ Cecil Crabb, Jr. writes that as early as the end of World War II, forty percent of the respondents to one poll classified the Soviet Union as an "aggressive" state. By August 1946, before the evolution of ostensibly anti-Soviet government policies such as the Marshall Plan and Truman Doctrine, seventy percent of the respondents to another poll disapproved of Soviet conduct. Quoting Paul Seabury's analysis, Crabb continues, "...whereas officials of the Truman administration were prone to think in terms of a more geographically limited 'Soviet problem', the American public tended to view the threat in more generalized terms--as a worldwide Communist challenge to the 'American way of life'." Cecil V. Crabb, Jr. Policy-Makers and Critics: Conflicting Theories of American Foreign Policy (New York: Praeger, 1976), pp. 90-91.

Employing an "anti-appeasement" paradigm, these policy-makers were determined to advance a relatively hard-line stance in the face of perceived threat.⁹

Brown contends that the twin goals of resistance to the spread of communism and the prevention of direct nuclear confrontation derived from a set of "critical premises" enjoying wide currency among those who occupied the highest policy-making echelons.¹⁰ The first of these premises, resting on a calculation of long-range Soviet objectives, assumed that the Soviets were determined to dominate the world and ultimately to replicate their national model on a universal scale. Second, there was a widespread feeling that a general war would inevitably lead to the physical destruction of the United States. Third, turning toward premises underlying policy options, was the assumption that a single-minded pursuit of "peace" might jeopardize vital national security interests, particularly if it eventuated in a relaxation of the effort to combat communism. Finally, the operative premise in any conflict involving American and Soviet interests was the maintenance of a balance of power between the two sides. In summary, Brown links the consensus on postwar goals--indicating the acknowledged existence of an "irreducible"

⁹See Michael Roskin, "From Pearl Harbor to Vietnam: Shifting Generational Paradigms and Foreign Policy," Political Science Quarterly 89 (Fall 1974): 563-588. See also Ernest R. May, "Lessons" of the Past (London: Oxford University Press, 1973).

¹⁰Brown, op. cit., pp. 10-14.

national interest--to a fundamental agreement on underlying assumptions about "world conditions and what these conditions seem to require of the United States in order to perpetuate itself and its Way of Life."

Daniel Yergin, in his analysis of the roots of the Soviet-American confrontation, argues that while American policy-makers viewed the Soviets as a threat, there was, nevertheless, a subtle but significant difference in their assumptions about the character of that threat.¹¹ Distinguishing between what he labels as the "Riga" and "Yalta" axioms, Yergin asserts that while the former was characterized by an image of the Soviet Union as a world revolutionary state, the latter saw the Soviets as behaving like a traditional world power content to operate within the framework of the existing international system. In Yergin's opinion, those who subscribed to the Riga Axiom, saw the Soviet Union not only as a conventional challenge to American power but as a menace to its very existence. They were thus inclined to emphasize confrontational aspects of the relationship rather than the possibilities for postwar cooperation and accommodation. The "Yalta" proponents, on the other hand, viewed the appearance of Soviet expansionism in Europe either as a defensive reaction to perceived threat from the West or as a consequence of the "natural" propensities of states to

¹¹Daniel Yergin, Shattered Peace: The Origins of the Cold War and the National Security State (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, Co., 1977).

establish hegemony through military victory. According to this axiom, or generalization about Soviet behavior, the Soviets could be expected to cooperate in areas of mutual national interest. Yergin, in analyzing the evolution of American policy toward the Soviet Union in the aftermath of World War II, concludes that the Riga Axiom was the generalization that ultimately took hold among the dominant group of American policy-makers.

According to Paul Hammond, an impressive governmental consensus developed in response to Soviet behavior immediately following World War II. This consensus, involving the executive branch and bipartisan Congressional leadership, "rested on the belief that Russia threatened vital American security interests, mainly in Europe, through a combination of political and military subversion, backed up by military blackmail, during conditions of economic prostration."¹² Domestic critics such as Henry Wallace failed to generate support for their accommodationist viewpoint. This could be attributed to continuing manifestations of Soviet aggressiveness, their inability to gain the support of the leadership of the two major parties and their failure to capture the sympathies of a broad segment of public opinion. The prevailing assumption that the Soviets were threatening Western Europe and hence

¹²Paul Y. Hammond, Cold War and Detente: The American Foreign Policy Process Since 1945 (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, Inc., 1975), p. 37.

threatening the United States, laid the groundwork for the evolution of policies that would involve the United States actively in world affairs.

Hans Morgenthau reasons that the series of postwar crises in Europe initially moved American policy away from assumptions of Wilsonian internationalism to assumptions of power.¹³ Instead of viewing the world as a self-regulating community of harmoniously arranged states, policy-makers began to recognize the need for the assertion of power as a counter-balance to threat. Nothing is more illustrative of this shift in assumptions than the development of regional security instruments, such as NATO, to augment the United Nations as a tool of American foreign policy. According to Morgenthau, American policy-makers adopted a set of realist assumptions about international politics and, accordingly, were able to fashion policies, such as the Marshall Plan and Truman Doctrine, that would tailor national strategy to the goal of the state.

The Cold War consensus and public mobilization

The development of a proper strategy, however, entailed more than the formulation of new assumptions about the international environment and its potential dysfunctionality. It required the engagement of the nation's resources

¹³Hans J. Morgenthau, The Purpose of American Politics (New York: Knopf, 1962), p. 132.

on a scale and in a direction not necessarily supported by the prevailing mood of public opinion. While it is true, as previously cited, that the public attitude toward the Soviets in the aftermath of World War II was negative, policy-makers and influential members of Congress sensed that the costs of anti-communism might outweigh the willingness of the public to make the necessary sacrifices. Accordingly, in mapping out the new strategy, it became necessary to mobilize the domestic resources of society by clarifying and accentuating the nature of the threat. By successfully building a consensus behind the aim of countering Soviet power, policy-makers managed to reorganize society toward the designated task. In so doing, they also developed public attitudes toward the Soviet Union which were decidedly more simplistic than their own. As a consequence, they established a domestic environment that would ultimately have significant impact in limiting the freedom of subsequent policy-makers in their dealings with the Soviet Union.¹⁴

Hammond notes that in the early years of the Cold War, the Truman administration was somewhat reluctant to over-emphasize the nature of the Soviet threat to the American people. Instead, Truman and his advisors opted for an approach that would gain support for a massive but limited defense of

¹⁴See Milton J. Rosenberg, "Attitude Change and Foreign Policy in the Cold War Era," in Domestic Sources of Foreign Policy, ed. James N. Rosenau (New York: Free Press, 1967), pp. 111-159.

Europe. This would allow for the development of a large-scale aid program without unleashing strong and uncontrollable sentiment for huge domestic rearmament outlays. But by 1950, the detonation of the Soviet A-bomb and the projection of a significant Soviet nuclear capability in the near future led to a reevaluation of American thinking regarding the military requirements of the state. Coinciding with the outbreak of the Korean War, this new thinking led to a significant rearmament program. It also led to an oversimplification of the monolithic character of communism. While State Department officials, among them Secretary of State Dean Acheson and Kremlinologists George Kennan and Charles Bohlen, viewed the Communist world as much more diffuse, it became necessary, for reasons of domestic political mobilization, to underscore the broad and unitary nature of the Soviet threat.

The public portrait of the Communist "menace" that emerged from the early days of the Cold War was, in part, a consequence of political manipulation. While it is true that there was already a strong, latent anti-Soviet mood in existence, by the time the government engineered its monumental responses of 1947, it is equally true that the leaders' perception of this opinion led them to employ rhetoric that would not only reinforce but also sharpen prevailing public assumptions. In reality, there was a glaring inconsistency between the ideological rationale developed to justify and mobilize support for the new policies and their actual content and

intent. The Truman Doctrine, while defended as a precedent for American involvement in behalf of "free" peoples was not followed, nor was it intended to be followed, by any effort to protect regimes in areas recognized to be within the Soviet sphere of influence. In fact, while portraying communism as a universal threat, the policies that evolved before 1950 were primarily centered on Europe. But in accentuating the monolithic character of communism, the administration was to open itself to partisan criticism in cases where it acted differently. Thus, Truman's decision not to seek massive Congressional aid in behalf of the Nationalist regime in China was to serve as a strong weapon in the hands of Republicans eager to discredit Democratic foreign policy.

Why did Truman's and successive administrations continue to develop public attitudes about the nature of the Soviet threat that they were not willing to support with appropriate strategies? Theodore Lowi, in his article "Making Democracy Safe for the World" suggests that the exigencies of domestic mobilization have forced presidents to oversell controversial foreign policy programs by indulging in rhetorical excesses.¹⁵ Lowi's contention is, in large part, correct. Domestic public opinion is relatively uninformed and detached, particularly with regard to foreign

¹⁵Theodore J. Lowi, The End of Liberalism (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., Inc., 1969), p. 180.

policy. The arousal of that opinion is more easily accomplished through the awakening of fear and an immediate sense of threat than in a careful explanation of the "enemy's" subtleties.

On the other hand, Lowi's analysis suggests a genuine cynicism on the part of the nation's leaders. This is not entirely true. Truman, for example, was a genuine anti-Communist who, after the German invasion of Russia, had almost whimsically hoped that the two giants would destroy each other. He himself had a relatively uncomplicated view of Soviet leaders as "relentless bargainers forever pressing for every advantage for themselves,"¹⁶ who could understand only force. His publicly articulated pronouncement that it "should be the policy of the United States to support people who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures," while not consistent with actual policy, was probably very close to his thinking about the responsibilities of the United States as the foremost democratic state.

The strong rhetoric of anti-communism that appeared in the Truman Doctrine address, drafted by the Department of State and supported by a strong policy elite consensus, represented a conscious attempt by the government to mobilize public opinion behind American policy in Europe. This

¹⁶Harry S. Truman, Memoirs: Years of Decision, Vol. I and Memoirs: Years of Hope, Vol. II (Garden City: Doubleday, 1955 and 1956), pp. 454-455 (I).

administration, as did subsequent administrations, subscribed to an essentially negative generalization about the well-springs of Soviet behavior. In drafting the public challenge to the Soviets, the administration was well aware of the limits to which it could conceivably extend itself against the Russians. Thus, the policy chosen was one of containment rather than "rollback." At the same time, Truman and his advisors in the State Department and allies in Congress realized that even limited action would require a widening of domestic opinion parameters. To do so would require, quite simply, a dramatic dose of shock treatment. It also would require strong references to those elements of Soviet behavior that offended American principles of justice in international relations. Stanley Hoffmann sees these principles as serving "the function or dysfunction of providing norms for evaluation and action."¹⁷ Long held principles such as "self-determination" and opposition to forced annexation of territory, were used to call attention to aspects of Soviet foreign policy that were inconsistent with the prevailing American ideology. The fact that the United States did not have the intention or wherewithal to oppose Soviet violations of self-determination and acquisitions by force wherever they occurred, did not minimize them as aspects of

¹⁷ Stanley Hoffmann, Gulliver's Troubles, or the Setting of American Foreign Policy (New York: McGraw Hill, 1968), p. 114.

Soviet behavior that rationalized a more vigorous foreign policy on the part of the Americans.

The rhetoric of the Truman administration can be seen as less a prescription for specific action than as a rationalization for a broad policy of confrontation. The gap that appeared to exist between its strong public statements and its relatively limited strategy was not, however, peculiar to the Truman administration. Eisenhower, while employing much of the same rhetoric, chose not to involve the United States militarily in areas such as Indochina and Hungary. In addition, he attempted to take advantage of what were perceived to be temporary thaws in the Cold War relationship. Kennedy, too, while speaking toughly in his inaugural address, pressed almost immediately for a workable test ban agreement. In all Cold War administrations the attempt to curb Soviet power--an attempt supported by the public--was tempered by the need to avoid general war. Accordingly, one can argue that while the rhetoric explained in idealistic terms, the fundamental American antipathy to the Soviets, the more complicated self-interest demanded a more restrained approach.

Presidents and their impact on Soviet-American relations

American presidents have operated within this context since the end of World War II. The broad parameters of public opinion and the objective conditions of the external environment have created an often ambiguous straddling of two basic objectives--political and indirect military opposition to the

Soviet Union, on the one hand, and avoidance of nuclear war, on the other. It is clear, then, that post World War II American presidents--from Truman to Jimmy Carter--have identified the national interest in remarkably similar terms; i.e., as a balance between confrontation and restraint. When a president has appeared to emphasize one over the other, he has invariably been compelled to reassert the balance. For example, Kennedy had to assure the Senate that the Test Ban Treaty would not allow the Soviets to gain a nuclear advantage. Johnson, while pursuing a truculent anti-Communist policy in Southeast Asia and Latin American arranged the Non-Proliferation Treaty with the Soviets. Carter, while initially advancing a strong human rights policy, was forced to back off when it threatened SALT negotiations. That this is so suggests strongly the limited choice available to presidents in the selection of national goals. Where then do presidents make a difference in foreign policy?

In answering this question, it is important to note that whereas the ambivalence in American goals toward the Soviet Union produced a consistently ambivalent policy, there were still strong disagreements about which of these two goals should be pursued with greater vigor. Robert Levine in The Arms Debate describes this disagreement in terms of three mainstream schools of thought: anti-war marginalists, anti-

Communist marginalists and middle marginalists.¹⁸ Anti-war marginalists believe that the Soviet Union poses a threat to the security of the United States but see greater danger in the possibility of nuclear war. Anti-Communist marginalists do not propose to initiate a nuclear war against the Soviet Union but also feel that arms control agreements work to the advantage of the Soviets, who are fundamentally untrustworthy. Middle-marginalists value neither "peace" over "anti-communism" nor "anti-communism" over "peace"; instead, they attempt to strike a balance between the two objectives. According to Levine, writing in 1963, most policy-makers are in this middle range.

One need not accept Levine's trichotomization to appreciate the existence of differing approaches to the Soviet-American rivalry. It is clear that, for whatever reasons, there were those interested in working toward a more positive relationship with the Soviet Union and those opposed. It is also clear that the policies ultimately adopted reflected what Levine refers to as a "middle marginal" approach, a balance between the two perspectives. The term "balance," however, is in some ways misleading. It suggests a continuous equilibrium between strategies representing opposing goals. But this does not adequately describe American foreign

¹⁸Robert A. Levine, The Arms Debate (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963); see also Reynold Levy, Nearing the Crossroads: Contending Approaches to Contemporary American Foreign Policy (New York: Free Press, 1975).

policy toward the Soviet Union since the end of World War II. Instead, an era of intense hostility, mitigated by strategic restraint, has been punctuated by periodic episodes of "thaw," in which efforts have been made to achieve limited accommodation. These periods have been truly ambiguous in character. They have reflected an attempt on the one hand, to ameliorate big power tension through negotiation. At the same time, each thaw has been marked by the continued effort to curb Soviet power.

Within this context, the role of the president can be better understood. A president's freedom of action in foreign policy is severely circumscribed. He is constrained by the domestic political environment, composed of public opinion, the media, political parties and in some cases, interest groups. He can be frustrated by Congress, particularly with regard to bills or treaties requiring appropriation or ratification. Within the executive branch, he must often defer to bureaucratic considerations and organizational repertoires. In a very broad sense, he is limited by the prevailing foreign policy consensus that defines the national interest, and by the structure of the international system. Nevertheless, a president, operating within this context, performs a function that significantly affects the outcome of foreign policy, i.e., the legitimization of policy that appears to violate the equilibrium between nuclear war avoidance and anti-communism.

Each administration has been compelled at times to risk the appearance of jeopardizing the goal of anti-communism by placing an emphasis on the pursuit of "peace." This problem has been especially vexing in response to Soviet signals of liberalization in either its internal or external policies. Soviet suggestions of a desire to relax political tensions and seek some mutually acceptable compromise invariably confront the administration with a strong dilemma. As Henry Kissinger notes, contending approaches to Soviet policy inevitably revolve around the question of Soviet intentions.¹⁹ While perceived "enemies" are always judged according to their "real" intentions, the Soviet case is especially prone to such evaluation. This results from the goal oriented nature of Soviet ideology and the apparent interplay between short and long range goals. The American "hard-liner" is more apt to emphasize the supremacy of long range, revolutionary goals while the "soft-liner" is more prone to accentuate the transcendence of short-range, more conciliatory goals.

Policy-makers, as noted by Gamson and Modigliani, must judge whether "accommodationist" policies merit reciprocal gestures.²⁰ One level of judgment involves an analysis

¹⁹Henry Kissinger, American Foreign Policy: Three Essays (New York: W. W. Norton, 1969), pp. 85-87.

²⁰William A. Gamson and Andre Modigliani, Untangling the Cold War (Boston: Little, Brown, 1971), pp. 60-62.

of Soviet power and intentions. Another level involves the extent of accommodation expected from the other side. Should the administration seek a relaxation of tensions in specific areas while acknowledging and even accepting Soviet provocations in others, or should it insist that the Soviet relax tensions "across the board" in return for accommodative behavior on the part of the United States? Finally, and perhaps most important, considering the extent of suspicion toward Soviet intentions in the political system as a whole, to what degree can the administration fashion accommodationist policies without appearing to jeopardize the anti-Communist component of the national interest.

The issue of Soviet-American relations is complex. It involves a number of specific policies and decisions in a variety of areas. What tone should a president adopt in his speeches about Soviet behavior? What proposals should American negotiators put forward in arms control discussions? What new weapons systems should be developed? What should the military budget be? How should the administration respond to an insurgency supported by Soviet arms? Clearly, the connection between the two superpowers is so integral to the operation of international politics at all levels and in all regions that it is virtually impossible for American policy-makers to analyze any foreign policy problem without reference to the larger conflict. Nevertheless, each issue has its own peculiar decision-making process, mobilizing

different interests and actors. Accordingly, within the larger issue area of Soviet-American relations, there are any number of sub-issues producing different degrees of constraint on the central decision-makers. A major consequence is the variability of policy in different areas.

The ambivalence in American foreign policy toward the Soviet Union can, therefore, be attributed to three factors. First, it is a function of the structural attributes of the international system. The competitive nature of the Soviet-American relationship coupled with the awesome destructive power of each side, dictates a policy that falls short of all-out confrontation, but simultaneously inhibits the range of potential accommodation. Second, it is a consequence of the Cold War consensus which compels presidents to seek a balance between anti-communism and the avoidance of nuclear war. Third, the complexity and far-ranging impact of the issue create a variety of sub-issue areas each with its own constellation of actors and constraints. The president's role is, therefore, two-fold. First, he must appear to strike a balance between the goals of "anti-communism" and "peace." This obtains both in crisis situations and in less pressing aspects of the Soviet-American relationship. In sum, it is his duty to define the international situation, within the context of a domestic system of conflicting interests and perceptions, in terms of the national interest. Second, it is the president's role to choose those areas of

policy that are most conducive to the exercise of his leadership.

Presidents perform a function that no other institutional figures in the American political system can undertake --i.e., the legitimization of policy that appears to extend beyond the prevailing parameters of political choice. The bureaucracy can propose change, but it does not have the connections to other elements of the political system-- particularly, the public, the parties and the media --that would allow it to act independently. Congress can endorse or even frustrate change, but it is too diffuse to lead the rest of the political system in an agreed upon direction. Only a president, with access to the broadest constituent base, can provide the leadership necessary to legitimize what appears to be new policy within the framework of the existing foreign policy consensus. When presidents fail to exercise leadership, it is probable that an administration will be unable to respond in an accommodative fashion toward the Soviet Union.

A perfect example of this proposition is provided by Eisenhower's stewardship as president. Eisenhower had a fairly limited view of the presidency, both in domestic and foreign policy. His administration was marked by significant changes in the international environment. With the end of the Korean War and the death of Joseph Stalin, there was some indication in 1953 that the Soviets might be willing to

pursue a policy of limited accord with the West. The president, who had a profound fear of nuclear war, initially responded to the death of Stalin with conciliatory proclamations. But Eisenhower, with his view of a restricted presidency, was not willing to commit the resources of his office to a full-scale struggle for change. His initial gropings for new policy initiatives were ultimately frustrated by his unwillingness to manipulate energetically his bureaucracy, and particularly Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, in behalf of policy departures and by his reluctance to advance his case in the larger arena.

A contrary example is provided by the record of the Nixon administration. Richard Nixon entered the presidency through a hair-breadth victory over his Democratic opponent, Hubert Humphrey. But Nixon had a strong interest in foreign policy and a willingness to maximize the power of the president in relation to Congress and the executive bureaucracy. To do so, he centralized foreign policy decision-making authority in the Executive Office and undertook a style of leadership that was exceedingly secretive. As a result, many of his decisions were in the nature of faits accomplis. Nixon would not have been able to pursue his major Cold War innovations, such as the opening to China and the Soviet-American detente, without significant changes in the Sino-Soviet relationship. Nor would he have had such an easy time in winning support for his conciliatory policies had not the

Viet Nam War begun to erode the Cold War consensus. But it is problematical whether another president, with less of a willingness to exert the considerable power of the presidency, would have been able to adjust foreign policy so successfully and dramatically to obvious changes in the external environment.

The proposition made here is that while events in the external environment inevitably call for a re-examination of national strategies, the conservative bias of the political system--including both governmental and non-governmental actors--tends to retard the evolution of adaptive policies. Only a president can provide the necessary leadership to steer the country toward policies that are reflective of these changes. At the same time, the degree and extent of change is constrained both by the goals that define the national interest and by the interests and attitudes of groups and organizations that are tied to old strategies. The task of the president is to define a change in policy as consistent with the goals of the country and either to defuse or circumvent the opposition of those who warn that change imperils the national interest.

Probably no issue pertaining to Soviet-American relations arouses greater domestic controversy about national security than arms control. Here, presidential leadership is crucial, not only in legitimizing policies as consistent with the national interest, but in integrating policy choices

in an area where centrifugal bureaucratic tendencies prevail. The fragmented character of decision-making in this area is related to three factors. First, arms control, as an issue, involves the interests and the expertise of a large and varied group of government agencies.²¹ Second, it is the type of issue that has critical and direct bearing on organizational missions and assumptions about international politics. Consequently, it tends to produce high-intensity bureaucratic participation. Third, arms control is generally perceived by bureaucracies as a distributive issue whose outcome can seriously affect the allocation of resources within the government.

The policy problems that result from such a wide proliferation of interests and contending assumptions are obvious. Without significant centralization of command, the tendency to division can lead either to delays in the policy-making process, compromises that seriously dilute policy or a failure to develop policy at all. The last alternative is highly unlikely, given the pressure placed on the policy-making system by bureaucratic groups in support of arms control, but delays and debilitating compromises are probable in the

²¹This was not always so. Bernhard G. Bechhoefer notes that until approximately 1958, and with the exception of Harold Stassen's disarmament staff, government agencies devoted little attention and few personnel to arms control. In part, this reflected "the failure of individuals in both the State Department and the military services to attach great importance to the arms control negotiations." Bernhard G. Bechhoefer, Postwar Negotiations for Arms Control (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 1961), p. 592. Since then there has been an

absence of any firm direction from the central policy-maker and his chief subordinates.

Perhaps even more important in explaining the role of presidents in the arms control field is the need for an integrating theory that can fuse political and military considerations into a unified strategy. Arms control is sometimes viewed, even within the government, as concerned primarily with the negotiation of agreements to limit the arms race. In this sense, it is often perceived, particularly by the military,²² as isolated from and even antithetical to the development of a strong strategic posture.²³ Arms control, however, is a policy that recognizes the existence of a Soviet-American interest in averting general war, either through avoidance or through the limitation of war once it has erupted. Consequently, a policy of arms control involves not only the negotiation of treaties to limit the level or character of armaments on both sides but also the development of a military strategy that, either unilaterally or through

expansion of interest and bureaucratic involvement in arms control, owing, in no small part, to the priority which successive presidents have attached to the issue.

²²Bechhoefer suggests, writing in 1961, that it is an overstatement to argue that members of the military invariably emphasize the obstacles to arms control. He notes that in the 1950s, there were military officers attached to the Atomic Energy Commission who made a valuable contribution to arms control policy. *Ibid.*, p. 591 n20. Nevertheless, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, has tended, by and large, to raise the greatest governmental objections to arms control.

²³See Thomas C. Schelling and Morton H. Halperin, Strategy and Arms Control (New York: The Twentieth Century Fund, 1961), p. 143.

reciprocation, attempts to stabilize deterrence.

The proclivity of government organizations to compartmentalize military and arms control considerations results from the notion that the two areas rest on vastly differing assumptions about Soviet behavior. Arms control policy has involved the belief that the superpowers have a joint interest in limiting the possibilities of nuclear war. Traditionally, military strategy, on the other hand, has been based on the assumption that the objectives of the two, great nuclear powers are incompatible. A policy of arms control, however, recognizes first, that the retention of military power is crucial to the stability of the Balance of Terror and second, that military strategy can also be developed on the basis of a shared interest between the United States and the Soviet Union. Whereas "disarmament" assumes that war is prevented by the "eradication of military establishments, military tradition, and military thinking," arms control assumes that war is prevented by some kind of deterrence.²⁴ This means that each side, rather than abolish or drastically reduce its military forces, will develop a force that places a premium on the avoidance or limitation of nuclear war.

Political centralization is necessary to overcome the centrifugal bureaucratic tendencies militating against the assimilation of specific measures to curb the arms race with

²⁴Ibid., p. 60.

an overall strategic posture. Resistance to such integration is strong. In some part, the allocation of military expenditures under an arms control strategy focuses less on the accumulation of weapons per se than on the qualitative improvement of weapons systems whose ultimate purpose is the avoidance or limitation of nuclear war. Perhaps more importantly, arms control requires that all elements of the executive branch recognize the inherent interest of the superpowers in some form of military collaboration, political differences notwithstanding. This requires strong central direction, presumably from a secretary of defense, but more importantly, from a president himself. Organizations often accentuate those policies that are most closely related to their respective missions. Thus, the military focuses on defending the state against its enemies while the disarmament experts press for a reduction in weapons. In doing so, each group tends to lose sight of the broader picture. It is, therefore, a president's responsibility to maintain the balance between policies aimed at frustrating Soviet power objectives and those aimed at seeking some accommodation between the two sides.

Arms control is a politicized issue. As a partisan issue, it invariably surfaces in election campaigns, as it did during Stevenson's bid for the presidency in 1956 and Kennedy's in 1960. As an interest group issue, it mobilizes attention among attentive groups in a manner rare for a

foreign policy matter. As a congressional issue, it attracts the attention not only of specialized committees and subcommittees, but also of the Congress as a whole, particularly in the treaty ratification stage. And finally as a public issue, it touches on the national consensus that developed out of the Cold War regarding Soviet-American relations.

Few issues are perceived as so vital to the core interest of the country. Few issues so transcend parochial interests. At the same time, few issues, which rely so much on speculating about future capabilities and intentions, require such elaborate and detailed expertise. Several consequences follow. First, bureaucracy is indispensable in the policy-making process. Second, the issue is likely to emerge at some point as a system-wide political issue. Third, the president is likely to take an interest in the issue. This is a consequence not only of the inclination of individual presidents, which might vary from president to president, but, more importantly, it results from the political nature of the question. The more politicized the issue, the less is the independence of the executive branch. And the less the independence of the executive branch, the more pivotal is the president as nexus between the executive and other elements of the political system.

While it might appear self-contradictory to argue that the greater the systemic constraints on the executive branch, the greater is the influence of the president; in

fact, the statement points to an interesting distinction between presidential and bureaucratic power. Bureaucracies have a tendency toward independence, especially when they have sources of strength outside the executive branch. While these sources can be powerful, they are also relatively limited in scope--confined to certain interest groups or congressmen who benefit from these connections. On the other hand, a president's constituency is much broader, for it includes his political party, the public, Congress and certain elements of the bureaucracy. Accordingly, one can argue that closed issues--those that fail to gain system-wide attention--strengthen the impact of the bureaucracy vis-a-vis the president. On the other hand, open issues--those that attract system-wide concern--place constraints on the development of policy that only presidents can remove. As a consequence, the larger the arena of conflict, the greater is the president's power in relation to his bureaucracy.

This does not mean that bureaucracies are not involved significantly in the determination of policies in areas of systemic concern. On the contrary, the nature of policy-making, particularly in the arms control area, demands the inclusion of certain bureaucratic groups in the decision-making process. Furthermore, the opposition of bureaucracy to presidential policies can have serious consequences in undermining the president's ability to marshal support in the political system at large. Nevertheless, certain

important differences exist in this area. First, the capacity of the bureaucracy to act independently of the president is reduced. This results from the bureaucracy's need to seek presidential support in behalf of its initiatives. Second, the greater the scope of political concern the greater is the ability of the president to circumvent or even stifle recalcitrant bureaucratic groups by seeking allies in the larger arena. The expansion of political conflict works to a president's advantage. While the bureaucracy's extra-governmental constituency is relatively narrow, the president's is large. Clearly, the larger the scope of conflict, the greater are the resources which a president can tap. The more constricted the scope of involvement (except for crises, which follow different patterns), the less is the president's ability to find allies in the arena where his potential strength is greatest.

While the openness of the issue area is significant in explaining the presidential-bureaucratic balance of power, the degree of internal control that a president has over his administration is equally significant. In large part, the extent of the president's mastery is a consequence of the patterns of intra-governmental interaction which the president institutionalizes. But in specific cases it is a function of three variables. First, what is the extent of personal presidential involvement? Presidents must choose those areas where they are willing to expend maximum attention,

time and prestige. The more a president involves himself directly in specific decision-making areas, the more control he asserts over government output. Second, presidents orchestrate the scope and character of bureaucratic involvement in specific issue areas. While this power is constrained by the need for organizational expertise, presidents can limit the flow of information to specific groups and establish ad hoc or new organizational arrangements in areas where they seek to circumvent conventional decision-making processes. Third, presidents retain the ability to undertake dramatic foreign policy initiatives either against the advice or their bureaucracies or without the knowledge of specific organizations. In so doing, they can manipulate not only the external political environment but also mobilize the domestic political system in a desired direction prior to gaining bureaucratic consent.

Conclusion

The ambivalence in American foreign policy toward the Soviet Union over the past thirty years is attributable to several factors. First, the structure of the international system forces each administration to confront Soviet power within distinct systemic limits. Second, the foreign policy consensus which has served as the framework for policy-making during this era establishes a dualism between two goals: anti-communism and the pursuit of peace. The attempt by successive administrations to balance these goals has led to a

consistent ambivalence in policy. Third, because the issue of Soviet-American relations is so complex and far-reaching, change in one aspect of American foreign policy has not necessarily been translated into change in another. The prominence of different bureaucratic groups in different areas and the variability of presidential influence "across the board" have strengthened the appearance of inconsistency in American policy.

What role does the president play? In terms of the broad goals of American foreign policy, all presidents in the postwar era have been compelled by circumstances to accept the basic dualism in objectives. Presidents have had their greatest influence in the choice among strategies designed to further these goals. By appearing to preserve the balance between anti-communism and the pursuit of peace, they have been able, when willing, to take initiatives which exploited possibilities for a relaxation of tensions. In terms of specific decisions, it is clear that the broad strategy cannot affect decisions in all areas of the Soviet-American relationship. A president is most likely to influence those decision areas that are politicized, or open, such as arms control, as long as he is willing to use his power in behalf of his goals.

PART II

JOHN F. KENNEDY
AND THE SOVIET UNION, 1963

CHAPTER III

INTRODUCTION

The year 1963 was marked by an apparent departure from the patterns of Soviet-American interaction that had evolved in the aftermath of World War II. In August, representatives of the United States, Soviet Union and United Kingdom, agreeing to shelve a more politically vexatious pact banning underground nuclear testing, initialed a treaty prohibiting the detonation of nuclear explosions in three environments; thereby ending a seventeen year negotiating impasse that had begun with the collapse of the Truman administration's Baruch Plan. Almost as a prelude to the Test Ban, American and Soviet negotiators, in April, agreed in principle to the establishment of a direct communications link between their two capitals; two months later, the "hot-line" became a reality.

On June tenth, President John F. Kennedy delivered a major foreign policy address in which he called on the American people to reevaluate their attitudes toward the Soviet Union and stressed those areas of mutual interest to the superpowers. Later that year, shortly after Senate ratification of the Test Ban Treaty, the President approved the sale of surplus wheat by private American concerns to the

Soviet Union, thus signaling a change in the highly restrictive American approach to East-West trade. By mid-October, bilateral negotiations were either progressing or contemplated to initiate direct air service between New York and Moscow, open new consulates in both countries, settle the Soviet war debt, establish a joint communications satellite system and engage in a combined space program.

The notion that the Soviet-American relationship was moving in new directions was recognized at the time by informed segments of the American public. As a reaction to the successful conclusion of the Moscow talks, the mass circulation periodical, Newsweek, titled its August fifth issue "A Truce in the Cold War?".¹ Later that year, in response to Senate ratification of the Test Ban Treaty, the highly respected Bulletin of Atomic Scientists set back its "death watch" from 11:52 to 11:48.² While others, opposed to or chary about these developments, warned of the dangers inherent in peace "euphoria,"³ it is clear that among the attentive public there was a realization that the Soviet-American relationship, either for the good or bad, was entering a new phase.

¹Newsweek, 5 August 1963, cover.

²Newsweek, 7 October 1963, p. 29.

³See the testimony of General Maxwell D. Taylor, Chairman, U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, U. S., Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, Hearings: Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. 88th Congress, 1st session, 1963, pp. 275-276.

The appearance of change, however, did not necessarily signify or result from a major departure in American objectives. Secretary of State Dean Rusk, arguing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in support of the treaty, testified that "three administrations representing both of our great political parties have devoted so much effort in attempting to make progress toward disarmament."⁴ Indeed, both the establishment of the high-level intragovernmental arms control deliberative unit, the Committee of Principals and the test ban initiative itself had originated in the Eisenhower administration.⁵ Eisenhower, according to Herbert York, under Kennedy a member of the General Advisory Committee of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, "just like President Kennedy, was very much concerned about where the world was heading and that something ought to be done."⁶ Clearly, Kennedy, in pushing for an arms control agreement, was reviving a policy that had first attracted serious governmental attention in the administration of his Republican predecessor and subsequently foundered at the negotiating table. The Kennedy administration's policy toward the Soviet Union in 1963 contained strong residual elements of the "Cold

⁴Hearings: Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, p. 12.

⁵The Committee of Principals was established in August 1958. The first proposal for a limited test ban treaty was advanced by the United States and United Kingdom on April 13, 1959.

⁶Herbert York, recorded interview by Steven Rivkin, June 16, 1964, page 18, John F. Kennedy Library Oral History Program.

War" rigidity that had characterized previous administrations and the earlier years of his presidency. At the end of June 1963, in West Berlin, Kennedy employed harsh rhetoric in depicting the ideological gulf between East and West. Coming only two weeks after his conciliatory American University address, it reiterated themes characterizing the most profound differences between the United States and Soviet Union. Moreover, Kennedy refused to consider seriously negotiations with Premier Nikita Khrushchev over a non-aggression pact and coupled his efforts for the limited test ban with promises to accelerate the underground nuclear testing program. Perhaps most illustrative of Kennedy's continued hard-line approach to the Soviet Union and communism was his sustained effort to seek a military solution to the Viet Nam imbroglio.

Addressing himself to the apparent contradictions between the administration's hostile and conciliatory gestures, Richard Walton, one of the most eminent, revisionist critics of Kennedy's foreign policy, contends that "in language and deed the President moved toward friendlier relations with Russia, but in neither language nor deed was he consistent."⁷ Walton is correct in his observation, but he fails to note both the deliberate nature of Kennedy's ambivalence and the conformity of these inconsistencies with the behavior of previous post-war administrations. Arthur M. Schlesinger,

⁷Richard J. Walton, Cold War and Revolution (New York: Viking Press, 1972), p. 143.

Jr. notes in his outstanding memoir of the Kennedy administration, A Thousand Days, that the President, despite Congressional obtuseness on the matter, consistently linked the extraction of Soviet concessions on arms control to the maintenance of a strong and vigilant defense establishment.⁸ More significantly, the Kennedy policy of "talon and olive branch," as he referred to it, was broadly consistent with the policies that had developed in the aftermath of World War II. It was a policy dictated by the core objectives of the nation, the encumbrances of domestic politics and the limitations imposed by the international system. As Theodore Sorensen, one of Kennedy's closest aides, acknowledges, even had the President been elected by an overwhelming majority, "his foreign policy objectives, as distinguished from his methods, would not, I believe, have differed radically from those of his Republican predecessor."⁹

Considering that Kennedy essentially elaborated on test ban policy that had originated in the Eisenhower administration and that his "peaceful" overtures to the Soviet Union were offered in conjunction with hard-line policies, why did tensions appear to ease in 1963? One obvious and, in fact, quite convincing explanation lies in the changes

⁸Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., A Thousand Days (Cambridge: Houghton Mifflin, 1965; Fawcett, 1967), p. 469.

⁹Theodore C. Sorensen, Kennedy (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), p. 510.

that occurred in Soviet policy that year. Buffeted, on the one hand, by his increasingly bitter dispute with the People's Republic of China, and on the other hand, by a declining Soviet economy, Khrushchev accepted the offer of a limited ban on July 2nd, thereby acquiescing in a proposal which the Soviets had resolutely rejected at Geneva. Later that year, it was the Soviets who initiated contacts with American grain merchants and government officials to engineer a deal for the sale of American wheat to Russia.

Changes in Soviet policy do not, however, explain in themselves the shift in relations that occurred in 1963. The Soviets had offered to relax tensions earlier, both during the Eisenhower administration and during the early days of the Kennedy administration; but both administrations were reluctant to enter into serious agreements as long as the Soviets continued to balance their accommodationist policies with provocations in areas such as Berlin, the Congo and Southeast Asia.¹⁰ In 1963, however, the appearance of Soviet willingness to enter into serious negotiations touched off within the Kennedy administration a ripple effect in numerous areas covering a variety of outstanding issues. Clearly, the momentum toward accommodation, limited as it was, was derivative of a congruence between internal as well as

¹⁰ For an account of missed opportunities during the Eisenhower administration see Emmett John Hughes, The Ordeal of Power (New York: Atheneum, 1963; Dial, 1964), pp. 87-107. See also Bruce Miroff, Pragmatic Illusions: The Presidential Politics of John F. Kennedy (New York: McKay, 1976), pp. 46-47.

external factors.

What moved the administration to capitalize on opportunities presented by the Soviet leadership in 1963? One conventional and quite plausible explanation lies in Kennedy's personal reaction to the near cataclysm of October 1962. According to this argument, the President was so shaken by the Cuban missile crisis, that he was doubly determined to reach a nuclear arms accord with the Soviet Union. In terms of motivation, it is clear that the events of October had a sobering effect on Chairman Khrushchev.¹¹ It is much more difficult, however, to gauge the effect of the crisis on Kennedy himself. In his correspondence with the Soviet Premier, the President alluded to the importance of the crisis in demonstrating the need for some early agreement on a test ban. Nevertheless, it is questionable whether the crisis had significant impact on changing American policy. For one thing, Kennedy had demonstrated sufficient concern and interest in arms control even before the missile crisis.

¹¹See, for example, Chairman Khrushchev's address to the Sixth Congress of the Socialist Party of Germany, delivered on January 16, 1963. In it, Khrushchev states that the lesson of the Caribbean crisis is that the revolutionary movement of the working class cannot be isolated from "the struggle for peace...and the prevention of thermonuclear war." United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, Documents on Disarmament, 1963, p. 12. See also Norman Cousins' fascinating account of his mediation efforts in 1963. Cousins was especially struck by the reaction of the Soviet Premier to the missile crisis. Norman Cousins, The Improbable Triumvirate (New York: Norton, 1972), p. 45.

Second, despite some initial confusion as to the direction of American policy regarding a comprehensive ban, the missile crisis did not lead to any significant relaxation of the American position on the inspection issue. This was in contradistinction to Khrushchev's post-crisis offer to allow for three inspections, an offer which the Soviets had been unwilling to concede since the early days of test-ban negotiations.¹³

It is possible to argue that among significant elements of the executive branch a feeling grew in 1963 that the Sino-Soviet rift was indeed authentic and that American policy should seek to drive a wedge between the Communist rivals. This perception was coupled with the idea that the Soviets were prepared to act out of national interest rather than ideology, a theory which was gaining ground among academic Kremlinologists. This argument has substantial merit, and it will be considered in greater detail later in this section. At the same time, three points must be considered. First, Kennedy, from the inception of his presidency, gave greater credence to national rather than ideological determinants in explaining Soviet nuclear policy. It is, therefore, highly unlikely that in 1963, he began to see a move away from ideology as a significant explanation for Soviet policy.

¹³This offer was contained in a letter, dated December 19, 1962, from Khrushchev to Kennedy. See Documents on Disarmament, 1962, pp. 1239-1242.

Second, both publicly and privately, the President tended to be cautious about the permanence of the Sino-Soviet dispute. Third, Kennedy, particularly in his response to the Viet Nam situation, continued to treat the Communist movement as monolithic rather than as polycentric. In so doing, he carried on the policy of active military containment of Soviet influence that began with Korea, receded during the Eisenhower years of massive retaliation and revived with the strategy of "flexible response."

The detente of 1963 occurred, not because the Kennedy administration developed drastically new objectives in its foreign policy stance toward the Soviet Union, but because of three related factors. First, whereas Eisenhower was personally committed to relaxing the arms race and seeking some mutual areas of agreement between the superpowers, he, unlike Kennedy, did not appear to have a strategic concept that recognized the co-existence of continued political conflict, on the one hand, and limited military collaboration, to avert or restrain nuclear war, on the other hand. Eisenhower's personal interpretation of the "New Look" strategy was perhaps motivated by a desire to "reduce the pressures for competitive escalation,"¹⁴ and his commitments

¹⁴Eisenhower's fiscal conservatism is often cited as influencing his strategic policies. Paul Hammond suggests, however, that the President might have restricted defense spending in order to defuse the inexorable spiral of the arms race. See Paul Y. Hammond, Cold War and Detente (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1975), p. 145.

to disarmament measures and summitry were obviously strong. Nevertheless, the President's inability or disinclination to develop a military strategy that contained within it the modalities for arms control coupled with Secretary of State John Foster Dulles' belief that arms control measures were of little value in the absence of political accommodation constrained his attempts to achieve accord. Kennedy, on the other hand, inherited Eisenhower's stymied test ban policy but fit it into a strategic and political design that was considerably more integrated as an arms control policy. He was, therefore, able to view arms control agreements with the Soviets in terms of an objective, reciprocal interest in arrangements for stabilizing the "Balance of Terror."

Second, Eisenhower's personal commitment to a relaxation of tensions with the Soviet Union was impeded by his constricted view of the presidency. Eisenhower's style of operation within the executive branch allowed the bureaucracy considerable opportunity to obstruct or dilute presidential preferences. Consequently, major bureaucratic players such as Dulles, Lewis Strauss and John McCone were able, sometimes together and occasionally individually, to frustrate the President's initiatives. Kennedy, on the other hand, with a greater willingness either to circumvent bureaucratic constraints or to lobby vigorously for his own position, was much better able to translate his personal preferences into administration-wide policies.

Third, both Eisenhower and Kennedy operated within the context of a domestic environment strongly anti-Soviet in orientation. Kennedy, however, was much more inclined to employ the resources of his office in challenging the political system. Under Kennedy, the principal opposition to a test ban did not lie in the executive branch--except, and to varying degrees, for the Joint Chiefs of Staff--but rather in Congress, where a coalition of Southern and defense-oriented Democrats along with conservative Republicans had been using the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy and the Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee to inveigh against the administration's apparent willingness to negotiate a comprehensive pact prohibiting underground nuclear testing. The attacks against the administration's test ban policy were accompanied by Republican efforts to generate political capital out of the Cuban imbroglio and continued Congressional hostility to the expansion of trade relations with the Soviet Union. Kennedy dealt with this opposition, in part, by tailoring his decisions to accommodate the public mood and by convincing Congress that his policies did not violate the national consensus. Moreover, he used his office to undertake independent foreign policy actions, circumvent his opposition and mobilize public support.

The detente of 1963 was, therefore, reflective of substantive policy decisions and a political calculation of the limits to which the domestic political system could be

tested. The major policy decision was made in 1962, when the President authorized negotiation of both a comprehensive pact and a partial treaty. Nevertheless, political calculations were never very far from the heart of test ban policy itself. In 1963, with the Soviets relaying a willingness to negotiate a partial treaty, Kennedy determined that he would stake the prestige of his office in winning endorsement for a limited detente. In doing so, he pressed the political system to accept the existence of policy ambivalences as legitimate expressions of the national interest.

CHAPTER IV

JOHN F. KENNEDY, ARMS CONTROL AND THE SOVIET UNION

Continuity in American foreign policy after World War II derives, in large part, from the attempts of successive administrations to seek a balance between the goals of anti-communism and nuclear war avoidance. To be sure, the threat of a serious, nuclear exchange between the superpowers did not evolve until the early years of the Eisenhower administration. Nevertheless, President Truman's anti-Communist policies were clearly tempered by his administration's reluctance to engage the Soviet Union in a general war. While anti-communism was defined in global terms, Truman was quite selective about those areas in which the United States would commit its economic and military resources against communism. In part, this reflected his assessment that the domestic political system would not support the cost of a massive military and economic commitment. At the same time, the relatively limited nuclear capabilities of the country forced the administration into the realization that a nuclear monopoly alone could not insure complete victory over the

Soviet Union.¹

With the advent of a Soviet nuclear capability, the Truman administration began to reassess its strategic posture. Under the guidelines of NSC-68 and given the impetus of the Korean War, the country shifted into a high gear rearmament program, involving both a buildup in conventional forces and a decision to develop a Hydrogen Bomb. NSC-68 represented the first instance during the Cold War in which an administration systematically explored the changing character of force requirements in an era of nuclear war.

The Eisenhower administration assumed power promising to confront communism vigorously while simultaneously reducing the country's enormous defense burden. Designing a policy variously referred to as the "New Look" or "Massive Retaliation," the administration developed a defense posture relying heavily on tactical and strategic nuclear weapons. Underlying this strategy was the assumption that nuclear forces alone could deter the Soviets from any threat to America's global interests. In order to reconcile this deterrence strategy with the goal of nuclear war avoidance, the administration developed a situational policy known as "brinkmanship." According to Jerome Kahan, brinkmanship involved the issuance of explicit threats in specific

¹See Colin S. Gray, "Across the Nuclear Divide - Strategic Studies, Past and Present," International Security 2 (Summer 1977): 25.

instances to employ nuclear weapons against strategic targets.² The credibility of the deterrent was supposedly enhanced by the administration's self-imposed inability to conduct limited war. Brinkmanship was employed, with relative success, in resolving the Korean War and in halting the Chinese bombardment of Quemoy and Matsu.

The Eisenhower administration in operation was far more unbalanced in the direction of nuclear war avoidance than it otherwise appeared. One reason for the primacy of nuclear war avoidance was the growing realization in Washington that American nuclear forces could not destroy Soviet capabilities so as to preclude a damaging retaliatory strike. This perception grew during the Eisenhower years, as the Russians increased their bomber force and surged ahead of the United States in the development and accumulation of middle-range and long-range, intercontinental ballistic missiles. As a consequence, marginal threats to American interests involving direct or indirect Soviet provocations led to the employment of non-nuclear forces, as it did in Lebanon, or to inaction, as in the cases of Dienbienphu and Hungary. Lebanon, however, was an exception, and even Eisenhower acknowledged that had American forces met strong resistance, the intervention would have seriously strained the capacity of America's non-nuclear capabilities. As

²Jerome Kahan, Security in the Nuclear Age (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 1975), p. 15.

Kahan notes in his portrayal of conventional preparedness under Eisenhower:

In sum, military planning under the New Look--constrained by budgetary pressure and nuclear air power priorities--yielded a U.S. military posture with neither the plans nor the capacity for coping with even moderately large nonnuclear conflicts. Within a few years after the administration entered office, conventional equipment was in serious need of modernization, nonnuclear ordinance was in short supply, and logistics support for sustained conventional campaigns was inadequate. Many U.S. tactical aircraft deployed in Europe and Asia even lacked conventional bombs and bomb racks. In addition, airlift and sea-transport capabilities were gradually reduced to the point where U.S. forces abroad could not be rapidly reinforced or effectively shifted between theaters. U.S. forces were not restricted to nuclear responses alone, however, and the sheer size of U.S. land, sea, and air capabilities provided usable nonnuclear options. Nevertheless, the decline in U.S. conventional capabilities was such that it would have been difficult to avoid using nuclear weapons in any conflict involving more than a few divisions and virtually impossible to counter relatively small simultaneous attacks in Europe and Asia with nonnuclear means.³

The Eisenhower administration, through most of its tenure, operated on two levels: one declaratory, the other actual.⁴ By claiming its readiness to engage in nuclear war to defeat any Soviet threat to American interests, the administration was obviously implying its acceptance of the feasibility of this kind of conflict as a means to contain and perhaps even roll back Soviet gains. At the level of reality, however, Eisenhower was clearly unwilling to risk nuclear war to arrest Soviet encroachments that did not

³Ibid., p. 17.

⁴William W. Kaufmann, The McNamara Strategy (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), pp. 257-258.

jeopardize directly the security of the United States. To critics of Eisenhower's strategy, this meant that, almost paradoxically, the articulated readiness to employ nuclear weapons created an imbalance in favor of nuclear war avoidance. Because the nuclear threat was unclear and more seriously, of questionable credibility, the policy of massive retaliation invited the Soviets to make piecemeal gains on the West.

Eisenhower's restraint of American nuclear forces, as, for example, in the case of Dienbienphu, did not necessarily signify the existence of an arms control policy. Arms control rests on the proposition that even in the absence of a political solution to the Cold War, each side can design mutually accommodative strategies to avert or limit the possibilities of full-scale nuclear conflict. During most of the Eisenhower administration, arms control policy was inhibited by Secretary Dulles' refusal to seek mutually beneficial spheres of military understanding as long as major political questions remained unsettled. Only with his death and subsequent replacement by Christian Herter, did the administration begin to move more seriously toward a test ban treaty.

More importantly, the doctrine of massive retaliation was antithetical to arms control. Dulles and Eisenhower did not see the New Look from the same perspective. To Dulles, constrained by the President's stringent fiscal demands, the

doctrine represented a clear pronouncement of American intent to employ its maximum powers to combat communism. To Eisenhower, influenced greatly by Secretary of the Treasury, George Humphrey, the New Look was designed to provide the United States with security at the least possible cost. More subtly, according to Paul Y. Hammond, the New Look, with its strict control of military spending, represented Eisenhower's way of inducing the Soviets to curb arms racing.⁵ To Eisenhower, the problem of nuclear war was essentially an arms race problem.

Placing limits on the number of nuclear weapons did not, however, translate into a policy of arms control as long as the administration was unrestrained in its threats to use those weapons. Eisenhower opted--until domestic "missile gap" pressures forced him to expand American nuclear forces--for a force posture of sufficiency. While he was not willing to employ a "minimum deterrence" strategy, neither did he choose a policy of "nuclear superiority," which many in the Air Force were pressing upon him. Instead, he placed limits on the number of nuclear weapons while simultaneously declaring that nuclear warfare formed the core of the American defense posture. Thus, whatever restraint he might have induced in the Soviet position by limiting nuclear forces was undercut by a policy that recognized, at least in theory,

⁵Paul Y. Hammond, Cold War and Detente (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1975), p. 145.

few limits to the use of those weapons.

In essence, the policy of massive retaliation militated against the evolution of a Soviet-American understanding on stabilizing the arms race. Soviet leaders viewed the strategy as provocative and threatening to their security. They responded, by and large, with truculent rhetoric, exaggerated boasts and, more importantly, by accelerating the pace of their missile development program. Brinkmanship might have deterred the Soviets and their Chinese allies in certain situations, but it also generated a negative action-reaction cycle that made arms stabilization increasingly more problematical. As Jerome Kahan notes:

The New Look was inherently incompatible with nuclear stability and arms control, owing to its stress on nuclear weapons at the expense of conventional arms and its reliance on the threat of massive retaliation. Seen in this broader context, the administration's strategic program had many provocative and destabilizing effects that clouded the international political climate, increased the risk of nuclear war, and contributed to subsequent Soviet efforts to redress the nuclear balance.⁶

Massive retaliation was designed to deter the Communists, specifically the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China, from threatening the global interests of the United States. At times, the threat of nuclear war appears to have operated effectively in achieving that goal, as in the cases of Korea, Taiwan and Berlin. Nevertheless, the administration's over-reliance on nuclear weapons and glaring weakness

⁶Kahan, op. cit., p. 73.

in conventional forces, sometimes forced it to retreat in areas where it did not want to risk a nuclear escalatory spiral, as in the case of Dienbienphu. By threatening the use of nuclear weapons in general but by precluding the nuclear option in specific cases, the administration was conveying to the enemy an ambiguous anti-Communist resolve. Hence, the Communists were, for all practical purposes, invited to test American intentions. In essence, the administration never adequately defined what it meant by anti-communism in relation to the military capabilities at its disposal.

The strategic doctrine of the Kennedy administration was in large part a reaction to the perceived deficiencies of the Eisenhower "New Look" and the changing character and magnitude of Soviet nuclear power. Kennedy was greatly influenced by the strategic studies of the Rand Corporation, academic works by political scientists such as William Kaufmann and Henry Kissinger and the criticisms of General Maxwell D. Taylor, arguing for the adoption of a flexible options military strategy as a credible alternative to massive retaliation.⁷ As a presidential candidate, Kennedy made these criticisms into a central focus of his campaign.

⁷For a discussion of these and other critiques see Harland B. Moulton, From Superiority to Parity: The United States and the Strategic Arms Race, 1961-1971 (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1973), pp. 27-35. See also General Maxwell D. Taylor, The Uncertain Trumpet (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960).

In addition, Kennedy used the highly volatile "missile gap" issue to score points against his Republican opponent, Vice-President Richard M. Nixon. Because of the accelerated pace of Soviet missile development and the increasingly bellicose boasts of Soviet Premier Nikita S. Khrushchev regarding the superiority of his country's nuclear capabilities, the impression grew in the United States that this country could not insure the destruction of Soviet retaliatory power in a first strike. Worse yet, from the standpoint of the Eisenhower administration, significant sentiment developed around the proposition that the United States would not in the near future be able to sustain the crippling effects of a surprise attack. This argument was given great credibility by the report of the blue-ribbon Gaither Committee, warning, on the heels of the traumatic Sputnik launching, that American reliance on the survivability of the SAC bomber force was becoming increasingly more tenuous.

To be sure, Eisenhower was arriving at similar conclusions by the last two years of his second term as president. For one thing, both the President and his Secretary of State acknowledged publicly that all-out nuclear war was not the only option in the nuclear age; instead, they contemplated the possibilities of limited war, both

conventional and nuclear.⁸ Second, despite Eisenhower's belief that the Soviets would never strike first⁹ and his attempt to suppress the gloomy analysis of the Gaither Report, the President stepped up efforts to make American nuclear forces less vulnerable to a devastating first strike. Measures of this kind included the development of an American ICBM force, the continuous deployment of a portion of the SAC bomber force in the air and the completion of an early warning system. Indeed, by the end of the decade, Eisenhower's decision to increase the defense budget for missile development led to a decisive nuclear advantage over the Soviet Union, which Kennedy soon learned upon his accession to the presidency.

Kennedy and the development of "Multiple Options"

Nevertheless, it was left to Kennedy to develop a systematic strategy balancing the goal of anti-communism with the objective of nuclear war avoidance. Kennedy and his Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara discovered fairly early in their administration that the missile gap did not exist. This did not mean, however, that the country could rely on its nuclear forces alone to deal with the Soviet threat.

⁸See John Foster Dulles, "Challenge and Response in United States Policy," Foreign Affairs 36 (October 1957): 31.

⁹Edgar M. Bottome, The Missile Gap: A Study of the Formulation of Military and Political Policy (Teaneck: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1971), pp. 77-79.

With the Soviets continuing their program of ICBM development, it was unlikely that in any future first strike the Americans could neutralize completely the Russians second strike capability.¹⁰ This meant that in the event of nuclear war, no matter the initiator and no matter the final outcome in terms of concrete gains and losses, neither side could claim victory. As McNamara stated:

...there would be such severe damage to this country that our way of life would change...Therefore, I would say we had not won.¹¹

Responding to the realities of Soviet power and to what he referred to as "our national tradition," Kennedy, in his first major defense message to Congress, declared that the United States would never use its nuclear weapons to "strike the first blow in any attack."¹² Consequently, the major focus of strategic development in the early months of the Kennedy administration was in protecting American forces and population centers against surprise Soviet attack. This project involved the hardening and dispersal of Minute-

¹⁰See McNamara's posture statement of January 30, 1963. United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, Documents on Disarmament, 1963, p. 18.

¹¹Kaufmann, op. cit., p. 95.

¹²Moulton, op. cit., p. 51. This pronouncement was of special concern to the Europeans who had assumed that American nuclear forces would be used in the event of a conventional, Soviet attack against Western Europe. The pledge not to use nuclear weapons first, however, was decidedly vague. For example, during the Berlin Crisis of 1961, with American conventional forces not yet at full strength, Kennedy engaged in brinkmanship against the Soviets.

men, land-based missiles and the deployment of a greater number of Polaris submarines, which had first been developed during the Eisenhower administration. It also entailed, not without great controversy, the institutionalization of plans to construct a nationwide shelter program and the development of a command and control system that could withstand an initial, surprise attack.

Kennedy did not believe that Khrushchev would be so reckless as to initiate a nuclear exchange and assumed that the continued hardening of American, second strike capabilities would reinforce the Soviet Premier in his reluctance. This view was buttressed by Khrushchev's speech of January 6, 1961, in which the Chairman rejected the feasibility of general war and even local conflict as a realistic means to enhance the ultimate victory of "socialism." Instead, Khrushchev announced his intention to support wars of national liberation and thereby erode the capitalist world at its periphery. In Kennedy's estimation, this aspect of the Soviet leader's address posed the greatest challenge to the West.¹³ Accordingly, the United States and its allies would have to develop modalities that could respond effectively to changes in Soviet tactics.

¹³Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., A Thousand Days (Cambridge: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1965; Fawcett, 1967), pp. 283-284.

Kennedy's vigorous response to the challenge posed by Khrushchev's revolutionary exhortations requires some explanation. While it is clear that the speech represented a major exposition on the changing character of conflict in the nuclear age, it did not reveal anything that the Soviets had not already demonstrated in deeds, if not words. By involving themselves so energetically in Cuba and the Congo, the Soviets had already shown that they were willing and able to manipulate unstable political conditions for their own purposes. Why then did the President consider the speech so significant that he read aloud from it at meetings of the National Security Council? And why did Secretary McNamara, in a speech delivered to the American Bar Association in February 1962, refer to it as:

one of the most significant speeches of the past year, and it may prove to be one of the most important statements made by a world leader in the decade of the 1960's.¹⁴

In some respects, the Khrushchev speech was publicly employed by the administration to restore confidence in the American deterrent. By rejecting offensive nuclear war as a credible instrument of his country's foreign policy, the Soviet leader was giving testimony to the awesome destructive power of American nuclear forces. This feeling of confidence was one that the administration was interested in conveying to the public in the aftermath of the missile gap controversy.

¹⁴Cited in Moulton, op. cit., p. 77.

More importantly, the Kennedy administration was determined to restore the balance between nuclear war avoidance and anti-communism. In Kennedy's estimation, the strategy of massive retaliation had unbalanced American foreign policy in the direction of nuclear war avoidance. It had created ambiguity in the American definition of anti-communism and, hence, had induced the Soviets and their allies to threaten American interests through indirect aggressions. Kennedy attempted to restore the balance by defining any Communist advance as a threat to American interests, and he attempted to strengthen anti-communism by reducing reliance on nuclear forces. Hence, Kennedy's emphasis on non-nuclear means of conflict was designed less to avert nuclear war, which massive retaliation had accomplished quite effectively, than it was to combat communism in a more uniform manner.

Kennedy's was not the first postwar administration to define internal revolutions as Communist provocations. The Truman Doctrine had recognized insurgencies in Greece and Turkey as Communist inspired, and the Eisenhower administration had involved itself in a variety of ways in the internal affairs of Iran, Guatemala, Indonesia and Lebanon, among others.¹⁵ Kennedy's, however, was the first administration to make military intervention a central element of its

¹⁵See Richard Barnet, Intervention and Revolution (Cleveland and New York: The World Publishing Co., 1968).

anti-Communist strategy.

In part, this reflected the President's acceptance of the point of view that the major arena of East-West conflict had shifted from Europe to the Third World.¹⁶ At the same time, sustained involvement in wars of national liberation was designed to serve as a demonstration to the Soviets of the administration's ability to control and escalate its military responses in the face of graduated threats to the national interest. While Kennedy initially placed great emphasis on counter-insurgency warfare as a means to neutralize Communist advances,¹⁷ his policy of escalation in Viet Nam demonstrates that he viewed the conflict as a test case for a strategy of non-nuclear, controlled response. In this way, the President employed Viet Nam to meet the concerns of the Europeanists also. American involvement was designed to show the Soviets and America's Western European allies that the administration possessed the capabilities and resolve to apply force against Soviet sponsored aggression. As such, Viet Nam represented a policy of prestige.¹⁸

¹⁶See Seyom Brown, The Faces of Power (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1968), p. 163.

¹⁷Morton Halperin, Defense Strategies for the Seventies (Boston: Little, Brown, 1971), p. 50.

¹⁸Assistant Secretary of Defense John McNaughton defined the aim of American involvement in Viet Nam as the protection of its "reputation as a guarantor." According to Jonathan Schell, "...not only was Indo-China a test case of the strategy of limited war but the strategy of limited war was a test case of the ability of the United States to meet challenges from any quarter." Jonathan Schell, The Time of Illusion (New York: Knopf, 1976). p. 94

The Khrushchev speech confirmed assumptions about Soviet behavior that tended to justify the multiple options military strategy that Kennedy's administration was about to introduce. This portrayal of Soviet aims as universal and Soviet means as limited was essential to the establishment of a strategy that would attempt to balance the goals of anti-communism and nuclear war avoidance by tailoring American forces to meet graduated threats to the national interest. Coming into office, Kennedy was as convinced as his predecessors that the long-range goals of the Soviet Union were inimical to America's core interests. He was equally committed to the role of the United States as the principal opponent to communism, as W. Averell Harriman comments:

He had a very clear conception of the Soviet Union and communism...he recognized the basic and fundamental difference between us--their desire to communize the world, and our desire to frustrate them in their designs.¹⁹

At the same time, Kennedy recognized that the dangers of nuclear war placed limits on the exercise of American power.²⁰ Consequently, a strategy had to be formulated that would contain Soviet expansion without projecting both

¹⁹ W. Averell Harriman, recorded interview conducted by Michael W. Forrestal, April 13, 1964, p. 70. John F. Kennedy Library Oral History Program.

²⁰ Kennedy identified himself in this regard with his Cold War predecessors, Democrat and Republican, when he explained why neither Truman nor Eisenhower had sought to liberate countries under Communist control. In a 1963 press conference he stated, "The reason the action wasn't taken was because they felt strongly that if they did take action

countries into a cataclysmic general war. The Eisenhower administration had attempted to do the same; the strategic doctrine of massive retaliation implied that a primary reliance on nuclear weapons could satisfy both objectives simultaneously. Kennedy, who assumed that the Eisenhower strategy was deficient in arresting the spread of communism, attempted to reinforce the balance by developing modalities that would combat communism and simultaneously avert general war. Viet Nam was a prime example of this strategy in operation. In this sense, the Khrushchev speech of January 1961 was perfectly suited as a justification for the evolving strategy. By appearing to eschew the employment of nuclear weapons to achieve world domination but by not abandoning the Communist objective to do so, Khrushchev was lending immediacy to an American strategy that, at least in theory, could adjust more readily to the multifaceted character of Soviet aggression.

Kennedy's approach to the Western alliance was guided by a similar concern. With the accession of Charles de Gaulle to power in France and the accelerated French effort to develop a nuclear capability of their own, the President was faced with the specter of political and military fragmentation in an area still considered to be the

it would bring on another war." U.S., Presidents, Public Papers of the President of the United States (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office), John F. Kennedy, 1963, p. 152.

forward defense against Soviet advance. While the French were also motivated by considerations of national prestige, other European states, particularly the German Federal Republic, were apprehensive about the American willingness to commit nuclear weapons against the Soviet Union in the event of a Russian attack.

European restiveness over the effectiveness of the American deterrent increased during the Kennedy administration, in large part, as a consequence of Kennedy's efforts to employ a multiple options approach in their defense. Under the Eisenhower doctrine of massive retaliation, Europe's shield was provided by the American nuclear force. It was assumed that the Soviets would refrain from hostile action as long as American capabilities were strong and as long as the American commitment to use nuclear weapons in defense of Europe was both clear and credible.²¹

The Kennedy administration, aside from its doctrinal adherence to a multiple options strategic posture, was also sensitive to international changes that made the conventional threat a plausible deterrent to Soviet aggression. First, the administration was convinced that Western Europe had escaped from its postwar economic devastation and could now assume a more equitable portion of its own defense burden. In his 1963 Posture Statement to Congress, McNamara commented:

²¹Kaufmann, op. cit., p. 103.

With the continued growth and extension of the Common Market, coupled with an increasing degree of political integration, in time there will inevitably develop in Europe a new power center, more nearly the equal of the Soviet Union and its European satellites. With the manpower, production capacity, and technical and scientific skills available to them, the nations of Europe should not only be able to provide larger contributions to their own defense but should also be in a position to contribute more to the defense of freedom in other parts of the world.²²

Second, the administration no longer adhered to the popular European belief that Soviet conventional forces were so great as to render any counter-buildup economically and militarily prohibitive. After an early review of Soviet capabilities, the Defense Department concluded that Soviet conventional strength on the European front was not at all as formidable as generally estimated. Consequently, according to the administration, alliance strategy should concentrate on the development of non-nuclear forces. McNamara made this point forcefully in his 1962 Ann Arbor Address:

The Soviets have superiority in non-nuclear forces in Europe today. But that superiority is by no means overwhelming. Collectively, the alliance has the potential for a successful defense against such forces. In manpower alone, NATO has more men under its arms than the Soviet Union and its European satellites...In order to defend the population of the NATO countries and to meet our treaty obligations, we have put in hand a series of measures to strengthen our non-nuclear power...We expect that our allies will also undertake to strengthen further their non-nuclear forces.²³

²²U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Armed Services, Hearings on Military Posture, 88th Congress, 1st session, 1963, pp. 296-297.

²³Cited in Kaufmann, op. cit., p. 119.

This conflict between the administration and its European allies found each side working at cross-purposes. The Europeans argued that American determination to increase the alliance's conventional strength only demonstrated to the Russians that the United States was not willing to employ nuclear weapons in case of Soviet attack. By focusing on the development of non-nuclear capabilities the Americans were debasing their nuclear deterrent. As a result, the Europeans were even more interested in acquiring their own nuclear forces.

The administration, however, felt that the proliferation of independent nuclear forces in the world would ultimately erode the defensive capabilities of the alliance. Aside from the President's deep, personal concern about the dangers of proliferation, the administration was of the opinion that small nuclear forces were strategically extraneous and potentially hazardous. This latter assessment was based on the fear that a small force might invite pre-emptive attack and then draw the United States into a larger war.²⁴

Most importantly, the Kennedy administration felt that European reliance on independent nuclear forces would undermine America's shift to a multiple options strategy, and simultaneously threaten the controlled response nuclear strategy. The administration assumed that there were

²⁴Ibid., p. 116.

gradations of possible Soviet-bloc attack against Western Europe. Not all provocations required a direct nuclear response. If the alliance's conventional forces were too thin, however, it would invite the kind of Communist encroachment that was certain of limited conventional success yet calculated to avert a nuclear response. The administration believed that the development of small nuclear forces of a non-tactical type would place too great an emphasis on the nuclear deterrent. Hence, the European members of the alliance would have little incentive to shore up their conventional defenses. This would leave the alliance, in the face of an ambiguous threat to a European state, with one of two options, nuclear war or inaction.

The administration's multiple options design for Europe was, thus, consistent with its general strategy of containment; although quite clearly, the nuclear option was a much more likely possibility in the defense of Europe than, for example, Southeast Asia. By placing greater emphasis on non-nuclear forces, it could mitigate the military consequences of confrontation and concomitantly strengthen the alliance's ability to deflect the Soviets. Not all European states were of the same opinion. The French continued to develop their own nuclear force, and the British demanded satisfaction of Eisenhower's earlier offer of Polaris missiles in lieu of the ill-fated Skybolt. The Americans attempted to ameliorate alliance tensions by

placing tactical nuclear weapons in the hands of NATO, as did Eisenhower, and by proposals such as the MLF; but they basically adhered to the position that Europe could best be defended by combining the nuclear deterrent with a strong, conventional capability. In this sense, the administration was extending its strategic doctrine to Western Europe--an area that had since the end of World War II been considered, from a strategic standpoint, almost as an extension of American territory.

This is not to say, in terms of American nuclear capabilities, that the strategic doctrine was automatically converted into appropriate force levels. The Kennedy-McNamara strategy appeared to suggest that the nuclear capabilities of the country were essentially deterrent in purpose and, hence, had to be built up to the point of assured destruction of the enemy so as to preclude a Soviet first strike. Graham Allison and Frederic Morris observe, however, that the force levels of the Kennedy administration far exceeded the requirements of the articulated doctrine.²⁵ In part, this can be explained by continuing American uncertainties over the nuclear capabilities of the Soviet Union.²⁶ While

²⁵Graham T. Allison and Frederic A. Morris, "Armaments and Arms Control: Exploring the Determinants of Military Weapons," Daedalus 104 (Summer 1975): 99-130.

²⁶In his 1963 Posture Statement, McNamara indicated that defense strategists were forced to project well into the future with regard to Soviet strategic advances. McNamara: "One of the major uncertainties is, of course,

it was almost immediately apparent that the missile gap did not exist, the pace of the Soviet development program was uncertain to American policy-makers.

Allison and Morris argue that there were other reasons for the gap between the requirements of assured destruction and the actual number of nuclear weapons that were deployed during this period of time.²⁷ First, Kennedy had promised during his campaign to strengthen strategic forces; to reduce that number in the FY1962 budget would have created problems in Congress. Second, according to Allison and Morris, the concept of nuclear superiority had become an article of faith enjoying widespread governmental and extra-governmental support in the early years of the Kennedy administration.²⁸ This consensus produced a momentum for the accumulation of greater numbers of nuclear weapons, even when those numbers exceeded the requirements of the doctrine. The military services, with important allies in the legislature, estimated the required force

the size and character of our opponent's strategic forces and defensive systems now, and more importantly, in the future." Documents on Disarmament, 1963, p. 18.

²⁷Allison and Morris, op. cit., pp. 112-113.

²⁸McNamara was conscious of this consensus when he declared, in defense of the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, "...The United States has nuclear superiority. We are determined to maintain that superiority." U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, Hearings: Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, 83th Congress, 1st session, 1963, p. 98.

levels at a much higher number than McNamara and Kennedy. Accordingly, the civilian officials in the administration were compelled to bargain with the military services to achieve a more equitable number that was still beyond the requirements of the strategic doctrine. Third, the defense budgets of the Kennedy years contained costs for some weapons systems that had already been authorized under Eisenhower.

Inconsistencies in the actual force deployment were matched by inconsistencies in doctrine also. During the first two years of the Kennedy administration, the strategic emphasis was on deterrence, including in 1961 the hardening and dispersal of second-strike and command capabilities and, in 1962, the development of a counter-force doctrine. But in 1963, McNamara announced a cities-avoidance strategy which rested on the country's ability to strike at military and non-military targets simultaneously or to strike at military targets and hold cities captive to a second counter-strike.²⁹ On the surface, the purpose of this strategy, combined with a strong counter-force capacity and civil defense program at home, was to limit the damage to population centers on both sides in the event deterrence failed. In actuality, according to its critics, it threatened to undermine deterrence by offering a type of nuclear war that

²⁹See McNamara's 1963 Posture Statement. Documents on Disarmament, 1963, p. 21.

was more palatable to both sides.³⁰ While in some respects consistent with the doctrine of graduated response, it also challenged the administration's commitment to nuclear war avoidance, administration disclaimers to the contrary.

The logic of arms control

Doctrinal inconsistencies notwithstanding, Kennedy appears to have attached high priority to averting nuclear war with the Soviets. In part, this was supposed to be accomplished by the creation of military alternatives that made the nuclear option less supreme. Another method was arms control which was clearly at the center of policy-making interest during the nearly three years of the Kennedy administration. In understanding how arms control fit into Kennedy's military-political strategy and why he considered it a viable option in the face of continued Soviet hostility,³¹ it would be instructive to compartmentalize the following discussion into two portions, one military, the other political.

The most visible arms control agreement of the Kennedy years was the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. In pressing

³⁰ Moulton, op. cit., p. 83.

³¹ Kennedy apparently did not interpret the negotiation of arms control agreements as meaning that the enemy was any less interested in pursuing aggressive goals. In his State of the Union Message, of 1963, during a hopeful period in test ban negotiations, the President stated, "I foresee no spectacular reversal in Communist methods and goals." Public Papers....Kennedy, 1963, p. 18.

for its ratification on Capitol Hill, Secretary of Defense MaNamara offered the administration's definitive, strategic rationale for its acceptance and in so doing, assessed the state of U.S.-USSR weapons development in 1963. Clearly, the principal area of concern was the constraint a treaty would impose on the development of high-yield weapons, which required atmospheric detonations for effective testing. The administration conceded that the Soviets enjoyed a definite superiority in this area. Nevertheless, in explaining the treaty to the Senate, McNamara argued that the administration saw greater value in the development of low-yield weapons and could easily tolerate a Soviet advantage in the region of high-yield weaponry.³²

According to McNamara, while high-yield weapons dropped from high altitudes caused tremendous thermal fires over large cities, a larger number of smaller weapons could produce the same impact and have a better chance of saturating enemy defenses. In addition, while high-yield weapons could destroy hard-shell command posts, even they could not penetrate extremely deep installations. In this regard, they were no more effective than numerous low-yield weapons.

While arguing that the United States, even under the terms of the Test Ban Treaty, could most probably develop

³²Hearings: Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, pp. 100-103.

high-yield weapons of a fifty-sixty megaton range for B-52 delivery, McNamara essentially reasoned that the strategic calculations of the Kennedy administration precluded such a costly and perhaps useless enterprise. With regard to the other, major area of concern, ABM development, McNamara contended that extrapolation from available data along with continued underground testing could sufficiently enhance warhead technology and resistance to blackout effects, two areas which depended on nuclear testing.³³ With regard to countering Soviet ABM technology, McNamara admitted that greater knowledge of warhead invulnerability upon re-entry could be achieved by atmospheric testing. Nevertheless, according to the Secretary of Defense, the size of the American nuclear force along with testing and extrapolative capabilities under the terms of the treaty could effectively neutralize a Soviet ABM system at its existing stage of development.³⁴

The administration's commitment to arms control was not confined to the search for a workable test ban agreement alone. Instead, arms control pervaded the entire military doctrine of the Kennedy administration. In this respect, it is evident that Kennedy's nuclear and conventional strategy was heavily influenced by the Harvard-MIT Arms Control Seminar conducted in 1960-1961. Theories and recommendations

³³Hearings: Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, p. 103.

³⁴Hearings: Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, p. 104.

of the most influential members of the seminar were incisively summarized in Strategy and Arms Control, written by Thomas C. Schelling and Morton H. Halperin.³⁵ The essential argument of the monograph is that political differences notwithstanding, the superpowers shared a common interest in managing the arms race in order to avoid nuclear war, limit one should it occur, and generally to moderate the threat perception inherent in the reciprocal fear of surprise attack. Security against surprise attached through nuclear deterrence was given a surprising twist. Stability of mutual deterrence was seen as being more certain at higher rather than lower levels of armaments. The result was a clear rejection of disarmament as a superior road to peace. Sound defense policies on both sides would lead to the procurement of systems that would reduce the benefits of a surprise attack. In short, a central aspect of arms control thinking in Cambridge was military collaboration with the Soviet Union in the acquisition of new nuclear weapons systems, either through unilateral decisions which are reciprocated or through negotiated agreements limiting both sides in their choice and testing of weapons.

The impact of this theory on the arms control thinking of the Kennedy administration is obvious in the words of Assistant Secretary of Defense, John T. McNaughton, who was

³⁵Thomas C. Schelling and Morton H. Halperin, Strategy and Arms Control (New York: The Twentieth Century Fund, 1961).

the principal administration exponent of the partial test ban initiative. In a 1962 speech McNaughton observed:

Another popular assumption is that all arms control measures...must be negotiated. This too is wrong. The feature of enhancing simultaneously the security of both sides characterizes a multiplicity of measures running across the spectrum from negotiated disarmament agreements, through reciprocal initiatives and through unilateral acts which involve only rational adjustment by the other side, to purely unilateral measures involving no reciprocation or adjustment by any other country.³⁶

McNaughton went on to outline three major areas of arms control strategy:

1. Those designed to prevent wars by "accident."
2. Those designed to prevent wars by "miscalculation," ...to permit deliberate, controlled response, especially in crisis.
3. Those designed to reduce the damage should a war occur--by building firebreaks against escalation of conflict, by pursuing a strategy which is anti-military rather than anti-population, and by ensuring that the power to stop a war is preserved.³⁷

The administration saw arms control as part of a sound defense policy designed to reduce the dangerous consequences of America's protracted conflict with Communist powers. Arms control theories about stable deterrence

³⁶Kaufmann, op. cit., p. 131.

³⁷Ibid., p. 132.

helped to rationalize an expansion of nuclear forces even to the point of clear superiority. The Soviet leadership, it was reasoned, could assume that the reinforcing cycle of reciprocal fear of surprise attack no longer existed because of American superiority. Moreover, superiority would also reduce the possibility of war through miscalculation or accident. Indeed, from an arms control standpoint, the Hotline Agreement, with its emphasis on avoiding miscalculation and communicating objectives in crisis situations, was perhaps a more significant measure than the Test Ban Treaty. Arms control was, therefore, not a strategy of idealists; instead, it was a strategy, in the tradition of balance of power theories, designed to control, or manage conflict.

Arms control and detente

This is not to say that Kennedy saw no political value in arms control. Aside from the strategic changes that made the test ban a viable agreement from the standpoint of American security, Kennedy tended to view arms control as a unique means to ameliorate political tensions because it placed a premium on Soviet-American collaboration. Military collaboration, in turn, might build mutual confidence and, hence, lessen the explosive potential of reciprocal fears. This link between arms control and detente was a central premise of Kennedy's foreign policy and helps to distinguish it from Eisenhower's initial test ban efforts, which were motivated primarily by the exigencies of world

opinion and politics. Despite the practical objections to disarmament, Kennedy did see propagandistic value in a declaratory policy in favor of disarmament. Schlesinger recalls that in preparing the American presentation to the 1961 meeting of the General Assembly, United Nations Ambassador Adlai Stevenson argued for the inclusion of a disarmament proposal. The President responded that Congress' cool reception to the proposed Arms Control and Disarmament Agency demonstrated that disarmament was not a popular issue in the United States. Nevertheless, Kennedy welcomed Stevenson's idea as a means by which the United States could "make time against the Soviet Union."³⁸ Sorenson cites a similar case involving the President's issuance of guidelines to the administration's arms control task force in 1962. Kennedy asked the negotiators to meet broad Soviet initiatives with "proposals that were not so complex and cautious as to lack all force and appeal."³⁹

Despite these initial motives, Kennedy did not view arms control progress as significantly unrelated to the conduct of relations in other, sensitive, political areas. Former Democratic, Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield remembers that Kennedy:

³⁸Schlesinger, op. cit., p. 442.

³⁹Theodore Sorensen, Kennedy (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), p. 578.

thought it /Test Ban Treaty/ might increase the thaw, might open paths which had hitherto remained closed, and might mark a beginning in a better relationship between the Soviets and ourselves.⁴⁰

Indeed, to Kennedy and his advisors, arms control was the one issue that had become almost a symbol of Soviet-American cooperation and competition in the Cold War era. According to this line of thought, relations in general could be judged by the failure or success of both sides to negotiate arms control agreements. This point was underscored by ACDA member Franklin Long in a letter to Kennedy dated July 12, 1963:

The test ban negotiations have come to represent almost an institutional barrier to improved relations between the two countries, and the failure of the two countries to resolve this issue has symbolized their inability to reach agreement on the central problems of the Cold War.⁴¹

Considering that Kennedy viewed Soviet foreign policy as essentially expansionistic,⁴² how could he assume that arms control agreements would lead to a thaw in the Cold War? In large part, Kennedy felt that a relaxation of tensions did not carry with it an end to Cold War hostility. Instead, detente involved a widening of cooperative areas and a

⁴⁰Mike Mansfield, recorded interview by Seth P. Tillman, June 23, 1964, p. 32. John F. Kennedy Library Oral History Program.

⁴¹Letter from Franklin Long on the "Political Implications of a Nuclear Test Ban" to President Kennedy, July 12, 1963. John F. Kennedy Library.

⁴²Public Papers...Kennedy, 1962, p. 899.

defusion of flashpoints, leaving the central antagonism intact. In defending this policy to the American people, Kennedy was quite specific in explaining to a public schooled in the manicheism of the Dulles era that inconsistencies were legitimate expressions of the national interest. On July 26, 1963, in a radio and television address in support of the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, Kennedy commented:

It /Nuclear Test Ban Treaty/ will not resolve all conflicts, or cause the Communists to forego their ambitions, or eliminate the danger of war.⁴³

And in a fuller statement on the ambivalences of detente, Kennedy addressed an audience at the University of Maine in the following words:

...there is nothing inconsistent with signing an atmospheric nuclear test ban, on the one hand, and testing underground on the other; about being willing to sell the Soviets our surplus wheat while refusing to sell strategic items; or about exploring the possibilities of disarmament while maintaining a stockpile of arms.⁴⁴

Kennedy was essentially stating what had already become a fundament of American foreign policy--that the American approach to the Soviet Union involved an amalgam of accommodative and confrontational policies. In part, he articulated this viewpoint openly because his was the first administration to challenge the American people with the realities of detente; by forcing their representatives

⁴³Public Papers...Kennedy, 1963, p. 602.

⁴⁴Public Papers...Kennedy, 1963, p. 796.

to ratify the Test Ban Treaty and a subsequent wheat deal. At the same time, Kennedy's perception of the Soviet Union and communism made him well-equipped cognitively to systematize a strategy that exploited the mutual interests of the two great powers; for Kennedy was, above all, a pragmatist who viewed international politics, particularly at the nuclear level, as a conflict of interests rather than ideologies.

In an article published for the prestigious periodical, Foreign Affairs in October 1963, NSC Deputy W. W. Rostow wrote:

There apparently has been increasing receptivity in White House and State Department circles, since the Cuban missile crisis, the Test Ban, and the widening of the Sino-Soviet split, toward the premise that the Soviets have seen the futility of expansionist objectives and would now like to turn their energies to domestic development tasks.⁴⁵

The feeling that the Soviet Union was entering a new, perhaps permanently more accommodative phase in the aftermath of the Cuban missile crisis was not confined to governmental circles. The most comprehensive assessment of this kind was provided by a politically influential Kremlinologist, Marshall D. Shulman of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, in his exposition before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.⁴⁶ Shulman argued that the Soviet leadership was in 1963, preoccupied with economic and

⁴⁵Cited in Brown, op. cit., p. 10.

⁴⁶Hearings: Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, pp. 792-813.

political problems on the domestic front, divisions within the Soviet bloc and increasing restiveness in the world Communist movement. For these reasons, the Soviets were compelled to moderate their conflict with the United States. Perhaps more important in the long run, according to Professor Shulman, was the fact that

the most striking characteristic of recent Soviet foreign policy has been the way in which policies undertaken for short term, expediential purposes have tended to elongate in time, and become embedded in doctrine and political strategy. The shift to a "peaceful coexistence" emphasis, originally a tactical alternation, has been evolving and deepening into a policy directed to power-bloc politics rather than toward social revolution.⁴⁷

Shulman suggested that the shift to a more "benign" policy on the part of the Soviet Union would most likely depend on the extent to which American foreign policy responded in kind. In other words, Shulman was urging American policy-makers to cease viewing the Soviets as creatures of ideology exclusively and begin exploring the nuances in Soviet behavior for evidence of pragmatic self-interest. By developing policies that increased the Soviet stake in peace and stability, American decision-makers could, in fact, elevate the temporary Soviet interest into a key aspect of dogma.

Kennedy believed that the Soviet national interest could lead to a relaxation of tensions with the United

⁴⁷Hearings: Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, p. 797.

States, but he did not subscribe to a "benign" view of Russian policy. The President saw arms control as an area of potential accommodation. At the same time, he recognized that the Soviets would continue to challenge American interests through wars of national liberation and other forms of provocation. For these reasons, he pursued a test ban without pressing the Soviets vigorously for collateral political agreements as, for example, over Europe and Southeast Asia. Neither did he accept, however, the recommendation of advisor W. W. Rostow to make a test ban contingent on gaining political concessions from the Soviets on Cuba, Laos and Viet Nam.⁴⁸ Kennedy believed that there could be some super-power reciprocation in the nuclear field. He also felt that nuclear accommodation might attenuate Soviet ambitions in other areas, but only because arms control signified Soviet acceptance of American capabilities to frustrate their objectives through limited and controlled military responses. At the same time, he persisted in recognizing Russian policy as inherently opportunistic and continued to treat wars of national liberation as extensions of the Soviet national interest.

Whereas Shulman saw Cuba as a watershed in Soviet-American relations, the indication is that the crisis,

⁴⁸Memorandum from W. W. Rostow to the Secretary of State, "The Viet Minh in Laos and the Harriman Mission," July 4, 1963; Memorandum from W. W. Rostow to the President, "The Harriman Probe," July 8, 1963. John F. Kennedy Library.

rather than change Kennedy's approach to the relationship, confirmed existing assumptions about Soviet behavior. To be sure, the crisis impressed on Kennedy the Soviet desire to avoid nuclear holocaust.⁴⁹ As such, it indicated the level of mutual interest involved in the realm of nuclear politics. In addition, it probably made it more imperative for the President, from a psychological standpoint, to seek a solution to the test ban imbroglio.⁵⁰ Nevertheless, Kennedy saw Soviet foreign policy from a realist's perspective from the time he entered office in 1961. In order to encourage a de-ideologization of the conflict, Kennedy began by toning down traditional Cold War rhetoric. Sorensen recalls that during the transition period, Khrushchev sent a cable calling for a restoration of relations as they had been during the Roosevelt era. The Soviet note cavalierly glossed over much history that had since embroiled the two countries in bitter dispute. Adviser Charles Bohlen recommended a curt, one sentence reply. He was overruled by Kennedy "in favor

⁴⁹On December 17, 1962, Kennedy told a nationwide audience, "I do think his (Khrushchev's) speech shows he realizes how dangerous a world we live in." Public Papers...Kennedy, 1962, p. 899. In a Redbook interview published in August 1963, the President stated, "I am sure that the event had a sobering effect on Mr. Khrushchev." Public Papers...Kennedy, 1963, p. 607.

⁵⁰Schlesinger was impressed with the effects of Cuba on Kennedy. "As for Kennedy, his feelings underwent a qualitative change after Cuba; a world in which nations threatened each other with nuclear weapons seemed to him not just as irrational but an intolerable and impossible world." Schlesinger, op. cit., p. 815.

of civility."⁵¹

In addition, Kennedy, who did not believe that there could be a military victory in the Cold War, attempted to expunge the word "victory" from the official government vocabulary. Taking a cue from Walter Lippmann, he also favored the usage of "adversary" in place of "enemy,"⁵² a change which involved the President in a protracted dispute with the military over speech clearances. While these rhetorical alterations did little to ease the substantive differences between the two sides, they represented, at least, an attempt to produce more favorable atmospherics⁵³ and to cultivate less rigid attitudes in the American public.

Kennedy's use of phraseology with a lower ideological ingredient was, of course, offset, by his continued and seemingly paradoxical depiction of the Soviet-American conflict in ideological terms. This apparent paradox can best be explained as a consequence of domestic political exigencies, the intermittently positive-negative character

⁵¹Sorensen, op. cit., p. 231

⁵²Schlesinger, op. cit., p. 155.

⁵³While the toning down of harsh rhetoric might appear to be inconsequential, in fact, it has importance in international politics. George Quester, in his definition of detente, includes the following, "no longer is each side writing uncomplimentary prose to reduce the credibility of the other's prose." George Quester, Nuclear Diplomacy (New York: Dunellen, 1970), p. 105.

of Soviet-American relations, and the President's continued preoccupation with wars of national liberation. Nevertheless, Kennedy himself did not view the conflict from an ideological perspective. Instead, he tended to view Soviet-American rivalry as a fundamental clash of competing national interests. From a policy standpoint, this meant that the Soviets could be expected to vitiate their ideological commitment, once that commitment failed to correspond to the national interest. Consequently, Kennedy's tactical approach to the Soviet Union was designed to develop a Soviet interest in peace and stability. This involved a three-pronged strategy. First, the United States had to build up and diversify American forces so as to convince the Soviets of the futility of expansionist aims. Second, American policy-makers had to explore areas of mutual interest to the superpowers including arms control, economic transactions and joint technological ventures. Third, the administration had to enhance the ascendancy of power calculations among Soviet policy-makers by exploiting the strains within the Soviet bloc.

The Cuban missile crisis, the agreement of the Soviets to negotiate a partial test ban treaty and the Soviet initiative to buy wheat from American grain merchants did not signify to Kennedy the sudden development of realpolitik tendencies in the Kremlin. Instead, they confirmed what Kennedy believed all along--that the Soviets

operated according to national interest rather than ideological motives, at least at the level of nuclear politics. In explaining this phenomenon to the American people, Kennedy rejected the notion that the intrusion of ideology on to the international scene in the twentieth century had rigidified the conduct of international relations. Instead, he seemed to assert something equivalent to a nineteenth century "balance of power" concept of alliance building and disintegration and thus recognized the existence of a constant fluidity in international friendships and enmities. For example, in his American University address, the President declared:

And history teaches us that enmities between nations as between individuals do not last forever. However fixed our likes and dislikes may seem the tide of time and events will often bring surprising shifts in the relations.⁵⁴

And on September 26, 1963, Kennedy stated his concept of national interest:

...we must recognize that every nation determines its policies in terms of its own interests...National interest is more powerful than ideology, and the recent developments within the Communist empire show this very clearly. Friendship, as Palmerston said, may rise and wane, but interests endure.⁵⁵

These comments represented clear references to what was perceived by many in 1963 as a major split in the Communist world, with the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China at odds over a variety of issues including the

⁵⁴Public Papers...Kennedy, 1963, p. 461.

⁵⁵Public Papers...Kennedy, 1963, p. 736.

crucial doctrine of "peaceful coexistence." The government first accorded serious attention to this dispute in 1961, under the auspices of the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research, and in January 1962, the upper levels of the Department began to consider it a significant international development.⁵⁶ In November 1962, Roger Hilsman of the Intelligence and Research Bureau delivered a major speech on the Sino-Soviet dispute and attacked the impression that it was a hoax.

By the time the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty was examined by the Senate, even the Joint Chiefs, who were probably most distrustful within the administration of Soviet motives, acknowledged that the Sino-Soviet dispute was authentic.⁵⁷ Indeed, in a research memorandum dated June 14, 1963, from Thomas Hughes of INR to Secretary of State Rusk, the intelligence expert argued that Khrushchev himself most probably calculated that American policy-makers were of the opinion that "the Soviet Union is at a major turning point in its foreign policy."⁵⁸

⁵⁶Roger Hilsman, To Move a Nation (Garden City: Doubleday, 1967), p. 344.

⁵⁷See the respective testimonies of General Earle Wheeler, Admiral David L. McDonald and General Curtis Lemay. U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Armed Services, Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee, Hearings: Military Aspects and Implications of Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and Related Proposals, 88th Congress, 1st session, 1963, p. 676, p. 707, p. 376.

⁵⁸Memorandum from Thomas C. Hughes to Secretary of State Dean Rusk, "The Soviet View of Forthcoming Moscow

Kennedy himself recognized the seriousness of the conflict,⁵⁹ and in numerous public speeches and press conferences he employed the Sino-Soviet discord theme to score debating points against communism and to reaffirm the strength of the West in the face of a fragmented enemy. For example, in his 1963 State of the Union address, the President commented:

...it was only a few years ago...that communism sought to convey the image of a unified, confident and expanding empire...But few people would hold to that picture today.⁶⁰

In a magazine article published the following day, Kennedy was even more emphatic in pointing to the disintegration of the Communist world:

Within the Communist world itself, monolithic unity has begun to give way to the forces of diversity that are bursting the bands of both organization and ideology--and heated arguments have become the rule instead of the exception.⁶¹

Nevertheless, when called upon to assess the long-range policy implications of the Sino-Soviet dispute, the President was considerably more circumspect. In a July 17,

Talks," June 14, 1963, p. 4. John F. Kennedy Library.

⁵⁹During his visit to West Berlin in June 1963, the President was given a full run-down on the internecine Communist dispute by the American Ambassador to Moscow, Foy Kohler. Newsweek, 15 July 1963, p. 31.

⁶⁰Public Papers...Kennedy, 1963, p. 15.

⁶¹Public Papers...Kennedy, 1963, p. 20.

1963 press conference, following the apparent collapse of Soviet-Chinese reconciliation efforts, Kennedy reflected on the permanence of the dispute:

Quite obviously there are strong indications of pressure there, but I would not make any final statements because history has shown that they are frequently reversed.⁶²

In fact, according to Sorensen, the President

derived little comfort from the Soviet-Chinese dispute, and thought, on the contrary, that it might increase the dangers of desperation in Moscow or irresponsibility in Peking.⁶³

This is not to say, however, that Kennedy regarded the Sino-Soviet imbroglio as inconsequential or worse yet, as a detriment to American interests. On the contrary, according to Sorensen, the President recognized that the

new fluidity in the post-Cuba Communist camp... presented opportunities which seventeen years of cold war rigidities had never made possible before.⁶⁴

The Sino-Soviet dispute corresponded to rather than challenged assumptions about Soviet behavior that had already formed the basis for Kennedy's policy initiatives. The selection of a military strategy with multiple options, the pursuit of functional agreements of a technical nature⁶⁵

⁶²Public Papers...Kennedy, 1963, p. 571.

⁶³Sorensen, op. cit., p. 726.

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 726.

⁶⁵Kennedy affirmed the political importance of technical agreements in the following words, "For a cooperative Soviet-American effort in space...would emphasize those interests that most unite us..." Public Papers...Kennedy, 1962, p. 264.

and, most importantly, the diplomatic effort to achieve a nuclear test ban accord all rested on the assumption that the Soviets could be expected to interpret their ideology to conform to immediate and long-range power interests. The growing corrosion in the Soviet-Chinese relationship, therefore, did not give rise to the need for new policies as much as it confirmed what had already been anticipated about Soviet behavior.⁶⁶ Perhaps even more significant was the impact of the split in justifying to recalcitrant segments of the executive branch the wisdom of a policy of limited accommodation. General Lemay, in testifying before the Senate in 1963, acknowledged that his qualified approval of the treaty was in large part a consequence of assiduous lobby efforts by Harriman and Rusk who argued that the treaty would further worsen Sino-Soviet relations.⁶⁷

Kennedy, ideology and national interest

Within the administration, Kennedy was clearly the foremost exponent of the view that the well-springs of Soviet behavior were to be found in national interest rather

⁶⁶During the 1960 campaign, Kennedy solicited written advice from Soviet expert George Kennan who responded, "The main target of our diplomacy should be to heighten the divisive tendencies within the Soviet bloc. The best means to do this lies in the improvement of our relations with Moscow." Letter from George F. Kennan to John F. Kennedy, August 17, 1960. John F. Kennedy Library. Schlesinger writes that Kennedy, "...unlike the ideological interpreters of the cold war...was not surprised by the split between Russia and China." Schlesinger, op. cit., p. 110.

⁶⁷Hearings: Military Aspects..., p. 738.

than ideology. This point is evidenced not only by his public speeches but by the testimony of numerous advisors and political allies. Schlesinger writes, for example, that

He /Kennedy/ never took ideology very seriously, certainly not as a means of interpreting history ...he tended to give greater weight in thinking about world affairs to national rather than to ideological motives.⁶⁸

To his friends, this was a serious weakness in his understanding of Soviet behavior. According to Charles (Chip) Bohlen, Kennedy

didn't quite understand it /the ideological aspects of the Cold War/ because I don't believe--I never had the impression--that President Kennedy had seriously read Marx or Lenin, or any of the Soviet theoretical writers very much...any of the subtleties of its application by the Russians, I felt was somewhat of a closed book to him.⁶⁹

British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan, a Kennedy admirer, was equally impressed by the President's minimization of the ideological aspects of the Soviet-American conflict:

There is a marked difference between President Kennedy 'in action' on a specific problem...and his attitude to larger issues (the nuclear war, the struggle between East and West, Capitalism and Communism, etc). In the first, he is an extraordinarily quick and effective operator--a born 'politician'...On the wider issues, he seems rather lost...⁷⁰

⁶⁸Schlesinger, op. cit., p. 110.

⁶⁹Charles E. Bohlen, recorded interview by Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., May 21, 1964, pp. 7-8. John F. Kennedy Library Oral History Program.

⁷⁰Harold Macmillan, At the End of the Day, 1961-1963 (New York: Harper and Row, 1973), p. 147.

This assessment was corroborated by U. Alexis Johnson, under Kennedy, the Undersecretary for Political Affairs in the Department of State:

/Kennedy/ was not what I would call a philosophical or a subjective turn of mind...and if he had a weakness I would say that it was a tendency to decide in the light of the immediate circumstances at the time without trying to look far ahead.⁷¹

Kennedy's tendency to "discount, at times perhaps unduly the role of dogma in Soviet policy,"⁷² was illustrated most effectively in his 1961 Summit meeting with Khrushchev in Vienna. The President attempted to engage the Soviet Premier in an ideological colloquy but was clearly out-matched by his practiced opponent. Schlesinger observes that Kennedy "might have done better by eschewing ideological discussion."⁷³ Instead, the President tried to induce Khrushchev to accept Kennedy's interpretation of Soviet behavior as a consequence of national interest, not ideology. Llewellyn Thompson, a Kennedy confidante and recognized expert on Soviet affairs, was especially critical of Kennedy's approach:

I think in retrospect, I'm sorry in a way that the discussion got off on ideological grounds...which is something I don't think the President quite appreciated the fact that a Communist like Mr.

⁷¹U. Alexis Johnson, recorded interview by William Brubeck, 1964, p. 12. John F. Kennedy Oral History Program.

⁷²Schlesinger, op. cit., p. 279.

⁷³Ibid., p. 341.

Krushchev could not yield even if he wanted to. I mean he couldn't formally deny his own ideology.⁷⁴

Kennedy's view of national interest as a determining factor in Soviet foreign policy implied not that ideology was inoperative, but that it would take a back seat to national interest when the two came into conflict. Whereas Dulles, with his rigid, ideological interpretation of the Cold War, was reluctant to engage the Soviets in any agreement, Kennedy and others in his administration believed that the Russians could reciprocate positively as long as reciprocation enhanced their national interest. Accordingly, the Soviets could initial and even observe arms control agreements but continue to support wars of national liberation, so long as such support did not threaten the national interest.

In some respects, Kennedy's arms control policy can be seen as a diplomatic weapon in the Cold War. On one level, the President sponsored a plan for the general and complete disarmament which was viewed as a propaganda instrument designed to meet similar, sweeping, Soviet disarmament proposals at the United Nations. Given the general disarmament component of Sino-Soviet polemics, the administration thereby hoped to further the public debate within

⁷⁴Llewellyn Thompson, recorded interview by Elizabeth Donahue, March 23, 1964, and Joseph E. O'Connor, April 27, 1966, p. 36. John F. Kennedy Oral History Program.

the Communist bloc. More importantly, by embracing the arms control strategy of military collaboration, the Soviets were induced to take a position on the Hotline and nuclear testing diametrically opposed to China's.

Most importantly, the Kennedy arms control policy represented an attempt by its architects to revive the anti-Communist component in American military strategy. Eisenhower had effectively avoided nuclear war, but, according to his critics, he did so at the expense of anti-communism. Under Kennedy, arms control was designed to stabilize the nuclear relationship between the superpowers and, in so doing, free the United States to confront the Soviets in a more flexible manner. In order to insure the necessary stability for a more effective anti-Communist strategy, the administration had to cooperate with the Soviets at a nuclear level by seeking a fundamental area of mutual interest: nuclear war avoidance and limitation. Thus, while appearing to stress the accommodative aspects of the Soviet-American relationship, the administration was actually devising a policy better equipped, at least, in its own opinion, to combat communism on a global scale.

CHAPTER V

ARMS CONTROL AND DETENTE: THE EVOLUTION OF POLICY ON THE TEST BAN ISSUE, 1957-1962

The Eisenhower legacy

The cornerstone of the emerging Soviet-American detente in 1963 was arms control.

The extent to which American foreign policy had previously been governed by a deliberate determination to link the progress of arms control negotiations with the rise and decline of Cold War tensions is a matter of some question. Bernhard Bechhoefer notes that Secretary of State John Foster Dulles was profoundly skeptical of the salutary impact of arms control agreements in the absence of any significant reduction in East-West political tensions.¹ Consequently, one might explain the arms control initiatives of the Eisenhower administration--such as the Atoms for Peace and Open Skies proposals, the convening of the 1958 Conference of Experts and the decision to join test ban negotiations--as concessions to international pressure for

¹Bernhard G. Bechhoefer, Postwar Negotiations for Arms Control (Washington: Brookings, 1961), p. 429.

the control of nuclear weapons. Viewing the Soviets as essentially untrustworthy yet mindful of the political value to the Kremlin of its apparent readiness to enter into negotiations, the administration had no choice but to produce an arms control position of its own. But this hesitant approach led to a policy that was, in Jacobson's and Stein's estimation, often contradictory and consistently burdened by qualifications that reduced its capacity to break meaningful negotiating ground.²

While the administration found it difficult to develop a strong test ban position once negotiations began, it was Eisenhower's leadership, according to Robert Gilpin, that moved the United States in the direction of test ban negotiations in the first place. Gilpin contends that Eisenhower's "desire for a nuclear test ban had become so strong by the fall of 1958 that it overrode both previous position against a nuclear test ban as an isolated step and his conviction that the United States should not suspend testing until it had learned all it desired to learn about nuclear weapons."³ In Gilpin's estimation, the decisions to engage the United States first, in a Conference of Experts--a decision made by the President and Dulles alone--

²Harold Karan Jacobson and Eric Stein, Diplomats, Scientists and Politicians: The United States and the Nuclear Test Ban Negotiations (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1966), pp. 471-473.

³Robert Gilpin, American Scientists and Nuclear Weapons Policy (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962), p. 196.

and second, in test ban negotiations represented major reversals in American policy. These developments could not have occurred, according to Gilpin, without Eisenhower's support of those in the administration who favored a test ban.

It is clear that by the time Kennedy entered office certain significant trends had already evolved. First, no matter Eisenhower's uncertainties, the United States was, by 1961, actively engaged in test ban negotiations with the Russians. This provided Kennedy with a framework for negotiations, a policy upon which to build and a commitment to seek a test ban accord that transcended partisan lines.

Second, the negotiations during the Eisenhower administration served to flesh out the issues dividing East and West. Clearly, the outstanding issue, once both sides agreed to explore a test ban, was the question of inspection. The Soviets, while initially agreeing to a system for on-site inspection, were not willing to meet Western demands for rigorous means of monitoring underground explosions. The issue was clouded by the existence of conflicting technical data. The 1958 Conference of Experts concluded, perhaps with an excessive degree of optimism, that effective control was indeed feasible. Subsequent American tests, specifically Hardtack I and II, demonstrated, however, that high altitude tests and deep underground explosions might conceivably escape the detection capabilities outlined by the 1958

Conference. Moreover, scientist Albert Latter who, along with Dr. Edward Teller, had just published a book critical of any prospective test ban,⁴ developed the "decoupling" or "big hole" theory, which advanced the proposition that tests could be concealed underground by exploding nuclear devices in extremely large, man-made cavities.

The new Western position, influenced as it was by the need to devise a policed comprehensive ban, was that any movement toward an agreement had to take into account the new scientific evidence. In late 1959, following Khrushchev's visit to Camp David, the Soviets agreed to consider the new data and by May 1960, it appeared that some agreement, including an atmospheric ban, an underground moratorium, a quota on inspections and a coordinated research program, might, in fact, emerge. But with the collapse of the Paris Summit, the Soviets renewed their insistence on the reliability of the Conference's report and refused to consider the new data advanced by subsequent American discoveries. Whether the Soviets employed the Paris Summit to frustrate the possibilities for accord, or whether the new political tensions made an accord unacceptable to the Soviets at that time,⁵

⁴Edward Teller and Albert Latter, Our Nuclear Future: Dangers and Opportunities (New York: Criterion Books, 1958).

⁵According to Jerome Kahan, "Kremlin leaders seemed to view negotiations mainly as a means of disguising the USSR's military deficiencies, acquiring prestige through the illusion of sincerity, and reducing the risk of U.S. attack as they slowly built a reliable deterrent." Jerome Kahan, Security in the Nuclear Age (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 1975), p. 61.

it is obvious that the technical requirements of inspection were being portrayed by those in the United States opposed to a treaty on military and political grounds as the central difference between the two sides. The problem of establishing an inspection formula that could satisfy these objections was to become a central concern of the Kennedy administration in its formulation of a "comprehensive ban" policy, and ultimately, in its adoption of a "partial" ban.

The American insistence on an inspected ban could be understood as the consequence of two vastly different motivations. On the one hand, there were those who favored a ban but who, nevertheless, would not accept an agreement that rested exclusively on Soviet gestures of goodwill. Within this group there were differences as to the scope and character of inspection requirements; but all agreed that the test ban was, at best, a positive development in the Soviet-American relationship and, at the very least, not potentially hazardous to American security interests. On the other hand, there was a smaller but quite articulate group of scientists, government officials and Congressmen who believed that any ban would jeopardize the country's strategic standing; they seized on the inspection issue as the unresolvable issue that would forestall any agreement. Their insistence on ironclad inspection safeguards was designed not necessarily to insure the emergence of a workable agreement but rather to make any agreement more difficult to achieve.

Robert Gilpin labels these opposing viewpoints as the "finite" and "infinite" containment schools.⁶ The finite proponents assumed that it was technically feasible to limit the nuclear arms race and, at the same, time, continue in a competitive political and military relationship with the Soviet Union. In other words, containment of Soviet power did not require the infinite expansion of American nuclear capabilities. The latter, on the other hand, argued that no inspection system could be devised that would guarantee against Soviet violations of a test ban agreement. Accordingly, the only alternative for American policy-makers was the authorization of an escalated weapons development program, complete with unrestricted testing. They opposed not only test ban negotiations but also the unofficial testing moratorium that lasted from 1958 until August 1961. There was another group, designated by Gilpin as the "control" school, that had little influence within the government but which, nevertheless, was fairly well-organized as an interest lobby. This group, led by scientist Linus Pauling, contended that the weapons race was directly responsible for the deterioration in Soviet-American relations. By controlling the arms spiral, so went their argument, political tensions would soon dissipate.

⁶Gilpin, op. cit., pp. 66-107 passim.

Bechhoefer portrays policy conflict within the Eisenhower administration in another way.⁷ Eisenhower and his disarmament adviser Harold Stassen placed principal emphasis on disarmament negotiations as a means to reduce political tensions. In other words, by appearing to accept the USSR as a legitimate state and by engaging the Soviets in disarmament negotiations, the path might be cleared for political accommodation. Dulles, on the other hand, stressed the need to mitigate political tensions as a means to create an atmosphere of trust necessary for disarmament negotiations. Bechhoefer does not believe that Dulles was opposed to disarmament per se, but the Secretary of State was clearly unwilling to pursue negotiations when they threatened to create, for example, serious anxieties among America's NATO allies. Indeed, the Dulles view was transmitted to certain elements of the Kennedy administration, such as W. W. Rostow, who were somewhat hesitant about a test ban treaty because of its potentially disruptive effects on the Atlantic Alliance.

The policy that developed during the latter days of the Eisenhower administration seems to have been an amalgamation of all these points of view, although the administration appears to have approached the test ban question more vigorously once Secretary Dulles' illness and subsequent death

⁷Bechhoefer, op. cit., pp. 429-435.

removed him from the policy-making scene. On the one hand, the United States explored possibilities for achieving a test ban. This itself represented a final reversal from the pre-1955 American position insisting on the discussion of more ambitious forms of disarmament. In addition, the administration, in 1959, offered a partial treaty to the Soviet Union, leaving for the future talks on a comprehensive ban. But, as Jacobson and Stein note, these initiatives were often diluted with concessions to the infinite containment school.⁸ Upon entering into test ban negotiations, the administration warned that the permanence of any agreement would be contingent upon the success of other disarmament negotiations. Similarly, in offering its partial treaty proposal, the administration, without outlining its specifics, insisted on techniques for control. Quite clearly, in allowing a consensus to be built behind his policy, the President was attempting to satisfy the major viewpoints in his administration.

Despite the apparent hesitations in the American stance, the policy-making process within the Eisenhower administration served to focus policy debate on an issue that, at least, had some realistic chance of negotiating success. Previous government thinking on arms control, during the Truman and Eisenhower administrations, had

⁸Jacobson and Stein, op. cit., p. 472.

centered on comprehensive disarmament measures.⁹ By 1958, however, partly as a consequence of Soviet initiatives and partly as a result of arms control negotiator Harold Stassen's opposition to disarmament as an unrealizable goal, the administration began debating the more realistic test ban question. Despite initial attacks from the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Atomic Energy Commission and Secretary of State Dulles, the test ban issue, indeed, became a central focus of internal policy debate. Thus, by the time Kennedy took office the test ban had already mobilized a considerable amount of government activity and had been framed in a manner that made it ripe for renewed action.

Another consequence of the Eisenhower's administration's attempt to deal with the emerging test ban issue was the alignment of bureaucratic positions and the establishment of bureaucratic mechanisms for the consideration of the issue. Jacobson and Stein note that the Atomic Energy Commission and Department of Defense were against a test ban, with the former particularly strong in its opposition.¹⁰ This could be attributed to the activism of AEC Chairman

⁹See William R. Frye, "The Quest for Disarmament Since World War II," in Arms Control: Issues for the Public, ed. Louis Henkin (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1961), pp. 18-48 passim.

¹⁰Jacobson and Stein, op. cit., p. 471. See also George B. Kistiakowsky, A Scientist at the White House (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976).

Lewis Strauss who was notably adept at bureaucratic in-fighting. According to Gilpin, after Strauss' forced resignation in 1958, test ban opponents lost a formidable spokesman.¹¹ In favor of the test ban were the Department of State--although Dulles' initial enthusiasm was rather reserved and his ultimate endorsement governed by political considerations--the Central Intelligence Agency, which saw the inspection provision as a means by which the Soviet Union could be opened up to greater surveillance and the President's Science Advisory Committee.

The establishment of the Science Advisory Committee was an important step in institutionalizing the access of this key arms control group to the President. Until 1957, the scientific community occupied a secondary status in the executive branch. The General Advisory Committee was attached to the AEC and the Science Advisory Committee to the Office of Defense Mobilization. But in 1957, as an anxious response to the launching of the Soviet Sputnik, Eisenhower created the position of Special White House Assistant for Science and Technology and named James Killian of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to fill the role. In addition, scientists were now attached directly to the President in the PSAC. Eisenhower also made use of special scientific task forces such as the Bethe Panel which helped move the administration toward a pro-ban stance.

¹¹Gilpin, op. cit., p. 199.

Indeed, at the Conference of Experts, which was so instrumental in giving test ban negotiations their initial momentum, the American delegation was composed almost exclusively of scientists, with only a junior foreign service officer representing the Department of State.

A further organizational contribution of the Eisenhower administration was the establishment of the Committee of Principals, a high-level interagency group designed to coordinate and ultimately ratify arms control policy. Founded in August 1958, the Committee was initially composed of the Secretary of State as Chairman, the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman of the AEC, the Director of the CIA and the President's Special Advisor on Science and Technology. Eisenhower preferred that the committee operate as a consensus-building mechanism. This would obviate the need for his direct intervention in the policy-making process, and it also explains, in part, why the policy that developed during his administration represented such an amalgam of viewpoints. Its establishment clearly demonstrated the new priority accorded arms control in the Eisenhower administration.

When Kennedy took office he was thus aware of the positions of the various governmental agencies with an interest in arms control. More importantly, he inherited organizational machinery that would be instrumental in the fashioning of his own arms control policy. Two of these mechanisms, the Special Assistant for Science and Technology

and the Committee of Principals were to prove especially noteworthy in his administration.

Two other sources of policy input developed during the Eisenhower administration and continued to exert considerable influence during the Kennedy era. The first, and more easily identifiable of these two sources was the British government. It is clear that the United States under both Eisenhower and Kennedy was sensitive to the opinions of allied and non-aligned states. In fact the pressure for a test ban from leading third world countries such as India was so great, that in the context of the global Cold War being contested at that time, the Americans had no alternative but to appear willing to negotiate an arms control agreement. At the same time, Britain, as the major Western ally and as a fellow nuclear power, was much more directly instrumental in the formulation of American policy. During the early 1950's, the two countries were joined in disarmament initiatives by France, which, for example, collaborated in the Tripartite Proposal, presented to the sixth session of the General Assembly in 1951. Indeed, at times the two European nations moved together beyond the United States in an attempt to break the negotiating logjam; as they did in May 1954 when they introduced a bilateral disarmament initiative at Geneva.

But by the late 1950s, France had embarked on a program designed to give it independent nuclear striking power. As a consequence, it opposed rather than supported efforts

to achieve anything short of total, multilateral disarmament. By the end of the decade, the "Western" negotiating position became synonymous with the Anglo-American stance.

This stance was reached through active consultation and coordination of policies. To be sure, the British appeared more willing to take bolder initiatives, at least during the Eisenhower administration era. This was no doubt a consequence of Britain's closer proximity to central Europe--where many nuclear war scenarios were projected--and the very active pressure of a vigorous "Ban the Bomb" movement at home. At the same time, the British enjoyed easy access to American policy-making circles, and in one dramatic instance, Prime Minister Harold MacMillan himself flew to Washington to prod the administration into being more forthcoming at the negotiating table. Differences notwithstanding, it is clear that the British were active and generally welcome participants in the American policy-making process.

A much less clearly defined source of influence was the domestic political environment. Jacobson and Stein note that public interest in test ban negotiations was relatively episodic, rising in relation to dramatic events such as the Soviet moratorium violation but, by and large, quiescent.¹² Nevertheless, policy-makers did not operate in a political vacuum. During the 1956 presidential

¹²Jacobson and Stein, op. cit., p. 470.

campaign, Democratic presidential candidate Adlai Stevenson prodded Eisenhower to respond to his proposal for a unilateral disarmament initiative. In addition, numerous scientists and public interest groups such as SANE made a strong case for the suspension of nuclear testing, while respected members of the foreign policy establishment, such as George Kennan, were suggesting means for the amelioration of tensions in Europe, such as mutual disengagement measures.

But the greatest source of influence came from individual Congressmen using the legislative machinery to press their own viewpoints on the administration. During the Eisenhower era, the foremost Democratic spokesman in favor of a test ban was Senator Hubert Humphrey, who employed his Subcommittee on Disarmament to incubate the test ban issue. Another Democrat, Senator Albert Gore, who had observed firsthand the negotiations in Geneva, was chary of a comprehensive pact; but he is credited with being the first major American political figure to recommend an atmospheric ban. With the administration unsettled about the course of American policy, these voices were accorded greater value than might otherwise have been the case. In a sense, Congress, during the Eisenhower administration, assumed a policy-initiation role.

In summary, the Kennedy administration, upon taking power in January 1961, walked into a policy area that had already developed considerable momentum of its own. To be

sure, by 1961, East-West negotiations were profoundly deadlocked. Nevertheless, events during the Eisenhower administration had committed the United States to search for a workable test ban accord. A negotiating framework had been established, central issues had been drawn and interested parties, from within and outside the executive branch, had been mobilized. Kennedy's task upon assuming power was, therefore, twofold. First, employing the policy-making machinery available to him, the new President had to seek a formula which would move the negotiations off dead-center. Second, he would have to sustain and even build support outside the executive branch in the face of continued Soviet obstructionism. This he would have to accomplish within the context of a strong, public anti-Soviet sentiment. These related tasks were ultimately to occupy a considerable portion of his interest, time and political energy.

Kennedy's first two years--organizing for arms control

The Eisenhower administration left office with the test ban negotiations stalemated and Soviet-American relations in a general state of decline. Having pledged during the campaign to attach a high priority to arms control,¹³ the new President began his tenure by ordering an administration-wide review of the American negotiation position.

¹³United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, Documents on Disarmament, 1960, p. 289.

This review resulted in a draft treaty tabled by the United States at the Geneva Conference on April 18, 1961. While the American position was only marginally different from previous Western proposals, it represented the first time that any administration had presented a full draft treaty for consideration. Despite outright Soviet rejection of the treaty, the President instructed Ambassador Arthur Dean to propose a concession on the inspection issue by offering the Soviets a sliding-scale from twelve to twenty inspections per year. The rejection of this concession demonstrated the wide gulf still dividing East and West on the central inspection issue. It also represented one hint among several that the Soviets were about to abrogate the testing moratorium.

The moratorium was a collateral but no less significant issue. The Joint Chiefs, along with several influential members of Congress and the scientific community were hectoring the President to resume underground testing, even before the Soviet atmospheric explosion of August 1961. As a response to this pressure, the President convened the blue-ribbon Panofsky panel, named after its Chairman, Professor Wolfgang Panofsky, to evaluate the possibilities of Soviet duplicity and to make recommendations regarding the advisability of renewed American testing. The Panel, organized under the auspices of the PSAC, acknowledged that the Soviets could have cheated; but it found no evidence to

support the contention that, in fact, they had. More importantly, the Panel saw little value in the resumption of American testing. The President, sympathetic to its conclusions, sided with the Panofsky Panel and refused to initiate a testing program until after the Soviets had resumed one of their own. Even then, he began with the authorization of underground tests and ordered the resumption of atmospheric testing only after the talks showed little sign of leading to a breakthrough.

The President's determination to avoid the unilateral resumption of nuclear testing and, at the same time, to achieve a semblance of momentum at Geneva, was facilitated by his approach to the management of the executive branch.¹⁴ This approach was, in large part, a reaction to the cumbersome policy machinery developed by his predecessor. Eisenhower, whose military background led him to inflated expectations about the efficacy of a clearly delineated chain-of-command, used what Clark and Legere call a "formalized codification" approach.¹⁵ The President was interested

¹⁴The material covering the organizational approaches of the Eisenhower and Kennedy presidencies borrows from the following works: Keith C. Clark and Laurence J. Legere, The President and the Management of National Security (New York: Praeger, 1969); I. M. Destler, Presidents, Bureaucrats and Foreign Policy (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972); Richard Tanner Johnson, Managing the White House: An Intimate Study of the Presidency (New York: Harper & Row, 1974); Louis Koenig, The Chief Executive (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1968).

¹⁵Clark and Legere, op. cit., p. 217.

in reconciling policy with action. To insure this, policy was clearly enunciated in an annual series of National Security Policy Papers. The purpose of these papers was to apprise lower-level bureaucrats of the administration's policies. To guarantee the execution of policy, Eisenhower established within the National Security Council an Operations Coordinating Board which issued periodic "Action Status Reports" designed to monitor the responsiveness of the foreign policy bureaucracy. Broad policy, however, was made by the NSC's Planning Board, composed of the assistant secretaries of the Council's constituent agencies and departments. In addition to the NSC, the Cabinet was revived as a significant policy-making organ. Periodic meetings between the Cabinet Secretary and the "Cabinet Assistants," a group of assistant secretaries from Cabinet level departments, were also used to monitor the implementation of Cabinet decisions within the various bureaucracies.

When Kennedy assumed the presidency, he was determined to reduce the number of boards and agencies which had multiplied under Eisenhower's "pyramidal" system of management. The new President reasoned that instead of aiding him in asserting control over the government, the coordinating boards tended to insulate the chief executive from the hub of the decision-making process. Based on the advice of reorganization advisors such as presidential scholar Richard E. Neustadt, Kennedy dismantled the boards, abolished the Cabinet Secretariat and deemphasized the role of the Cabinet.

To monitor government operations, the new President relied on two strategies. First, he employed the National Security Council, and particularly its chief McGeorge Bundy, as a personal staff rather than as an interagency decision-making board. One of the major criticisms leveled at the Eisenhower NSC was its propensity to produce "watered-down" recommendations resulting from the need to satisfy the variety of interests and viewpoints represented on the Council.¹⁶ Second, and perhaps more importantly, the President, in order to achieve a greater harmony between policy and action, attempted as much as possible to monitor the implementation of decisions himself. To do so, he established contacts with lower level bureaucrats, thereby hoping to circumvent routine channels of command. As Koenig writes, Kennedy tried to build administration-wide personal relationships rather than institutions.¹⁷

Kennedy's approach has been widely labeled as "action" rather than "policy" oriented. This description

¹⁶Under Eisenhower, a premium was placed on the achievement of consensus prior to presidential decision. This was a major reason for the construction of so many coordinating boards, and it describes Eisenhower's use of the Committee of Principals. But Kennedy, according to the then Deputy Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, U. Alexis Johnson, "wanted to get things done before they had become too orderly, before opinions had become too departmentalized." U. Alexis Johnson, recorded interview by William Brubeck, 1964, pp. 13-15. John F. Kennedy Library Oral History Program.

¹⁷Koenig, op. cit., p. 172.

has been used to distinguish his administration's from Eisenhower's. The Eisenhower model assumed that a hierarchical system would automatically convert broad policy into specific action. Kennedy, apparently more attuned to the vagaries of the bureaucratic process, eschewed broad policy declarations as futile. Instead, he approached each issue from an action perspective and organized special interagency task forces to deal with them. According to this pragmatic decision-making model, policy "tended to be viewed more as a set of reasons lying behind an action program undertaken, or simply as a description of an action program; the action itself was the focus of interest."¹⁸

Kennedy's informal approach to decision-making was contrived to encourage the development of presidential control over the policy-making process. Nevertheless, it too had certain inherent limitations. First, it placed a great premium on active presidential involvement in the development of policy.¹⁹ While this emphasis on the employment of personal presidential power paid dividends in areas where the President chose to exercise his influence, it inevitably

¹⁸ Clark and Legere, op. cit., p. 72.

¹⁹ Presidential Adviser Charles Bohlen contends that Kennedy might have, in fact, been "somewhat overimpressed by Neustadt's book on the power of the President in that a strong President always went outside channels." Charles Bohlen, recorded interview by Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., May 21, 1964, p. 30. John F. Kennedy Library Oral History Program.

allowed for greater bureaucratic independence in other areas. Second, the creation of ad hoc panels did not obviate the need for intra-administration consensus building. Instead of constructing consensus through formal institutions such as the National Security Council or Cabinet, the mechanisms for bureaucratic infighting were the informal boards and panels. As Adrian Fisher, Deputy Director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency during the Kennedy administration, notes, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who had strong reservations about the comprehensive ban which Kennedy favored, were actively involved in the interagency planning that led to the American proposals of August 1962.²⁰ That these deliberations were conducted under the ad hoc auspices of the ACDA did not mean that this important and sometimes vexatious group was excluded from the decision-making process.

These limitations notwithstanding, the evolution of the administration's policy in 1961-62 resulted in a coherent arms control position--a quality singularly lacking in the Eisenhower administration. This coherence can be attributed to three factors. First, Kennedy chose arms control as an area of principal personal concern and involvement. Second, the President filled key administration posts with individuals who had contributed to theory building in the arms control

²⁰ Adrian Fisher, recorded interview by Frank Sieverts, May 13, 1964, p. 14. John F. Kennedy Library Oral History Program.

movement. Finally, the establishment of a new arms control coordinating unit, the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency aided the President immeasurably in asserting control over his administration in this key issue area.

In August 1962, Ambassador Dean tabled two draft treaties at Geneva; one proposing a comprehensive, the other a partial ban. As Fisher remembers it, the idea for a limited ban did not originate with the President;²¹ instead, its key administration exponents were John McNaughton of the Defense Department and Carl Kaysen of the National Security Council.²² Under the direction of the ACDA, the 1962 arms control reevaluation involved a major executive branch consensus-building project. Upon concluding its final meeting on July 3, the interagency task force sent the two drafts to relevant agencies for final comment. On July 20, the Committee of Principals' Committee of Deputies met to discuss the new viewpoints. As a consequence, two revised drafts were composed. These drafts were submitted to the Committee of Principals on July 26. Only then were they submitted to the President for his consideration and formal authorization.

The attempt to build a consensus behind the "two draft" proposal did not occur, however, without significant

²¹Ibid., p. 13.

²²Schlesinger, op. cit., p. 456.

presidential participation. Fisher recalls that the President was well aware of the interagency group's decision to consider a limited ban and made his opinions known through constant questioning and prodding. He was also apprised of the scientific developments that led to a review of the administration's position on a comprehensive ban.²³

In addition, Kennedy used the Committee of Principals to exert considerable influence on the shaping of policy. The Committee, which met eleven times between March 1 and August 1, 1962, was supplied with firm presidential guidelines, unlike the deliberations of the Committee during the Eisenhower administration. As a high-level interagency group, these guidelines were communicated downward to those areas of the bureaucracy involved in staff work. Finally, once the task force's recommendations were made known to the President, the Committee of Principals met with him two additional times, on July 30 and August 1.

²³Fisher notes, "...he /Kennedy/ seemed to me about as well advised on the subject as any non-scientific person could be." Fisher interview, p. 15. During the summer of 1962 Project VELA produced some promising evidence regarding the detectability of underground explosions. Kennedy's awareness of this development was made public in a press conference that summer. In response to a question on the status of the administration's arms control policy, the President answered, "...we've been attempting...to bring our own position in line with new scientific data available to us in late June." See U.S., President, Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1963), John F. Kennedy, 1962, p. 592.

Kennedy's interest in promoting a strong arms control position was conveyed to his administration not only through active presidential involvement in the policy-making process but by the emplacement of like-minded personnel in important decision-making posts. Abram Chayes, under Kennedy Legal Advisor to the State Department, notes that men such as Jerome Wiesner, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., and Carl Kaysen were interested in exploring new directions in the East-West relationship.²⁴ Wiesner, who became the President's scientific advisor, is credited by Schlesinger with keeping the arms control initiative alive in the executive branch.²⁵ During the 1960 campaign, Wiesner had written an article for Daedalus in which he criticized the West for its timidity on the disarmament issue.²⁶ Shortly after the 1960 election, Wiesner attended the Pugwash Conference and became convinced that the Soviets were, indeed, serious about achieving a test ban agreement. He carried this impression with him in his new post as the President's Special Assistant for Science and Technology. Another major personnel change, according to Jacobson and Stein, was the replacement of hard-line AEC Chairman John McCone with Glenn Seaborg.²⁷ At the department

²⁴Abram Chayes, recorded interview by Eugene Gordon, May 18, 1964; June 22, 1964; June 23, 1964, p. 226. John F. Kennedy Library Oral History Program.

²⁵Schlesinger, op. cit., p. 465.

²⁶Jerome B. Wiesner, "Comprehensive Arms Limitation Systems," Daedalus 89 (Fall 1960): 917-918.

²⁷Jacobson and Stein, op. cit., p. 270.

level, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara was valued not only for his judgment but also for his ability to control the Joint Chiefs of Staff.²⁸

At the center of the administration's arms control activity in 1961-62 was the newly formed Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. Sorensen notes that the agency was established because Kennedy felt that too little governmental attention was being devoted to the subject of arms control.²⁹ Indeed, while many government organizations were involved to some degree in the formulation of arms control policy, the only governmental unit devoting full-time attention to the problem was the relatively small Disarmament Administration, situated in the Department of State. The creation of the agency also signaled the administration's public determination to make progress in this area. An outgrowth of the Democratic Advisory Council's "Peace Agency" idea, it satisfied the liberal wing of Kennedy's party, which had made arms control a high priority item in the Democratic platform.

²⁸Schlesinger, op. cit., p. 465. Sorensen notes that McNamara could "only go so far in overwhelming the Joint Chiefs of Staff if he was to maintain morale and support within the Pentagon." Theodore Sorensen recorded interview by Carl Kaysen, March 26, 1964 and April 4, 1964, p. 14. John F. Kennedy Library Oral History Program.

²⁹Sorensen, op. cit., p. 578.

The most important function of the ACDA was to give the President greater control over the arms control efforts of his administration. Richard Neustadt, who along with Republican John McCloy was one of the architects of the new agency, was interested in making it as responsive to the President as bureaucratically feasible. In a memo to McCloy, he suggested that the unit should be a "self-contained administrative entity headed by a Director who ranks bureaucratically with the Under Secretary of State and Deputy Secretary of Defense."³⁰ More importantly, he preferred that the head of the agency report directly to the President rather than through the Secretary of State. As a consequence of his recommendations, the ACDA represented a bureaucratic anomaly. While nominally under the authority of the Secretary of State--who as the principal foreign policy advisor in the administration had first claim to the formulation of arms control policy--the Agency Director was, in a very real sense, directly answerable to the President. In the hands of a president with great interest in arms control, the ACDA could, therefore, be a powerful mechanism for political mastery. This feature was accentuated by Trevor Gardner, under Eisenhower Assistant Secretary of Defense for Research and Development and originator of the

³⁰Memorandum from Richard E. Neustadt to John J. McCloy regarding the location of the contemplated disarmament organization, March 29, 1961. John F. Kennedy Library.

Peace Agency idea, in testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee:

I believe that the organization will work as long as the President retains a strong and continuing interest in the disarmament area...I would think that in the event we had a President whose interest was not strong in that area that the two-headed facet of reporting might be a deficiency.³¹

During the 1962 review of the administration's test ban policy the agency and its director, William Foster assumed the principal coordinating role within the executive branch. This was, in part, a consequence of the agency's preference for a comprehensive ban, a preference shared by the President. It was also a function of the President's greater interest in arms control and Secretary of State Dean Rusk's relative diffidence on the issue.³² With access to a wide array of government agencies and research facilities outside the government, the ACDA's task forces considered all proposals and prepared them for review by the Committee of Principals.³³ These functions within the government were matched by sedulous ACDA efforts to cultivate Congressional opinion and by its coordination of all government

³¹U.S., Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, Hearings: Disarmament Agency-S.2180-A Bill to Establish a United States Disarmament Agency for World Peace and Security, 87th Congress, 1st session, 1961, p. 195.

³²Schlesinger, op. cit., p. 466.

³³The ACDA organized working groups according to four functional areas: International Relations, Weapons Evaluation and Control, Science and Technology and Economics. Documents on Disarmament, 1963, p. 699. In 1962, the Agency spent four million dollars on outside contracts.

public information programs.

It is clear, then, that by the late summer of 1962, the administration, despite continued Soviet intransigence on the issue, had fashioned a test ban policy that satisfied major governmental interests. The hard liners, particularly among the military, were, at least temporarily, reconciled by the continued American insistence on verified inspection and by the resumption of atmospheric testing. The comprehensive ban advocates, particularly in the ACDA, were encouraged by the determination of the administration to continue the search for a treaty prohibiting underground testing. A middle ground was struck by the simultaneous proposal of a partial ban; a proposal which was not necessarily favored by the President but which, nevertheless, won his approval. In retrospect, however, it was Kennedy's decision to permit the tabling of a partial ban, over the objections of his arms control experts in the ACDA,

Ibid., p. 196. In testimony before the Senate Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee, representatives of the Agency cited the following government organs as sources of policy input: Director of Research and Engineering, Advanced Research Projects Agency, Assistant Secretary for International Security Affairs, Defense Atomic Support Agency, Air Force Technical Applications Center, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Defense Intelligence Agency, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Director of Military Applications of the AEC, Commissioner of the AEC, CIA, Special Assistant to the President for Science and Technology. In addition, the ACDA relied on the Department of Defense for all questions relating to the military balance of power. U.S., Congress, Senate, Hearings: Military Aspects and Implications of Nuclear Test Ban Proposals and Related Matters, 88th Congress, 1st session, 1963, pp. 50-51; 146-147.

that cleared the path for an agreement that would satisfy both the Soviet Union and his domestic critics.

The Soviet-American relationship had not improved appreciably with the inception of the Kennedy era. In fact, with the American involvement in Viet Nam escalating, the resumption of nuclear testing on both sides and the ever worsening Berlin crisis, one might argue that relations had deteriorated even further, reaching a nadir with the missile crisis of October. Nevertheless, the Kennedy administration ranked arms control as a high priority foreign policy item. One reason for this was, as already stated, the prominence of the military collaboration doctrine in the upper reaches of the administration. According to this line of thought, continued conflict with the Soviet Union and its client states did not rule out the achievement of some stability in the "Balance of Terror."

Perhaps even more important in moving the administration toward the development of a coherent arms control policy was the President's willingness and ability to involve himself in the decision-making process. Eisenhower was deeply troubled by the arms race, but he did not have a concept of presidential power that would lead to the assertion of his will over a divided administration. Kennedy, whose interest in arms control was more pragmatic than Eisenhower's, was, on the other hand, willing to flex his political muscle within the executive branch and even beyond.

He did this by active presidential involvement in the policy-making process, by the emplacement of arms control advocates in key government positions and by the employment of the ACDA as an arms control coordinating unit. This activism did not immediately produce an arms accord; but it did produce an arms control policy.

CHAPTER VI

THE ROAD TO THE TEST BAN TREATY: TEST BAN NEGOTIATIONS IN 1963

The negotiating tempo accelerated dramatically following the denouement of the Cuban missile crisis. During the crisis, the President and the Soviet Premier exchanged letters expressing the need for progress on a test ban. On December 19, 1962, Chairman Khrushchev forwarded a personal letter to President Kennedy in which he offered to accept a limit of three on-site inspections per year as part of a comprehensive agreement. In advancing these concessions, the Soviet Premier relied on previous conversations between Ambassadors Dean and Kuznetsov and scientists Wiesner and Federov in which the Americans were alleged to have agreed that three inspections would be sufficient. Khrushchev adhered to the Soviet position that internationally supervised inspections were unnecessary, but he acknowledged that the exigencies of Congressional endorsement were factors in softening the Soviet stand, a theme which would recur throughout subsequent negotiations.¹

¹This concern was expressed most pointedly by Premier Khrushchev in discussions with peace activist, Norman Cousins. See Norman Cousins, The Improbable Triumvirate (New York: Norton, 1972), p. 96.

Kennedy, in his response, attempted to clarify the American position by first rejecting the Soviet understanding of the Dean-Wiesner exercises in personal diplomacy. The President also made a point of affirming that his insistence on a greater number of on-site inspections was a consequence of American security interests rather than anticipated Congressional reactions.² Nevertheless, Kennedy struck a positive note in his letter and recommended the immediate convening of a high level tripartite conference in New York and Washington.

The impending negotiations were accompanied by a positive American gesture. On January 26, 1963, the President postponed the planned detonation of an underground nuclear explosion that had been scheduled as early as January 1. Nevertheless, the new momentum failed to produce a significant narrowing of Soviet-American differences on the inspection issue. The Soviets stuck to their interpretation of the Dean-Wiesner "concessions," while the United States and Britain continued to insist that three inspections were not sufficient safeguards against Soviet cheating.³ As a consequence of the renewed stalemate, the President decided to resume underground testing, and the talks shifted once

²Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, Documents on Disarmament, 1962, pp. 1277-1279.

³See Secretary of State Dean Rusk's news conference of February 1, 1963. Documents on Disarmament, 1963, pp. 28-29.

again to the Eighteen Nation Geneva Conference.

Comprehensive ban advocates within the administration were persistent in their search for a formula that would break the logjam. Despite growing and more vocal Congressional clamor against possible American concessions, the administration, in February and March, reformulated its negotiating position to allow for a minimum number of seven inspections and modified its requirements regarding the character of the inspection teams.⁴ But this offer, as controversial as it was in Congress, did little to soften the Soviet position; instead, the Soviet negotiators continued to press for a maximum of three inspections, while Khrushchev stepped up his truculent public attacks against the Western position.⁵ Kennedy's mood was increasingly pessimistic,

⁴Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., notes that McNamara would have accepted six as the minimum number of inspections that would guarantee against Soviet cheating. Wiesner, who was perhaps the most active of the comprehensive ban advocates within the administration, would have accepted five. According to Schlesinger, "the President was particularly interested in the possibility of lowering the required quota of annual on-site inspections from the existing figure of twenty. Spurred on by presidential concern, scientists worked to refine techniques of identification and inspection." Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., A Thousand Days (Cambridge: Houghton Mifflin, 1965; Fawcett, 1967), pp. 816-819.

⁵See Khrushchev's interview with the Italian newspaper Il Giorno, April 20, 1963. Documents on Disarmament, 1963, pp. 173-176. The Soviets were also beginning to express deep concern about the American plan to provide NATO countries with nuclear weapons under the guise of the MLF. This concern was voiced in a Soviet note dispatched to the United States, Great Britain and the Federal Republic of Germany in mid-April. Eighteen Nation Disarmament Conference/84, April 17, 1963.

but he continued to attach high priority to the achievement of a test ban agreement. Failure to reach an accord in the near future would, in the President's own words, let the "genie out of the bottle."⁶

In April, positive developments in two collateral negotiating areas--one involving the creation of a direct communications link between Moscow and Washington, the other setting up a weather inspection exchange between the two countries--signaled some progress in relations.⁷ Nevertheless, the elusive inspection issue continued to stymie the test ban negotiations. As part of a British initiative to salvage the negotiations, the United States agreed to send the Soviets a note proposing the convening of a high-level meeting in Moscow. Later that spring, on May 27, thirty-four senators, including Senator Thomas Dodd of Connecticut and Senator Hubert Humphrey, passed a resolution recommending

⁶U.S., President, Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office), John F. Kennedy, 1963, p. 424.

⁷Kennedy did not feel that these agreements were of significant enough consequence to merit public debate and Congressional endorsement. In answering a news conference question regarding the employment of an executive agreement rather than a treaty, the President responded, "No, it doesn't seem to me that it involves issues which are substantive enough to warrant a treaty." Clearly, Kennedy did not want to sidetrack the more sensitive test ban negotiations by allowing the American policy of negotiation with the Soviet Union to come under a public attack--an inevitable byproduct of treaty submission. Instead, the President was husbanding his political resources for the more critical battle over a test ban. Public Papers...Kennedy, 1963, p. 349.

that the United States actively seek an accord to prohibit nuclear testing in the atmosphere and under the sea.

New momentum was generated by both sides when, on June 8, Premier Khrushchev agreed to convene the Moscow Conference. In response, Kennedy announced the unilateral American commitment not to be the first nation to resume atmospheric testing; and on June 10, in an address delivered at the American University, the President appeared to accept the Soviet doctrine of "peaceful co-existence." The impending conference generated a high-level interdepartmental review of the British-American negotiating position. This review led to two major decisions--each one reflecting a large measure of presidential input. First, the President chose Ambassador Averell Harriman, a strong advocate of a nuclear test ban, as the Chairman of the American delegation. Second, the administration decided to press for a comprehensive ban in Moscow. This reflected Kennedy's continued preference for a pact outlawing all forms of nuclear testing.

The Soviet response to the Western initiative was generally favorable. The President's speech was beamed throughout the Soviet Union. Moreover, in an interview published by the Soviet news organ, Pravda and Izvestia, Premier Khrushchev welcomed the message contained in the

American University address.⁸ While he objected to the continued ambivalences in American policy, specifically with regard to the administration's reluctance to resolve the Berlin issue on Soviet terms and to consummate a non-aggression pact in Europe, the Soviet Premier evaluated the President's remarks as a great step forward. With Khrushchev's July 2nd announcement that the Soviet Union would now be willing to engage in a partial ban and with the apparent collapse of Sino-Soviet high-level discussions one week later, the stage was set for an agreement on a limited pact.⁹

Despite some negotiating difficulties in Moscow, delegates from the three nuclear states initialed the treaty on July 25. Defended by the President as the "product of the steady effort of the United States Government in two administrations"¹⁰ and portrayed as being vital to the

⁸Documents on Disarmament, 1963, pp. 222-228. Khrushchev's impressions of the American University address are recorded in an interview conducted by the John F. Kennedy Library less than one year after Kennedy's death. In it, the Soviet Premier states, "I would like especially to note his /Kennedy's/ speech at American University on June 10, 1963. That statement can be called courageous and more realistic than what the Soviet Union and other countries of the socialist world often heard from American leaders." Nikita Khrushchev, oral history interview conducted on June 29, 1964, p. 2. John F. Kennedy Library Oral History Program.

⁹The extent of the differences between the two Communist giants became apparent on July 31, 1963, when Peking Radio launched a bitter broadside against the Soviet initiative. Documents on Disarmament, 1963, pp. 268-272.

¹⁰Documents on Disarmament, 1963, p. 302.

national interest, the administration submitted the treaty for Senate ratification on August 8. Upon the conclusion of extensive hearings, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the Senate Committee with the principal responsibility for advising the full Senate on treaties, recommended ratification.¹¹ On September 24, the Senate, voting in a bipartisan fashion, ratified the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty by a tally of 80-19.¹²

¹¹Senate Ex. Report, 88th Cong., 1st sess., pp. 1-26. The Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee, which did not enjoy the formal status of the Foreign Relations Committee with regard to treaties, was not as favorable in its recommendations. While not rejecting the treaty, the Subcommittee reported significant strategic disadvantages. U.S., Congress, Senate, Committee on Armed Services, Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee, Interim Report on the Military Implications of the Proposed Limited Nuclear Test Ban (1963), pp. 11-12.

¹²The New York Times, 25 September 1963, p. 1.

CHAPTER VII

THE TEST BAN TREATY AND THE POLICY-MAKING PROCESS

Assessing President Kennedy's role in reaching agreement with the Soviet Union on a limited test ban, National Security Advisor McGeorge Bundy commented less than one year after the President's death:

Unless the President uses these powers with energy, arms control agreements are improbable. The momentum of the arms race--the power at work to keep it going almost without conscious new decision--is enormous. Military men in all countries find it hard to approve any arms control proposal which is not either safely improbable or clearly unbalanced in their favor. In the United States only a strong Commander-in-Chief with a strong Secretary of Defense is in a position to press steadily for recognition that the arms race itself is now a threat to national security. Only the President can ensure that good proposals are kept alive even after a first rejection, and that new possibilities are constantly considered--so that there may always be as many proposals as possible on the table waiting for the moment of Soviet readiness.¹

The successful negotiation and ratification of the Test Ban Treaty appear to confirm Bundy's assessment of the end-product of presidential determination to employ power in behalf of arms control initiatives. Indeed, if the Kennedy

¹McGeorge Bundy, "The Presidency and the Peace," Foreign Affairs 42 (April 1964): pp. 362-363.

administration is an example of this dynamic in operation, then the Eisenhower presidency is perhaps representative of the reverse. Despite the existence of bureaucratic forces in behalf of a test ban and the President's own latent preference for an end to the arms spiral, Eisenhower's failure to assert himself more vigorously within his administration led to the pursuit of fairly unclear policy objectives. If Bundy's argument is taken to its logical conclusion, then one might speculate that had Eisenhower been more determined in pressing for the development of a coherent test ban policy, a treaty might have been initialed before Kennedy came to the presidency.

This is not to say that the potential for irresolution was not present in the Kennedy administration. The principal source of governmental opposition to Kennedy's test ban efforts was the Joint Chiefs of Staff. To be sure, civilian elements of the administration were not always in agreement over specific arms control measures. For example, following the Soviet abrogation of the testing moratorium in August 1961, Secretary of State Rusk recommended the immediate resumption of above-ground testing, while USIA Director Edward R. Murrow, among others, recommended against testing by arguing that such a move would rob the Soviet violation of its intrinsic political value to the United States. In 1962, with the administration formulating a new approach to the Geneva negotiations, the ACDA was reluctant

to go along with the decision to offer a partial treaty as an alternative proposal, lest it appear to dilute the administration's stated resolve to negotiate a comprehensive pact. From the other end of the policy spectrum, NSC official Walt Rostow, who had earlier collaborated in the drafting of the American University Address, expressed strong reservations about the administration's determination to take advantage of Khrushchev's apparent change of heart and negotiate a three-environment ban.²

Tactical differences aside, the civilian sector of the administration, from the Secretaries of State and Defense to the Director of the CIA, were in basic accord regarding the value of a test ban agreement. As Benjamin Read, under Rusk the Executive Secretary of the Department of State, recalls, the effort to win Congressional support for the Test Ban Treaty entailed "tremendous unanimity among those involved."³

The military's objections to the arms control measures of the Kennedy administration stemmed, however, from a fundamental skepticism about arms control as a concept.

²Memorandum from W. W. Rostow to McGeorge Bundy and Carl Kaysen, July 5, 1963. John F. Kennedy Library. Rostow, and some Europe-first members of the Department of State, were concerned that a test ban agreement might threaten the proposed MLF, a scheme for nuclear sharing in Western Europe.

³Benjamin H. Read, recorded interview by Joseph E. O'Connor and Dennis O'Brien, February 22, 1966 and October 17, 1969, p. 22. John F. Kennedy Library Oral History Program.

This does not mean that the Joint Chiefs were united in the degree of their opposition; for example, it is possible to place Chairman Maxwell D. Taylor, sympathetic to Kennedy's strategic thinking, at one end of the spectrum, and Curtis Lemay of the Air Force at the other end.⁴ Nevertheless, it is doubtful that the military, as a group, would have recommended the test ban on their own initiative. Instead, the story of the administration's test ban efforts points to the exertion of tremendous civilian pressure in bringing the military into line. Their ultimate endorsement of a limited test ban reflects both the relatively innocent character of the treaty and their grudging acceptance of political realities.

In part, one might explain the military point of view as a consequence of its adherents' role perceptions.

⁴That Lemay was conscious of these differences is evidenced by a comment he made in testimony before the Senate Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee. Lemay: "I am less optimistic than the other members of the Joint Chiefs on this particular subject." U.S., Congress, Senate, Committee on Armed Services, Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee, Hearings: Military Aspects and Implications of Nuclear Test Ban Proposals and Related Matters, 88th Congress, 1st session, 1963, P. 156. Philip S. Kronenberg has written an interesting article on the fragmented character of the military. See Philip S. Kronenberg, "The Greening of the Brass: Emerging Civil-Military Relations," in New Civil-Military-Relations, eds. John P. Lovell and Philip S. Kronenberg (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1974), pp. 333-334. Nevertheless, according to Morton Halperin, deliberations among the Joint Chiefs of Staff are generally geared toward the achievement of a unanimous position. See Morton H. Halperin, The Role of the Military in the Formation and Execution of National Security Policy (Morristown, New Jersey: University Programs Modular Services, 1974).

Samuel P. Huntington, one of the foremost experts on civil-military relations, theorizes that the military's functional role of national security maintenance compels it to over-emphasize the immediate threat to that security.⁵ Because of their sense of professional responsibility, military men, according to Huntington, assume the "worst case," and calculate that it is safer to overestimate rather than underestimate the degree of external threat. This is translated into a general assumption that as long as another country possesses a significant military capability, there is always a danger that it will be used.

Kennedy had attempted, earlier in his administration, to induce the military people to reach beyond their narrow, professional outlooks in offering recommendations to him. In a National Security Action Memorandum (NSAM)

⁵Samuel P. Huntington, The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations (New York: Vintage, 1957), pp. 63-66. Bernard Mennis, in his comparison of civilian and military government bureaucrats, finds that the military tends to view the threat from the Soviet Union as much greater than do civilian foreign service officers. See Bernard Mennis, American Foreign Policy Officials: Who They Are and What They Believe Regarding International Politics (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1971). This difference between military and civilian assumptions regarding the external environment was made clear in the conflict between Secretary MacNamara and the Joint Chiefs. As one aide to the Joint Chiefs confided to journalist Marvin Kalb in the 1960s, "MacNamara thinks that the Russian Chiefs reason the way we do. Well, from our point of view, that's madness." See Marvin Kalb, "What Is Power Doing to the Pentagon?" in Civil-Military Relations and Military Professionalism, United States Army War College (Carlisle: United States Army War College, 1969), p. 37.

circulated to the Joint Chiefs in mid-1961, the President urged the military, particularly in matters pertaining to the Cold War, to take into account political considerations.⁶ This was a theme which he repeated directly to the Joint Chiefs while attempting to win them over to a limited test ban some two years later.⁷ But even in their defense of the Test Ban Treaty on Capitol Hill, the Service Chiefs, particularly General Lemay, continued to distinguish between, rather than synthesize, military and political concerns. Testifying before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Lemay acknowledged that political rather than military considerations had been instrumental in gaining Joint Chiefs' support for the treaty:

I would say probably the key factor was political in this case. We examined the military and the technical aspects and came up with a net disadvantage in that field.⁸

⁶NSAM No. 55 from President John F. Kennedy to the Joint Chiefs of Staff on their role in the Cold War. John F. Kennedy Library.

⁷Hearings: Military Aspects..., p. 200.

⁸U.S., Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, Hearings: Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, 88th Congress, 1st session, 1963, p. 358. An interesting footnote to the test ban debate is the extent to which Congressional committee differences mirrored the polarity within the administration between political and military considerations. The Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee, which concentrated on the military aspects of the Test Ban Treaty, ultimately reported strong reservations to the Senate. The Foreign Relations Committee, on the other hand, which focused on political considerations, recommended ratification of the Treaty almost unanimously.

Civilian officials, particularly Kennedy, McNamara and McNaughton, believed that arms control could serve to maintain a favorable military balance between the United States and the USSR. In fact, one of the principal administration arguments in support of a comprehensive ban was that continued testing on both sides might undermine American's nuclear superiority, especially because the Soviets had yet to learn all that was possible from underground testing.⁹ But the military argued that a policy of arms control would ultimately jeopardize national security by placing too much trust in the Soviets' inclination to restrain their nuclear policies. Thomas J. Power, under Kennedy, Commander of the Strategic Air Command, testified against Senate ratification of the Test Ban Treaty in these words:

I believe that it is a mistake to maintain any posture other than that of overwhelming military superiority.¹⁰

In a similar vein, Admiral George Anderson, whose position as Navy Chief of Staff was not renewed as of July 1963, testified before the Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee:

...United States must maintain a clear military superiority, including nuclear striking power over the Communist bloc in order that the penalty of military aggression on the part of the Communists

⁹See the testimony of Dr. Harold Brown, under Kennedy, Director of Defense Research and Engineering. Hearings: Military Aspects..., pp. 864-865.

¹⁰Hearings: Military Aspects..., p. 796. The Air Force was particularly strong in its condemnation of the administration's apparent willingness to seek some stability in the Balance

will be obvious, it will be certain, it will be prompt, and as devastating as necessary to the Communists if they resort to any form of aggression.¹¹

In essence, both civilian and military officials agreed that the American military posture should be one of nuclear superiority. Civilian officials, however, believed that superiority could be stabilized by arms control measures and assumed that a military understanding between the United States and the USSR carried with it an implicit acknowledgment on both sides of American nuclear superiority. The military, however, did not believe that the Soviets could be trusted to restrain themselves in the realm of nuclear strategy. Political agreements might lead to a relaxation of tensions, but they could not be expected to influence Soviet nuclear policy. In fact, this point of view was the exact reverse of the arms control thinking of the civilian elements of the administration. The latter believed that, whereas political tensions might continue, there was room

of Terror. In early 1963, The New York Times quoted several USAF sources to the effect that the administration was willing to settle for a nuclear "stalemate" with the Soviet Union. The New York Times, 1 February 1963, p. 1. On September 11, 1963, during the height of the Senate debate over ratification of the Test Ban Treaty, the Air Force Association approved a policy statement charging Kennedy with adopting a "nuclear stalemate strategy." The New York Times, 12 September 1963, p. 21.

¹¹Hearings: Military Aspects..., pp. 305-306. Hanson Baldwin, military correspondent for The New York Times, surmised that the administration's decision not to reappoint Anderson and the one year extension of Lemay's position as Air Force Chief of Staff demonstrated the existence of a large strain in the Defense Department. The New York Times, 3 May 1963, p. 18.

for accommodation in the realm of military strategy. The military, however, argued that, whereas agreements might conceivably lead to a relaxation of political tensions, only unilateral, unfettered strategic programming could possibly deter Soviet might.

It is clear, therefore, that while civilian elements of the administration, by and large, saw an intrinsic strategic value in arms control agreements, the military tended to compartmentalize military and political considerations.¹² It is difficult to gauge the extent to which the military point of view was, in fact, instrumental in the development of the American arms control position. It is clear that the decision to follow the Soviet abrogation of the unofficial testing moratorium with the resumption of underground and atmospheric testing bore a strong military imprint. It is also clear that interagency consideration of the American negotiating stance invariably produced some provision that appeared to take into account strongly held military reservations. For example, the revised American proposals of March 23, 1963, contained a measure designed to satisfy the military's insistence on the right of withdrawal from a comprehensive treaty.¹³

¹²This compartmentalization was evident in Taylor's defense of the Test Ban Treaty before the Senate. The Chairman, reading a unified Joint Chiefs statement, noted, "The Joint Chiefs have reached the determination that while there are military disadvantages to the treaty, they are not so serious as to render it unacceptable." Hearings: Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, p. 275.

¹³Hearings: Military Aspects..., p. 303.

At the same time, there was considerable tension between civilian and military officials on the test ban issue. A major source of tension was the relationship between the Joint Chiefs and Secretary of Defense McNamara. According to Herbert York, the military resented the Secretary's attempts to circumvent their authority in areas considered to be within their pale of expertise.¹⁴ While acknowledging that they, as a group, enjoyed access to the Committee of Principals through the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman,¹⁵ a recurring theme in military testimony before the various Senate committees was the inaccessability of the Secretary himself. In addition, there are those who argue that the President had less than full confidence in military advice. Presidential confidant Benjamin C. Bradlee quotes Kennedy as saying:

The first advice I'm going to give my successor is to watch the generals and avoid feeling that just

¹⁴Herbert York, recorded interview by Steven Rivkin, June 16, 1964, p. 26. John F. Kennedy Library Oral History Program. This strain became even greater in 1963. On April 20, McNamara saw fit to respond to his military critics by arguing that he was in the best position to determine the nation's security needs. The New York Times, 21 April 1963, p. 1. The administration's decision to affix its signature to the Moscow Treaty did not reduce the strain. In September, Admiral Anderson, in a speech at the National Press Club, accused the Secretary of Defense of downgrading the advice of the military. The New York Times, 5 September 1963, p. 1. On October 4, Representative F. Edward Hebert, a strong military advocate, charged that civilians were intruding into military matters in the Defense Department. The New York Times, 5 October 1963, p. 7.

¹⁵Hearings: Military Aspects..., p. 301.

because they are military men their opinion on military matters is worth a damn.¹⁶

The size of the gulf separating civilian and military officials on the test ban issue became apparent on June 26, 1963, when Admiral Anderson, reading a unified Joint Chiefs position paper, testified before John Stennis' Subcommittee in opposition to a comprehensive ban. Why the Joint Chiefs waited until June to voice their strong reservations is not entirely clear. General Lemay alludes to an answer when he explains the Joint Chiefs' reaction to news of the Harriman mission:

I think we were all caught a little bit by surprise at the seriousness of the administration trying to get a treaty signed, up to the point where Mr. Harriman was going over there. Up until then we hadn't recognized the seriousness of the approach to this particular treaty.¹⁷

The question of timing notwithstanding, Anderson enumerated the following areas of military concern in the draft comprehensive treaty under consideration following the decision to engage in talks in Moscow:

¹⁶ Benjamin C. Bradley, Conversations with Kennedy (New York: Norton, 1975; Pocket Books, 1976), p. 117. A similar sentiment was conveyed by the President to peace activist Norman Cousins in 1963. Cousins: "In fact, he /Kennedy/ said, some generals believed the only solution for any crisis situation was to start dropping the big bombs. When the President would pursue the matter by asking how bombing would solve the problem, the replies would be far less confident or articulate. Cousins, op. cit., p. 135.

¹⁷ Hearings: Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, p. 382.

1. The present treaty would prohibit all tests, including those that could not possibly be detected.
2. There are serious questions remaining regarding the quantity and quality of inspections.
3. Restrictions governing the types of events that could be inspected are too stringent.
4. The area size of on-site inspections is too small.
5. The treaty relies too much on the logistic support of the host country.
6. The right to designate the inspection of an event in the territory of a non-permanent member is in the hands of an international commission.
7. The exercise of the withdrawal privilege could be delayed up to 120 days under the present treaty; it should not exceed 60 days.¹⁸

Acknowledging that "different views are held by some of our civilian superiors on this matter,"¹⁹ and that the Secretary of Defense himself disagreed with the Joint Chiefs' definition of an acceptable detection threshold, Anderson went on to specify those areas where the Defense Department had attempted to modify JCS testimony. The differences between the Joint Chiefs' statement and the Defense Department's requested revisions illustrates the gap between the two groups regarding their conflicting perceptions of the utility of a comprehensive ban. For example:

¹⁸Hearings: Military Aspects..., pp. 303-304.

¹⁹Hearings: Military Aspects..., p. 306. The JCS wanted to establish their own field tests with regard to detection systems. Questioning by Senator Strom Thurmond of Admiral Anderson revealed that the ACDA had ignored this request. (335)

JCS Statement: They conclude, therefore, that the proposed treaty is not consistent with national security, the Joint Chiefs have expressed their view.

Proposed Change: They conclude, therefore, that the proposed treaty contains certain risks to national security. These risks the JCS recognize must be balanced against the risk of losing by continued testing the advantage now held by the United States in certain areas of nuclear technology, and the potential deterrent to proliferation which a test ban might provide.

Or:

JCS Statement: Thus, the present military relationship would be altered in favor of the Soviet Union.

Proposed Change: Thus, the present military relationship in terms of nuclear warheads capability could be altered in favor of the Soviet Union as would probably be the case if both sides continued testing.²⁰

It is clear that the military's reservations about the hazards of a comprehensive ban were not shared by the President or by other, key civilian officials. As ACDA Director Foster testified before the Stennis Subcommittee:

They [Joint Chiefs] are not making policy decisions which take into account all of the factors that go into this sort of thing, so I do not think it is incumbent upon us to take into account the individual opinions of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.²¹

²⁰These statements are taken from Anderson's testimony. Hearings: Military Aspects..., pp. 323-327 passim. This was not the first time that civilian "muzzling" of the military emerged as an issue before Congress. The previous Congress had, in fact, devoted an entire set of hearings to this issue. U.S., Congress, Senate, Committee on Armed Services, Special Preparedness Subcommittee, Hearings: Military Cold War Education and Speech Review Policies, 87th Congress, 1st session, 1962.

²¹Hearings: Military Aspects..., p. 30.

At the same time, military disquiet over the administration's negotiating position was perceived correctly as potentially threatening to the search for political support in Congress. Individual congressmen, both in the Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee and the Foreign Relations Committee, peppered civilian and military officials with questions about military access to the highest decision-making circles. Congressional solicitude for the military's status in the administration was, in fact, so pronounced, that the question of whether the Joint Chiefs were adequately consulted became an issue in and of itself. The Stennis Subcommittee's Chief Counsel, James T. Kendall, summed up a fairly strong Senate impression when he defended the Subcommittee's solicitation of testimony from military quarters:

I would hope that the fact that the people wore a uniform would not be a factor in your /Franklin Long of the ACDA/ thinking that we went to the wrong place.²²

The administration, particularly Secretary McNamara, was careful to reaffirm publicly the central position of the military as an active consultant in the decision-making process.²³ On May 22, 1963, Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman

²²Hearings: Military Aspects..., p. 147.

²³Secretary McNamara's defense of the administration created a slight controversy in both the Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee and Foreign Relations Committee. In answering a question from Senator Richard Russell of Georgia, the Secretary of Defense replied, "The Chiefs have met on literally hundreds of occasions in the last two years to consider the proposals that have been under study." Hearings: Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, p. 111. Shortly

Taylor was elevated to full-fledged membership in the Committee of Principals, and Taylor, testifying before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in behalf of the partial test ban accord, acknowledged that:

...we actively participated in drawing up his /Harriman's/ directive. Then during the discussions in Moscow, the negotiations, all the cable traffic was made available to the Chairman, who made the necessary extracts and reported daily to the Joint Chiefs of Staff.²⁴

It is difficult to challenge the administration's contention that it included the military in test ban deliberations following the June 10 announcement of impending negotiations in Moscow. On June 14, the Committee of Principals dispatched Taylor to solicit the opinions of the Joint Chiefs with regard to a limited ban.²⁵ In addition,

afterwards, Senator Barry Goldwater of Arizona, asked General Lemay to confirm this estimate. The Air Force Chief of Staff retorted, "No! He hasn't discussed it with me personally, nor do I remember his discussing it with the Joint Chiefs as a body." (372)

²⁴Hearings: Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, p. 297.

²⁵Taylor, in testimony before the Stennis Subcommittee, cited the dates on which the JCS was represented in meetings of the Committee of Principals. These dates were July 26, 27, August 1, 1962; February 18, April 17, June 14, July 8, 1963. Hearings: Military Aspects..., p. 608. While deliberations of the National Security Council were unavailable to this researcher, the attendance list of the NSC meeting of July 9, 1963 gives some indication of those who were actively involved in test ban deliberations. Taylor is included on this list. Other principals were the President and Vice-President, William Foster and Adrian Fisher of the ACDA, Glenn Seaborg of the AEC, Attorney-General Robert F. Kennedy, CIA Director John McCone, Robert McNamara, Paul Nitze and John T. McNaughton from the DOD, Edward A. McDermott of the Office of Emergency Preparedness, Dean Rusk,

the Chiefs were involved in preparing the government's directive to the Harriman mission. The Chairman, who did not have a complete treaty in his hands until the conclusion of negotiations, nevertheless had access to all cable traffic from Moscow. In addition, other members of the Joint Chiefs, both individually and collectively, met with the President twice in July to hear Kennedy's case in behalf of the treaty.²⁶ At the same time, the Joint Chiefs conducted several conversations with Secretary Rusk and Ambassador Harriman over the political advantages of the test ban.²⁷ The only source of friction, aside from policy itself, was a feeling among certain members of the Joint Chiefs that they were being deliberately isolated from McNamara. General Lemay could not recall any discussions with the Secretary of Defense in July and Admiral Anderson, who officially left his post on August 1, testified that

to the best of my recollection, Secretary McNamara did not discuss this particular treaty with the Joint Chiefs of Staff while I was present prior to the first of August. I followed the agenda very closely when I was not present. I was present at most of the meetings in June and July. And while

George Ball, Averell Harriman, Llewellyn Thompson and William Tyler of the State Department, Douglas Dillon of the Treasury, Donald M. Wilson of the USIA and McGeorge Bundy, Jerome Wiesner, Carl Kaysen and Bromley Smith of the White House Staff. John F. Kennedy Library.

²⁶Hearings: Military Aspects..., p. 733.

²⁷Lemay testified that the JCS "has consulted just about everybody on the treaty question." Hearings: Military Aspects..., p. 733.

we, the Chiefs, during the latter part of this period were discussing our plans to conduct the examination of the implications of this particular treaty, to my recollection we did not discuss it at that time with Secretary McNamara.²⁸

Anderson acknowledged, however, that he was apprised of numerous JCS discussions with McNamara following August 1-- discussions which followed the administration's endorsement of the treaty.

While there is sufficient evidence to support the contention that the Joint Chiefs of Staff were consulted on the test ban matter, it is also clear that the President was attempting to make it difficult for the military to oppose him. Foremost in achieving this objective were the decisions to forestall the resumption of atmospheric testing and to convene the Moscow talks. Lemay's comment that "we were all caught a little bit by surprise" is not particularly difficult to understand. By May 1963, it appeared as if the negotiating momentum generated in the three months following the Cuban crisis had all but completely evaporated. The inspection issue appeared no closer to a resolution, and the domestic political mood, particularly in Congress, was becoming increasingly more hostile to detente. Under these circumstances, it was not unreasonable for the military to assume that arms control talks would not lead to an agreement in the future.

²⁸Hearings: Military Aspects..., p. 912.

Presidential initiatives

With positions on both sides intractable--each side believing that it had offered the other the greatest possible concession, three inspections for the Soviets, seven for the Americans--the atmosphere was becoming increasingly less conducive for a major breakthrough. Under these conditions, the greatest need was for a gesture or series of gestures that would keep the negotiations alive. The making of these gestures went beyond the capabilities of those elements of the executive branch most in favor of achieving an agreement; witness Dean's and Wiesner's abortive ventures into personal diplomacy earlier in the year.²⁹ Instead, they could only originate in the president--the one institutional figure with the independent policy-making power and prestige to speak definitively to the Soviets in behalf of the United States.

²⁹People like Llewellyn Thompson, a State Department Ambassador at Large, and William Foster of the ACDA were convinced that "a special effort should be made to keep Soviet policy from tightening up again" and that "a new formula had to be found before a new hard-line developed inside the Soviet Union." See Cousins, *op. cit.*, p. 121. Not all ventures into personal diplomacy by test ban advocates in the executive branch were as ambiguous and ill-fated as the Dean-Wiesner initiatives. Thompson takes some personal credit for the Soviet decision to entertain renewed proposals on a limited ban. In a private luncheon discussion with Soviet Ambassador, Anatoly Dobrynin, the Russian told him that owing to the prevailing Senate mood, it was impossible for the Soviets to consider the limited ban as a realistic proposal. Thompson retorted, "If the President is behind it, the Senate will fall in line." Thompson concludes that Dobrynin's subsequent report to Khrushchev eventuated in the new Soviet position. Llewellyn E. Thompson, recorded interview by Elizabeth Donahue, March 25, 1964, and by Joseph E. O'Conner, April 27, 1966, p. 9. John F. Kennedy Library Oral History Program

The need for "atmospheric" initiatives was impressed on the President by two individuals, neither of whom occupied an official position in the United States government. One of these was British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan, whose determination to break the negotiating logjam was equaled by his apprehension that the potential failure of the West to act decisively would scuttle any possibilities for an accord. The other was peace activist and Saturday Review editor, Norman Cousins, whose unofficial designation as Kennedy's peace emissary gave him access to Kennedy that would lead to the historic American University address in June.

Macmillan and Kennedy had discussed the question of arms control as early as December 1961 in Bermuda. At that meeting, the Prime Minister attempted to convince the President not to resume atmospheric testing without first taking some major, concerted initiative to arrest the arms spiral. While unable ultimately to persuade Kennedy to prevent the resumption of atmospheric testing, Macmillan came away with the impression that

...Kennedy was desperately anxious to postpone the day of resuming tests, which he regarded as a confession of failure in the diplomatic field. Like me he longed for some breakthrough towards peace. My purpose, therefore, was to provide him with the necessary ammunition and to urge upon him a new effort to deal with the problem as a whole.³⁰

³⁰Harold Macmillan, At the End of the Day: 1961-1963 (New York: Harper and Row, 1973), p. 153.

In March 1963, with the Geneva talks stalemated and the domestic pressure in the United States making it difficult for the President to relax the American negotiating position, Macmillan wrote a letter to Kennedy suggesting, among other things, the convening of a summit conference with Khrushchev. Instrumental in the formulation of this initiative was David Ormsby-Gore, British Ambassador to the United States. Ormsby-Gore was not only an effective interpreter of the American political scene, but also a confidant of President Kennedy, a fact appreciated by the Prime Minister:

...David Gore has been quite invaluable. He has established a remarkable position with Kennedy, an intimate and trusted friend. It is most fortunate--and almost unprecedented--for a British Ambassador to have this position and is based on old pre-war friendships between various Kennedys and Cavendishes and Gores.³¹

Kennedy, while not averse to circumventing his bureaucracy, was reluctant to engage Khrushchev in high-level summitry, a point which he made as early as February 14, 1962, in a televised news conference:

...a summit is not a place to carry on negotiations which involve details, and that a summit should be a place where perhaps agreements which have been achieved at a lower level could be finally, officially approved by the heads of government.³²

³¹Ibid., p. 469. This point is corroborated by Schlesinger, who adds that "he /Gore/ influenced Kennedy on the question of detente." Schlesinger, op. cit., p. 393.

³²U.S., President, Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States (Washington, D.C.: U. S. Government Printing Office), John F. Kennedy, 1962, p. 136. Kennedy's reluctance represented an interesting about-face from his

In answering Macmillan, Kennedy reiterated his apprehensions about summitry and in a follow-up letter added that

memories...of May 1960 are very strong in this country, and in my own mind, and I believe that on the historic evidence it is not likely that Khrushchev would make major changes at a Summit from positions put forward under his direction.³³

Kennedy suggested as an alternative that the Western leaders propose the convening of a high-level conference, a recommendation ultimately endorsed by the Prime Minister.

Khrushchev's reply was truculent in tone and highly critical of the Western insistence on seven inspections, but it did not reject, in principle, the dispatching of high-level British and American diplomats to Moscow. Despite Kennedy's discouragement at the decidedly hostile tone of Khrushchev's reply, Macmillan persuaded the President to continue the initiative,³⁴ and on June 8, the Soviet Premier agreed to the convening of the conference.

decision in February 1961 to seek a summit meeting with the Soviet leader. In this regard, he seems to have accepted the position set forth by Secretary of State Rusk who, writing during the 1960 presidential campaign, stated that "negotiating of a serious nature should not be conducted by those with the ultimate authority to blow each other up." Dean Rusk, "The President," in U.S. Government Organization and Executive Direction for the Formulation of National Security Policy, ed. U. S. Army War College (Carlisle: USAWC, 1969), pp. 9-13. At the same time, because of Kennedy's displeasure with the Department of State, this turnaround did not lead to a significant enhancement of the Department's role as the principal negotiating arm of the government.

³³Macmillan, op. cit., p. 465.

³⁴Macmillan remembers in his diary that "David Gore is confident that the President will agree-if only to please me." Ibid., p. 469.

In his June 10 foreign policy address at American University, the President disclosed publicly Khrushchev's acceptance of the joint British-American offer to convene a high-level, tripartite conference in Moscow. He also announced that the United States would not be the first country to resume above-ground nuclear testing. Sorenson notes that those parts of the speech dealing with nuclear testing were shown to the Joint Chiefs of Staff,³⁵ but this recollection does not necessarily correspond to the testimony of Lemay and Anderson. Lemay recalled that "I did not have any prior knowledge of the suspension of atmospheric testing. I don't think the Joint Chiefs knew about it either."³⁶ Anderson testified that to "the best of my knowledge the Joint Chiefs, their views were not solicited on the recent suspension of tests in the atmosphere."³⁷ In addition, AEC Commissioner Leland Haworth acknowledged that neither the Joint Chiefs of Staff nor the AEC were consulted in advance of the President's announcement to suspend plans for the resumption of atmospheric testing.³⁸

In reconciling the conflicting recollections of these individuals, two possibilities emerge. First, the JCS

³⁵Theodore Sorensen, recorded interview by Carl Kaysen, March 26, 1964 and April 4, 1964, p. 72. John F. Kennedy Library Oral History Program.

³⁶Hearings: Military Aspects..., p. 757.

³⁷Hearings: Military Aspects..., p. 317.

³⁸Hearings: Military Aspects..., p. 297.

might not have been consulted but rather informed of the President's decision. A more plausible alternative is that Chairman Taylor was apprised of the decision to suspend atmospheric tests, but not the other members of the Joint Chiefs. The Joint Chiefs had been particularly averse to any testing moratorium, particularly a unilateral one, and it is conceivable that Kennedy was fearful that advance notice would result in leaks that would both rob his statement of its intended drama and generate criticism that might be avoided were the announcement to be made within the context of the President's address. In any case, Taylor was clearly more sympathetic to the President's objectives than other members of the Joint Chiefs. This possibility is offered by Lemay himself who testified that "...I am not sure whether the Chairman was personally informed or not."³⁹

In retrospect, the greater significance of the President's address was, in the long run, his articulation of a concept of detente, and, in the short run, his attempt to convince the Russians of his real determination to engineer a test ban. While the President had been contemplating a major address on "peace" since the early spring, his intentions were given greater immediacy by the advice of Norman Cousins. Cousins had been conveying messages and impressions between the President and Chairman Khrushchev since

³⁹Hearings: Military Aspects..., p. 757.

December 1962. In an April conversation with Kennedy, he noted that hard-liners in the Kremlin and the Communist Chinese were putting pressure on the Soviet leader to renounce his "arms control initiative."⁴⁰ Clearly, according to Cousins, matters in the Soviet Union were coming to a head. On June 18, Khrushchev was slated to address the Soviet Plenum and soon after a major summit conference was anticipated between the Chinese and Russians. Without any positive reinforcement from Kennedy and given Khrushchev's post-Cuban missile crisis, internal weakness, there was a real danger that the Soviet leader would feel compelled to announce the termination of his "peace" offensive. Cousins recommended that the President deliver a major foreign policy address:

The moment is now at hand for the most important single speech of your Presidency. It should be a speech which, in its breathtaking proposals for genuine peace, in its tone of friendliness for the Soviet people and its understanding of their ordeal during the last war, in its inspired advocacy of the human interest, would create a world groundswell of support for American leadership.⁴¹

With the President's concurrence, Sorensen began assembling material for the speech. According to Kennedy's aide:

⁴⁰Cousins, op. cit., pp. 114-115.

⁴¹Letter from Norman Cousins to the President, April 30, 1963. John F. Kennedy Library.

...unlike most foreign policy speeches--none of which was so sweeping in concept and import as this turned out to be--official departmental positions and suggestions were not solicited...He /Kennedy/ did not want that new policy diluted by the usual threats of destruction, boasts of nuclear stockpiles and lectures on Soviet treachery.⁴²

There is some question as to whether the address was drafted by so small a group. While Sorensen contends that he and Bundy were the only two presidential advisors who knew of the speech,⁴³ Adrian Fisher of the ACDA remembers that "like many of the President's speeches, since it was a good speech it's got more authors than you can shake a stick at. Everyone had a finger in it."⁴⁴ In any case, once Sorensen's initial draft was completed, it was circulated around the executive branch, although not through conventional channels. It was shown to the Secretaries of State and Defense, and on June 7, Bundy convened a small group including Kaysen, Rostow, Schlesinger and Tom Sorensen to

⁴²Sorensen, op. cit., pp. 730-731. The singularity of this approach is made clear by the President's earlier recitation of the method by which most of his speeches were usually drafted and subsequently cleared. In a news conference dated January 24, 1962, Kennedy stated, "When I gave my State of the Union Address, I submitted that part dealing with foreign policy to the State Department for any comments, the part dealing with the Defense Department and national defense to the Secretary of Defense...Public Papers ...Kennedy, 1962, p. 61.

⁴³Sorensen interview, p. 72.

⁴⁴Adrian Fisher, recorded interview by Frank Sieverts, May 13, 1964, p. 21. John F. Kennedy Library Oral History Program.

examine the draft.⁴⁵ Finally, on June 9, at night, Bundy deputy Kaysen circulated the speech among cabinet-level departments for "minimum clearance."⁴⁶

Formulating a negotiating position:

Once it became apparent that the Soviets were responding affirmatively to the address, it became necessary to solidify the American negotiating position. After renewed interagency coordination and consultation with the British government,⁴⁷ a firm negotiating position was staked

⁴⁵Sorensen interview, p. 72; Schlesinger, op. cit., p. 822. Llewellyn Thompson remembers that Sorensen read him a draft of the speech over the phone. Thompson interview, p. 20.

⁴⁶Sorensen, op. cit., p. 736. In a memo from Pierre Salinger, the President's Press Secretary, to Carl Kaysen, the NSC Deputy was instructed to circulate the speech for clearance. John F. Kennedy Library.

⁴⁷British-American cooperation was especially close during this period of time. At the end of June, Kennedy stopped off in London for high-level discussions with Prime Minister Macmillan. According to Sir Michael Wright, a disarmament expert who was attached to the British negotiating team in Moscow, the American and British delegations met daily in Moscow to discuss their respective instructions from London and Washington. Wright remembers that there were many different channels of communications between the two groups "on a low to a high level." Sir Michael Wright, recorded interview by David Nunnerly, May 14, 1969, p. 2. John F. Kennedy Library Oral History Program. An INR memorandum dated July 8, 1963, indicates that most NATO members were in favor of a test ban. The Scandinavian countries and Canada saw a test ban as a "step in the direction of reducing tensions in general." The Benelux countries and Italy favored a ban for the same reasons but also hoped that an agreement would reduce the chances of nuclear proliferation, particularly to China and France. Germany "would publicly welcome a test ban agreement." Privately, however, many German leaders worried that a relaxation of tensions might lead to a "softer" American policy toward the Soviet Union. Portugal,

out. A recently declassified ACDA document entitled "Points to Be Covered in Preparation for the Forthcoming July 15 Mission of Governor Harriman to Moscow" gives some new insight into the administration's negotiating position as it stood on the eve of the Moscow talks.⁴⁸ The document divides discussion areas into four main parts:

1. Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty--According to the ACDA, "the initial part of the discussion should deal with a comprehensive test ban treaty." The Agency advises the American negotiator to emphasize that the American insistence on seven inspections per year results from the scientific uncertainties regarding the detection of underground tests as distinct from earthquakes. Harriman should make clear that the issue has nothing to do with the political requirements of ratification. The document goes on to suggest that the American negotiator might explore possibilities for breaking the deadlock by dividing inspections into seismic and aseismic zones.

Greece, and Turkey supported a test ban in principle. Only France was against a test ban. Memorandum from Thomas L. Hughes to the Secretary, "Allied Attitudes on Linking a Test Ban Agreement with a Non-Aggression Pact," July 8, 1963. John F. Kennedy Library.

⁴⁸This document was recently declassified by the ACDA and forwarded to this researcher by the Kennedy Library under a mandatory review procedure. It is dated June 20, 1963. While the document was prepared prior to Khrushchev's July 2 announcement that he could accept a partial ban, and while it does not represent the final instructions approved by the NSC; it is, nevertheless, quite faithful to the final set of recommendations, particularly in its emphasis on a comprehensive treaty, its attempt to gain some mutual understanding on non-proliferation and its instructions to bypass negotiation of a non-aggression pact. Most other briefing papers, including a substantial Defense Department paper on nuclear dissemination and a Joint Chiefs of Staff analysis of Chinese Communist vulnerability were reviewed and remain classified. In any case, the ACDA, as the principal arms control coordinating unit in the administration, produced a fairly representative list of instructions.

2. Atmospheric, Outer Space, and Underwater Test Ban Treaty With Some Limitations on Underground Tests--On this point the document begins, "The U.S. offer to sign a treaty banning tests in the atmosphere, underwater, and in space remains open. Although the preference is for a comprehensive treaty, if the Soviet Union still cannot be persuaded on the number and role of inspections for underground tests, then a partial treaty may be the best solution obtainable in the present international climate." At the same time, the ACDA notes a basic disadvantage in a partial treaty. Because the Soviet Union lags behind the United States in its knowledge of the effects of underground explosions, it would gain much more from a treaty which allowed unrestricted underground testing. Harriman might, therefore, offer a partial treaty in conjunction with a quota on underground explosions.

3. Relationship of a Test Ban to Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons--The Agency documents notes, "One of the principal interests of the United States in a test ban agreement is an interest in it as one of a series of steps designed to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons throughout the world."⁴⁹ Assuming that the Soviets have a similar interest, the document advises Harriman to pursue the point and suggests that the administration might be willing to exert pressure on DeGaulle to gain French compliance.⁵⁰ With regard to the MLF, the Agency is ambiguous, although it defends the proposal as preventing European states from acquiring their own, nuclear capabilities.

⁴⁹Kennedy reiterated time and again in 1963 that the principal value of a test ban pact would be its impact on the future dissemination of nuclear weapons. According to Schlesinger, Kennedy, by mid-1963, began to see China as a potentially major enemy of the United States. He hoped that a U.S.-Soviet understanding could emerge to limit the Chinese ability to acquire a nuclear capability. He alluded to the need for a non-proliferation pact as early as 1962, when he stated at a press conference, "There is really no use in having an inspection system agreed upon between say the Soviet Union and the United States and some other countries and then have another country--large--carry on intensive armaments preparations." Public Papers...Kennedy, 1962, p. 139.

⁵⁰In fact, during the negotiations in Moscow Kennedy made a major effort to push DeGaulle into the British-American

4. NATO-WARSAW-Non-Aggression Pact--The document notes that not enough is yet known about the issue to allow for serious negotiations. Harriman is advised to deflect the issue, although some probing is allowed.

Because Kennedy had such a personal stake in achieving a test ban agreement, the choice of a chief negotiator was especially important. The President required an individual with solid experience in negotiations with the Soviets but also someone with an equal commitment to arms control.⁵¹ Schlesinger writes that a natural choice would have been John McCloy, who at the time was Chairman of the ACDA's General Advisory Committee.⁵² The selection of McCloy, a Republican, would have simplified the administration's attempts to defend the test ban on Capitol Hill against partisan attack. But, according to Schlesinger, McCloy was unavailable.

The President then turned to the Department of State. Mary Milling Lepper, in her analysis of the Test Ban Treaty, reasons that the selection of an individual from the

camp. On July 16, Macmillan received a letter from Kennedy in which the President suggested offering the French the release of vital nuclear information which until then had been withheld. Kennedy believed that in return, DeGaulle might agree to sign the Test Ban Treaty. Macmillan, op. cit., p. 476.

⁵¹Foy Kohler, the American Ambassador to the Soviet Union, might have been an obvious choice, but, according to Benjamin Read, he was persona-non-grata with Khrushchev. Read interview, p. 10.

⁵²Schlesinger, op. cit., p. 824.

State Department was designed to assuage Congressional discomfort over the apparent usurpation of State Department authority by the recently formed ACDA.⁵³ In addition, because the ACDA, and in particular, its Director William Foster, had been so vigorous in its promotion of a test ban, the agency inevitably had "stepped on too many toes" in Congress, a point made by Benjamin Read of the State Department.⁵⁴

According to Schlesinger, Rusk suggested the appointment of Averell Harriman as Chief Negotiator in Moscow. Carl Kaysen recommended that Rusk's suggestion be acted upon immediately, lest opposition develop in the State Department against Harriman's selection.⁵⁵ Read remembers that Harriman was not particularly well-liked among State Department regulars, and this probably explains both Kaysen's haste and the subsequent departmental brouhaha over his designation.⁵⁶ It is also apparent that Kennedy had his eye on Harriman since, at least, April. Cousins reports that upon hearing of Khrushchev's desire to give the negotiations a new impetus, Kennedy retorted, "This looks like a job made

⁵³Mary Milling Lepper, Foreign Policy Formulation: A Case Study of the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty of 1963 (Columbus: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co., 1971), p. 81.

⁵⁴Read interview, p. 11. In addition, whereas Kennedy and McNamara continued to support the doctrine of nuclear superiority, Foster, in testimony before Congress, suggested that nuclear parity would not necessarily jeopardize national security. Hearings: Military Aspects..., p. 46.

⁵⁵Schlesinger, op. cit., p. 824.

⁵⁶Read interview, p. 10.

to order for Averell Harriman."⁵⁷

The appointment of Harriman was consistent with the President's desire to make the negotiations as much an extension of his own will as politically feasible. The Ambassador, with a commitment to arms control equal to that of the President, was nominally a member of the State Department, but, in a very real sense, not tied to its bureaucratic parochialism. The President, who had employed Harriman's services earlier to resolve the Laos imbroglio, was determined to make the test ban initiative a major test of his personal prestige, and his orchestration of the decision-making process that guided the negotiators was clearly designed to maximize presidential involvement and control. This fact soon became evident to Read and others in the State Department:

We had suspected it before that time, but it was made explicitly clear in the Moscow discussion, that it was the President's initiative that produced the negotiations. It was not the initiative of the State Department text or anyone else that got this thing going...And the President felt passionately involved in achieving its success.⁵⁸

The selection of the negotiating team and the guidelines for communicating with the delegation were a direct function of the President's desire to control tightly the flow of information between Moscow and Washington. Harri-

⁵⁷Cousins, op. cit., p. 114.

⁵⁸Read interview, p. 8.

man wanted Kaysen and McNaughton, two early limited ban advocates, to accompany him to the negotiations and was insistent on excluding the military from the delegation.⁵⁹ At the same time, Kennedy took extraordinary measures to insure the secrecy of deliberations at the White House. After one conversation with the President, Harriman returned to the State Department with specific instructions as to the circulation of cables from Moscow through the executive branch. According to a memorandum on the subject subsequently made available to the Kennedy Library:

1. All substantive communication between Moscow and Washington will be designated BAN, eyes only.
2. Upon receipt in the State Department's Communication Center, incoming messages slugged BAN will be relayed automatically to the White House.
3. The message will then be sent in two copies in sealed envelopes to S/S--Mr. Read. The names of those who see the cables in the Communications Center will be written down.
4. One copy will be put in a brown envelope as a file copy. Another copy for the Secretary of State can be shown by Mr. Read to George Ball and Ambassador Thompson. Test Ban material is to be forwarded to William Foster at the ACDA.⁶⁰

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 10. Harriman had a strong sense of the need for civilian supremacy over the military, "But I'm just trained by experience and knowledge of the need for domination of the military because they are trained to do certain things." W. Averell Harriman, recorded interview by Michael Forrestal, April 13, 1964, and Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., January 17, 1965, and June 6, 1965, p. 87. John F. Kennedy Library Oral History Program.

⁶⁰State Department Memorandum on Handling Ban, John F. Kennedy Library.

These elaborate security measures demonstrate the extent to which the President attached primary importance to the talks in Moscow. He was especially fearful lest the cables be disseminated to the military, whose known opposition to Kennedy's test ban efforts and propensity for leaking unfavorable information might endanger the progress of negotiations through the untimely release of sensitive information. As Read remembers it:

This was part of the same feeling of concern on the part of the President that cables that went to the Defense Department would inevitably get into the massive military machinery and the close security that he wanted and insisted on would be jeopardized.⁶¹

The circle of those involved in drafting the instructions to the Moscow delegation was carefully drawn by Kennedy himself. The original group included the President, Rusk, George Ball, Foster, McNamara and McCone meeting in the White House Cabinet Room. Included later were U. Alexis Johnson, Edward R. Murrow, Sorensen and Thompson. But it was clearly the President who "set the tone for outgoing communications."⁶² In fact, Read cites one instance in which Kennedy himself drafted a communique to Harriman. In a cable to the Ambassador following Harriman's first report, Kennedy instructed his negotiator to use the mutual fear of China to wring concessions from Khrushchev:

⁶¹Read interview, p. 9.

⁶²Ibid., p. 3.

...I remain convinced, however, the China problem is more serious than Khrushchev's comments in his first meeting. I believe you should press the question in a private meeting with him. I agree that large stockpiles are characteristic of U.S. and U.S.S.R. only, but consider the relatively small forces in hands of people like the Chinese Communists could be very dangerous to all of us. Further I believe that even the limited test ban⁶³ can and should be the means to limit diffusion.

The negotiations

The negotiations in Moscow progressed despite occasional vexations over the Soviet desire to conclude a non-aggression pact in Europe, the American insistence on a written right of withdrawal, the question of peaceful explosions and a final dispute over the extension of the treaty to non-signatories. It became clear fairly early that several of Kennedy's objectives would not be met in Moscow. Almost immediately, Khrushchev rejected the possibility of making any further concessions on a comprehensive ban. Clearly, Kennedy was not willing to pay the domestic political price of going beneath seven inspections. In addition, Khrushchev refused to discuss the Chinese issue with Harri-

⁶³ Ibid., p. 24. Indeed, in a conversation with Harriman and Kaysen before the two negotiators left for Moscow, Kennedy told Harriman that "he could go as far as he wished in exploring the possibility of a Soviet-American understanding with regard to China." Schlesinger, op. cit., p. 825. Macmillan notes that Lord Halisham, the British negotiator in Moscow, reported to him that the American delegation was moving away from the idea of a non-dissemination treaty. Macmillan, op. cit., p. 480. If this is so, it does not correspond with the instructions contained in the President's missive to Harriman. Perhaps, after noting Soviet obduracy on the non-proliferation idea, the American delegation decided not to press the matter any further.

man and put off any attempt to negotiate a non-proliferation treaty. At the same time, the Soviets alternated between pushing for and relaxing on their insistence to link a partial ban with a wider accord on the European question. Kennedy, who was already concerned about DeGaulle's refusal to consider a ban on testing and German anxieties on the same issue, did not want to strain the alliance any further by negotiating a pact that worried his Western allies. Accordingly, Harriman convinced the Russians that a non-aggression pact would require considerable negotiation between the United States and Western European countries and persuaded them to detach the issue from test ban questions.

The withdrawal question was less significant in the broad context of issues dividing the negotiators, but it posed, nevertheless, a serious threat to the ultimate conclusion of the treaty. The Soviets did not want the inclusion of a specific withdrawal clause, because they felt that a written stipulation to that effect would impinge on their unstated, sovereign right to withdraw from any treaty once it proved detrimental to the national interest. The Americans, on the other hand, anticipated difficulties with Congress in the absence of a withdrawal clause. First, the Joint Chiefs had made the right of withdrawal a key part of their position. Second, the Americans feared that were China, a non-signatory, to develop a significant nuclear capability, it would be incumbent on the United States to

resume atmospheric testing despite the absence of any Soviet violation. As a consequence, the following compromise wording was incorporated in the treaty:

Each Party shall in exercising its national sovereignty have the right to withdraw from the Treaty if it decides that extraordinary events, related to the subject matter of this Treaty, have jeopardized the supreme interests of its country.⁶⁴

Another troublesome question in which the President took a personal and decisive hand was the issue of peaceful nuclear explosions in the atmosphere. The Soviet draft treaty contained no provision for peaceful explosions. The American draft of August 27, 1962, however, contained a stipulation allowing the detonation of peaceful nuclear explosions in the atmosphere under carefully controlled supervision. This was designed to encourage the "Plowshares Program" which was part of the AEC's bureaucratic domain. Kennedy broke the impasse by dropping the American insistence on allowing peaceful nuclear explosions.⁶⁵ In return, the Soviets agreed to a less rigorous means for the future revision of the treaty, thus affording the opportunity for

⁶⁴U.S., Department of State, United States Treaties and Other International Agreements (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1964), p. 1319. Records of cables from Washington to the Moscow delegation indicate that on July 17, Rusk advised Harriman of the importance to Congress of a withdrawal clause. "Chronological Index and Distribution Sheet on All Ban Messages." John F. Kennedy Library.

⁶⁵Jacobson and Stein, op. cit., p. 457.

amendments allowing peaceful detonations.

At the eleventh hour, a new predicament developed and enveloped the British and American allies in their first, major negotiating dispute. The Soviets proposed that any country not now a party to the treaty but agreeing to its provisions in the future, should automatically have its name affixed to the treaty copy situated in each of the original parties' depositories. The American delegation was apprehensive that such a procedure might give the Soviets the opportunity to gain de jure American recognition of East Germany by including the Communist government in a treaty to which the United States was a principal party. Harriman suggested that a stipulation be included in the treaty noting that accession to the agreement by a new government did not imply recognition by previous signatories. The Soviets, who had made the recognition of East Germany a cornerstone of their policy in Central Europe, strongly demurred. This impasse was further complicated by Russian language in the preamble suggesting an abrogation of the right to employ nuclear weapons, even in self-defense.

The American insistence on non-implied recognition of new signatories vexed the British. Macmillan wrote in his diary on July 25, 1963, ironically, the day on which the Test Ban Treaty was initialed:

...The new American clause seemed to go back on the compromise already agreed which was quite sensible and said that no country need accept formal adherence from a country with which they were not in

relations. The other American change was that nothing in the Treaty could be taken to prevent the use of nuclear weapons in war! This was so absurd as to be hardly credible.⁶⁶

Schlesinger opines that the British government's anxieties, leading parenthetically to Macmillan's instructing Ambassador Gore to intervene personally with Kennedy, could be traced to nervous reports from Britain's "restive" negotiator, Lord Halisham.⁶⁷ According to Schlesinger, Harriman was correct in pressing the issue with the Soviets, and as Harriman later contended:

⁶⁶Macmillan, op. cit., p. 483.

⁶⁷Schlesinger, op. cit., p. 823. Schlesinger is quite critical of Halisham's participation in the negotiations. He writes, "Halisham, relying on British amateur tradition, was ill prepared in the technicalities of the problems and was consumed by a desire to get a treaty at almost any cost." (827) Macmillan, writing some eight years after the publication of Schlesinger's book, was careful to reaffirm his confidence in Halisham (Quintin Hogg) as he notes in his memoirs, "...I can never be sufficiently grateful both to Halisham and Harriman for the energy and imagination with which they conducted this delicate negotiation." Macmillan, op. cit., p. 480. Nevertheless, a message from Halisham to Macmillan seems to confirm Schlesinger's opinion that the British Ambassador was perhaps overeager in his attempt to achieve an agreement. Halisham: "I stressed your anxiety to make the most of the opportunity for progress towards better East-West relationships, and your feeling that the opportunity might not recur...Harriman emphasized how important it was not to hold up the signature of the test ban, and I said this would make a profound impression on public opinion in the West and all over Europe. If the Soviet government wanted a Non-Aggression Pact, the signature of the Nuclear Test Ban would be a powerful argument in favor of further partial measures of agreement, perhaps including a Non-Aggression Pact. We ourselves would do our best to respond." (481)

I am always right when I know I am right. Sometimes I only guess I am right, and then I may be wrong. This time I knew I was right.⁶⁸

The impasse was resolved when the Russians agreed to shelve any language in the preamble prohibiting the right to use nuclear weapons in war-time.⁶⁹ In addition, Fisher and McNaughton engineered a compromise whereby signatories would only be required to sign with nations that they recognized.⁷⁰ In the late afternoon of July 25, with Gore and Bundy in the President's office, Kaysen called from Moscow and recommended that Kennedy authorize the revised language. The President agreed immediately and phoned Macmillan with the news that the treaty had been signed.

⁶⁸Schlesinger, op. cit., p. 830.

⁶⁹Apparently, the United States dropped its insistence on the inclusion of a clause acknowledging the right of any Party to use nuclear weapons during war. There is no evidence of such a clause in the final treaty. Abram Chayes was especially concerned that retention of wording outlawing all nuclear explosions in the atmosphere would create tremendous difficulties in Congress. According to Chayes, "The natural tendency would be for opponents of the treaty to try to load on to the reservation as much as they could to attenuate in this way, if not to defeat, the purposes and effects of the treaty." Memorandum for Under Secretary George Ball from Abram Chayes, July 24, 1963. John F. Kennedy Library.

⁷⁰The treaty states, "This Treaty shall be registered by the Depository Governments pursuant to Article 102 of the Charter of the United Nations." U.S. Treaties, p. 1318. Article 102 of the UN Charter reads, "Every treaty and every international agreement entered into by any Member of the United Nations after the present Charter comes into force shall as soon as possible be registered with the Secretariat and published by it." Cited in John G. Stoessinger, The Might of Nations (New York: Random House, 1965), p. 441.

With the treaty initialed, Kennedy attempted to tie all loose ends within the executive branch, so that the administration would present a united front in testimony before the Senate. It has already been noted that the Joint Chiefs, apart from Chairman Taylor, were denied access to all cable traffic and excluded from active participation in the Moscow negotiations. Once the treaty became a certainty, however, the Joint Chiefs, both individually and collectively, were lobbied vigorously and intensively by the President and other civilian members of the administration. The main line of argument in behalf of the treaty was that the political value of ratification far exceeded any possible military disadvantages. Nevertheless, the Joint Chiefs calculated that the cost/benefit of treaty ratification would require the following:

1. The United States should not accept a limitation on testing if the Soviet Union could achieve a major advantage that could not be overcome by the United States under the present treaty.
2. The Test Ban Treaty is acceptable only if clandestine testing by the Soviets would not seriously affect the balance of power.
3. Withdrawal should be uncomplicated, allowing the United States to withdraw upon violation or serious jeopardy to the national interest.
4. If conditions under criteria 1 and 2 are not met, the treaty must convey adequate compensatory advantages elsewhere.⁷¹

⁷¹Hearings: Military Aspects..., p. 588.

Kennedy, eager to win the support of the Joint Chiefs, offered to attach safeguards to the treaty to meet these conditions. In testifying before the relevant Senate committees, each member of the Joint Chiefs stressed that his endorsement of the treaty was predicated on the enactment of guarantees promised by the President. But even so, there were still some reservations regarding the specific character of these safeguards, as Lemay testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee:

We are all aware of the statement by the President and the Secretary of Defense have made in regard to maintaining a test program and so forth. We have not, however, discussed with them what they mean by that--whether what we consider an adequate safeguard program coincides with their idea on the subject.⁷²

Evaluation

At the outset of this chapter, McGeorge Bundy was quoted as crediting President Kennedy with overcoming the bureaucratic momentum of the arms race through the vigorous exercise of the numerous instrumentalities of presidential power. There is much of merit in this argument. Aside from strengthening those elements of the administration most in favor of an arms agreement, Kennedy took independent actions

⁷²Hearings: Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, p. 373. Conversely, the President himself was not so certain that the public support of the Joint Chiefs would mean that the military would not lobby behind the scenes to defeat the treaty. He made this reservation known on August 7, 1963, in a meeting with the newly formed Citizens Committee for a Nuclear Test Ban. Cousins, op. cit., p. 134.

to keep the negotiations alive when they appeared least promising. Gestures such as the Moscow talks initiative, the suspension of atmospheric testing and the American University address were all taken in circumvention of routine bureaucratic channels. Once the talks reached the decisive state, the President sedulously stage-managed the decision-making process and isolated that segment of the executive branch that had proved itself in the past to be least sympathetic to his policy objectives. Indeed, in dealing with the Joint Chiefs of staff, Kennedy sometimes treated its members as adversaries who had to be confronted with a fait-accompli and then pacified with ambiguous concessions. This point was not lost on Lemay who testified:

I think that the fact that it had been signed had an effect on me...I would think I would have been against it.⁷³

In assessing Kennedy's role, however, one must avoid overestimating the President's capacity to control the flow of events both inside and outside the executive branch. Jacobson and Stein, in distinguishing between the arms control efforts of the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations

⁷³Hearings: Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, pp. 371-372. The impression that the JCS were, in fact, coerced into endorsing a treaty that they opposed was strong among opponents of the agreement. On September 13, Senator Stennis, who as Chairman of the Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee had close ties to the military, charged that the military was coerced into approving the Test Ban. The New York Times, 14 September 1963, p. 4.

argue that it was Kennedy's leadership that led to the tabling of two treaties in 1962 and conversely Eisenhower's irresolution that prevented a nuclear test ban treaty from being tabled earlier.⁷⁴ This is an important point, and it recognizes the central role of a president in lending coherence to a policy-making system that is centrifugal in character.

At the same time, two points of equal significance must be considered. A limited test ban proposal had been advanced by the Americans and British in 1959. While it was not packaged in the form of a treaty, and while it contained some provision for international inspection, the proposal was not very different in its essence from the Draft Treaty tabled in 1962. In return, the Soviets rebuffed the Eisenhower-Macmillan initiative. Nevertheless, in July 1963 the Soviets reversed themselves and accepted the partial ban idea.⁷⁵ Why they did so is a matter of some question. It is clear that had the President not sustained the test ban initiative, the atmosphere for a Soviet policy switch might not have existed. On the other hand, other factors, peculiar to Soviet politics, might have come into play, such as

⁷⁴Jacobson and Stein, op. cit., p. 475.

⁷⁵The extent to which the Russian acceptance of a limited ban was not anticipated by American policy-makers is indicated by Secretary Rusk's statement of May 29, 1963, that the Soviets were just not interested in a partial treaty. He made this remark in answer to a Senate resolution urging the administration to explore the possibilities for a limited ban. The New York Times, 30 May 1963, p. 1.

Soviet economic needs, the rift with China, and the hope that a treaty might prevent the West Germans from acquiring a nuclear capability of their own. Quite possibly, the Soviets, aware after the experience of the Cuban missile crisis, that they were no match for the United States in terms of nuclear strength, opted for a policy, as represented by the test ban, that would ease tensions and thereby avoid putting them in a position where nuclear inferiority might lead to another political defeat. In this sense, Kennedy's expansion of nuclear forces and willingness to threaten their use over Cuba might have persuaded the Soviets to seek a "breather" in the Cold War. This, parenthetically, was the short-run effect of Kennedy's nuclear policies and his Cuban decision. The long-range impact was in accelerating the development of Soviet nuclear forces. Whatever the motivation, it is impossible to escape the conclusion that Kennedy's successful efforts in signing an accord with the Soviet Union was in no small part a consequence of a major change in Soviet policy.

Closely tied to this point is the fact that the accord finally initialed was not necessarily Kennedy's first choice, but at the same time, it was clearly more politically expedient. It is interesting to speculate on what might have occurred had Khrushchev, in his July 2, 1963 speech, agreed to the administration's demand for seven as the minimum number of inspections required for a comprehensive ban. Given the Joint Chief's statement of June 26 to the Stennis Subcommittee, it is most probable that such an eventuality

would have embroiled the President in a public fight with his principal military advisors. As it was, the Joint Chiefs accorded the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty only grudging public support. In a sense, then, Kennedy was fortunate that the Soviets did not force him to fight an internal battle that might have easily resulted in his defeat.

CHAPTER VIII

THE NUCLEAR TEST BAN TREATY AND DOMESTIC POLITICS

At the outset of 1963, there were indications that Kennedy might have serious difficulty in winning Congressional support for an arms control agreement. To be sure, the President had emerged from the 1962 Cuban crisis with his public standing appreciably enhanced.¹ Nevertheless, Khrushchev's apparent duplicity in stationing offensive missiles so close to American shores along with new questions about Soviet adherence to the agreement which had signaled an end to the crisis led to strong attacks against the administration's attempt to negotiate a treaty that many believed would afford the Soviets a fresh opportunity to engage in strategic treachery. On January 29, shortly after Kennedy's announced decision to postpone underground testing, Republican New York Governor Nelson Rockefeller

¹Dr. George Gallup's American Institute of Public Opinion reported that on October 10, 1962, among respondents to the question: Do you approve or disapprove of the way Kennedy is handling his job as president, 62% approved, 22% disapproved and 16% offered no opinion. The same survey released on January 20, 1963, found 76% approval, 13% disapproval and 11% no opinion. Cited in Hazel Gaudet Erskine, "The Polls: Kennedy as President," Public Opinion Quarterly 28 (Summer 1964): 334-335.

criticized the administration's alleged intention to engage in "bilateral and secret deals."² Later that winter, with the collapse of the New York and Washington talks and with a renewed American effort to achieve a successful negotiating formula, Senator Everett Dirksen of Illinois, the Republican minority leader in the Senate, accused Kennedy of offering too many concessions to the Soviets.³

While party affiliation is not always a satisfactory indicator of Congressional voting behavior, it is, to quote Robert Dahl, not "the negligible factor it is sometimes thought to be."⁴ Dahl, who studied a series of foreign policy issues considered by Congress between 1933-1948, discovered that, with minor variations, members of the Senate and House of Representatives tended to vote in many instances according to party affiliation. This finding applied to situations in which the parties divided sharply and cases in which bipartisan support existed.

Since 1948, there have been changes in Congressional voting patterns. The Congressional Quarterly found, for example, that by 1972, in approximately 67% of foreign policy cases before Congress, bipartisan voting was the norm, with

²The New York Times, 30 January 1963, p. 2.

³The New York Times, 1 March 1963, p. 1.

⁴Robert A. Dahl, Congress and Foreign Policy (New York: Norton, 1950), p. 46.

a majority of Democrats opposing a majority of Republicans in only 33% of the cases polled.⁵ At the same time, certain types of issues in which a history of partisan division is evident have experienced shifts in party alignments. For example, during the 1950s and early 1960s, Democrats tended to vote in support of greater defense expenditures, with Republicans in opposition. This pattern was particularly pronounced during the Eisenhower era, when Democrats proposed annual amendments to the defense budget, in turn supported by the Republican President and his party in Congress.⁶ This alignment has since shifted in the opposite direction, in large part, as a consequence of Democratic opposition to the Viet Nam War.⁷

Another issue area in which change has occurred is trade policy. During much of the twentieth century, partisan division was fairly strong, with Democrats in favor of relaxing trade restrictions and Republicans opposed. By 1965, however, Southern Democrats, eager to protect their

⁵Congressional Quarterly, November 18, 1972, pp. 3012-3016. This bipartisan voting has had an important impact in reducing the number of cases in which a majority of Democrats opposed a majority of Republicans. Spanier and Uslaner note that between 1947-1970 there was not one foreign policy roll call vote in which 80% of the Republicans opposed 80% of the Democrats. John Spanier and Eric Uslaner, How American Foreign Policy Is Made, 2nd ed. (New York: Praeger, 1978), p. 70.

⁶Barry B. Hughes, The Domestic Context of Foreign Policy (San Francisco: W. H. Freeman and Co., 1978), p. 134.

⁷Ibid., p. 134.

indigenous textile industry from foreign competition, began to evidence a noticeable shift toward opposition to expanded trade, while Northern Republicans, sensitive to the global interests of American business, shifted to a more liberal position. By 1973, Northern Democrats with large labor constituencies had joined Southern Democrats in their support of protectionism. Accordingly, one can describe the shift in partisan alignments as having come full-circle by 1973.⁸

One variable of apparent continuity in influencing Congressional voting patterns is the partisan affiliation of the president. To be sure, the character of the American political system--involving a separation of powers, federalism and decentralized parties--militates against strict party voting in Congress. During the early years of the Eisenhower administration, many Republicans opposed the President's foreign policy objectives, as evidenced, for example, by the controversy over the ill-fated Bricker Amendment.⁹ During the tail end of the Johnson administration, leading Democratic legislators, such as Senators J. William Fulbright and Robert F. Kennedy, challenged the administration's war policies in a most bitter fashion. Ten years later, President

⁸Ibid., p. 137 and Spanier and Uslaner, op. cit., p. 8.

⁹See Marian D. Irish and Elke Frank, American Foreign Policy: Context, Conduct, Content (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1975), p. 147-148.

Carter depended on substantial Republican support to gain Congressional authorization to sell war planes to Egypt and Saudi Arabia and to lift the arms embargo against Turkey. In addition, there has been a noticeable trend on the part of Southern Democrats to oppose presidential attempts to increase non-military foreign aid, even when the president is a Democrat.¹⁰

Nevertheless, there is sufficient evidence to support the proposition that in many instances, a president will draw the support of members of his own party in Congress and conversely, repel opposition members. Mark Kesselman notes, for example, that after the 1952 election, there was a strong trend among Democratic legislators who had supported Truman's foreign policy initiatives to oppose those same policies when advanced by a Republican president.¹¹ Even the Viet Nam War, which mobilized much criticism against Johnson from within the ranks of his own party, is indicative of this rule. Spanier and Uslaner note that once Nixon took office in 1969, many Democratic Congressmen who had supported Johnson's war effort, attacked those same policies when advanced by the Republican president.¹² According to Spanier and Uslaner, the increase in Democratic partisanship allowed several anti-war measures to pass Congress

¹⁰Hughes, op. cit., pp. 130-132.

¹¹Mark Kesselman, "Presidential Leadership in Congress on Foreign Policy," Midwest Journal of Political Science 5 (1961): 284-289.

¹²Spanier and Uslaner, op. cit., p. 81.

during the 1970s. At the same time, in 1973, a measure directed against Nixon's Cambodia policy found most Democrats in support and most Republicans voting in favor of the President.

The tendency to divide along partisan lines is perhaps greatest when national elections are anticipated. At this juncture, those factors which induce bipartisanship are often overwhelmed by the dictates of the competitive party system. The party in opposition finds it expedient to attack administration policies, which under normal circumstances, its members might have supported.¹³ The party in command of the presidency often rallies to the president's side lest his policies appear to divide its members. Very often, once the election is over, bipartisanship will once again emerge. John Foster Dulles acknowledged the existence of this pattern in testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee shortly before his ascent to the position of Secretary of State:

¹³ During the Viet Nam War, the Republican leadership was essentially in agreement with President Johnson with regard to the assumptions underlying the American commitment in Indochina. Nevertheless, because of the nature of the political process and the perceived unpopularity of the war, they felt it expedient, in speeches, policy statements and research studies, to portray themselves as less unyielding than the President. See Holbert N. Carroll, "Congress and National Security Policy," in The Role of Congress in the Development and Support of National Security Policy, ed., U.S. Army War College (Carlisle: USAWC, 1969), p. 9.

...under our Constitutional system we have a general election every four years...one side presents his case, the other side presents the other case, as two lawyers do when they go into court. At that stage the two parties are not judges and they are not judicial. In my opinion they should not be...but when the time is in the past, then I believe we should try to work together on a bipartisan basis.¹⁴

In early 1963, the potential for strong partisan division on the test ban issue did, in fact, exist. The Republican Conference Committee, in a move designed to make a political issue out of the administration's negotiating stance, charged that Kennedy was leading the country into acceptance of a "risky, unenforceable pact" and established a policy formulating committee, under the chairmanship of a strident test ban opponent, Representative Craig Hosmer of California, to offer a sustained alternative to the administration's "propaganda."¹⁵ In February, Republicans charged that the administration's decision to accept fewer on-site inspections could only jeopardize national security,¹⁶ and in March, the Conference Committee revived Latter's "Big Hole" theory by contending that the test ban pact under

¹⁴Cited in Cecil V. Crabb, Jr., American Foreign Policy in the Nuclear Age (New York: Harper and Row, 1972), p. 141.

¹⁵The New York Times, 1 February 1963, p. 1. Hosmer's stridency was reflected in the generally abusive tone he employed to question government witnesses in testimony before the Joint Committee of Atomic Energy. U.S., Congress, Joint Committee on Atomic Energy, Hearings: Developments in Technical Capabilities for the Detection and Inspection of Nuclear Tests, 83th Congress, 1st session, 1963.

¹⁶The New York Times, 11 February 1963, p. 1.

consideration would allow for large-scale Soviet cheating.¹⁷ Republican presidential aspirants such as conservative Barry Goldwater and centrist Nelson Rockefeller, sensing political value in the test ban issue, joined their colleagues in attacks on the administration.

The Democratic side was far less united in support of the administration position. While Senator Humphrey took the lead in publicly repudiating Republican charges, other Democrats were no less vocal in expressing their reservations about a comprehensive ban. On February 21, Senator Thomas Dodd leveled a strong blast against the administration, accusing it of offering too many concessions to the Soviets.¹⁸ In addition, two respected defense-oriented members of the Democratic Party, Senators Henry Jackson of Washington and Stuart Symington of Missouri, questioned the administration's purported tendency to lower inspection requirements in return for negligible Soviet concessions.¹⁹

¹⁷The New York Times, 19 March 1963, p. 1.

¹⁸The New York Times, 22 February 1963, p. 1.

¹⁹U.S., Congress, Senate, Committee on Armed Services, Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee, Hearings: Military Aspects and Implications of Nuclear Test Ban Proposals and Related Matters, 88th Congress, 1st session, 1963, pp. 21-49 passim.

The "Test Ban" campaign

The growing possibility of a concerted Republican campaign to defeat any comprehensive treaty and the uncertainty regarding the degree of Democratic support potentially available in the Senate forced the administration to devote more attention to the cultivation of support in the domestic political arena. In January 1962, Sorensen sent Kennedy a memo contending that most of the public opposed a resumption of nuclear testing.²⁰ By January 1963, however, Kennedy's political operatives became concerned that the administration's misperception of public attitudes had led it into complacency regarding the exigencies of domestic political mobilization. According to political advisor Fred Dutton, the vigorous activities of pro-ban groups in the United States did not necessarily reflect widespread, grassroots support for the administration's bargaining position:

Most people outside of the ban-the-bomb groups are poorly informed and increasingly suspicious on the subject.²¹

²⁰Memorandum from Theodore Sorensen to President John F. Kennedy. John F. Kennedy Library.

²¹Memorandum written by Frederick Dutton, late 1962 or early 1963. John F. Kennedy Library. Pro-ban advocates among the public tended to come from the better-educated stratum of society; those opposed to a test ban, with some exceptions, were among the less-educated segment of the public. A study published in Public Opinion Quarterly in the summer of 1963 indicated this polarity. The study also found that those with less education were at the same time less fearful of fallout. They were also opposed to the Soviet right to conduct tests while simultaneously supportive of the American right. Those with more education were

With a renewed emphasis on winning support outside the Executive branch, the administration focused its attention on two areas. On the one hand, an attempt was made to establish better communication between the administration and Democratic senators publicly opposed to or undecided about the merits of a comprehensive ban. Mary Milling Lepper notes that extensive conversations between AEC Commissioner Haworth and Chairman of the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy, John O. Pastore of Rhode Island, were conducted along with discussions between Fisher and Senator Gore. Lepper discloses that these contacts impressed on the administration the existence of limited support for a comprehensive ban and significant support for the negotiation of a partial treaty.²² On the other hand, the administration sought to rebut opposition arguments which pro-ban advocates believed were receiving undue media attention.²³ In response to Senator Dodd's attack on the administration's test ban policy, Adrian Fisher wrote a letter to The Washington Post, arguing that, in terms of strategic strength, there was more benefit than disadvantage in a comprehensive

considerably more anxious about nuclear war, and they challenged the right of either side to conduct nuclear tests. See Sidney Kraus, Reuben Mehling and Elaine El-Assal, "Mass Media and the Fallout Controversy," in Public Opinion Quarterly 27 (Summer 1963): 191-205 passim.

²²Mary Milling Lepper, Foreign Policy Formulation: A Case Study of the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (Columbus: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co., 1971), p. 78.

²³Ibid., p. 94.

pact.²⁴ In addition, favorably inclined senators were enlisted in the effort to build support for a test ban. Aside from Humphrey's spirited public attacks against the administration's opponents, Senator Pastore collaborated in arranging testimony before the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy to give administration members a full public hearing.

The centerpiece of the administration's public lobbying efforts was the President himself. In a news conference dated February 22, 1963, Kennedy explained the administration's rationale in seeking to curb the arms race:

Well, in my judgment, the major argument for the test ban treaty is the limiting effect it might have on proliferation.²⁵

On March 21, the President reaffirmed his commitment to achieve a test ban accord by stating that despite the existence of considerable opposition to his policy of negotiation with the Soviets, he would continue to press for an agreement.²⁶ In May, the President lent urgency to the achievement of a test ban agreement by reiterating his belief that failure to reach an accord in the near future would lead to widespread proliferation of nuclear weapons.²⁷ Clearly, Kennedy was staking his own prestige on the success of arms control negotiations.

²⁴The New York Times, 4 March 1963, p. 1.

²⁵U.S., President, Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States (Washington, D.C.: U. S. Government Printing Office), John F. Kennedy, 1963, p. 208.

²⁶Public Papers...Kennedy, 1963, p. 280.

²⁷Theodore C. Sorenson, Kennedy (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), p. 310.

In a sense, the President's involvement in marshaling support outside the executive branch for his administration's test ban position was an extension of his view of the president's role in mobilizing public opinion.

As Sorensen notes:

...no problem of the Presidency concerned him more than that of public communication--educating, persuading and mobilizing that opinion through continued use of the political machinery, continued traveling and speaking and, above all, a continued attention to the mass media: radio, television, and the press.²⁸

At the same time, the President understood that the specific issue of arms control requires special sensitivity to the inherent, anti-Communist sentiment of the American people. Consequently, the President had to accentuate the pitfalls in failure to negotiate a treaty without appearing too soft on the issue of communism and the Soviet Union. The latter perception was one that was already gaining adherents among right-wing segments of the population. Addressing himself to this charge, Kennedy was careful to associate himself with ultra-conservative concerns while at the same time pointing to the inherent peril in a position that took no cognizance of strategic realities. In a press conference dated February 14, 1962, the President responded to a question regarding the alleged "no-win" policy of his administration:

²⁸Theodore C. Sorensen, Kennedy (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), p. 310.

Of course, every American...wants the United States to be secure and at peace and they want the cause of freedom around the world to prevail...We want to do that, of course, without having a nuclear war. Now if someone thinks we should have a nuclear war in order to win, I can inform them that there will not be a winner in the next nuclear war, if there is one.²⁹

Kennedy was not the first president to seek a balance between the objectives of anti-communism and nuclear war avoidance, but he was the most clear-cut up to that time in articulating publicly this complementarity as the governing ideology of American foreign policy in the postwar era. In large part, Kennedy articulated this position because he believed it. At the same time, the need to make frequent references of this duality was in no small measure a consequence of political exigencies. Kennedy recognized that his entire policy of detente, including the centerpiece, arms control, could only survive the wear and tear of the policy-making process if it could be framed in terms of protection from the two greatest threats to the national interest: communism and nuclear war. He recognized that given the strong impulse within the public and Congress to attach greater priority to the anti-Communist tendency, only the prestige of the presidency could possibly legitimize accommodationist policies as consistent with the national interest. George Kennan confirms this analysis in an interview conducted by the Kennedy Library:

²⁹Public Papers...Kennedy, 1962, p. 141.

He /Kennedy/ was very troubled about this problem /negotiations with the Soviet Union/ because, having been in Congress, he was very sensitive to the strong anti-Communist feelings that were prevalent in a portion of the electorate and in a large portion of Congress. He wanted to handle this problem in such a way as to make progress in composing our differences..., but not to get himself attacked at home for being soft on Communism or anything of that sort.³⁰

In a sense, Kennedy was better equipped to achieve this balance in 1963 than he was in the earlier years of his presidency. By appearing to act decisively and courageously in facing down Khrushchev over Cuba, the President was able to dispel any notion that his was, in fact, an administration of surrender. According to Sorensen, 1963 was not a year marked by radical departures in American foreign policy; the President had extended the "olive branch" earlier.³¹ Instead, it was a year in which political circumstances changed to allow the President to challenge the strong anti-Communist tendencies in the electorate and in Congress. This new flexibility Sorensen cites as a major consequence of the Cuban missile crisis.

³⁰ George F. Kennan, recorded interview by Louis Fischer, March 23, 1965, pp. 43-44. John F. Kennedy Library Oral History Program. Kennedy's wariness of the need to explain a nuclear test ban as a means to enhance the national security is evidenced by a statement he made in a press conference dated March 14, 1962, "In our opinion, our security position would be strengthened if there were no more atmospheric tests." Public Papers...Kennedy, 1962, p. 228.

³¹ Sorensen interview, pp. 14-15.

It is clear that Kennedy gave extraordinary attention to developing a climate of opinion that would sustain his test ban initiative and the treaty initialed in Moscow on July 25. It is also clear that the test ban was the centerpiece of a policy of detente that would ultimately, or so it was hoped, be linked to other areas of the Soviet-American relationship.³² The vigorous application of presidential power outside the executive branch was a consequence of several factors. First, Kennedy himself viewed the presidency as the leading institutional source of political opinion in the United States. Second, the President, along with other members of the administration, saw Congress as the most serious potential threat to his policy of detente. Kennedy assumed that by creating a domestic mood of receptivity to greater flexibility in the Soviet-American relationship, he would be able to apply pressure on Congress to support him. Third, Kennedy understood that only a president could legitimize policies that appeared to be innovative within the framework of the foreign policy consensus that had guided the United States since the end of World War II. Fourth, the President was determined not to repeat the mistakes made by Woodrow Wilson in his League of Nations fight. In an interview conducted by Robert Stein, editor of Redbook

³²According to a New York Times report in 1963 "administration officials believe the successful conclusion of the Moscow talks may lead the State Department to reassess its policy on a broad range of East-West ties." The New York Times, 22 July 1963, p. 2.

magazine, on August 1, 1963, Kennedy argued that Wilson's failure to mobilize public support in his own behalf spelled disaster for his initiative.³³ Kennedy believed that the expansion of public interest beyond select interest groups would eventually work to his advantage. No doubt, he was aware of the institutional singularity of the presidency as reference point for the largest possible national constituency. He assumed that with an enlarged scope of public involvement, the tendency of this group to support rather than oppose him would provide his efforts with an incalculable political resource. Kennedy reflected on the need for greater interest in his interview with Stein:

A great mass of people frequently are not heard or may not be informed, may not understand the argument, may feel the arguments are too complicated, may be too involved in their own private lives that they don't have time to take an informal interest in world events or in great national issues. Therefore, the field is left to a few participants on both sides. I think that the wider we can spread this debate the better off we will be.³⁴

³³Public Papers...Kennedy, 1963, p. 609. That Kennedy was extremely conscious of the Wilson debacle is evidenced by a dialogue between the President and members of the Citizens Committee for a Nuclear Test Ban on August 7, 1963. Cousins reports that Kennedy warned, "Ever since Woodrow Wilson, a President had to be cautious about bringing a treaty before the Senate unless he had a fairly good idea where the votes could come from." Cousins, op. cit., p. 128.

³⁴Public Papers...Kennedy, 1963, p. 609. In some respects, it is difficult to understand Kennedy's determination to widen the scope of public involvement. Those groups that were most involved in the test ban debate were generally in Kennedy's corner. Aside from Edward Teller's public testimony against the treaty, the forces that opposed the treaty were not well-organized. One notable exception was

Kennedy's approach to the problem of public mobilization on the test ban issue and the collateral issue of detente, apart from efforts by other members of his administration to influence public attitudes, was essentially two-fold. First, the President made clear in numerous public speeches, interviews with the print media and television and radio addresses that the administration's commitment to the Test Ban Treaty was derivative of a strongly felt presidential initiative. In some respects, the substance of his message was less important than the added measure of credibility invested in the administration's position by its identification with the presidential office.

Another, more subtle approach to the problem of public mobilization was the President's active collaboration with the pro-ban lobby, the Citizens Committee for a Nuclear Test Ban, headed by Norman Cousins and Ambassador James J. Wadsworth. Pro-ban forces had injected themselves into the public arena well before the treaty was initialed on July 25. Earlier that year, groups such as the Dentists Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy, the California Young Democrats, the

the National Committee Against a Test Ban, formed by six editors of the conservative periodical, The National Review. Pro-ban advocates, on the other hand, were well-organized even before the debate over the Test Ban Treaty. During the 1961 Senate debate over the establishment of the ACDA, no fewer than thirteen disarmament groups testified in favor of the Agency. These groups were ultimately to serve as a natural constituency for the ACDA.

Women's Strike for Peace, along with groups of church leaders, business executives, scientists and academicians had at one time or another taken public action in support of negotiations. On the eve of Harriman's departure to Moscow, in a carefully orchestrated media-event, the Ambassador was handed a petition signed by 30,000 names. Wadsworth himself, who in April had chided Hosmer for presuming to speak for all Republicans, had simultaneously urged Kennedy to educate the public as to the hazards of nuclear testing.³⁵ In July, he promised to support the treaty but reserved the right to differ with Kennedy on matters of political strategy.³⁶

With the signing of the Test Ban Treaty, however, the President was interested in marshaling the resources of these groups toward a more coordinated lobbying effort. The newly reconstituted Citizens Committee met with the President on August 7 in the White House. The group apprised the President of its organizational framework and of the extent of its support. Kennedy, in turn, offered his services to the Committee and then suggested areas where it might concentrate its activities.³⁷ Over the next month and a half, the President so closely monitored the efforts of the Committee that he personally authorized lobbying directed at

³⁵The New York Times, 8 April 1963, p. 46.

³⁶The New York Times, 17 July 1963, p. 2.

³⁷Sorensen, op. cit., p. 739.

specific senators and approved newspaper and television advertisements.³⁸

With Kennedy so convinced that a major effort to reach public opinion was necessary for ratification of the Test Ban Treaty, a major question presents itself: to what extent did the President's efforts lead to the overwhelming success of his battle to win the endorsement of the Senate? It is clear that some change occurred, both in public and Congressional attitudes between the advent of the Harriman mission and the date on which the Senate ratified the treaty. Kennedy, for example, doubted on August 7 that a vote taken that day would produce the necessary two thirds Senate majority.³⁹ In addition, influential senators such as Jackson and Dirksen did not commit themselves in favor of the treaty until September.

³⁸In a memorandum from Cousins to the President, dated August 28, 1963, the peace activist outlined the Committee's response to specific suggestions made by Kennedy. This memorandum is indicative of the extent to which the President orchestrated the unfolding lobbying effort in behalf of the Test Ban Treaty. Among Kennedy's suggestions was the drive to solicit business, academic, religious, farm and labor support. The President also directed the Committee to concentrate its attention on swing states such as Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, Ohio, South Dakota and Washington. In addition, he advised that liberal groups should be consulted and that Senator Jackson should be made the object of special attention. Norman Cousins, The Improbable Triumvirate (New York: Norton, 1972), pp. 138-144.

³⁹Ibid., p. 129.

Public attitudes were even more subject to change. Cousins notes that private polling conducted shortly after the successful negotiations in Moscow indicated that while the opinion trend was moving away from support for nuclear testing, congressmen were receiving mail showing a proportion of 10:1 and in some cases 20:1 against the Test Ban Treaty. In the White House meeting of August 7, a tally by Congressional liaison Larry O'Brien came up with a 15:1 ratio of letters to Congress against the treaty. A check of White House mail found that while the test ban issue evinced relatively little interest, it was clear that the number of letters opposing the ban exceeded those in favor by a large margin.⁴⁰ But by August 27 the tide began to turn, with pro-ban letters trailing anti-ban letters by a 3:2 margin. By September, letters in favor of the treaty took a decisive lead.

The extent to which letters are accurately reflective of public opinion is indeed open to question. Robert Dahl, in his study of Congress and foreign policy, notes that "mail may not be representative, and the Congressman may not be guided by it. He may look upon it as largely the work of chronic letter-writers and cranks. Or he may suspect

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 127. This finding contradicts a White House claim released on July 27, that the number of letters supporting the President exceeded the number in opposition by a 40:1 ratio. The New York Times, 28 July 1963, p. 1.

that the avalanche has been carefully engineered."⁴¹ Kennedy himself had a rather jaundiced view of letter-writers. Schlesinger recalls that in the week following Kennedy's delivery of the American University Address, there were 896 letters sent to the White House, 861 in favor and 25 against. In contrast, that same week the Freight Rate Bill generated 25,232 letters. According to Schlesinger, the President was not incredulous:

That is why I tell people in Congress that they're crazy if they take their mail seriously.⁴²

While changes in the ratio of letters for and against the treaty may not be indicative of the movement of public opinion during this period of time, public opinion polls are available to corroborate the conclusion that change did, in fact, occur. A Harris Poll conducted in the early part of July disclosed:

Unqualified approval for negotiations	47%
Qualified approval	20%
Opposed	17%
Not Sure	10% ⁴³

⁴¹Dahl, op. cit., p. 35. In the case of the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, there was definitely a feeling among administration supporters that the mail against ratification resulted from a concerted campaign. Senator Aiken noted on September 18, that most of the mail came from Texas and California. The New York Times, 19 September 1963, p. 10.

⁴²Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., A Thousand Days (Cambridge: Houghton-Mifflin, 1965; Fawcett, 1967), p. 831.

⁴³Cited in Lepper, op. cit., p. 51.

On September 1, 1963, more than a month after the initialing of the Moscow Treaty, the Harris Poll indicated the existence of an appreciable rise in support:

Approved	81%
Opposed	8%
Qualified approval	11% ⁴⁴

There is, parenthetically, some support in these findings for Kennedy's contention that increased public awareness would necessarily favor the administration position. In early July, before the test ban issue had evolved into actual government policy, 10% had no opinion. The Harris Survey of September 1, however, which demonstrates a large gain for the treaty, has no category denoting "no opinion," indicating that the level of public awareness had become so great that all respondents had some opinion.⁴⁵

In order to explain the link between these findings and Kennedy's ultimate victory in the Senate, it is best to examine first, the properties of public opinion and second, their relationship to foreign policy. Most political scientists view the content of foreign policy attitudes as a consequence rather than as a determinant of government policy. This conclusion is supported by the existence of two phenomena. First, there is ample evidence to suggest that

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 54.

⁴⁵The Gallup Poll found 78% awareness in its survey of September 1. Ibid., p. 54.

considering the relatively unstructured and low-intensity nature of public attitudes on foreign policy,⁴⁶ the impact of public opinion is only marginally felt by decision-makers in the executive branch and by members of Congress. Bernard Cohen discovers, for example, the State Department officials are relatively immune from the consideration of political variables in their formulation of foreign policy recommendations.⁴⁷ With regard to Congress, the seminal study of Warren Miller and Donald Stokes demonstrates that among three issue areas examined--race, economics and foreign policy--constituency factors are least compelling in foreign policy matters.⁴⁸

These findings support the contention that the impact of public opinion on policy-makers and legislators is virtually negligible. On the other hand, it is clear that government policy is a key variable in explaining the content

⁴⁶See Gabriel A. Almond, The American People and Foreign Policy, 2nd ed. (New York: Praeger, 1960), pp. 69-70. Martin Kriesberg, who conducted a study of foreign policy attitudes published in 1949, discovered that 30% of the electorate was totally unaware of foreign policy issues, 45% aware but incapable of framing intelligent opinions, and 25% informed and capable of having intelligent opinions. What is striking about Kriesberg's study is that it was conducted at the apogee of the Cold War, when one might reasonably have expected that interest in foreign policy issues would be fairly intense. See Martin Kriesberg, "Dark Areas of Ignorance," ed. Lester Markel, in Public Opinions and Foreign Policy (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1949), pp. 49-77.

⁴⁷Bernard C. Cohen, The Public's Impact on Foreign Policy (Boston: Little, Brown, 1973).

⁴⁸Warren E. Miller and Donald Stokes, "Constituency Influence in Congress," in Elections and Political Order, eds. Angus Campbell, Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller and Donald Stokes (New York: Wiley, 1966), pp. 362-363.

of public attitudes. John Mueller, in his impressive book, Wars, Presidents and Public Opinion, notes that public opinion often changes to reflect turnarounds in government policy.⁴⁹ For example, once the Johnson administration initiated a bombing policy against Hanoi and Haiphong in 1965, public opinion changed from its previous opposition to bombing to support. Conversely, public opinion surveys demonstrated a lack of support for a bombing pause in 1967-1968. After Johnson's decision significantly to cut back the bombing in March 1968, a major switch in public attitudes occurred. In another case, the Harris survey discovered that there was a dramatic shift toward support for American intervention in Cambodia between April and May 1970. The decisive turning point was Nixon's decision to invade the country.⁵⁰ Interestingly enough, the greatest source of support came from those who were better-educated, with the college-trained segment of the population shifting from 3% favoring armed intervention to 50%. It is findings such as these which lead political scientists to label public opinion as essentially "permissive."⁵¹

The generally supportive character of public opinion

⁴⁹John Mueller, War, Presidents and Public Opinion (New York: Wiley, 1973), pp. 69-74.

⁵⁰Cited in Hughes, op. cit., p. 109.

⁵¹Spanier and Uslaner, op. cit., p. 94.

does not mean that policy-makers can take any action and assume that it will be self-legitimizing. For one thing, in areas where special interests--either governmental or non-governmental--predominate, presidents are bound by the need to satisfy groups who are sufficiently aware, organized and mobilized to fight policies which they consider to be inimical to their core interests. Military budget battles, trade policies or cases in which ethnic lobbies have strong objections to government policy, are examples of situations in which public constraints on presidential action are relatively severe.⁵² Considering that party discipline in Congress is not air-tight and that, subsequently, interest groups enjoy significant access to individual legislators, it is clear that a confrontation between the president and a major interest group can be converted into an executive-legislative face-off. On the other hand, where, as for example in the case of the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, interest group activity is primarily supportive of the president, presidents are quite obviously freer to pursue policies that might, at face value, offend public opinion in general.⁵³ The absence of significant

⁵²Cecil Crabb argues that single issue interest groups are usually strongest when they are not opposed by other groups and when they promote positions that dovetail with public opinion in general. He makes this statement in assessing the power of the so-called "China lobby" in this country. Crabb, op. cit., p. 157.

⁵³Mary Lepper's study of the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty devotes considerable attention to the lobbying efforts of

interest group activity in opposition to a president makes other indices such as presidential deference, partisan affiliation, personal conscience or regional loyalties more instrumental in determining the outcome of Congressional voting.

In addition to the constraints imposed by specific interest groups, in some instances public opinion is perceived by policy-makers as being too restrictive to allow for innovation. Benjamin Bradlee was told by Kennedy that while some "myths" were no longer appropriate to the conduct of American foreign policy and consequently "had to go," others were "still too sacred to discuss publicly, at least for him to discuss."⁵⁴ According to Roger Hilsman of the State Department, one of these so-called myths was the country's policy of non-recognition of the Communist government in control of the Chinese mainland, and Hilsman continues, "Kennedy had mentioned the need for rethinking

interest groups both before and after the initialing of the agreement. At the end of her book she notes, "In questioning senators and their staff as to whether they were influenced in their position on the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty by the activities of interest groups, very little affirmative information was forthcoming." Lepper adds, however, that when the same question was rephrased, it was clear that many congressional offices maintained complete files on the interest groups and their Washington lobbyists. What is left unsaid, but certainly implied, is that congressmen relied on interest groups for their information and did accordingly take the views of lobbyists into account. Lepper, op. cit., p. 128.

⁵⁴ Benjamin C. Bradlee, Conversations with Kennedy (New York: Norton, 1975; Pocket Books, 1976), p. 107.

our position."⁵⁵ This account is corroborated by Cecil Crabb who, relying on Schlesinger's account, comments:

Kennedy, "considered the state of our relations with Communist China as irrational," and he "did not exclude the possibility of doing something to change them in the course of his administration."⁵⁶

At the same time, Kennedy felt too constrained by the prevailing climate of public opinion to seek new initiatives toward the Communist government.⁵⁷ He authorized the State Department to explore opportunities for change and even allowed Hilsman to deliver a major address on the subject; but he still refused to commit himself personally. This, he argued, would require a friendlier Congress and more public understanding. The Chinese case is a perfect example of a situation in which the bureaucracy, particularly the State Department, was advocating consideration of a major switch in policy, with a president, sensitive to domestic political realities, arresting any movement toward change.⁵⁸

It is clear, then, that the role of public opinion in the determination of foreign policy is considerably more

⁵⁵Roger Hilsman, To Move a Nation (Garden City: Doubleday, 1967), p. 348.

⁵⁶Crabb, op. cit., p. 159.

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 160.

⁵⁸Kennedy was especially sensitive to the role of public constraints as they impinged on the conduct of American foreign policy. Kennedy acknowledged that Soviet leaders, free from such restraints, "have advantages as a dictatorship in this cold war struggle." Public Papers... Kennedy, 1962, p. 21.

complex than originally stated. While it is true that public opinion follows rather than leads government policy, it is equally true that certain public attitudes are perceived as so intense and/or rigid that their alteration requires significant and politically hazardous manipulation from above. If the central decision-maker chooses to adopt policies that, on the surface, run counter to prevailing public attitudes, he must seek to change those attitudes. If he calculates that the cost/benefit of public mobilization is not worth the adoption of new policies, then public constraints have indeed carried the day. For this reason, presidential scholar Ervin C. Hargrove chooses to label public opinion as a series of "supportive constraints."⁵⁹

The implication of this ambivalence between the limits imposed by public opinion and the opportunities for widening the parameters of allowable government choice is that presidents, with access to this large constituency, are the only political actors capable of legitimizing controversial policies within the framework of existing public opinion. At the same time, there is an impressive consensus among students of public opinion regarding the ability of governments to mobilize public support behind change. V. O. Key writes that "governments, if they are worth their salt, have their effects upon the properties of mass

⁵⁹Erwin C. Hargrove, The Power of the Modern Presidency (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1974), p. 106.

opinion."⁶⁰ Focusing on the president, Key adds:

To arouse latent opinion, attention must be captured, and on the American political scene only the president can capture the attention of the ordinarily inattentive public.⁶¹

Herman Finer is particularly impressed with the capacity of presidents to influence public attitudes:

I /Finer/ do not forget that the President moves only within the ambit of the prevailing climate of opinion...But the President himself is a creator of public opinion, the invoker of men's hearts, the awakener of their minds.⁶²

In assessing Kennedy's role in mobilizing the public to support his test ban initiative, it is important to consider those conditions that invest public opinion with significance and vitality. Taken alone, public opinion is essentially inert. The public as a whole, excluding individual interest groups, is neither sufficiently organized nor interested to act politically on its foreign policy attitudes. Even as voters, members of the public rarely choose candidates according to their foreign policy preferences.⁶³ This can be explained, in part, by the relative

⁶⁰V. O. Key, Public Opinion and American Democracy (New York: Knopf, 1961), p. 259.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 259.

⁶²Herman Finer, The Presidency: Crisis and Regeneration (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), p. 99.

⁶³Warren Miller discovered in a study of vote changes between the 1956-1960 elections, that the foreign policy positions of the parties accounted for no more than a .5% switch from election to election. Warren Miller, "Voting and Foreign Policy," in Domestic Sources of Foreign Policy, ed., James N. Rosenau (New York: The Free Press, 1967), p. 229.

unimportance to the public of foreign policy issues as compared with domestic issues.⁶⁴ It can also be attributed to the generally convergent foreign policy platforms of the two major parties, which makes it difficult for the voter to discern significant foreign policy differences at election time.

At the same time, in a competitive electoral system, there is a natural tendency for parties to divide where partisanship offers some promise of significant political reward. At times, of course, the basis for partisan opposition can involve a matter of conscience or substance. For example, Eisenhower told Kennedy privately that he could support all of the new President's foreign policy initiatives, but he warned that in the event Kennedy changed the government's China policy, he would be forced to reenter public life.⁶⁵ At other times, however, partisanship might emerge on a foreign policy issue, not because the party in opposition is substantially in disagreement with the administration, but rather because it senses that by making an issue of the president's handling of a specific situation, it can weaken his public esteem and, hence, reduce his political power. For example, after the Cuban missile crisis, the President's initially high standing in public opinion polls was

⁶⁴Spanier and Uslaner, op. cit., p. 99.

⁶⁵Schlesinger, op. cit., p. 443.

progressively eroded by a barrage of Republican attacks charging him with ignoring post-crisis Soviet subterfuge in Cuba. A Gallup Survey covering the period February 24-May 24, 1963, asking respondents if they approved or disapproved of Kennedy's handling of the Cuban situation, demonstrated a significant and steady drop-off in support among Republicans, Democrats and Independents.⁶⁶ Clearly, once Republicans saw an initial pay-off in attacking the administration, they escalated their criticisms to produce further erosion in the President's position. Public opinion is thus relevant in indicating those areas that can be exploited for partisan gain.

Aside from the relationship between partisanship and public opinion polls, regional voting patterns that cross party lines are often a function of popular attitudes in areas that have little direct bearing on foreign policy. While presidents can often command support on foreign policy matters that is not forthcoming on domestic issues, it is not always possible to compartmentalize these two areas so neatly. Presidential popularity is not always divisible by issue area, and a drop-off in support on one issue of high intensity concern can make it easier or even compel legislators to withdraw their support on other issues.

⁶⁶Erskine, op. cit., pp. 338-339. General support for the president was reduced from 56% to 45%. Republicans trailed off from 36% to 27%, Democrats from 69% to 55%, and Independents from 55% to 44%.

In the case of the Test Ban Treaty, the civil rights issue is illustrative of this phenomenon. Even as the test ban issue was developing steam in 1963, the unfolding civil rights drama managed to capture greater, popular attention. Sorensen notes, for example, that Kennedy's American University address was overshadowed by the President's civil rights message delivered the next day.⁶⁷ The greatest source of popular concern was in the South, where the civil rights movement was concentrating most of its activity. As a consequence of his strong, public stand in favor of civil rights, including the Justice Department's decision to seek the integration of the University of Alabama, the President was experiencing noticeable slippage in the polls. A Harris Poll, quoted in Newsweek on July 8, 1963, noted that the President's general popularity had fallen five points between May and July.⁶⁸ Whereas nationally, support for his civil rights program garnered 49% approval, in the South only 25% offered their support. This was reflected in regional distinctions regarding the President's popularity in general. In the Northeast, the President's popularity stood at 65% and in the West and Midwest at 64%. In the South, the President was supported by only 49% of those who responded. The Gallup

⁶⁷Sorensen, op. cit., p. 733.

⁶⁸Newsweek, 8 July 1963, p. 21. The fact that his popularity was slipping was not lost on the President, who acknowledged to black leaders shortly before embarking on his European tour, that the civil rights issue was creating serious difficulties for his presidency.

Poll found even greater slippage in the South. Whereas the President's popularity in the South stood at 52% in late May, it fell to 33% in June as a consequence of his civil rights speech.⁶⁹ In July and September, Kennedy's public standing in the South rose to 44% but in October, following the convulsions in Birmingham, it declined to 40%.

It is not surprising then that among the nineteen votes opposing final ratification of the Test Ban Treaty, the largest single bloc, nine Senators, was composed of Southern Democrats. Of course, Southern Senators tended to reflect the general conservatism of the region with regard to national security matters. At the same time, however, many Democrats and Republicans who were just as hard-line on the question of Soviet-American relations, voted in support of the treaty. It is possible that the unpopularity of the President in the South allowed those legislators in opposition to vote against the President or compelled them to vote against Kennedy on this issue lest their support be construed as endorsement of his civil rights policy.

The failure of the Republicans, on the other hand, to mount a serious challenge against the Test Ban Treaty can also be related to the climate of public opinion. To be sure, as New York Times columnist Max Frankel noted on the day before the treaty was initialed in Moscow, the President's

⁶⁹Erskine, op. cit., p. 336.

extreme secrecy and the limited nature of the pact made it difficult for his Senatorial critics to challenge him.⁷⁰ The Republicans had been warning in and out of Congress that a comprehensive treaty would jeopardize national security; presented with a treaty that met these objections, Republican lawmakers were hard-pressed to challenge the President.

At the same time, it was clear to many Republicans that the Test Ban Treaty was not an issue that could generate a significant amount of political capital in opposition. This reality was supported by a Harris Survey published on August 26, 1963, which demonstrated that while the President could be beaten in 1964 on economic and civil rights issues, 81% of the public supported him on his handling of Khrushchev.⁷¹ Coming, with some exceptions, from areas where the President's popularity was still over 50%, Republican legislators such as George Aiken and Hugh Scott and luminaries such as Herbert Hoover and Dwight Eisenhower tendered immediate support. While presidential aspirants such as Richard Nixon and Nelson Rockefeller attacked the "military and political assumptions" that underlay the treaty,⁷² even they supported ultimate ratification. Clearly, as one Republican Senator told Newsweek on August 5:

⁷⁰Max Frankel, "A Silence in Washington," The New York Times, 25 July 1963, p. 2.

⁷¹Newsweek, 26 August 1963, pp. 25-27.

⁷²The New York Times, 12 August 1963, p. 1.

I don't see any political mileage in opposing the treaty. It is very likely that the Senate would approve such a treaty.⁷³

Senate endorsement

The absence of any substantial political value in opposing the Test Ban Treaty helped to forge the bipartisan consensus that ultimately produced such an enormous victory for Kennedy in the Senate. The President, however, committed to achieving as near a unanimous vote as possible, did not take Republican or Democratic support for granted. Sensitive to Wilson's cataclysmic personal and national defeat some forty-five years earlier and convinced that his Democratic predecessor had needlessly alienated the Senate, Kennedy made certain to apprise key senators and Senate committees on the developments from Moscow. Mike Mansfield, then Democratic Majority Leader of the Senate, recalls that a tentative Test Ban Agreement was forwarded to the Foreign Relations Committee two weeks before its initialing in Moscow.⁷⁴ In addition, Secretary Rusk and ACDA Director Foster were dispatched by the President to speak individually with every Senator while test ban talks were in progress.⁷⁵ On July 24, Secretary Rusk briefed members of the Senate Armed Services Committee and the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy, two committees which had been particularly inclined

⁷³Newsweek, 5 August 1963.

⁷⁴Mike Mansfield, recorded interview by Seth P. Tillman, June 23, 1964, p. 16. John F. Kennedy Library Oral History Program.

⁷⁵Sorensen, op. cit., p. 737.

to criticize the administration's previous negotiating position. From these conversations, it became clear to the administration that the treaty would have difficulty passing the Senate if attached to a non-aggression pact.⁷⁶

Spurred by the President's stated desire to achieve "quick action" on ratification, Senate leaders of the Democratic Party mobilized their legislative forces. At times, their attempt to build broad, bipartisan support backfired, as, for example, in the case of Humphrey's proposal to send a bipartisan Congressional delegation to Moscow for the official signing ceremony. Republican leaders such as Bourke Hickenlooper of Iowa and George Aiken of Vermont feared that by going to Moscow, they would commit themselves to voting for the treaty even before the convening of Senate hearings. Democrat J. William Fulbright, Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, also opposed the idea on the grounds that it would create an issue that would deflect attention from the treaty itself. Ultimately this wrangle was resolved with Republicans Aiken and Leverett Saltonstall, from Kennedy's home state of Massachusetts, accompanying the delegation.

With Senators gradually declaring their intentions with regard to the treaty, Kennedy administered the decisive

⁷⁶Benjamin H. Read, recorded interview by Joseph E. O'Connor and Dennis O'Brien, February 22, 1966 and October 17, 1969, p. 12. John F. Kennedy Library Oral History Program.

blow in mid-September. In a meeting with Dirksen on September 9, the President assured the Republican leader of certain guarantees that would safeguard the security of the United States. These guarantees, contained in a public letter to Dirksen and Mansfield dated September 11, included a commitment to continue an underground testing program, a promise to maintain preparedness for possible resumption of testing in prohibited environments, a pledge to continue research in the detection of underground tests and a stipulation that the President still retained the right to employ nuclear weapons for self-defense purposes.⁷⁷

In a sense, these provisions were designed to satisfy the reservations articulated by the Joint Chiefs in their testimony before the Preparedness Subcommittee and the Foreign Relations Committee. In a larger sense, however, the commitment to maintain vigilance in the face of continued Soviet hostility was designed to put the treaty in its proper perspective. Kennedy was essentially assuring the public, Congress, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff that by engaging in a Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, the administration was merely committing itself to a course of action that had in the past enjoyed widespread and bipartisan support; i.e., the balancing of the goals of nuclear war avoidance and anti-communism. Dirksen, in supporting the treaty

⁷⁷Public Papers...Kennedy, 1963, pp. 669-671.

unreservedly, clearly associated the Republican Party with the goals of the Democratic President. Among those items listed by Dirksen in favor of the treaty, he included reference to the fact that the Republican Party Platform of 1960 had pledged to seek an early agreement to forego nuclear tests in the atmosphere.⁷⁸ In this regard, Kennedy's policy was correctly seen as a culmination of efforts begun by his Republican predecessor.

In assessing Kennedy's ability to gain ratification of the treaty with only one, minor Senate reservation attached to it,⁷⁹ Lepper concludes:

Many factors contributed to overcoming the hostility toward the treaty. Acceptance was partly a result of the wide public discussion which the treaty had received as a result of the activities of interest groups, interested individuals, and the congressional committee hearings. Those who favored the test ban were aided tremendously by the position taken by the secretary of defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Ultimately, much credit must be given to the public commitment by President Kennedy that all safeguards to national security must be maintained.⁸⁰

Lepper's observations are, in large part, legitimate.

It is true that at the beginning of the year opposition to a

⁷⁸U. S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, Documents on Disarmament, 1963, p. 497. In the case of Dirksen, the President's letter clearly had a salutary effect. On July 28, Dirksen objected to the treaty on the grounds that it relied too heavily on Soviet good faith. The New York Times, 29 July 1963, p. 2.

⁷⁹This reservation pertained to the Senate's constitutional right to pass on all amendments to the treaty.

⁸⁰Lepper, op. cit., p. 111.

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test ban was strong. In addition, public opinion polls, newspaper editorials and letters to Congress at the beginning of the treaty debate did not show strong support for the President's initiative. Clearly, the intense lobbying efforts of interest groups in favor of the treaty and the President's own orchestration of domestic public opinion had an impact in changing the political climate to a favorable one.

At the same time, the Test Ban Treaty must be considered in its proper perspective. The treaty that was ultimately adopted and presented to the Senate for ratification was a far-cry from the comprehensive pact that had mobilized such intense criticism earlier in the year from Republicans and Democrats alike. Indeed, the treaty that ultimately evolved was closer to the original thinking of Senate Democrats such as Dodd, Pastore and Gore, than to the more ambitious goals originally favored by the President. One can make a strong argument behind the case, as Max Frankel did in 1963, that the treaty passed so overwhelmingly because, indeed, it was so innocuous.

This does not mean that there were not serious objections to the treaty as it was subsequently presented to the Senate. From within the administration, the Joint Chiefs clearly had strong reservations about its effect on the country's military posture. Defense-minded Democrats such as Henry Jackson and other members of the Preparedness Subcommittee endorsed the treaty with great reservations.

Irreconcilable anti-Communists such as Strom Thurmond of South Carolina were opposed to any treaty that promised some thaw in the Soviet-American relationship

Kennedy's ability to circumvent this resistance is testimony not only to his personal political capabilities but to the institutional role of the presidency as it relates to public opinion, Congress and partisan conflict. It is clear that no other figure in the American political system can command the same attention for his point of view as a president. In some respects, this creates a situation in which the president enjoys a virtual monopoly on the flow of information pertaining to national security and foreign policy in general.⁸¹ As a consequence, those who oppose the president's point of view are often hard-pressed to find a constituency that can serve as a political base for effective criticism. Translated into the hard currency of political support and opposition, this asymmetry between the wide scope of presidential reach and the relatively narrow domain of his opposition results in an impressive boost to presidential power. Elmer Cornwell notes this point when he states:

In a very real sense, however, the American President finds in the populace not only his base of electoral support, but the very essence of his power to influence the process of governance.⁸²

⁸¹See Thomas Halper, Foreign Policy Crises: Appearance and Reality in Decision-Making (Columbus: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co., 1971).

⁸²Elmer E. Cornwell, Presidential Leadership of Public Opinion (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1965), p. 4.

There are, of course, exceptions to this rule. Interest groups, when they are able to mobilize intense support from a specific segment of the population, can periodically challenge, or at least, neutralize presidential power. Congress can occasionally frustrate presidents if the issue under consideration touches on its constitutional prerogatives, such as the ability to control appropriations. The weakness, however, of interest groups is that they are most powerful on issues that concern only small portions of the population. On symmetrical issues, such as arms control, they must contend with the president's ability to reach a larger constituency. With relation to Congress, the fragmentation of authority and power within each house makes it relatively simple for the legislators to attack presidents but almost impossible for them to offer creditable, alternative courses of action.

The only institution capable of challenging the president's political reach is the opposition party. For one thing, the opposition party has a large public base of support from which it draws a natural constituency. In addition, because its leaders are often perceived by the public and particularly the media as part of a counter-elite, the party out of power is often called upon to offer opposing assessments to those of the president. For example, newspaper reports of Kennedy's American University address were balanced by the exposure of Republican charges

that the address represented a "soft line" and attacks by Goldwater and Dirksen as to the utility of the Moscow conference.⁸³ Even though in these cases the president is still at an advantage, he will, nevertheless, usually attempt to frame his policies in a way that will prevent the surfacing of partisan differences. For example, during the 1962 campaign Kennedy was careful to accentuate that neither he nor Eisenhower "have attempted to make any partisan issue out of foreign policy."⁸⁴ This deference to Eisenhower and fear of the possible consequences of partisan division were also evidenced in Kennedy's China policy. Following the initialing of the Test Ban Treaty, Kennedy went out of his way to build a bipartisan support in Congress and had CIA Director McCone brief Republican presidential aspirant, Nelson Rockefeller.⁸⁵ Clearly, the threat of partisan opposition was one that Kennedy took seriously.

In the case of the test ban issue, Kennedy's success was as much a factor of the absence of a strong, organized opposition as it was a consequence of his mobilization efforts. Interest groups opposed to the treaty were few and badly organized. Congress, particularly the Senate, was split by committee and region. The Republican Party, seeing no political payoff in opposition and themselves linked to

⁸³The New York Times, 11 June 1963, p. 17.

⁸⁴Public Papers...Kennedy, 1962, p. 779.

⁸⁵The New York Times, 6 August 1963, p. 14.

the treaty through Eisenhower, jumped on the bandwagon fairly early. The coalition that ultimately opposed Kennedy, made up principally of Southern Democrats, had little constituency support outside their region.

Kennedy, who fashioned himself a mobilizer, believed that government policy derived its legitimacy from the support of the people. Accordingly, it was the president's role to educate and persuade, to build a constituency behind articulated policy. In essence, though, despite Kennedy's assiduous cultivation of public opinion in 1963, a major portion of his success was attributable to the largely self-legitimizing character of government policy. It has already been noted that public attitudes on foreign policy questions often change to accommodate administration reversals, providing, of course, that there is no strong, organized opposition to challenge the change. The same may be said of the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. As long as negotiations were in progress, people were asked by pollsters to respond to an issue that had not yet been framed as an official, government policy. Once the treaty was signed, however, no doubt many people assumed that the United States had already committed itself to a course of action. Once this occurs, surveys show that public support usually falls in line.

The role of the president in this case is to associate himself and his office with a specific policy. In

doing so, the president does more than persuade. Instead, he invests his administration's policy with the official stamp of legitimacy that only a president can provide. Because people generally look to the president as their source of information and interpretation of the outside world, his strong identification with government policy is usually converted into public support.⁸⁶

In a sense, a similar analysis may be applied to Congress. Congress' influence in foreign policy is primarily, according to James A. Robinson:

to legitimate and/or to amend recommendations initiated by the executive to deal with situations usually identified by the executive.⁸⁷

With regard to treaty matters, the power of endorsement is usually translated into acceptance of presidential initiatives. Crabb notes that between 1789-1963, the Senate approved without change 69% of those treaties presented to it by the president. Of the remaining 31%, modifications were made in 18%.⁸⁸ According to Aaron Wildavsky's figures, between 1948-1964, Congress accepted only 40.2% of the president's domestic policy initiatives. During the same period of time, it rejected only 26.7% of the president's defense policy measures and only 29.2% of those policies

⁸⁶Spanier and Uslaner, op. cit., pp. 93-94.

⁸⁷James A. Robinson, Congress and Foreign Policy-Making (Homewood: Dorsey Press, 1967), p. vii.

⁸⁸Crabb, op. cit., p. 106.

relating to treaties, general foreign relations and foreign aid.⁸⁹ According to Wildavsky, in the realm of foreign policy there has not been a major issue on which presidents, when they were serious and determined have failed.⁹⁰

Part of the reason for this phenomenal record of presidential dominance, particularly in the nuclear age, is, according to Robinson, "the changing character of information or intelligence in modern policy-making."⁹¹ Accordingly, presidents do and are purported to have more information than Congress. In addition, as already noted, the public tends to rally behind the president in areas where ordinary citizens have few concrete interests and opinions of their own.⁹²

But perhaps most important is the capacity of presidents to create irreversible, de facto situations through independent actions.⁹³ In the case of the Nuclear Test Ban

⁸⁹Aaron Wildavsky, "The Two Presidencies," in Aaron Wildavsky, The Revolt Against the Masses and Other Essays on Politics and Public Policy (New York and London: Basic Books, 1971), p. 326.

⁹⁰Ibid., p. 324. The situation has changed in the post-Watergate and Viet Nam era. Wildavsky's observation is relevant, however, to the period in which Kennedy operated.

⁹¹Robinson, op. cit., p. vii.

⁹²The public rallies around the president even following a major foreign policy disaster or blunder. According to a Gallup Poll, Kennedy's approval rating stood at 78% in early April, 1961. In late April, following the Bay of Pigs debacle, it rose to 83%, the highest it ever reached during his presidency. Erskine, op. cit., p. 334.

⁹³Wildavsky, op. cit., p. 326.

Treaty, once the President authorized the initialing of the treaty in Moscow, it became a fact that its opponents could not easily reverse. Harry Byrd, a strong anti-treaty senator from Virginia, noted this point in discussions before the Preparedness Subcommittee:

I have a feeling that the buildup of propaganda or whatever one might wish to term it in support of this treaty has amounted to an overkill, and I feel that if we reject this treaty-and I have not yet made up my mind whether I am going to vote for or against it-but one of the factors which is disturbing me tremendously...is the one concerning overkill in the sense that I have just referred to it. I am afraid that if we now reject it, after all of the buildup that we have witnessed, the impact upon other countries and our relations with other countries is going to be terrific.⁹⁴

This is not to say that Kennedy, in the case of the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, operated free from constraint. On the contrary, the strength of his performance in 1963 lay in his ability to gauge the extent to which the domestic political system would bend to conform to his policies. As already noted, public opinion, while generally supportive, creates invisible parameters to restrict presidential freedom of action. These boundaries assume substance and life when the party in opposition calculates that they have been violated. In 1963, with national elections pending, the Republican Party was primed to make national security an issue, just as Kennedy did in his successful pursuit of the

⁹⁴Hearings...Military Aspects..., p. 800.

presidency three years earlier; and the President was sensitive to this possibility.⁹⁵ Accordingly, Kennedy had to insure that a fruitful policy of arms control did not appear to favor the objective of nuclear war avoidance over containment of the Communist threat.

Kennedy's approach was, therefore, persistent yet simultaneously cautious. He wanted a comprehensive ban but refused to move beyond the minimum of seven annual inspections. This he did in response to his reading of domestic pressures. It has already been noted that respected members of the administration such as Robert McNamara and Jerome Wiesner, were willing to accept six and five inspections respectively. Their position was backed by Macmillan. But Kennedy calculated that given the existing climate of opinion in the public and Congress, seven would have to be the minimum number. As Sir William Penney, a scientific expert attached to the British delegation to Moscow, told Macmillan, "...it's not science but politics which holds back the President."⁹⁶

In public speeches and in written commitments to Congress, Kennedy reiterated that the Soviets had not changed their character appreciably, and that the United States still put a premium on military readiness. Whether

⁹⁵The New York Times, 20 October 1963, p. 1.

⁹⁶Harold Macmillan, At the End of the Day: 1961-1963 (New York: Harper and Row, 1973), p. 455.

this assertion would have carried a negotiated comprehensive pact, even with a provision for seven inspections, is questionable. It is clear, though, that the treaty finally signed was in itself tame enough and consistent with policies previously endorsed by the Republican Party to insure significant bipartisan support. The Test Ban Treaty did represent an incremental break from the past. Moreover, it represented an opportunity for public and Congressional authorization--with the president articulating the governing assumptions--for a fuller exploration of policies that balanced the goals of anti-communism and nuclear war avoidance.

Test Ban fallout: the Wheat Deal

The extent to which the test ban achievement afforded the administration greater flexibility in dealing with the Russians was demonstrated by the President's decision to allow the granting of export licenses to wheat dealers interested in trading with the Soviets--a decision made shortly after Senate ratification of the Test Ban Treaty. Trade policy had been a major instrument of American Cold War diplomacy since passage of the Export Control Act in 1949. In 1961, Congress banned the export of Food for Peace commodities to all Communist countries except Poland and Yugoslavia and, in another action, restricted the sale of subsidized foods to "unfriendly" countries. In 1962, Congress prohibited the President from granting MFN status

to all but two Communist states. These statutory measures stemmed from Congress' deeply-held belief that the relaxation of trade restrictions would ultimately work to the strategic advantage of the Soviet bloc. Holbert N. Carroll notes:

The Congress is extremely dubious about the argument of the executive branch...that to ease restrictions on East-West trade will over time enhance the security of the United States.⁹⁷

According to Secretary of Commerce Luther Hodges, a major participant in the Wheat Deal decision, Kennedy "felt generally that we ought to have more trade between the Soviets and us."⁹⁸ This feeling was accentuated in 1963 with the evolution of detente between the superpowers. Khrushchev, in responding to Kennedy's American University address, noted an inconsistency between the President's call for better relations and the continued intransigence of American policy on trade matters. According to the Soviet Premier, "Trade is an indicator of good relations between states."⁹⁹ Considering the high premium put on expanded trade by Soviet leaders, Kennedy reasoned that the failure

⁹⁷Holbert N. Carroll, "Congress and National Security Policy," in The Role of Congress in the Development and Support of National Security Policy, ed. United States Army War College (Carlisle: USAWC, 1969), p. 5.

⁹⁸Luther H. Hodges, recorded interview by Dan Jacobs, March 19, 1964, and March 21, 1964, p. 93. John F. Kennedy Library Oral History Program.

⁹⁹Documents on Disarmament, 1963, p. 223.

of the United States to respond positively to Soviet overtures for grain purchases could lead to a "renewal of the Cold War."¹⁰⁰

In a sense, then, the decision to allow the sale of wheat to the Soviet Union was linked to the President's interpretation of detente as a series of measures--with arms control as one aspect--designed to foster cooperation in areas of mutual interest to the United States and Soviet Union. The wheat deal, however, represented more than a response to changes in the international situation governing relations between the two countries. Instead, it arose, in large part, from new public expectations about the extent to which previously proscribed transactions with the "enemy" were now legitimate, and hence, allowable. In a general sense, this invested the government with greater freedom to explore avenues for joint Soviet-American cooperation, such as a combined space enterprise. In the specific case of the wheat deal, however, the new climate of opinion allowed agricultural interests with an economic stake in expanded trade, to press the government to broaden the scope of sanctioned transactions. Had the government not originally taken the lead in legitimizing mutually beneficial contacts with the Russians, it is improbable that farmers, given their long tradition of anti-communism and no matter their

¹⁰⁰The New York Times, 11 October 1963, p. 1.

dire economic circumstances, would have considered trading with the country's principal adversary.

Secretary of Agriculture Orville Freeman informed the Cabinet on September 24 that American wheat brokers were in Canada to explore Soviet interest in purchasing grain from American traders.¹⁰¹ According to Sorensen Freeman's disclosure ignited a spontaneous discussion, with the Secretaries of Defense, Commerce, Labor and Treasury offering their opinions.¹⁰² The next day, Kennedy left Washington for a tour of the West and instructed Sorensen to assemble appropriate information. Meanwhile, staff work was conducted within the departments so that by the time Kennedy returned it was "ripe for a presidential decision."¹⁰³ On October 1, the President convened the National Security Council along with representatives from the Departments of Agriculture, Justice, Commerce and the Treasury.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹Mansfield interview, p. 32.

¹⁰²Sorensen, op. cit., p. 740.

¹⁰³Charles Murphy, recorded interview by George A. Barnes, June 30, 1964, p. 28. John F. Kennedy Library Oral History Program.

¹⁰⁴The attendance list reads as follows: President Kennedy, Orville Freeman and Charles Murphy of Agriculture, Robert F. Kennedy and Norbert Schlei of the Justice Department, Marshall Carter of the CIA, Luther Hodges and Dr. Jack Behrman of the Commerce Department, Roswell Gilpatric and Paul Nitze of the Department of Defense, General Curtis Lemay of the JCS, Edward McDermott of the OEP, George Ball, E. Griffiths Johnson and Averell Harriman of the State Department, Henry Fowler from the Treasury, Donald Wilson of the USIA, McGeorge Bundy, Theodore Sorensen, Pierre Salinger, Lawrence O'Brien, Kenneth O'Donnell and Bromley Smith of the White House Staff. John F. Kennedy Library.

According to Under Secretary of Agriculture Charles Murphy, the decision to allow the wheat sale was made on the basis of a one to two hour discussion that took place that day.¹⁰⁵ Several days later the President announced his decision after informing key members of Congress two hours beforehand.¹⁰⁶

The wheat deal decision was clearly not a presidential initiative despite its intrinsic connection to Kennedy's policy of detente. Instead, according to Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield, the President had to be "taught about its importance."¹⁰⁷ Aside from its foreign policy implications, the wheat deal was primarily a domestic issue touching on the concerns and interests of wheat growers, located principally in the Mid-West. It involved complex issues of domestic agricultural policy, and as Murphy recalls:

He /Kennedy/ did not have as much detailed knowledge about agricultural programs and agricultural problems as he did in some other fields.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ Murphy interview, p. 27.

¹⁰⁶ Kennedy was later charged, by his opposition in Congress, with failure to consult Congress adequately. Llewellyn Thompson, who was present at the meeting, was, nevertheless, quite impressed with the President's handling of the legislators, "He managed skillfully to let anyone speak...without getting...bound in any way to follow their advice, but at the same time without giving them the impression that their advice had been ignored." Llewellyn Thompson, recorded interview by Elizabeth Donahue, March 25, 1964 and Joseph E. O'Conner, April 27, 1966, p. 9. John F. Kennedy Library Oral History Program.

¹⁰⁷ Mansfield interview, p. 32.

¹⁰⁸ Murphy interview, p. 15.

Freeman's advocacy of a wheat transaction with the Soviets resulted from his new-found awareness of major and unanticipated attitudinal changes in the country's Wheat Belt. In mid-September, the Agriculture Secretary visited Iowa and Kansas and was surprised to hear that at a grass-roots level farmers were expressing strong interest in trading with the Russians.¹⁰⁹ This change in sentiment might be attributed to several factors. First, on a purely economic basis, wheat growers quite obviously stood to benefit from the lifting of trade restrictions; it would open a vast new market for export and help to stabilize wheat prices at home.

Second, coming on the heels of the Canadian decision to sell \$800 million worth of wheat to the Soviets, the change in farm belt attitudes can be viewed as a case of "emulative linkage," to borrow James Rosenau's terminology.¹¹⁰ This type of linkage occurs when action taken by a government or subnational actor toward the external environment indirectly influences action taken by subnational groups in another state. In the case of the wheat deal, the decision of the Canadian government, a major Western ally, to allow the sale of wheat to the Soviets, served as a model for American producers and traders.

¹⁰⁹The New York Times, 20 September 1963, p. 10.

¹¹⁰James N. Rosenau, Linkage Politics (New York: Free Press), 1969, p. 46.

Third, and perhaps most important from a political standpoint, there was a general perception by the public, long hostile to transactions with the Soviets, that conditions had changed enough to allow for new policies. This attitude was best summed-up by a business leader at a White House Conference held in mid-September. The conference of 200 businessmen was spontaneously diverted from its agenda by a call to the President from several businessmen for a re-examination of Soviet trade policy. When asked why the business community was suddenly reversing a long and firmly held policy against expanded trade, one businessman was reported to have responded that "changed world conditions" had produced attitudinal changes.¹¹¹

The change in attitudes among farmers was, in fact, so remarkable that it astonished even the principal agricultural interest groups in the country. The three most important of these groups were the Farm Bureau, the Grange and the National Association of Wheat Growers.¹¹² The Farm Bureau, the largest of the three organizations, represented 1,600,000 families, of which 10% were commercial wheat growers. The Grange had a membership of 800,000 in the Northeast and Northwest, most of whom planted some wheat acreage. The National Association of Wheat Growers

¹¹¹The New York Times, 19 September 1963, p. 14.

¹¹²The New York Times, 22 September 1963, p. 1.

represented approximately 70,000 to 75,000 farmers. These farm organizations, which traditionally had been strongly anti-Communist, were as much surprised by the shift in farm sentiment as was the administration. Realizing that opposition from among farmers was no more than a "loud murmur,"¹¹³ both the Grange and National Farm Bureau promised to reevaluate their traditional hostility to trade with the Soviet Union and offered to submit the issue to their respective memberships.

While farm support was clearly an important resource in the President's attempt to dramatize the wheat deal as a major step in the continuing Soviet-American detente, Kennedy was reluctant to act unilaterally without Congressional authorization. Despite its domestic features, the wheat issue touched on a sacred tenet of post-war American foreign policy. As far as Congress was concerned, any transaction that alleviated pressure on the Soviet economy would ultimately allow the Russians to concentrate their energies and resources on further development of their strategic capabilities. The Republican Party, in particular, had accepted the test ban as a measure that did not violate the essential goal of anti-communism. Trading with the enemy, however, not only suggested a more cooperative relationship with communism but also appeared to violate numerous Congressional resolutions and statutes limiting

¹¹³ The New York Times, 20 September 1963, p. 10.

such transactions. Kennedy felt vulnerable on this issue and with elections around the corner, wanted to secure bipartisan support for his initiative.

In reality, most administration supporters argued that the wheat deal did not require specific Congressional authorization. A memorandum from the Justice Department supported this contention,¹¹⁴ and in a discussion with Senator Aiken, the President was advised not to seek legislation where unnecessary.¹¹⁵ Nevertheless, Kennedy wanted to prevent the Republicans from making the wheat deal into a campaign issue. With Vice-President Lyndon Johnson referring to the decision as "the worst political mistake we have made in foreign policy in this administration,"¹¹⁶ the President dispatched Secretaries Hodges and Freeman along with Assistant Secretary Ball to lobby with the House Foreign Affairs and Agriculture Committees. Instead of gaining

¹¹⁴Memorandum from Assistant Attorney General Norbert A. Schlei to Theodore C. Sorensen. September 27, 1963. John F. Kennedy Library. Sorensen cites the following as reasons for the administration's stated position that despite the provisions of the 1961 Agriculture Act, the sale did not require Congressional authorization: the 1961 Act represented a non-binding declaration of interest; the amendment had been adopted during the height of the Berlin crisis, whereas tensions had since eased; it had been assumed by some members of Congress to apply to a different kind of sale; the United States had been selling the Soviets non-surplus commodities for years. Sorensen, op. cit., p. 836.

¹¹⁵Mansfield interview, p. 16.

¹¹⁶Schlesinger, op. cit., p. 840.

support, however, the disclosure of administration intentions mobilized Republican opposition. This prompted political aide Dutton to request that the administration cease its consultations with Congressional committees:

When no legislative action is required, as for the wheat sale, the executive branch triggers opposition by seeking a broad expression of legislative support.¹¹⁷

Kennedy's calculated political approach to the wheat sale issue did not initially materialize as he had hoped. Instead of developing a strong, bipartisan consensus behind the deal, it mobilized much opposition from Republicans, even among those from wheat-producing states. To Republicans, the issue was not just wheat but also the alleged usurpation of Congressional authority by presidential fiat. Kennedy was cognizant of this controversy in announcing his approval of such sales on October 9. He defended the administration's decision not to prohibit private wheat sales to the Soviet Union and then asserted that despite the absence of any need for Congressional authorization, he would still refer his action to Congress.¹¹⁸

The President, upon sensing the difficulties in attempting to build bipartisan Congressional support for the wheat sale, decided to employ the same tactics that had

¹¹⁷Memorandum from Frederick Dutton to McGeorge Bundy and Larry O'Brien, September 30, 1963. John F. Kennedy Library.

¹¹⁸Public Papers...Kennedy, 1963, p. 767.

worked so well in the case of the test ban. One of the most effective of these measures was simply, independent presidential action. On October 9, despite the absence of widespread Republican support, the President announced his decision to the nation; if he could not win Congress, as he had initially attempted to do, he would circumvent it. Afterwards, Kennedy began to build public support in behalf of his initiative. Noting the link between the wheat deal and the test ban, Kennedy enlisted the aid of groups which had helped in the treaty effort. He also supplied favorably inclined Congressmen with supportive speeches and statistics and intervened to win the support of potentially hostile groups, such as Polish-Americans and longshoremen. The final resolution of the debate in Congress did not occur until after his death, but eventually, the deal succeeded without statutory interference from the legislative branch.

The Test Ban Treaty and the Wheat Deal compared

The wheat deal, besides being an aspect of detente, was far different, both in character and policy-making development, from the test ban issue. For one thing, it represented a much sharper confluence of domestic and foreign policy interests and, hence, touched on the occupational concerns of farmers and longshoremen. As a consequence, the scope and intensity of interest group involvement was much greater than in the case of the Test Ban Treaty.

Another difference involved the extent to which each issue felt presidential input. While both decisions were ultimately made by Kennedy, the test ban issue evolved over a much longer period of time with a significantly greater degree of direct presidential participation. In the test ban case, the President had to intervene frequently to insure that the policy-making direction of his administration conformed to his preferences. In the case of the wheat deal, while presidential actions were instrumental in making the sale a reality, the initiative originated and ultimately developed in the bureaucracy. By the time Kennedy was called upon to make a decision, it had already developed a governmental consensus.

The President, in pushing for a test ban, was essentially continuing, albeit more deftly and with greater resolution, a policy initiated by his Republican predecessor. When presented to the Republicans for ratification, the issue already had built-in bipartisan support. In the case of the wheat deal, Kennedy was moving in entirely new directions--directions, in fact, which Republicans had consistently opposed in the past. Bipartisan support in this case was not immediately forthcoming, particularly because Republicans, such as Richard Nixon, sensed that this was an issue out of which political capital could be generated.

The Test Ban Treaty required a public examination because of the constitutional prerogative assigned to the Senate. The wheat deal, however, did not necessarily require Congressional ratification, although opponents claimed that it did. Kennedy's decision to submit it for consideration represented his attempt to defuse it as a potential election issue. Advisers such as Fred Dutton argued that, on the contrary, by opening the issue to Congressional debate, Kennedy was creating a problem where one did not necessarily exist.

Despite these significant differences, the two issues must be considered in tandem. For one thing, both were part of a policy of detente and, hence, tied to Kennedy's view of Soviet-American relations. Second, and perhaps most important, the wheat deal would not have, in all probability, occurred in the absence of the test ban agreement. In some respects, this means that without the prior, positive achievement in Soviet-American relations, other developments, such as the wheat deal, would have never materialized. Considering the symbolic, political importance of the test ban as a barometer of Cold War tensions, the collapse of test ban negotiations would have probably signaled a deterioration in all areas of mutual concern. Senator Stephen Young of Ohio was cognizant of this fact when he urged the administration, in August, to take advantage of the new mood in Soviet-American relations

to look into the possibilities of expanded trade.¹¹⁹

At the same time, the new climate in relations was matched by a greater domestic receptivity to the undertaking of positive transactions between the two countries. The administration "broke the ice" by signaling to the public that certain types of transactions, based on mutual interest, could, indeed, be legitimate. Once this occurred, not only did it afford Kennedy a more conducive domestic environment for the further pursuit of detente; but it also induced groups, perceiving a potential advantage in dealing with the Soviets, to reevaluate the attitudes and policy preferences that had become a staple of Cold War diplomacy. The wheat deal provides the best example of the latter phenomenon, because farmers themselves petitioned the administration to expand the scope of allowable transactions.

¹¹⁹ The New York Times, 21 August 1963, p. 34.

CONCLUSION

This study attempts to understand the role played by President John F. Kennedy in the formulation of his administration's policies toward the Soviet Union. In some respects, one might argue that had Kennedy not occupied the presidency between 1961-1963, American policy would not have been demonstrably different. In a broad sense, Kennedy's policy toward the Soviet Union can be viewed as a continuation of his predecessors' attempts to walk the line between anti-communism and nuclear war avoidance. Kennedy was committed to containing Soviet expansionism, as were Truman and Eisenhower. At the same time, he, like the Presidents before him, was conscious of the limits to American power and the ever-increasing perils of thermonuclear war. Consequently, systemic conditions, particularly the constraints imposed by the steadily growing Soviet forces, had a great impact in determining his foreign policy and ultimately, the foreign policies of his successors.

If the broad outlines of his policy were governed by external factors, the specific details, one might argue, were shaped by government bureaucracies. Arms control was clearly an issue of enormous significance in the Soviet-American relationship. It mobilized intense organizational

interests and required a substantial degree of bureaucratic expertise. Using Allison's organizational output model, for example, one can attribute the administration's decision in 1962-63 to reduce the number of on-site inspections required in a comprehensive ban to major scientific discoveries related to the verification of nuclear tests. On the other hand, the administration's refusal to go below the level of seven inspections can be explained, in part, by the scientists' inability to devise an exact means to distinguish earthquakes from nuclear explosions detonated at low thresholds.

Using a bureaucratic politics model, one might explain the irresolution of Eisenhower's test ban policy as a consequence of serious divisions within the executive branch.¹ Employing the same approach, Kennedy's success in developing a test ban policy can be attributed to better coordination within the administration and a general consensus as to the wisdom of a test ban.

¹For an insider's account of the sharp divisions within the Eisenhower administration over a test ban see George B. Kistiakowsky, A Scientist at the White House (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976). According to Kistiakowsky, intragovernmental differences did not only result from organizational dynamics but from personal predilections as well. For example, under Christian Herter, the State Department seemed to favor a test ban in intragovernmental deliberations. Nevertheless, whenever Herter was absent from meetings of the Committee of Principals, his subordinate took a position less favorable to a test ban. This reflected, according to Kistiakowsky, the subordinate's unwillingness to "push energetically towards seeking a relaxation of tensions with the Soviets." (222-223).

Furthermore, using the bureaucratic model, one can better understand the role of presidents in lending coherence to the policy-making system. Eisenhower permitted the policy-making process to develop at an organizational level, reserving the final decision for himself. As a consequence, Eisenhower's strong, personal commitment to a test ban was often undermined by his reliance on slow, deliberate, consensus-building mechanisms. This meant not only that several of his policy initiatives were too carefully balanced to accommodate all sides, but that recalcitrant organizational players had a built-in opportunity to subvert the policy-making process. As Charles Maier notes in his introduction to Science Adviser George Kistiakowsky's memoirs:

...his /Eisenhower's/ style of administration and careful delegation of authority constrained his own convictions; he would not short-circuit the National Security Council or the special Committee of Principals in which John McCone could slow the progress of American bargaining.²

Eisenhower was sometimes unclear about his instructions to the bureaucracy, which made those in favor of a test ban less certain of their mandate. Kistiakowsky cites one example in which it was almost impossible to ascertain the President's wishes. As a consequence, Ambassador James Wadsworth confided to Kistiakowsky, "I certainly don't know what my instructions are and how I am to conduct the meeting."³

²Ibid., p. lii.

³Ibid., p. 213.

Evidence presented in this dissertation shows that Kennedy assumed an active role in test ban negotiations. Aside from establishing a bureaucratically strong arms control coordinating unit in the form of the ACDA, the President kept informed of scientific developments, issued strict guidelines to the Committee of Principals and staffed his administration with individuals committed to arms control. To be sure, the Kennedy administration was characterized by bureaucratic infighting and consensus building, particularly with regard to civilian-military differences. Nevertheless, Kennedy was willing to manipulate and even short-circuit the decision-making process and, on some occasions, to isolate groups that were opposed to the thrust of his policies. Kennedy was also inclined to lobby personally within his administration for his own initiatives. This he did, for example, in persuading the Joint Chiefs to support the Test Ban Treaty.

The Kennedy example demonstrates the extent to which bureaucratic processes are amenable, given the proclivities and styles of individual presidents, to executive control. At the same time, the test ban case indicates that government policy, even of a very specific nature, is not always a consequence of organizational outputs and bureaucratic politics alone. In the case of the test ban negotiations, President Kennedy occasionally undertook actions in contravention of his bureaucracy. The announcement of June 10, 1963, that the United States would refrain from initia-

ting nuclear tests in the atmosphere was made in the absence of prior consultation with individual members of the JCS or the AEC Commissioners. Similarly, the American University address was drafted by an exclusive group under direct orders of the President and was submitted only at the last moment to relevant organizations for formal comment. In both cases, decision and execution were left in the hands of the President, thus obviating the problems of implementation that bureaucratic scholars consider so central to their understanding of organizational power.

Allison sees government policies as agglomerations of decisions and actions taken by many different organizations and individuals. This point helps to explain many of the apparent inconsistencies in government policy. For example, the Russians interpreted their talks with Dean and Wiesner as indicating a significant relaxation in the American position vis-a-vis inspections. The Soviets continued to treat their understanding of the Dean-Wiesner comments as definitive statements of American policy, despite contradictory signals from the President himself.

While it is accurate to portray government policy in this light, one must not overlook the qualitative distinction between actions taken by subalterns of the president and the chief executive himself. To be sure, presidential statements of policy are not converted automatically into appropriate actions. Similarly, depending

on the prestige of a presidential subordinate, actions or statements made in the name of the United States government can be interpreted abroad as representing official policy. For example, McNamara's various speeches on nuclear strategy invariably produced strong reactions overseas. Nevertheless, when there is ambiguity in government policy, the president stands alone as the definitive spokesman for American foreign policy. This was recognized in 1963, when negotiations over a comprehensive treaty threatened to collapse. Upon the recommendation of Norman Cousins, President Kennedy took the initiative in defining the American view of detente to the Soviets. The President's address was one among many made by government officials in 1963, but it clearly stood out from the rest, not only in substance, but in the extent to which it influenced Soviet policy.⁴

Perhaps the most important aspect of the chief executive's role, specifically with regard to arms control policy, is the extent to which presidents lend balance to the pursuit of conflicting bureaucratic objectives. Arms

⁴Kennedy's prolific use of personal letter-writing in his relations with Khrushchev is indicative of his belief that consultations at the top levels of government were important in clarifying each side's objectives to the other. According to Llewellyn Thompson, Kennedy, by circumventing the State Department, was doing exactly what the Russians wanted. Assuming that the Department was biased against them, the Soviet leaders preferred communicating with the President directly. Llewellyn E. Thompson, recorded interview by Elizabeth Donahue, March 25, 1964 and by Joseph E. O'Conner, April 27, 1966, pp. 58-59. John F. Kennedy Library Oral History Program.

control, according to Thomas Schelling and Morton H. Halperin, involves a fusion of military and political considerations:

Arms control is a recognition that nearly all serious diplomacy involves sanctions, coercion and assurances involving some kind of power or force, and that a main function of military force is to influence the behavior of other countries, not simply to spend itself in their destruction.⁵

Nevertheless, the fragmentation of government into organizations, each with its own mission and specific set of assumptions about international politics, tends to compartmentalize arms control policy-making so that multiple goals are pursued with multiple strategies. The disparity and intensity of these differences are compounded by the interplay of bureaucratic interests, perceived by each organization as vital to its existence, and the general tendency of organizations to resist cognitive change.

In the case of arms control, structural differentiation produces a centrifugal policy-making system in which those entrusted with a defense mission and those with a disarmament role operate not only in isolation from one another but, in many instances, at cross-purposes. Arms control, as Schelling and Halperin note, requires a level of mutual military understanding between states involved in an adversary relationship. Occasionally, this understanding

⁵Thomas C. Schelling and Morton H. Halperin, Strategy and Arms Control (New York: The Twentieth Century Fund, 1961), p. 143.

can be translated into formal agreements, as in the case of a treaty; but it can also assume the form of reciprocal or unilateral initiatives, both in the development of military strategy and in the treatment of political crises. Consequently, arms control involves not only the construction of agreements to reduce armaments, but the development of military strategies that take into account a mutual desire to avert, or in the worst case, limit general war.

The military's proclivity, however, is to view arms control as a subject detached from and even antithetical to strategic preparedness. In part, this derives from the military's traditional antipathy to "collaboration with potential enemies," a requirement of arms control.⁶ Additionally, and perhaps more importantly an arms control strategy does not necessarily correlate with the accumulation of greater numbers of weapons. While it is true, as Schelling and Halperin demonstrate, that arms control can be undermined by the reduction of forces below certain levels,⁷ it is equally true that an arms control strategy puts a premium on factors such as missile quality, invulnerability, deployment, command and control and intelligence --considerations that do not per se translate into larger budgets. It has already been demonstrated how the force

⁶Ibid., p. 142.

⁷Ibid., p. 57.

requirements of Kennedy's arms control strategy--despite its emphasis on nuclear superiority--came into conflict with the force levels dictated by the military's bureaucratic interest.

Similarly, organizations whose missions involve "disarmament" negotiation sometimes attempt to work in isolation from the military. During the Kennedy era, the ACDA, and particularly its Chairman William Foster, were accused of neglecting or undervaluing military recommendations. Whether this assertion is correct or not, it is clear that as the chief arms control unit in the administration, the ACDA, tended to press initiatives, such as a comprehensive ban, that placed it in direct opposition to the military. The willingness to compromise behind a limited ban was much less evident in the ACDA than it was, for example, in the civilian sector of the Defense Department, the staff of the NSC and even the President himself.

Considering the existence of centrifugal policy-making tendencies, how can the balance between conflicting organizational goals result in a policy grounded in arms control theory? One possibility lies in the bureaucratic process itself. The requirements of consensus-building invariably have some homogenizing effect on government policy. The test ban policies of both the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations emerged from intra-governmental political maneuvering, and all sides were forced at some

point and to some degree to reconcile their policy preferences with those of competing organizations. Under Eisenhower, the hesitancies of the AEC and Defense Department were balanced by the determination of the State Department (under Herter) and the Science Office to develop a test ban policy. Under Kennedy, the enthusiasm of the ACDA was somewhat offset by the reservations of the military.

The test ban, however, was merely one, albeit an important aspect of arms control; and it is the realization of the broader, strategic significance of arms control that illuminates the central role of the president in fashioning arms control policy. Eisenhower was deeply concerned about the ultimate perils of the arms race and the repeated resort to nuclear threats to contain Communist advances. He advocated, within the parameters of his role perception, for a policy which made a test ban part of a comprehensive set of measures. Eisenhower, however, did not possess a theory that fit test ban considerations into larger strategic questions. His principal concern in the area of nuclear strategy was in deterring Communist advances within the limits of his innate fiscal conservatism, and in preventing an occurrence of a Korea-like situation. Hence, test ban policy was essentially developed in the absence of any firm theory of how the country's strategic posture could be adapted to a policy of arms control. The Eisenhower

administration was forced to develop a separate test ban policy; but it did not design an arms control posture.

Kennedy and McNamara recognized that arms control involved the development of a military design and a collateral political strategy to negotiate an understanding between the two countries. Accordingly, military posture and test ban policy were developed in tandem rather than in isolation from one another. From a bureaucratic perspective, the greatest obstacle to this synthesis lay in the fact "the military and diplomatic worlds have been kept unnaturally apart for so long that their separation came to seem natural."⁸ Consequently, the major task of the administration was to bring these considerations together under an arms control strategy. Kennedy did this, in part, by attempting to persuade the military that their compartmentalized perspective on military and political issues was too narrow. More importantly, he appointed a strong Secretary of Defense, with an equal commitment to and understanding of arms control, to oversee the implementation of the strategy in all its aspects. Recognizing that arms control involved a fusion of military strategy and diplomatic initiatives, the President attempted to integrate what were considered to be antithetical bureaucratic objectives into one policy.

⁸Ibid., p. 143.

Arms control can be defined as a policy that seeks to balance the goals of anti-communism and nuclear war avoidance. All postwar administrations have ultimately steered a course somewhere between the two objectives, and each has practiced self-restraint in the pursuit of the anti-Communist goal. What was original about the Kennedy administration, particularly in juxtaposition to the policies of its predecessor, was in its attempt to develop a strategic posture that recognized the mutual interest of both great powers in establishing parameters around their competitive, military interaction. Eisenhower believed that both the United States and the Soviet Union possessed joint interests in the curtailment of the arms race, but he never constructed a strategic design which recognized the mutual war-avoiding, war-limiting objectives of both sides. Under Kennedy, arms control involved not only the attempt to stabilize the nuclear relationship between the superpowers but also the effort to develop a military posture that would better achieve the political goal of anti-communism. To be sure, concessions were made to organizational interests, both in the development of test ban policy and military strategy. Nevertheless, the President's interest in strategic⁹ issues coupled with his authority over the

⁹According to the then Army Chief of Staff, Earle Wheeler, Kennedy "exhibited a knowledge in this area /military strategy/ and an interest in it that he wouldn't have had if it had not come from within himself." Earle Wheeler, recorded interview by Chester Clifton, 1964, p. 5. John F. Kennedy Library Oral History Program.

bureaucracy went a long way toward the evolution of an arms control policy. Where the central decision-maker has no integrating theory and, moreover, does not have the inclination to suppress bureaucratic independence, arms control is much more difficult to achieve.

The cooperative superpower needs of arms control challenge not only some bureaucratic assumptions about Soviet behavior but also much of the anti-Soviet ideology that evolved in the aftermath of World War II. If there is a recurring theme in the questions asked administration exponents of the Test Ban Treaty by Congressional critics, it is the question of trust. Given the record of Soviet treaty violations and the portrayal of Soviet duplicity in much of the Cold War rhetoric of the Truman, Eisenhower and even Kennedy administrations, opponents of the treaty challenged the administration's willingness to enter into an agreement with the Russians that apparently rested on some level of mutual cooperation between the two countries. In actuality, the partial test ban relied little on trust, as Secretary of State Dean Rusk asserted in testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. To critics of detente, however, the Test Ban Treaty represented one indication among many that the administration was developing expectations about Soviet behavior that were simultaneously in conflict with standard assumptions about Soviet policy and injurious to the national interest.

Government policy in the arms control field is constrained, therefore, not only by bureaucratic processes but by the exigencies of domestic politics. In the case of the Test Ban Treaty, it is evident that specific policy choices reflected these pressures. The decision not to lower inspection requirements below seven was based, in large part, on the President's assessment that this number would be the minimum acceptable to his critics in Congress, who remained skeptical about the reliability of detection systems developed by American scientists. In July, during Harriman's mission to Moscow, administration feelers to Congressional committees revealed considerable opposition to the negotiation of a Non-Aggression Pact and support for inclusion of a withdrawal clause in the Test Ban Treaty. Almost immediately, cables reflecting this viewpoint were forwarded to the Ambassador.

These cases demonstrate that arms control policy involves not only strategic decisions but domestic political calculations as well. In essence, arms control, specifically the negotiation of agreements, requires an evaluation on the part of the administration regarding the extent of super-power collaboration allowable within the boundaries of political opinion at home. Inevitably, the one political figure who can determine these limits is a president; first, because he, as opposed to his bureaucracy, is politically accountable to domestic opinion, and second, because he,

and no other governmental actor, can reach such a large constituency with such an authoritative voice.

Accordingly, the more politicized a foreign policy issue is, the greater is the likelihood that a president will be drawn into the policy-making process, first to protect his own political interest and second to choose a formula upon which he is willing to stake his prestige in the larger political arena. This is not to say that bureaucratic figures, interest groups, congressmen and members of the opinion-making public will not themselves engage in political maneuvering; but it is only a president, with unparalleled prestige and constituency reach, who can possibly legitimize policies that appear to fall outside the pale of an accepted understanding of the national interest. Consequently, arms control policy is either constrained or enhanced by a president's calculation of the extent to which he is able to commit his power to legitimize specific decisions as consistent with the national interest.

Kennedy, who viewed himself as a political mobilizer, was clearly willing to employ the resources of his office in building domestic support for his test ban initiative. He stage-managed the activities of supportive interest groups, employed the media to convey his message and sedulously courted influential congressmen. In so doing, he accentuated the dangers of nuclear war while pledging not to retreat from the battle against communism. He, thus, attempted to justify the need for limited, military

collaboration with the Soviet Union while articulating a strong anti-Communist resolve; his American University address notwithstanding.

It would be simple to minimize the detente of 1963 in the light of subsequent events. After Kennedy's death, the war in Viet Nam exploded into military and political disaster, ultimately detracting from rather than enhancing the credibility of American power. In addition, rather than accept American nuclear superiority, the Russians, responding to Kennedy's enormous arms buildup and their apparent political defeat in Cuba, accelerated their nuclear weapons program. Before the end of the decade the United States and Soviet Union reached a level of rough nuclear parity, forcing even McNamara to abandon doctrines such as "counterforce" and "cities avoidance" in favor of mutual assured destruction." Finally, whereas the spirit of detente, evidenced in policy decisions such as the "Wheat Deal," promised a relaxation in political tensions between the superpowers, the Cold War continued to oscillate between periods of relative calm and high tension.

Nevertheless, the Kennedy detente was never portrayed as an end to the Cold War. Instead, it was seen by its architects as a means by which anti-communism could be pursued less dangerously and more effectively. By outward appearances, it looked little different from the policies

of Kennedy's predecessors.¹⁰ The government continued to avoid nuclear war while implicitly threatening the possible use of nuclear weapons, as in Berlin and Cuba. In addition, while some attempt was made to de-ideologize the American portrait of the Soviet Union, communism was still treated as the supreme international enemy. That this was so is only natural considering the importance of systemic conditions, the pressures of domestic and bureaucratic constraints and Kennedy's own commitment to the Cold War. The originality of the Kennedy administration lay first in its development of a strategic design that implicitly recognized the need for a modicum of military collaboration between the superpowers. The second feature of Kennedy's detente was in his articulation of a viewpoint that saw the existence of ambivalences in American foreign policy as a legitimate expression of the national interest.

¹⁰ Paul Y. Hammond, Cold War and Detente (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1975), p. 207.

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