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**NAVAL  
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**MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA**

**THESIS**

**A THEORY OF STATE BEHAVIOR UNDER THREAT:  
THE TRAGEDY OF DOMESTIC REALISM**

by

Omar Fuad Ayyoub Khoury

March 2007

Thesis Co-Advisors:

Rafael Biermann  
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**A THEORY OF STATE BEHAVIOR UNDER THREAT:  
THE TRAGEDY OF DOMESTIC REALISM**

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Colonel, Jordan Armed Forces  
B.S. Electrical Engineering, University of Texas, 1985

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF ARTS IN SECURITY STUDIES  
(DEFENSE DECISION-MAKING AND PLANNING)**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis introduces the theory of domestic realism to explain and predict state behavior under threat. The formulation of the theory relies on a dual track approach. The first is eclectic and deductive; this track utilizes concepts from diverse fields, especially from International Relations theory, to build the theory. The second track is inductive and illustrates the theory by introducing four case studies.

Domestic realism holds that the behavior of states, its institutions and its citizens responsible for security, under perceived high threats is marked by aberrations that starkly depart from their espoused norms, laws, and values. The prime concern for security and self-preservation trumps all other legal constraints and ethical considerations.

In spite of its tragic and unsettling nature, it behooves us to accept the domestic realism notion that aberrations in behavior are inevitable in the face of looming threats. Only through increased awareness can we inoculate and educate leaders at different levels to account for the manifestations of domestic realism as they formulate and implement policies, and to prompt them to be proactive and to incorporate mechanisms for oversight and accountability in order to counter or at least mitigate potential excesses.



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## I. THE NEED FOR A NEW PARADIGM

...It went on and on into the night. Women carried the wounded and broken bodies from the road until they dropped from exhaustion. But still it went on and on. Whatever moral ascendancy the West held was lost here today. India is free for she has taken all that steel and cruelty can give, and she has neither cringed nor retreated.

The above words are taken from the famous scene in the movie *Gandhi* during which the American journalist Vince Walker of the *New York Times*, in the role played by actor Martin Sheen, reported the beating of Indian men by guards at the Dharasana Salt Works on May 21, 1930.<sup>1</sup> India at that time was still under British rule; and there was a ban on the making of salt without license from the British authorities which Gandhi set out to change in the famous Salt March. Gandhi and his followers employed civil disobedience and nonviolent resistance to achieve their goal of an independent India. They started by challenging the laws that governed the making of salt; the Salt March and the attempt to gain access to the Dharasana Salt Works were carried out in that context. As Walker reported, the attempt to access the Works was met by a harsh response from the guards at the site under the British command; clubs were used by the guards on the approaching unarmed nonviolent

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<sup>1</sup> The quote is taken from scene number 19, "Dharasana Salt Works," *Gandhi*, DVD, directed by Richard Attenborough (1982; Columbia Tristar Home Entertainment, 2001); a version of the original screenplay written by John Briley, *Gandhi: The Screenplay* is available at <http://www.hundland.com/scripts/Gandhi.htm> (accessed January 13, 2007).

columns of Indian men and hundreds of them suffered injuries, including cracked skulls, bleeding, and unconsciousness.<sup>2</sup>

One can reason that Walker was probably driven by the American idealism of the 1930s for him to see the government action against the Indians as a loss of moral ascendancy for the West at large; nonetheless, the question of why various states in different parts of the world descend down some path and resort to such actions and under what conditions remains a valid one across time.

#### **A. PURPOSE OF INTRODUCING DOMESTIC REALISM**

This thesis addresses the question of why states sometimes depart from their espoused laws, ideals, and values and infringe upon the rights of their subjects, whether within their own borders or in other areas under their control. It seeks to reach an answer through generalization that is based on existing empirical evidence by introducing a theory that the author calls Domestic Realism. The theory argues that the driving force behind such behavior is the presence of a high level of threat that could affect one or more of three levels of analysis that feed into each other: the individual, the institutional or bureaucratic, and the state levels.

---

<sup>2</sup> Another account of the event is provided by Matthew Taylor, "The Pinch Heard 'Round the World: Gandhi's Salt Satyagraha 75 Years On," *PeacePower; Berkeley's Journal of Principled Nonviolence and Conflict Transformation* 1, no. 1 (2005), [http://www.calpeacepower.org/0101/salt\\_march.htm](http://www.calpeacepower.org/0101/salt_march.htm) (accessed January 13, 2007).

Domestic realism seeks to explain and predict such events that exhibit a stark departure from expected liberal democratic norms and ideals by establishing a causal relationship between threats and modes of behavior at the three aforementioned levels of analysis. The theory of domestic realism seeks to formulate overarching hypotheses that obviate the need to rediscover history and to repeatedly ask the question of "Why did it happen?" whenever we are confronted with similar events. In other words, it moves from the isolated events to the recurring pattern, from seeing the trees to seeing the forest. Most importantly, by introducing this new paradigm and addressing these policy relevant questions, it attempts to foster a greater understanding of these events and their causes in the hope of mitigating their effects.

## **B. ORIGINS AND MOTIVATION**

Domestic realism is motivated by the belief in the equality of human beings. This belief is preached by religions, and taught by liberal political thought. It is often reaffirmed during historical events as can be seen in the slogan of the French Revolution (liberty, equality, fraternity); it eloquently appears in the preamble of the United States Declaration of Independence ("We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal"). Domestic realism interprets this equality in the broadest of terms to mean equality of rights as well as equality in makeup, psyche, behavior, and response to stimuli and events.



Domestic realism draws upon events and concepts from history, psychology, philosophy, ethics, comparative politics, and upon the realist tradition in International Relations (IR) Theory, to explain domestic policies under threat. The theory starts with basic assumptions that cross with those made by realists about the importance of security in society, how power is desired and sought, the rationality of the actors, the utility of alliances, and about the imperative of success especially in a democratic setting that punishes failures at the ballot box.

Even though usually we start with local phenomena and extrapolate to the international realm, domestic realism does the opposite by taking concepts from the well developed field of International Relations and "intrapolating" deductively to gain insight into states' domestic policies. Domestic realism makes use of the equality and similarity aspects of all human beings. Therefore, the theory expects similar reactions from different people across time and culture to the same incidents - especially threatening ones once they reach a certain tipping point, the threshold level of which might differ among actors and cultures. Domestic realism calls this cross-border cross-cultural uniformity, the uniformity of the human response.

### **C. IMPORTANCE: THE INTERNATIONAL DOMESTIC NEXUS**

Even though domestic realism focuses on internal policies of states, it has international implications. The nature of a country's domestic policies and its regard for its own citizens or subjects is of course important in its own right, but it may also influence the way that country is

perceived by the international community. The country's international image, reputation, and prestige are significantly affected by its domestic policies.<sup>3</sup> How it acts internally, has a bearing on relations with other countries, up to the point of diplomatic recognition. Oppressive policies have been used by democratic countries that uphold certain standards as grounds for passive criticism or even for active intervention either through sanctions or through military intervention. Examples include: the former Soviet Union, China, Kosovo, and Iraq.

#### **D. EXISTING LITERATURE**

Examination of the literature reveals the absence of any theory to explain events that depart from expected modes of behavior; the trend is usually to look at incidents as isolated events, and in denial, to see the perpetrators as "a few bad apples," to search for causes anew each time, and to generally ignore what domestic realism sees as the inevitable recurring pattern of behavior when confronted with mounting threats.

Several references document policies and abuses of power from a historical perspective, and some attempt to draw analogies between previous practices and our current counter terrorism policies, but they fail to construct a theoretical generalization of reactions to threats over

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<sup>3</sup> Morgenthau discusses the importance of image, reputation, and prestige for states. He states that a policy of prestige is "an intrinsic element" of international relations and that prestige contributes to security, wealth, and power. Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: Knopf, 1954), 67-79.

time.<sup>4</sup> Some focus on terrorism and address state response in the past in various democratic countries; again the coverage is historical in nature.<sup>5</sup> Other references focus on existential threat to a state such as war and on the use of constitutionally approved emergency powers or legislations in time of crisis and the balance between these powers and liberties; at times use is made of extra-constitutional measures.<sup>6</sup>

International Relations realist literature provides background on security and about the different variants of realism and on alliances and alignments in the face of

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<sup>4</sup> David Cole, *Enemy Aliens: Double Standards and Constitutional Freedoms in the War on Terrorism* (New York: The New Press, 2003); Cynthia Brown, ed., *Lost Liberties: Ashcroft and the Assault on Personal Freedom* (New York: The New Press, 2003); Edward Pessen, *Losing Our Souls: The American Experience in the Cold War* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1995); Athan G. Theoharis, *The FBI & American Democracy: A Brief Critical History* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2004); David Wise, *The American Police State: The Government Against the People* (New York: Random House, 1976).

<sup>5</sup> Andrew Silke, ed., *Terrorists, Victims, and Society: Psychological Perspectives on Terrorism and its Consequences* (England: Wiley, 2003); Paul Wilkinson, *Terrorism and the Liberal State*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: New York University Press, 1986); Paul Wilkinson, *Terrorism versus Democracy: The Liberal State Response* (London: Frank Cass, 2001); Alex Schmid and Ronald D. Crelinsten, eds., *Western Responses to Terrorism* (London: Frank Cass, 1993); David A. Charters, ed., *The Deadly Sin of Terrorism: Its Effect on Democracy and Civil Liberty in Six Countries* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994); Charles H. Brower II, Nigel Rodley, and Oren Gross, "Torture, Violence, and the Global War on Terror," (American Society of International Law, Proceedings of the Annual Meeting, 2005).

<sup>6</sup> Clinton Rossiter, *Constitutional Dictatorship: Crisis Government in the Modern Democracies* (New York: Harbinger, 1963); Michael Freeman, *Freedom or Security: The Consequences for Democracies Using Emergency Powers to Fight Terror* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003); David Cole and James X. Dempsey, *Terrorism and the Constitution: Sacrificing Civil Liberties in the Name of National Security* (New York: The New Press, 2002); Brian Loveman, *The Constitution of Tyranny: Regimes of Exception in Spanish America* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1993); Daniel Franklin, *Extraordinary Measures: The Exercise of Prerogative Powers in the United States* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1991); Oren Gross, "Chaos and Rules: Should Responses to Violent Crises Always Be Constitutional?" *The Yale Law Journal* 112, no. 5 (March 2003): 1011.

external and internal threats.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, other literature makes the case for bringing human nature back into politics.<sup>8</sup>

Literature on political violence provides insight into state behavior in various countries as governments go about policing violence; some cases exhibit little restraint in accomplishing that.<sup>9</sup>

The fields of psychology and sociology provide insight into the nature of threat and into responses to threat; International Relations theory addresses perceptions and misperceptions that can be useful in assessing threat.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: Knopf, 1954); John H. Herz, *Political Realism and Political Idealism: A Study in Theories and Realities* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1951); Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979); John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001); Stephen M. Walt, "Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power," *International Security* 9, no. 4 (Spring 1985): 3-43; Steven R. David, "Explaining Third World Alignment," *World Politics* 43, no. 2 (January 1991): 233-256.

<sup>8</sup> James C. Davies, *Human Nature in Politics: The Dynamics of Political Behavior* (New York: Wiley, 1963); J. Roland Pennock and John W. Chapman, eds., *Human Nature in Politics* (New York: New York University Press, 1997); Steven Pinker, *The Blank Slate: The Modern Denial of Human Nature* (New York: Penguin, 2002).

<sup>9</sup> Donatella Della Porta, *Social Movements, Political Violence, and the State: A Comparative Analysis of Italy and Germany* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Christopher Hewitt, *Consequences of Political Violence* (Aldershot, England: Dartmouth, 1993); Ted Honderich, *Political Violence* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1976); Peter Ackerman and Jack DuVall, *A Force More Powerful: A Century of Nonviolent Conflict* (New York: Palgrave, 2000).

<sup>10</sup> Thomas W. Milburn and Kenneth H. Watman, *On the Nature of Threat: A Social Psychological Analysis* (New York: Praeger, 1981); George A. Kourvetaris and Betty A. Dobratz, *Political Sociology: Readings in Research and Theory* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1980); Philip E. Tetlock, "Social Psychology and World Politics," in *The Handbook of Social Psychology*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1998), 868-912; Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976); Benjamin Fordham, "The Politics of Threat Perception and the Use of Force: A Political Economy Model of U.S. Uses of Force, 1949-1994," *International Studies Quarterly* 42, no. 3 (September 1998): 567-590.

Various articles address the relationship between threat and repression and its use by democratic as well as non-democratic states.<sup>11</sup>

## **E. METHODOLOGY**

This thesis will rely on a dual track approach in making the case for domestic realism. The first track is deductive and is based on utilizing concepts of International Relations theory and adapting them to domestic behavior; this is in line with the eclectic theory-building approach of "importing existing theories from one domain and adapting them to explain phenomena in another."<sup>12</sup>

The second track will be one of induction moving from observations and cases to theory generalization; it will rely on historical interpretation of events that feed into each other at the three levels of analysis (individual, institutional, and state). Different case studies taken from well-established democracies will be analyzed in their historical context in order to establish the causal relationship between the independent variable being threat,

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<sup>11</sup> Robert W. White and Terry Falkenberg White, "Repression and the Liberal State: The Case of Northern Ireland, 1969-1972," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 39, no. 2 (June 1995): 330-352; Christian Davenport, "Multi-Dimensional Threat Perception and State Repression: An Inquiry into Why States Apply Negative Sanctions," *American Journal of Political Science* 39, no. 3 (August 1995): 683-713; Scott Sigmund Gartner and Patrick M. Regan, "Threat and Repression: The Non-Linear Relationship between Government and Opposition Violence," *Journal of Peace Research* 33, no. 3 (August 1996): 273-287; Jennifer Earl, "Tanks, Tear Gas, and Taxes: Toward a Theory of Movement Repression," *Sociological Theory* 21, no. 1 (March 2003): 44-68.

<sup>12</sup> Stephen Van Evera, *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997), 27; the author mentions in the footnote that this technique was originally suggested by Shively, *Craft of Political Research*, 165.

and the dependent variable being behavior that departs from liberal democratic norms. In certain cases there will be an intervening variable through the corollary of supremacy of righteousness which will be explained later.

#### **F. ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS**

The next chapter will introduce the Theory of Domestic Realism and its various aspects. Subsequent chapters will discuss case studies reflecting the manifestation of domestic realism at each of the three levels of analysis. One or two cases will be analyzed for each of the three levels of analysis. At the individual level, the Stanford Prison Experiment of 1971 and the shootings at Kent State University of 1970 will be analyzed. The prison experiment gives a research-based example of average students becoming abusive while playing the role of guards in a simulated prison setting; and the Kent State shootings demonstrate how guardsmen resorted to use of force as they felt threatened by student protesters. At the institutional level, experimentation on humans will be analyzed; this will primarily be about U.S. experiments during the Cold War following the dawn of the nuclear age. At the state level, the French involvement in Algeria during the period of 1954-1962 will be analyzed; faced with the threat of losing control of Algeria, severely harsh measures were employed to stop Algerian nationalists. A conclusion will summarize the findings.

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## II. THE THEORY OF DOMESTIC REALISM

*The essence of ultimate decision remains impenetrable to the observer—often, indeed, to the decider himself. ... There will always be the dark and tangled stretches in the decision-making process—mysterious even to those who may be most intimately involved.*

John Fitzgerald Kennedy<sup>13</sup>

The above quote by the late President Kennedy captures the important insight that decisions and actions are not fully understood even by those who make them. This is why experiments in psychology are conducted under controlled conditions; and in the absence of such experiments, theories are formulated to help make sense of the outside world and to explain and predict when certain actions are carried out and how individuals and collectivities react to certain stimuli to produce those decisions and actions. Introducing domestic realism is one such attempt to explain aberrations in domestic policies that part company with espoused ideals of most states.

Since the methodological approach adopted here relies on adapting IR concepts, especially realist principles, a short summary of such concepts is presented next. However, it is worth noting at the outset that no attempt will be made to contrast realism with other IR theories for two reasons. First, it is simply well beyond the scope of this thesis. Second, there has been a continuing debate among the

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<sup>13</sup> Quoted in Graham Allison and Philip Zelikow, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: Addison-Wesley, 1999), i.



different schools of thought in International Relations theory that will likely continue well into the future with proponents of each theory advancing their hypotheses and criticizing those of others, thus making it impractical to make such an attempt. Moreover, it is quite reasonable to expect that all theories will continue to exist in the future.

#### **A. REALISM AND ITS VARIANTS IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS THEORY**

Realism is the longest existing paradigm among the IR theories. It is said to have started with the writings of Sun Tzu in China, and Thucydides in Greece more than two thousand years ago. It was followed a few hundred years ago by the writings of Machiavelli in Italy, Hobbes in England, and Rousseau in France.<sup>14</sup> It was never superseded by other theories; in fact it "has been the dominant theory of world politics since the beginning of academic International Relations," especially after the end of the Second World War.<sup>15</sup>

There are several variants of realism. The primary ones are classical or human nature (anthropological) realism, structural neorealism or defensive realism, and offensive realism.

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<sup>14</sup> Joshua S. Goldstein and Jon C. Pevehouse, *International Relations*, 7<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York: Pearson Longman, 2006), 55-56; Tim Dunne and Brian C. Schmidt, "Realism," in *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Edited by John Baylis and Steve Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 162.

<sup>15</sup> Dunne and Schmidt, 162, 165.

Classical realism, which emerged under the impact of two World Wars, Nazism and the rise of bipolarity and strongly rejected the Wilsonian idealism of the interwar period, holds a pessimistic view regarding human nature and its supposed effect on relations among states. According to the older writings of Hobbes, actors are pursuing their own self-interests thus leading to a perpetual "state of war" and to what he called in his "Leviathan" the "homo homini lupus" principle. Human nature is seen as selfish rather than altruistic.<sup>16</sup> In the post Second World War years, the writings of Morgenthau emphasized the perennial quest for power defined as the "control of man over man"; his realist work on human nature, inspired by Reinhold Niebuhr ("animus dominandi"), became popular for decades thereafter.<sup>17</sup> Alongside other variants of realism, states are considered the primary actors and they are continually vying to increase their power; according to classical realists, the "lust for power is inherent in states."<sup>18</sup> Power here can be defined as having greater resources militarily, economically, and demographically; whereby these resources can be leveraged to influence other actors.<sup>19</sup>

Defensive or structural neorealism, which was introduced by Waltz<sup>20</sup>, contends that the competition among

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<sup>16</sup> Goldstein and Pevehouse, 55-57.

<sup>17</sup> Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: Knopf, 1954); Reinhold Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society: A Study in Ethics and Politics* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932).

<sup>18</sup> John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001), 19-22.

<sup>19</sup> Dunne and Schmidt, 180.

<sup>20</sup> Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979).

states is determined by the structure of the international system which is characterized by anarchy or the absence of a central authority. Therefore, there is no entity to enforce laws and states have to take care of themselves in this self-help system. The struggle for power is primarily motivated by the need for security and by the will to survive. According to defensive realism, the "principal interest" is security and the "pre-eminent goal" is survival.<sup>21</sup> States are mainly concerned with relative, not with absolute gains, which makes cooperation very unlikely. One inevitable consequence is Herz's notion of the security dilemma, namely, that the enhanced security of one state and "the means by which a state tries to increase its security decrease the security of others."<sup>22</sup> In order to increase the collective power of states they sometimes engage in power-balancing through the formation of alliances that help those states by leveraging their pooled resources to counter common threats whether they are actual or perceived.<sup>23</sup>

Offensive realism is also driven by the structure of the system. According to its main protagonist, John Mearsheimer, all states are power maximizers which seek to dominate the system. They are not, as defensive realists assert, status quo oriented and satisfied with the power distribution ("satisficers"). Once they have achieved

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<sup>21</sup> Dunne and Schmidt, 174.

<sup>22</sup> John H. Herz, *Political Realism and Political Idealism: A Study in Theories and Realities* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1951); Miles Kahler, "Inventing International Relations: International Relations Theory After 1945," in Michael W. Doyle and G. John Ikenberry, eds., *New Thinking in International Relations Theory* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997), 28; Robert Jervis, "Cooperation under the Security Dilemma," *World Politics* vol. XXX, no. 2 (January 1978): 169.

<sup>23</sup> Goldstein and Pevehouse, 76, 84.

hegemony, they "seek to prevent the rise of 'peer competitors'" to ensure their continued hegemony.<sup>24</sup> In his book about great power politics, Mearsheimer further argues that "[a]lthough it is depressing to realize that great powers might think and act this way, it behooves us to see the world as it is, not as we would like it to be."<sup>25</sup>

One of the basic tenets of realism is the conceptualization of states as the primary actors in international politics. Another basic tenet is that state behavior is not governed by their domestic political systems, culture, or morality; the following quote succinctly summarizes this belief:

...realists believe that the behavior of great powers is influenced mainly by their external environment, not by their internal characteristics. The structure of the international system, which all states must deal with, largely shapes their foreign policies. Realists tend not to draw sharp distinctions between 'good' and 'bad' states, because all great powers act according to the same logic regardless of their culture, political system, or who runs the government. It is therefore difficult to discriminate among states, save for differences in relative power. In essence, great powers are like billiard balls that vary only in size.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Glenn H. Snyder, "Mearsheimer's World: Offensive Realism and the Struggle for Security," *International Security* 27 (Summer 2002), a Review of John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (W. W. Norton, 2001).

<sup>25</sup> John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001), 3-4.

<sup>26</sup> Mearsheimer, 17-18.

Realism historically adopted an "ethic of responsibility" which limits the role of ethics in international relations and considers that desired outcomes may be achieved through amoral actions.<sup>27</sup> To expound on this concept further, and to stress the similarity across states in the realist tradition, it is crucial to emphasize that:

Realists tend to treat political power as separate from, and predominant over, morality, ideology, and other social and economic aspects of life. For realists, ideologies do not matter much, nor do religions or other cultural factors with which states may explain their actions. Realists see states with very different religions or ideologies or economic systems as quite similar in their actions with regard to national power.<sup>28</sup>

The other major assumption shared by realists, besides the role of the "generic" state and the anarchic nature of the international system, is the rational actor assumption whereby states act as "rational individuals" and as utility maximizers in pursuing their interests according to a cost-benefit calculus akin to rational choice.<sup>29</sup>

Realism stood the test of time and provided valuable insight into state actions. There are of course other competing theories of IR; however, as was stated earlier, it is not within the purview of this thesis to address the debate between the different schools of thought in IR. In this thesis we utilize the realist principles outlined above and apply them domestically. Before doing so, there is a need to introduce some other concepts.

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<sup>27</sup> Dunne and Schmidt, 180.

<sup>28</sup> Goldstein and Pevehouse, 56.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 56-57.

## **B. THE BASIC PROPOSITION OF DOMESTIC REALISM**

It is useful at this stage to introduce the basic proposition of domestic realism without much elaboration as it will be revisited later after discussing other pertinent background. The basic proposition of domestic realism is that under perceived high threats, states, their institutions, and their citizens that are responsible for security within the state, act similarly across cultures and across political systems, and that the nature of their domestic behavior invariably entails encroachments on civil liberties and human rights and a departure from laws, ideals, values, and moral standards they might hold dear at other times.

The line of thought to be followed will be based on the fact that threats reduce security and the prospects for survival, be it physical or political; such situations necessitate actions that eventually lead to abuse as the push for survival overtakes morals under mounting threats. The theory of realism provides the basis for similarity between states and for the subjugation of morality.

## **C. LEVELS OF ANALYSIS**

International Relations theory, including realism, makes use of different levels of analysis to simplify the study of complex settings.<sup>30</sup> Unlike realism, which is

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<sup>30</sup> Goldstein and Pevehouse, 15-17; J. David Singer, "The Level-of-Analysis Problem in International Relations," in Klaus Knorr and Sidney Verba, *The International System: Theoretical Essays* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961); Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), 13-31; Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver, and Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998), 5-7.

primarily concerned with state level actors, domestic realism as a theory of state behavior under threat incorporates three levels of analysis: the individual level, the institutional or bureaucratic level, and the state level.

One or more of the three levels might feel affected by a threat and adopt a policy or initiate a response to that threat; the effects of that response, however, sometimes feed into other levels because they either precipitate a wider crisis when the initial response is initiated by the lower sub-state levels, or because the measures to implement a state policy have to be carried out by actors at the lower institutional or individual levels.

The fact that actions taken by an actor on one level could spread or feed into the other levels can be seen in the LA riots of 1991. What started as the beating of Rodney King by individual members of the Los Angeles Police Department led to the LA riots and the decision of Governor Pete Wilson to send in the California National Guard; and it later led to intervention by President Bush to federalize the National Guard and to retry the responsible officers in a federal court (for different charges because of the so called "double jeopardy" stipulation).<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Lou Cannon, *Official Negligence: How Rodney King and the Riots Changed Los Angeles and the LAPD* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1999), 20-50, 325, 343, 373-377.

The prison abuses at Abu Ghraib that were carried out by prison guards harmed the image of both the military establishment and that of the United States and in all likelihood contributed to increased insurgency acts against U.S. troops.

In the particular case where there exists a high level of abuse as a consequence of state policy, the three levels become actively interacting. Strict policies of the state that are harshly enforced by security agencies increase public discontent and increase resistance to those policies, thereby necessitating even stricter measures by the state and its agents. Domestic realism calls this cyclical process the "Vicious Circle of Blatant Measures," which becomes increasingly difficult to break. The insight that people adhere to behavior that is suppressed is supported by the psychological work of J. W. Brehm: "when a free behavior is threatened with elimination, the individual's desire for that behavior or its object will increase;" and "when a free behavior is threatened with elimination, the individual will tend to attempt re-establishment of freedom by engaging in the behavior which is threatened."<sup>32</sup>

The recently released U.S. Army and Marine Corps Counterinsurgency field manual alludes to the same mechanism in discussing "Reaction to Abuses:"

Though firmness by security forces is often necessary to establish a secure environment, a government that exceeds accepted local norms and abuses its people or is tyrannical generates resistance to its rule. People who have been

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<sup>32</sup> Quoted in Thomas W. Milburn and Kenneth H. Watman, *On The Nature of Threat: A Social Psychological Analysis* (New York: Praeger, 1981), 37-38.



maltreated or have had close friends or relatives killed by the government, particularly by its security forces, may strike back at their attackers. Security force abuses and the social upheaval caused by collateral damage from combat can be major escalating factors for insurgencies.<sup>33</sup>

#### **D. SCOPE AND SPECTRUM**

Two points are worth mentioning about the scope of domestic realism, and about the spread across the spectrum of different actors.

In discussing domestic realism, whether it be the theory itself or the cases that will be addressed later, we are primarily concerned with what might be called "normal" states, that is, states that have well-functioning political systems and well-intended noble motivations but end up deviating from the ideal. Our concern is with states and actors within those states that hold a high moral standard, but seem to experience a "fall from grace" under certain conditions. Domestic realism makes a universal claim about all countries and backgrounds. But since authoritarian regimes are oppressive by definition, the focus is on democratic states - states that are least disposed to violating citizens' rights. The cases and the evidence are mostly drawn from western democracies to establish the departure from the adopted liberal democratic ideal under conditions of threat. Furthermore, we are concerned with the

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<sup>33</sup> Department of the Army, FM 3-24 *Counterinsurgency* (Washington D.C.: Department of the Army, 2006), Chapters 1, 9, <http://usacac.army.mil/CAC/Repository/Materials/COIN-FM3-24.pdf> (accessed January 25, 2007).

behavior of such states whether their actions are carried out within their own borders or elsewhere (under a mandate in another country or as an occupation force, for example) because such states are expected to hold a higher moral standard, and because their citizens are brought up and schooled in an environment that instills values and ideals that respect human rights and individual liberties. Along the same lines, states that are exclusive and that discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, or religion are inherently abusive and as such do not warrant discussion.

Domestic realism acknowledges the fact that even with violations and departures from ideals, there is a spectrum that states and sub-state actors fall on. This spectrum has two distinct ends proportional to the severity of the responses. The basic notions of domestic realism still hold as a matter of principle, but there are different and varying shades or degrees. One goal of introducing the theory is to increase awareness of aberrations and induce actors to move along the spectrum from the less favorable end to the more favorable one.

## **E. THREATS AND RESPONSES**

### **1. Measuring Threats**

It is worth elaborating on threats and their magnitude. Threats might mean different things to different people and different states; moreover, the perception of a threat might change over time. This is the reason we often talk about

"perceived threats" which necessitates putting ourselves in the other side's shoes to be able to better assess their responses in light of their history, attitudes, culture, norms, and beliefs. In many countries the challenge to the ruling elites and the prospect of a coup might be the primary challenge. The perceived threat in other countries might not be as well defined. In the United States, challenging the "American way of life" might be seen as a threat, as happened under McCarthyism; during the British colonial presence in India, the making of salt by Indians led by Gandhi was perceived as a threat.

Threat is not quantifiable; moreover, it is in the eyes of the beholder, as was mentioned. The threshold to consider something threatening differs among individuals, institutions, and states; and it also differs across time and after major events such as September 11 or the London bombings in 2005. At the individual level, there are of course universally acknowledged conditions of high threat to life under which laws worldwide grant the right to self-defense. On the other hand, however, there are instances of violent behavior that seem incongruent and inexplicable for the wider public. For example, very few individuals exhibit severe "road rage" to basically "snap" and kill a complete stranger for no reason other than the latter's driving behavior; most people confine their reaction to the verbal level or even just keep on driving without reaching that tipping point. Therefore, the analysis of the level of threat is context and perception-based and has to be assessed in relative situational subjective terms rather than in absolute ones.

At the state level, the way a state deals with threats is bound to be related to the state's political culture, legal system, and accountability. But even in states that are well established with a long history of democratic tradition and that are least disposed to violate citizens' rights, under certain conditions violations do take place even in those higher end countries. It is worth noting that in a country like the United States, one that is steeped in a constitutionally-mandated democratic tradition that values and respects citizens' rights, the American Civil Liberties Union continually champions citizens' rights, thus indicating that the state-citizen relationship is a continually evolving interaction that calls for monitoring and that context could give rise to aberrations.

To elaborate further on the concept of the tipping point from a state perspective, good insight can be gained from the British policy in Northern Ireland. The policy during the 1970s "had maintained that 'terrorism' could never be fully eliminated, and that it was the government's objective to 'check' paramilitary activity in order to provide for 'an acceptable level of violence.'"<sup>34</sup> Therefore, in spite of the fact that this acceptable level is rather subjective, the British government felt that it could tolerate a certain level of violence on a permanent basis; beyond this subjective level, violence would become unacceptable.

Further insight can be gained by looking at a thought experiment by philosopher Michael Hooker, even though it was

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<sup>34</sup> Peter R. Neumann, "Winning the 'War on Terror'? Roy Mason's Contribution to Counter-Terrorism in Northern Ireland," *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 14, no. 3, (Autumn 2003): 45-64.

initially discussed in a different context. His hypothetical experiment involves a glass urn full of marbles to the point that everybody agrees that it is full; marbles are then taken out one by one to the point that it is almost empty. The question he then poses is "[w]hich marble was it that, when you took it out, caused the onlookers to shift from a state of saying 'a lot of marbles' to a state of saying 'hardly any marbles'?" Hooker goes on to say "[o]bviously, there was no single marble."<sup>35</sup> In other words there is a continuum or a sliding scale for the perception of a threshold or a tipping point in each particular situation, but nonetheless, once surpassed, the perception changes from full to empty or from acceptable to unacceptable.

## **2. Threats to the Various Actors**

### **a. Threats to Individuals**

There are many threats to the various actors in a state; some are related to the physical safety and security of the actors, whereas others might be more cognitive and perceptual having more to do with the images the actors hold of themselves, their surroundings, and the people they interact with. Starting out with the individual and since the adopted approach is to extend IR concepts such as security, a good starting point is the definition or the meaning of security, and the basic needs or interests that individuals want satisfied and whose loss might be threatening to their well-being as individuals.

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<sup>35</sup> Rushworth M. Kidder, *How Good People Make Tough Choices: Resolving the Dilemmas of Ethical Living* (New York: Quill, 2003), 104.

Great insight can be gained into individual needs from Maslow's Theory of Human Motivation in which he spells out five categories of needs. We reproduce the list here as taken from Davies' work on *Human Nature in Politics* where he describes the needs as "a system of great use in political analysis."<sup>36</sup> The five main categories of needs are:

1. Physical (water, food, sex, etc.);
2. Safety (order, predictability, dependability of the environment);
3. Love, affection, belongingness;
4. self-esteem;
5. self-actualization.

More insight into the notion of safety and security can be attained from the simple and parsimonious dictionary definition of the word security:

**1:** the quality or state of being secure: as **a:** freedom from danger : SAFETY **b:** freedom from fear or anxiety **c:** freedom from the prospect of being laid off <job ~>...<sup>37</sup>

According to domestic realism, individuals consider as threatening any event that affects their security, that is, endangers their physical safety or causes fear and anxiety; that threatens their job performance and their economic wellbeing by possibly leading to them being laid off from their work; or that affects the order and predictability of the environment around them. Equally

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<sup>36</sup> A. H. Maslow, "A Theory of Human Motivation," *Psychological Review* 50 (1943): 370-396; as mentioned by James C. Davies, *Human Nature in Politics: The Dynamics of Political Behavior* (New York: Wiley, 1963), 8-9.

<sup>37</sup> Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 11<sup>th</sup> ed., s.v. "Security."

important on the threat scale are the less visible threats that affect the self-esteem of individuals and their ability to carry out their responsibilities successfully; domestic realism views the imperative or even the compulsion to succeed in fulfilling duties as very essential to the individual's image and self-esteem. Therefore, one could reason that, for example, a policeman faced by a criminal or faced by a mob in a riot views the situation as threatening both physically and emotionally and that according to our realist-based model, which will be discussed further in the next section, will do all that is needed to assure his security especially if the threat level crosses a certain threshold according to his or her perception.

These arguments are supported by research. In their book *On The Nature of Threat*, Milburn and Watman elaborate on the psychological effects of being threatened and on the characterization of threatening situations.<sup>38</sup> The authors discuss two aspects: the level of the threat, which might be actual or perceived; and the amount of control over the situation that the threatened individual experiences.<sup>39</sup> The authors start by explaining that:

In environments containing threats, organisms survive by reducing the randomness around them. Danger is implicit in unpredictability; consistently successful defenses are usually possible only with preparation. Preparation requires expectation of threat, and such expectations require prediction. Therefore,

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<sup>38</sup> Thomas W. Milburn and Kenneth H. Watman, *On the Nature of Threat: A Social Psychological Analysis* (New York: Praeger, 1981).

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 4-5.

organisms that reduce uncertainty have a survival advantage over those that do not reduce it as effectively.<sup>40</sup>

They further state that "the need to control is really a part of a more basic drive to reduce uncertainty in every way." They quote A. Adler's work "that the need to control one's personal environment is 'an intrinsic necessity of life itself,'" and B. Malinowski's description of "primitive belief systems as the result of the desperate need of people to assert themselves as masters over a dangerous world." They further discuss G. A. Kelly's hypothesis that "the essence of control was predictability, and that the lack of it produces great anxiety." G. Zimbardo and N. E. Miller went even further and felt that "the focus of the drive was on effecting change in the environment, rather than on mere predictability."<sup>41</sup> Therefore, one can conclude that individuals striving for control and predictability, maintaining self esteem, success, safety, and security are in essence confronting threatening situations.

#### ***b. Threats to Institutions***

Institutions are subject to threats that are similar to those that affect individuals; this is especially true for the leadership officials at the helm of a governmental institution or organization where the performance of the organization reflects directly on their

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<sup>40</sup> Thomas W. Milburn and Kenneth H. Watman, 31.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 33.



status and job security. This is true for organizations in a democracy where there is a higher degree of accountability for those officials before the public. It is also true in an authoritarian regime where accountability is to the higher authority rather than the public, which depending on the situation might be more or less tolerant of mishaps in comparison with a democracy.

As just mentioned, domestic realism views failure as very threatening to organizations; but equally threatening to an organization is a loss of relevance. That is why officials continually assert the role and relevance of their organizations and of the services they provide. Failure to accomplish tasks (and at times even a single one) could be threatening to higher level officials on the one hand and to the very existence of the organization on the other hand. Organizational survival is the top priority of any organization; it is closely tied with maintaining relevance of said organization. In their discussion of organizational behavior, Allison and Zelikow state that governmental organizations are created in response to certain problems and to fulfill certain roles; therefore, they strive for efficiency and the "optimal accomplishment of the mission."<sup>42</sup>

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provides a recent example of the effect of a lower level of performance, or failure of an organization in carrying out its expected role, or of living up to expectations as it pertains to its performance following Hurricane Katrina

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<sup>42</sup> Graham Allison and Philip Zelikow, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: Addison-Wesley, 1999), 149-150.

which left a devastating trail in Louisiana and Mississippi. The head of FEMA, Michael Brown, resigned soon after; moreover, prominent public officials called for abolishing FEMA altogether. After meeting in April 2006, the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee recommended abolishing FEMA which was described as a "bumbling" bureaucracy. Senator Joe Lieberman, the ranking democrat on the committee at the time, cited "neglect of duties" and "failures of leadership" Senator Susan Collins, the chairwoman at the time, was quoted as saying, "[o]ur first and most important recommendation is to abolish FEMA ... FEMA is discredited, demoralized, and dysfunctional."<sup>43</sup> The full Senate later voted to "scrap the name and structure of the Federal Emergency Management Agency and replace it with a new independent agency."<sup>44</sup> Therefore, we can conclude that success and relevance of an organization are crucial for its continued existence and the security of its members.

Another example that highlights the importance of maintaining role and relevance for institutions can be gained from the reorganization of the United States military following the Second World War, which is codified in the National Security Act of 1947. Even though all the entities concerned shared the best interest of the country as a whole, they also had their own interests and their own fears

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<sup>43</sup> CNN.com, "Senators: 'Bumbling' FEMA must go," April 27, 2006, <http://www.cnn.com/2006/POLITICS/04/27/katrina.fema/index.html> (accessed January 27, 2007).

<sup>44</sup> Bloomberg.com, "Senate Votes to Replace FEMA With New Disaster Agency," July 11, 2006, <http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601103&sid=aFlu8KM9yJZQ&refer=us> (accessed January 11, 2007).

for their role and survival within the military; the following quote summarizes the interests of the different parties:

The reorganization conflict escalated into "a wrenching, bitter struggle." The prospect of an independent air force "engendered fear and dismay in the Navy and Marine Corps." Senior Army Air Forces officers questioned the need for navy and Marine Corps aviation. The army and Marine Corps also had differing views on land warfare missions. The army argued that the marines "should be restricted to duties with the fleet, and have only lightly armed units for shore operations." The navy and Marine Corps opposed unification as a way of "protecting their functions and the composition of their forces." The Marine Corps saw the struggle as a fight for survival.<sup>45</sup>

### ***c. Threats to States***

States are subjected to more grand scale types of threats that either affect a wide constituency or are of a high magnitude or visibility. Again these threats might be genuine or perceived and they are of course threatening to individual leaders, to the ruling elites, or to society at large. Examples of threats include war, the prospect of war, coups, subversion, terrorism, demonstrations, riots, the spread of crime, loss of law and order, the image of an ineffectual government, secession, and threats to territorial integrity.

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<sup>45</sup> James R. Locher, III, *Victory on the Potomac: The Goldwater-Nichols Act Unifies the Pentagon* (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 2002), 24-25.

The threats cited above are self-evident in the challenge they pose for the state; but for the sake of example, the threat of secession will be elaborated upon. Even though the right of self-determination is universally acknowledged, the concern of states for their territorial integrity leads them to counter secession attempts by minorities.<sup>46</sup> Secession is very threatening to the very existence of the state in its present format. It leads to the breakup of a country, tears people apart, and dilutes the resources that are available to the state. A distinction needs to be made between the voluntary breakup of a country whereby the central authority is indifferent, sympathetic, or at least willing to put the issue to a public vote on the one hand, and the forcible secession of a part of the country against the will of the central government on the other hand. Examples of the former include voting for the independent status of the Province of Quebec that forms a large part of Canada, the Montenegrine referendum, the breakup of the Soviet Union, and the splitting of Czechoslovakia into two states. Examples of the latter include the secession of the South in the United States which led to the U.S. Civil War, the breakup of Yugoslavia, and the drive for independence of Chechnya which provoked a severe response from Moscow.

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<sup>46</sup> Patricia Carley, *Self-Determination: Sovereignty, Territorial Integrity, and the Right to Secession* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 1996); Allen Buchanan, *Secession: The Morality of Political Divorce from Fort Sumter to Lithuania and Quebec* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1991); Stephen Macedo and Allen Buchanan, eds., *Secession and Self-Determination* (New York: New York University Press, 2003).

The U.S. Civil War is often termed the war to save the union, and President Abraham Lincoln is one of the most respected Presidents credited with preserving the union. Lincoln did not accept secession and insisted that the "Union of these States is perpetual," and he vowed to "hold, occupy, and possess" the federal government areas.<sup>47</sup> The President was against backing down in the face of secessionist threats, and in an address to Congress talked about the war and "domestic foes:"

And this issue embraces more than the fate of these United States. It presents to the whole family of man, the question of whether a constitutional republic, or a democracy—a government of the people by the same people—can or cannot, maintain its territorial integrity against its own domestic foes.<sup>48</sup>

It can be expected that no country would allow secession, and it is reasonable to make comparisons with major historical events to make the point; this sometimes might not be to the liking of those involved in a bitter struggle for independence, but it does underscore the fact that secession was and is quite threatening to states. The following quote from Chechnya Magazine emphasizes this point:

In Moscow in April 1996, President Bill Clinton was asked a question on Chechnya and chose to make a spectacularly inappropriate comparison to Abraham Lincoln in his reply. Clinton said, "I would remind you that we once had a civil war in our country, in which we lost on a per capita

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<sup>47</sup> George Brown Tindall and David E. Shi, *America: A Narrative History*, brief 6<sup>th</sup> ed., vol. 1 (New York: W. W. Norton, 2004), 518.

<sup>48</sup> Robert A. Divine and others, *America Past and Present*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York: Harper Collins, 1995), 439, 442.

basis far more people than we lost in any of the wars of the twentieth century, over the proposition that Abraham Lincoln gave his life for, that no state had a right to withdrawal from our Union."<sup>49</sup>

A very recent example comes from Kosovo. The province "has been a U.N. protectorate since 1999, when NATO air strikes stopped Serbia's crackdown on separatist ethnic Albanian rebels." The publication of the plan for the future status of Kosovo as a de facto sovereign state by the United Nations envoy Martti Ahtisaari provoked a strong reaction by Belgrade. "Both Serbia's pro-Western president, Boris Tadic, and its nationalist prime minister, Vojislav Kostunica, immediately rejected the plan, and reasserted the country's claims to Kosovo as the heart of the ancient Serb homeland." Kostunica further "threatened to cut off diplomatic ties with any country that recognizes Kosovo as an independent state."<sup>50</sup>

### **3. Perceptions of Threats and Responses**

Faced with threats, people's perceptions shift and become confused. For example, within the context of negotiations, the Harvard Negotiation Project members state that:

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<sup>49</sup> Thomas de Waal, "The Chechen Conflict and the Outside World," *Chechnya Magazine* (April 18, 2003), <http://www.crimesofwar.org/chechnya-mag/chech-waal.html> (accessed February 4, 2007).

<sup>50</sup> CNN.com, "Serbia rejects U.N. Kosovo plan," February 2, 2007, <http://www.cnn.com/2007/WORLD/europe/02/02/un.kosovo.ap/index.html> (accessed February 2, 2007).

people get angry, depressed, fearful, hostile, frustrated, and offended. They have egos that are easily threatened. They see the world from their own personal vantage point, and they frequently confuse their perceptions with reality.<sup>51</sup>

The perception of threats depends on the relationship of the sides and also depends on if the side perceiving the threat represents a paranoid target, belongs to a threat-oriented culture, or if the individual belongs to the group of persons who are "habitually anxious: They tend to have low thresholds for assessing present or approaching events as dangerous, particularly to their self-esteem. So, they fear not only danger, but also helplessness or lack of control." Furthermore, threats affect the way the side perceiving the threat views its own image, as they:

endanger a target's sense of control. In this sense, threats can infantilize a target by appearing to reduce his personal potency to that of a child. Therefore, threats, as a message form, are easily used to demean or insult. It can be insulting to be threatened, even when the threat's chances of success are small, because the threatener is suggesting implicitly that the target is threatenable.<sup>52</sup>

It is worth noting that past experience reduces susceptibility to threats. But if the threat persists, the individual fights in response under certain circumstances. Milburn and Watman list some of these circumstances, they include: when fighting eliminates the threat, when it is the only way out, when there is loss of status before peers,

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<sup>51</sup> Roger Fisher, William Ury, and Bruce Patton, *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement without Giving In* (New York: Penguin Books, 1991), 19.

<sup>52</sup> Milburn and Watman, 88, 97, 104, 122.

when it is dishonoring not to fight, when there is a risk to lose valuable resources, or when there is the risk of an inequitable settlement. The individual does not fight when the threat does not affect the above factors, or when it is overwhelming.<sup>53</sup>

Jervis discusses perceptions of danger. He states that "decision-makers often see imaginary dangers," and that they "are sensitive to threats to their security that critical observers regard as minuscule." An important point for our discussion and for the reaction of powerful actors within the state is what causes them to react to their perceptions. Jervis states that people exhibit "perceptual vigilance" and a lowered threshold to threats and as such become inclined to act by taking "corrective action" to reduce the pain when they feel that they have the power to effectively change the situation. He further states that "the predisposition to perceive a threat varies with the person's beliefs about his ability to take effective counteraction if he perceives the danger." Otherwise, "if there is nothing a person can do to avoid the pain that accompanies a stimulus, his perceptual threshold for the stimulus will be raised (defense);" that is, people exhibit "perceptual defense" and "underestimate the chances of harm."<sup>54</sup>

Jervis' views pertain primarily to individuals; but individuals are the decision makers in institutions and states and their perceptions eventually shape policies. Jervis, nonetheless, does give some examples at the state

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<sup>53</sup> Milburn and Watman, 108-110.

<sup>54</sup> Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), 372-378.



level that underscore the basic point we are trying to emphasize here for the purposes of domestic realism, namely, that actors are more likely to perceive threats and to act against them when they possess the capability to act and to avoid or limit the threat. One of his examples discusses how "American perception of the threat posed by Russia at the end of World War II may have been facilitated, or even permitted, by the belief that this menace would be contained by the appropriate policies." He further states that "actors will be slow to recognize dangers when even a policy based on accurate perceptions would not be adequate" to counter a threat.<sup>55</sup> From a domestic realism perspective, institutions and states more often than not have the upper hand within a given country; thereby there is a greater chance to detect threats and to counter them actively.

#### **F. PROJECTING REALISM DOMESTICALLY AND THE ACTORS' RESPONSE TO THREATS**

Having discussed the nature of threats and other needed background, we are now ready to "intrapolate" or project the tenets of realism that were discussed in a previous section to the domestic sphere. Alongside this projection will be a discussion of the nature of the actors' response to threats.

Building on the concepts of realism, we need to make two important points. First, in line with realist principles and under conditions of threat and in the pursuit of security, modes of behavior of the actors are neither affected nor influenced by their culture or their political

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<sup>55</sup> Jervis, 377-378.

systems, that is, states and individuals act the same when threatened. For example, in spite of their many differences culturally and politically, Amnesty International's 2006 annual report lumped the United States, China, and Russia together, and condemned them for "focusing on narrowly defined interests." The report adds that the "relentless pursuit of security by powerful countries has undermined human rights." Talking about the war on terror, Amnesty International's secretary general stated that "[t]here is no doubt that it has given a new lease on life to old-fashioned repression."<sup>56</sup>

Second, under conditions of threat morality is subordinate to safety and security; the fight for survival overtakes and subjugates norms and morals. These notions are in line with realist thought and they can also be found in other works. The German philosopher Nietzsche discussed morality and the role of fear in his work titled *Beyond Good and Evil*, stating that "as long as one considers only the preservation of the community, and immorality is sought exactly and exclusively in what seems dangerous to the survival of the community - there can be no morality of 'neighbour-love'." He continues by stating that "fear is again the mother of morals," and that,

In the last analysis, 'love of the neighbour' is always something secondary, partly conventional and arbitrary-illusory in relation to *fear of the neighbour*. After the structure of society is fixed on the whole and seems secure against

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<sup>56</sup> Danica Kirka, "Powerful states putting security ahead of human rights: Amnesty International," CBCnews, May 23, 2006, <http://www.cbc.ca/cp/world/060523/w052340.html> (accessed February 5, 2007).

external dangers, it is this fear of the neighbour that again creates new perspectives of moral valuation.<sup>57</sup>

The discussion that follows will be divided along the major variants of realism discussed previously.

### **1. Projecting Classical and Structural Variants Domestically**

For the purposes of this discussion, both the classical and structural variants of realism are lumped into one group in order to circumvent the old debate of whether behavior is caused by human nature or by system-level anarchy. Domestic realism adopts the realist principle that actors pursue their self-interests and that they seek to increase their power but sees the root cause of this pursuit as immaterial to this discussion. Writing back in 1951, John Herz addressed the issue along this line by reasoning that the "accumulation and perpetual competition for more is the natural result of the 'struggle for survival,'" and that what propels the competition for more power is not "an innate 'power instinct'" but rather "the mere instinct of self-preservation." He further argued that:

Whether man is 'by nature' peaceful and co-operative, or aggressive and domineering, is not the question. The condition that concerns us here is not an anthropological or biological, but a

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<sup>57</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, extracts in chapter titled "Against Conventional Morality," in John Cottingham, ed., *Western Philosophy: An Anthology* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), 402-403.

social one. It is his uncertainty and anxiety as to his neighbors' intentions that places man in this basic dilemma."<sup>58</sup>

Herz in this contest seems to be leaning towards what later became known as structural realism or neorealism where the structure of the system determines behavior.

Domestic realism adopts the notions of structural realism: the need for and the importance of security, the notion that the main goal is survival, and the anarchic nature of the system. Domestic realism reasons that, yes there is no anarchy domestically in the traditional sense, namely that there is of course a central authority that people can turn to and that can interfere to limit the encroachments of some. But one has to bear in mind that the presence of government domestically does not necessarily guarantee the security of the actors—especially under threat. Individuals still exhibit self-help behavior, they still lock their doors and own guns. Institutions could actually stand to lose with government regulation; they lobby and fight for their status and for their self-interests. Domestic realism argues that the domestic system may still be characterized by what it calls "quasi-anarchy;" the domestic setting, in other words, "resembles" the anarchy of the international realm especially when there is a perception of threat.

Anarchy is here conceptualized analogous to the "state of war" assumed to exist by IR realists, building on Hobbes. Of course, there is no continuous war in world politics. But

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<sup>58</sup> John H. Herz, *Political Realism and Political Idealism: A Study in Theories and Realities* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1951), 3-4.

there is the constant possibility and potential of war.<sup>59</sup> Uncertainty, i.e., the aforementioned fear of one's neighbor and of cheating necessitates measures to assure one's own safety in the future. Therefore, by a quasi-anarchic system we mean that if the actors within the state are left to their own devices they are bound to seek to augment their power and clout; and if governments work to limit this proclivity, actors within the state will strive to work within or around the system to circumvent any restrictions and to assure power and survivability. This is evident by the ageless wisdom that actors are constantly vying for more power within the boundaries of any one country. The attempt to counter this propensity by the founding fathers in the United States is well articulated in the U.S. Constitution through the notion of checks and balances between the three branches of government. In spite of these measures, we still witness what historian Arthur Schlesinger calls the "Imperial Presidency;" a term he introduced in his 1973 book carrying the same title.<sup>60</sup> In an article titled "The Return of the Imperial Presidency?" Wolfensberger states that "*Webster's Unabridged Dictionary* bluntly defines *imperial presidency* as 'a U.S. presidency that is characterized by greater power than the Constitution allows.'"<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Michael W. Doyle and G. John Ikenberry, eds., *New Thinking in International Relations Theory* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997), 10.

<sup>60</sup> Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Imperial Presidency* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1973).

<sup>61</sup> Donald Wolfensberger, "The Return of the Imperial Presidency?" *Wilson Quarterly*, vol. 26, no. 2 (Spring 2002) 36.

The desire to acquire greater power for "political survival" and to counter threatening prospects is not limited to the executive branch. Seeking more power and resources in its rudimentary form, that is money, in a manner involving improprieties led to the demise of the prominent former Congressman Tom Delay. Yes, the role of government and the media is to limit wrongdoing. But the tendency to accumulate power is still there, and other cases of power accumulation might go undetected beneath the radar level or at least remain uncorrectable retrospectively. It takes an overly vigilant government as well as political opponents to keep track of all possible wrongdoers and to prove in a court of law that there were wrongdoings and to be able to overturn the consequences. The case of Republican Congressman Tom Delay is a case in point. He was considered by Democrats a "symbol of abuse of power;"<sup>62</sup> and the former House Majority Leader was indicted by a Texas grand jury "on a charge of criminally conspiring with two political associates to inject illegal corporate contributions into 2002 state elections that helped the Republican Party reorder the congressional map in Texas and cement its control of the House in Washington."<sup>63</sup> He eventually resigned and is facing the court case, but "[n]o jury can undo the outcome of Texas's 2002 elections."<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> David S. Broder, "After Delay, a New Approach?" *washingtonpost.com*, April 5, 2006, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/04/04/AR2006040401273.html> (accessed February 5, 2007).

<sup>63</sup> R. Jeffery Smith, "Delay Indicted in Texas Finance Probe," *washingtonpost.com*, September 29, 2005, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/09/28/AR2005092800270.html> (accessed February 5, 2007).

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

At the state and institutional levels as well, the eminence of threats and the effect of system structure lead to unexpected outcomes and departures from laws and ideals. The United States is the leader of the free world, but historically and under certain threats the country deviated from its standards and from constitutional provisions. One primary example is the actions taken against the 120,000 Japanese Americans during the Second World War in the wake of Pearl Harbor because of national security and for fear of divided loyalty or the formation of a "fifth column" in a total war setting. This group of people was moved away from the west coast of the United States and relocated into inland concentration camps, and they were forced to sell their property at great losses. "More than two-thirds of those detained were *Nisei*, native-born Americans." The Supreme Court "upheld relocation on grounds of national security in wartime."<sup>65</sup> It is worth noting the similarity of state behavior in this type of setting; during the Second World War, the USSR also sent Germans living on its territory to Siberia. They were not allowed to return to Germany until after the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989.<sup>66</sup>

Faced by the threat of subversion, the power of the FBI grew to resemble what Keller calls in his typology an "independent security state," or a "state within the state." The independent security state defines "security interests ... [and] neutralize[s] those who disagree;" furthermore, "it circumvents legislative and judicial control." Keller states

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<sup>65</sup> Robert A. Divine and others, *America Past and Present*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York: Harper Collins, 1995), 840.

<sup>66</sup> Interview with Professor Rafael Biermann—visiting professor from Germany.

that FBI policies after 1964, which were "hostile to the spirit of liberalism, ... persisted only because the FBI had developed secrecy and administrative controls to a fine point, sufficient to insulate its activities from the courts, the Congress, and the public."<sup>67</sup> This insulation and the ability to work within and around the system to circumvent restrictions and accountability is congruent with the previously introduced notion of a quasi-anarchic system in domestic realism; it might have been done for a good purpose, but it is still extrajudicial. With lower accountability and less adherence to the law, Gill states that such an institution "constitute[s] the antithesis of liberal democracy." The FBI was involved in "flagrant abuses" and relied on techniques such as "mail-opening, wiretapping, electronic surveillance, break-ins" without the proper authorization.<sup>68</sup>

Keller further states that "the state reveals itself most clearly when confronted with a threat to its survival;" furthermore, "because the highest and most compelling state interest is self-preservation, the state also acts against the sympathizers and agents of hostile foreign powers;" he further goes on to add that:

In the United States, the threat of subversion, espionage, sabotage, extremism, and terrorism has functioned historically as the domestic and moral equivalent of war. In time of war, niceties of civil liberty are suspended...<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> William W. Keller, *The Liberals and J. Edgar Hoover: Rise and Fall of a Domestic Intelligence State* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), 16-17, 189.

<sup>68</sup> Peter Gill, *Policing Politics: Security Intelligence and the Liberal Democratic State* (London: Frank Cass, 1994), 64, 116-117.

<sup>69</sup> William W. Keller, 190.



The threat of terrorism nowadays is leading to measures that would have been inconceivable before the events of September 11, 2001, such as detention, rendition, suspension of habeas corpus, eavesdropping, mail-opening, and aggressive interrogation.

It is interesting and noteworthy how the situation, the position, or the structure leads to certain policies being adopted by people that had previously opposed them when they were not within or locked into the decision making apparatus. Jervis discusses how "one's role within the government" influences policy choices especially in military related issues, which could be interpreted as an issue of safety and national security. As an example he mentions how in "1910, Winston Churchill, as Home Secretary, led the attack upon the demand of McKenna, First Lord of the Admiralty, for more ships; by 1913 they had exchanged offices and each, with equal conviction, maintained the opposite view."<sup>70</sup> A recent interesting example is the Iraqi Ministry of Interior which seems to be employing actions that would not have been expected from a group that had suffered oppression for a long time. Human Rights Watch states: "[e]vidence suggests that Iraqi security forces are involved in these horrific crimes ... abduction, torture and murder."<sup>71</sup> It does seem that under the threat of a vicious armed resistance, the previously oppressed have turned to oppression as they assumed similar administrative roles and

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<sup>70</sup> Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), 26.

<sup>71</sup> Human Rights Watch, "Iraq: End Interior Ministry Death Squads," [hrw.org](http://hrw.org), October 29, 2006, <http://hrw.org/english/docs/2006/10/29/iraq14473.htm> (accessed February 5, 2007).

as they became responsible for providing safety and security. Again, morality takes a second place to security under threat; and as Waltz puts it: "Despite cultural and other differences, similar structures produce similar effects."<sup>72</sup>

## **2. Projecting Offensive Realism Domestically**

Domestic realism also subscribes to the notions of offensive realism; namely that powerful players seek to dominate the system and prevent the rise of peer competitors to ensure their continued survival and hegemony.

Monopoly is one example from the field of microeconomics whereby powerful corporations seek to dominate the market and to benefit from what is called barriers to entry for newcomers to any one industry. Governments do interfere to stop monopolists through antitrust laws and the breakup of large corporations such as the breakup of Standard Oil and AT&T; in this case the lack of anarchy with government presence protects the consumer but actually threatens the large corporation seeking to achieve "economic hegemony." The point we are trying to make here is that the proclivity is toward achieving monopoly, dominating the market, and preventing would be entrants to the market.<sup>73</sup> As a matter of fact the primary model of industry analysis that is taught in Business Schools and

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<sup>72</sup> Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979), 88.

<sup>73</sup> This mutually exclusive notion is indeed taught in MBA programs and Strategic Management classes. The author was in one such class where the professor stressed more than once: "I am not here to teach you about ethics, I am here to teach you about monopoly."

texts is the one developed by Michael Porter of Harvard Business School and is known as Porter's Five Forces model. The model discusses among other things the threat of substitutes to firm products and the threat of new entrants because "[u]nless the entry of new firms is barred, the rate of profit will fall toward its competitive level."<sup>74</sup>

A very prominent example of the projection of offensive realism domestically is the Watergate Scandal. The resulting abuse and law breaking behavior is an embodiment of the essence of domestic realism that is posited by this thesis. It includes all the elements starting with the "lust for power," "the abuse of power,"<sup>75</sup> the perception of threat to political survival at one stage, the desire to maintain dominance at a later stage, the confidence in the ability to act, and finally the resulting violations of laws and norms and the undermining of the democratic process.

President "Nixon went to great lengths to guarantee his reelection in 1972;" and the "White House labored under a siege mentality that seemed to justify any and all measures necessary to defeat its opponents." The threat to political survival later disappeared however and the focus seems to have shifted to the offensive realism notion of eliminating rivals to assure dominance. Historians state that the "irony of the Watergate break-in was that by the time it occurred, Nixon's election was assured." As a matter of fact Nixon's reelection was a "stunning victory." In line with the propositions of domestic realism, numerous violations of the

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<sup>74</sup> Robert M. Grant, *Contemporary Strategy Analysis*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 73-75.

<sup>75</sup> Robert A. Divine and others, *America Past and Present*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York: Harper Collins, 1995), 950-955.

law took place; they included spying, bugging, and break-in at Democratic national headquarters in the Watergate building; and they were followed by cover-up and obstruction of justice.<sup>76</sup>

#### **G. THE TRAGEDY OF DOMESTIC REALISM**

Along the lines of Hardin's *Tragedy of the Commons*<sup>77</sup> in which the exploitation of common resources that are available to everyone in the society is inevitable, and Mearsheimer's *Tragedy of Great Power Politics*<sup>78</sup> in which preventing the rise of peer competitors is inescapable, the title of this thesis signifies the unfortunate fact that domestic realism is likewise unavoidable. There is simply too much at stake for the various actors to allow goodwill and morality to supersede security, survival, and what might seem as the good of the many in confronting the threat of the few. Nonetheless, putting this tragedy of domestic realism in the proper perspective, and gaining a greater understanding of its nature, will help in countering its effects, or at least in alleviating its manifestations.

An important question arises: Why don't we see wide spread violations of the expected standards of conduct? Domestic realism answers this question in two parts. First, in many cases the unacceptable threat threshold level has not been reached to induce a norm-violating response, that

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<sup>76</sup> Divine and others.

<sup>77</sup> Garrett Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons," *Science* 162, (December 1968): 1243-1248.

<sup>78</sup> John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001).

is, there might be a higher level of tolerance. Second, that violations do actually exist on a larger scale than is seen, but are not exposed. Had it not been for the videotaping of the beating of Rodney King<sup>79</sup>, the validity of the claim would have been lost between "allegations" and "the ongoing investigation." In a recent CNN program on the first anniversary of hurricane Katrina, the killing of two residents of New Orleans by officers of the New Orleans Police Department is still under investigation one year later and the officers are still in the department.<sup>80</sup> Domestic realism calls this the "Visual Tip of the Iceberg;" unless violations are documented in picture or in video format, they are denied by the perpetrators and, more importantly, the aberrations are met by disbelief and denial by the general public. The pictures of the abuses at the Abu Ghraib prison are another such example.

It is also important to differentiate between the tendency and the wide scale outbreak. By comparison, the international system is not marked by numerous wars; and realists believe that:

the best description of world politics is a "state of war"—not a single continuous war or constant wars but the constant possibility of war among all states. Politics is gripped by a state of war because the nature of humanity, or the character of states, or the structure of international order (or all three together) allows wars to occur.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Lou Cannon, *Official Negligence: How Rodney King and the Riots Changed Los Angeles and the LAPD* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1999), 20-21.

<sup>80</sup> Anderson Cooper, "Katrina Killings," *Anderson Cooper 360*, broadcasted on CNN, August 25, 2006.

<sup>81</sup> Michael W. Doyle and G. John Ikenberry, eds., *New Thinking in International Relations Theory* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997), 10.

## H. EXACERBATING FACTORS

### 1. Supremacy of Righteousness

An important corollary takes shape from the primary proposition of domestic realism and the prospect of threat mentioned above. Since there is a threat coming from another side, an unconscious and sometimes deliberate differentiation takes place between "us" and "them." This differentiation in time becomes between good and evil, between the "good guys" and the "bad guys", between the moral and the immoral. According to Tetlock, leaders could even reach the stage of "dehumaniz[ing] out-groups;"<sup>82</sup> such characterization is encouraged by the fundamental attribution error whereby the behavior of others is attributed to personal traits rather than to situational and external causes.<sup>83</sup> This sequence eventually leads to feelings of righteousness and moral supremacy, and could in various cases lead to unethical behavior that is justified on the basis that "we" are working for the common and the greater good; unfortunately, there is a transformation at times to "the end justifies the means." Domestic realism calls this corollary "Supremacy of Righteousness;" it has important ramifications that lead to adopting harsh measures and to conducting unethical research. It is in essence following Mill's utilitarianism or consequentialist philosophical theory whereby the prime concern is with achieving long term results that bring happiness to the

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<sup>82</sup> Philip E. Tetlock, "Social Psychology and World Politics," in *The Handbook of Social Psychology*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1998), chap. 35, 897.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, 877.

largest number of people even if the immediate conduct causes pain to the few; the moral value is thus determined by the consequences of the act not by the act itself.<sup>84</sup>

Therefore, individuals and groups endeavor to do well and to reach noble ends. But with the realization that somebody out there is threatening them or threatening their crusade to do so end up at times reacting in kind. By analogy, this is somewhat of a capital punishment for committing murder type approach. Trying to refute the political idealism of the Wilsonian era, John Herz gives the following example along the same line of argument:

As an illustration let us consider the case of a man who is passionately imbued with the urge to compassion and the feeling of a compelling duty to act accordingly, but who at the same time realizes that in order to bring about a "better world" (i.e., one in which there is less human suffering or misery) force must be applied to eliminate the powers of "evil." Such a man might easily become a great religious apostle or a revolutionary leader. To him religious wars or class struggles would be acceptable, in spite of the violence and the suffering of millions which they would entail, since the humanitarian end would appear to him to justify the means.<sup>85</sup>

## **2. Trust Networks**

The one concept that was left out of our projection of IR concepts into the domestic sphere is the formation of

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<sup>84</sup> John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism*, extracts in John Cottingham, ed., *Western Philosophy: An Anthology* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), 387-392.

<sup>85</sup> John H. Herz, *Political Realism and Political Idealism: A Study in Theories and Realities* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1951), 10.

alliances; according to Walt, "states form alliances to balance against threats."<sup>86</sup> Corporate mergers also lead to a consolidation of power and resources. For domestic realism, a second corollary takes shape with the projection of alliance formation under the prospect of threat. Faced with threat, individuals react like states that form alliances to jointly meet a threat (collective defense) - they tend to rely on groups or to form groups of people that they have confidence in and that they can trust to provide protection, to pool resources, to lend mutual support, and to ensure success or at least to prevent failure. In some societies these groups might be based on kinship, thus making the tribe the basic unit of such groups. In other societies lacking such arrangements, groups of people sharing similar interests and ideologies come together to form entities such as political parties. These arrangements lead to trusted political appointments that are sometimes characterized by favoritism and cronyism. Domestic realism calls these groups "Trust Networks;" they further exacerbate domestic realism, diminish oversight, and through homogeneity contribute to groupthink.

Political parties "are the most organized, the most powerful, and seemingly inevitable."<sup>87</sup> Nonetheless, "since the early days of democracy, many people have viewed them as little more than a necessary evil."<sup>88</sup> They are indeed necessary, but the presence of groups composed of loyal and

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<sup>86</sup> Stephen M. Walt, "Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power," *International Security* 9, no. 4 (Spring 1985):3-43.

<sup>87</sup> Patrick H. O'Neil, *Essentials of Comparative Politics*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: W. W. Norton, 2007), 149.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.



like-minded people could at times shift the focus towards parochial interests, as well as reduce critical thinking and contribute to groupthink. In the United States, which has a long tradition and a well established party system, the party label starts to affect behavior toward others. "The decline of comity is a product of several converging factors, most notably the escalating cohesion within, and polarization between, the two parties' officeholders and allied interest groups—a byproduct of partisan realignment."<sup>89</sup> Senator John McCain is quoted as saying: "The environment here is very poisoned. Both parties are playing to their bases and have caused a degree of partisanship and enmity that I haven't seen in the years that I have been here."<sup>90</sup> Observers also note that "[i]ncivility became so rife in the House;"<sup>91</sup> and likewise in the Senate, "[c]ivility in this body has eroded over time," commented Senate majority leader in 2004, Bill Frist.<sup>92</sup>

What we are trying to emphasize is how groups of people coalesce and how they view out-groups; furthermore, how such in-group forces and uniformity contribute to the famous notion suggested by Irving Janis, the Groupthink Syndrome.<sup>93</sup> According to Janis, the symptoms can be divided into three types:

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<sup>89</sup> Roger H. Davidson and Walter J. Oleszek, *Congress and Its Members*, 10<sup>th</sup> ed. (Washington, DC: CQ Press), 484.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., 478.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Irving L. Janis, *Groupthink: Psychological Studies of Policy Decisions and Fiascoes*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1982).

1. Overestimations of the group: illusion of invulnerability and excessive optimism; "unquestionable belief in the group's inherent morality, inclining the members to ignore the ethical or moral consequences of their decisions;"
2. Closed-mindedness: group rationalization to discount warnings; and stereotyping of enemy leaders as too evil or too weak and stupid; and
3. Pressures toward uniformity: self-censorship; illusion of unanimity; pressure to conform; filtering out adverse information about effectiveness and morality.<sup>94</sup>

He goes on to say that his analysis can be summarized as follows:

The more amiability 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 in irrational and dehumanizing actions directed against out-groups.<sup>95</sup>

Tetlock adds to these points that:

Once people categorize themselves into groups, researchers often observe ... [that] people exaggerate intergroup differences and intragroup similarities ... [and that] people place more trust in fellow members of the in-group ... [and that] people allocate resources to in-group members in ways designed to maximize absolute gain, but they allocate resources to out-groups in ways designed to maximize the relative advantage of the in-group vis-à-vis the out-group.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> Janis, 174-175.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>96</sup> Philip E. Tetlock, "Social Psychology and World Politics," in *The Handbook of Social Psychology*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1998), chap. 35, 895.

### 3. Obedience

An important exacerbating factor stems from the high level of obedience that individuals display towards authorities. Individuals might even be sympathetic with others that are being subjected to cruel action, but the overriding factor is obedience to authority and the shifted moral of approval from that authority. The seminal work that was conducted by Stanley Milgram on obedience underscores this point. In his experiments, individuals were willing to administer what they saw as very painful electric shocks to another individual who was not performing a learning task well enough. The subjects of the experiment were getting instructions from the experimenter running the experiment to keep going on administering shocks of progressively increasing voltage to the screaming learner who seemed to be in much pain; the learner was actually a confederate working with the experimenter and he was not getting any shocks but merely acting.<sup>97</sup> Milgram sums up his conclusions as such:

This is, perhaps, the most fundamental lesson of our study: ordinary people, simply doing their jobs, and without any particular hostility on their part, can become agents in a terrible destructive process. Moreover, even when the destructive effects of their work become patently clear, and they are asked to carry out actions incompatible with fundamental standards of morality, relatively few people have the resources needed to resist authority. A variety

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<sup>97</sup> Stanley Milgram, *Obedience to Authority: An Experimental View* (New York, Harper & Row, Publishers, 1974).

of inhibitions against disobeying authority come into play and successfully keep the person in his place.<sup>98</sup>

The structure of society and the nature of upbringing children and educating them condition people to obey all the way through their early twenties; family, school, and work all constitute what Milgram calls "structures of authority" emphasizing obedience and often only allowing "discreetly expressed dissent."<sup>99</sup>

Milgram's work on obedience was conducted a relatively short time after World War II; one aspect of the research was to understand the high level of obedience and the limited resistance within the German military. According to Milgram, the individual undergoes a moral shift whereby the person's sense of duty or his success in performing duties before the authority become dominant:

Although a person acting under authority performs actions that seem to violate standards of conscience, it would not be true to say that he loses his moral sense. Instead, it acquires a radically different focus. He does not respond with a moral sentiment to the act he performs. Rather, his moral concern now shifts to a consideration of how well he is living up to the expectations that the authority has of him. In wartime, a soldier does not ask whether it is good or bad to bomb a hamlet; he does not experience shame or guilt in the destruction of a village: rather he feels pride or shame depending on how well he has performed the mission assigned to him.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Milgram, 6.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., 135-137.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., 8.

## **I. CASES**

In the course of our deductive presentation of the theory of domestic realism, we alluded briefly to some cases that exhibited departure from the expected norms and values which are at the heart of the theory. The following chapters will rely on the inductive approach and provide more in-depth examples of domestic realism at the three levels of analysis.

### III. DOMESTIC REALISM AT THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

There is a limited number of settings in which individuals belonging to security or law enforcement agencies interact with the public in such a way that misuse of official duties or deviation from expected codes of conduct take place. These include police brutality, interrogation of suspects, the treatment of individuals in custody or in captivity, and actions taken against demonstrators or rioters. In this chapter two cases will be discussed; the first is the Stanford Prison Experiment that was conducted in 1971 which represents psychological research that is related to guard-prisoner interaction, and the second is the unrest at Kent State University in 1970 that led to the death or injury of several protesting students. The point we are trying to emphasize is how threat or the perception of threat lead to reactions that were not planned nor intended. The cases show how normal average individuals put in a certain situation, role, or structure could slide into abusive behavior. It is important to point out that no implication is made that abusive or violent behavior is excusable nor are we apologetic for it, but rather that conditions leading to it are abundant unless extraordinary measures are taken to limit the effect of those conditions.

## **A. THE STANFORD PRISON EXPERIMENT**

Seldom could one devise an experiment to test individual interactions. Often such experiments are not feasible; moreover, in later years such experiments had to go through extensive scrutiny by Institutional Review Boards to assure maintaining ethics of research and the well-being of the subjects in such experiments. The Stanford Prison Experiment was one of those rare settings where such research could be conducted. And even though many might object to the conduct of such an experiment, it provides great insight into human nature and highlights abusive behavior by ordinary people with no predisposition to be abusive.

### **1. What Was the Experiment About?**

The Stanford Prison Experiment was about the study of prisoner and guard behavior in a mock-up prison that was constructed in the basement of the Psychology Department at Stanford University. The participants had responded to a newspaper ad to take part in a two-week experiment in return for a monetary compensation of \$15. The applicants were screened for psychological problems and as such those who were chosen to participate fit the description of being average normal college students. Furthermore, they were divided into prisoners and guards at random by a coin flip without any consideration for their physique or any assessment of their traits to assume either role. The experiment strove to achieve a high level of realism: starting out with the arrest of would be prisoners from

their homes by the Palo Alto city police, the search of the arrestees, the handcuffing, the reading of their rights, and the complete processing and ensuing confusion for the prisoners at the police department. At a later stage in the prison, it involved stripping of clothes, use of feminine dress-like uniforms, attaching a chain to the right ankle, use of numbers instead of names, and total control of the prisoners' environment.<sup>101</sup>

The guards also had their own khaki uniforms and wore sun glasses to hide their feelings. They were asked to maintain law and order in the prison, but no details on how to accomplish their task were given to them. As the experiment proceeded, prisoners protested the dehumanization and the bad treatment, and the guards attempted to assert their power and authority and to subdue the prisoners using several measures to the point of becoming sadistic. When confronted with attempts at rebellion or escape, the guards added to the initial measures of using uniforms, hooding, and push-ups, and sleep control new measures such as sitting or stepping on the prisoners' backs while doing push-ups. They also used a fire extinguisher which sprayed very cold carbon dioxide against rebelling prisoners, stripped them, put the leaders in solitary confinement, controlled their meals, controlled their toilet use, and made them clean toilet bowls with their bare hands.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> The description of the experiment is available in different sources; one such resource is the experiment website by Philip G. Zimbardo, "The Stanford Prison Experiment: A Simulation Study of the Psychology of Imprisonment," <http://www.prisonexorg/> (accessed February 16, 2007).

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., the Slide Show, Slides 1-42, starting at <http://www.prisonexorg/slide-1.htm> (accessed February 16, 2007).



For the purposes of domestic realism we are more concerned with guard behavior and its determinants than with prisoner behavior; and primarily with the perplexing question of why do "good" people behave in "evil" ways in certain settings. According to its primary organizer Professor Philip Zimbardo, the experiment sheds light on what he calls the "nature of Human Nature,"<sup>103</sup> or the "dark side of human nature."<sup>104</sup> The important question for the researchers after the end of the experiment was "[h]ow could intelligent, mentally healthy, 'ordinary' men become perpetrators of evil so quickly?"<sup>105</sup>

## 2. Nature of the Situation

Professor Philip Zimbardo and his colleagues stress the importance of the situation<sup>106</sup> in their explanations of the behavior during the experiment. But what characterized this situation especially for the guards as they embarked on their role? How was the situation initially portrayed to them? It is noteworthy that:

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<sup>103</sup> Philip G. Zimbardo, "The Stanford Prison Experiment: A Simulation Study of the Psychology of Imprisonment," <http://www.prisonexorg/> (accessed February 16, 2007).

<sup>104</sup> Philip G. Zimbardo, Christina Maslach, and Craig Haney, "Reflections on the Stanford Prison Experiment: Genesis, Transformations, Consequences," in *Obedience to Authority: Current Perspectives on the Milgram Paradigm*, ed. Thomas Blass (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., 2000) 196.

<sup>105</sup> Philip G. Zimbardo, "The Stanford Prison Experiment: A Simulation Study of the Psychology of Imprisonment," Slide 34 <http://www.prisonexorg/slide-34.htm> (accessed February 16, 2007).

<sup>106</sup> Philip G. Zimbardo, Christina Maslach, and Craig Haney, "Reflections on the Stanford Prison Experiment: Genesis, Transformations, Consequences," in *Obedience to Authority: Current Perspectives on the Milgram Paradigm*, ed. Thomas Blass (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., 2000) 204-205.

The guards were given no specific training on how to be guards. Instead they were free, within limits, to do whatever they thought was necessary to maintain law and order in the prison and to command the respect of the prisoners ... They were warned, however, of the potential seriousness of their mission and of the possible dangers in the situation they were about to enter, as, of course, are real guards who voluntarily take such a dangerous job.<sup>107</sup>

The guards were further told "that if the prisoners escaped the study would be terminated."<sup>108</sup> Therefore, for our purposes, the guards were given a threatening setting in which to work; their success and self-esteem were on the line; and their moral concern shifted to trying to fulfill the expectations of their higher authority as was discussed in the previous chapter on obedience. It is interesting to note that the guards internalized their role and became keen on mission success and put in extra hours even though there was no pay in return for the extra time.<sup>109</sup> Furthermore, Zimbardo himself, who was playing the role of prison Superintendent, became so focused on success and maintaining law and order and the security of his prison to the point of lashing out at a colleague who was inquiring about the experiment's academic design at the time of a rumored escape plot. Upon later reflection, Zimbardo said:

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<sup>107</sup> Philip G. Zimbardo, "The Stanford Prison Experiment: A Simulation Study of the Psychology of Imprisonment," Slide 12 <http://www.prisonexorg/slide-12.htm> (accessed February 16, 2007).

<sup>108</sup> Philip G. Zimbardo, Christina Maslach, and Craig Haney, "Reflections on the Stanford Prison Experiment: Genesis, Transformations, Consequences," 200.

<sup>109</sup> Philip G. Zimbardo and others, "The Psychology of Imprisonment: Privation, Power, and Pathology," in *Theory and Research in Abnormal Psychology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., edited by David L. Rosenhan and Perry London (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1975), 275.

To my surprise, I got really angry at him. Here I had a prison break on my hands. The security of my men and the stability of my prison was at stake, and now, I had to deal with this bleeding-heart, liberal, academic, effete dingdong who was concerned about the independent variable! It wasn't until much later that I realized how far into my prison role I was at that point - that I was thinking like a prison superintendent rather than a research psychologist.<sup>110</sup>

The situation was further characterized by its "power-laden" nature and by the need to control; the guards initially used prisoner counts at many times including at night to "exercise control over the prisoners."<sup>111</sup> The relationship evolved to the point that:

the need for the now "righteously" powerful guards to rule the obviously inferior and powerless inmates became sufficient justification to support almost any further indignity of man against man.<sup>112</sup>

In addition the researchers felt that "[e]very guard at some time engaged in these abusive, authoritarian behaviors since *power* was the major dimension on which everyone and everything was defined in this situation."<sup>113</sup>

It is worth noting that even though this was an experiment that did not involve much harm for the guards or for their careers as it would have for real guards, their

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<sup>110</sup> Philip G. Zimbardo, "The Stanford Prison Experiment: A Simulation Study of the Psychology of Imprisonment," Slide 27 <http://www.prisonexorg/slide-27.htm> (accessed February 16, 2007).

<sup>111</sup> Ibid., Slide 12-14.

<sup>112</sup> Philip G. Zimbardo and others, "The Psychology of Imprisonment: Privation, Power, and Pathology," in *Theory and Research in Abnormal Psychology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., edited by David L. Rosenhan and Perry London (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1975), 275.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., 281.

success and self-esteem pushed them to act harshly against the perceived threat that was confronting them. Following the prisoners' rebellion the threat became more defined and the division between "us" and "them" became more pronounced as

it was no longer just an experiment, no longer a simple simulation. Instead, the guards saw the prisoners as troublemakers who were out to get them, who might really cause them some harm. In response to this threat, the guards began stepping up their control, surveillance, and aggression.<sup>114</sup>

Aggression by the guards escalated daily. "It was initially in response to perceived threats," but was later "emitted simply as a 'natural' consequence of being in the uniform of a 'guard' and asserting the power inherent in that role." The use of power "intensified whenever there was any perceived threat by the prisoners." Power became "the ultimate reward." The researchers expected that as the prisoners are released "it is likely they will never want to feel so powerless again and will take action to establish and assert a sense of power."<sup>115</sup>

It is remarkable how roles and situations change people behavior as was mentioned in the previous chapter. The Stanford team had a former prisoner on the team as consultant who later acted as head of the Parole Board in the experiment. During the hearings, team members noticed

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<sup>114</sup> Philip G. Zimbardo, "The Stanford Prison Experiment: A Simulation Study of the Psychology of Imprisonment," Slide 20 <http://www.prisonexorg/slide-20.htm> (accessed February 16, 2007).

<sup>115</sup> Craig Haney, Curtis Banks, and Philip Zimbardo, "A Study of Prisoners and Guards in a Simulated Prison," *Naval Research Reviews* 26, no. 9 (September 1973):12-15.

an unexpected metamorphosis of our prison consultant as he adopted the role of head of the Parole Board. He literally became the most hated authoritarian official imaginable, so much so that when it was over he felt sick at who he had become - his own tormentor who had previously rejected his annual parole requests for 16 years when he was a prisoner.<sup>116</sup>

One should not however lose sight of the fact that there was indeed individual differentiation. Guards during the experiment were divided into three groups: good with the prisoners; tough but fair; and hostile and innovative in its humiliation techniques. But "[e]ven the 'good' guards felt helpless to intervene."<sup>117</sup> This again underscores the fact that not all people have the same threshold for threats nor the same severity of the response once a certain threshold is reached; but it also shows the limited ability to interfere to correct wrongful situations or excesses in the face of overwhelming circumstances.

### **3. The Experiment and Real Life Situations**

According to the researchers, the most surprising outcome is:

the relative ease with which sadistic behavior could be elicited from normal, non-sadistic people, and the extent of the emotional

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<sup>116</sup> Philip G. Zimbardo, "The Stanford Prison Experiment: A Simulation Study of the Psychology of Imprisonment," Slide 32 <http://www.prisonexorg/slide-32.htm> (accessed February 16, 2007).

<sup>117</sup> Ibid., Slide 33.

disturbance which emerged in young men selected precisely on the basis of their emotional stability.<sup>118</sup>

Reflecting on the experiment in a recent publication, one of the lessons Zimbardo and his colleagues learned from the experiment was that it has "considerable generalizability power" along with other psychological research, such as Milgram's work on obedience. Indeed, "total situations" can "transform human nature in ways that challenge our sense of the stability and consistency of individual personality, character, and morality." They go on to add:

Thus any deed that any human being has ever done, however horrible, is possible for any of us to do—under the right or wrong situational pressures. That knowledge does not excuse evil; rather, it democratizes it, shares its blame among ordinary participants, rather than demonizes it.<sup>119</sup>

In real life situations the guards stand to lose more if they allow the threats to overtake them. Failure or the prospect thereof affects their task accomplishment, mission success, ego and self-esteem, image before colleagues, job security, and the control of the "bad guys" or the evil and inferior others. As we mentioned in the previous chapter,

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<sup>118</sup> Philip G. Zimbardo and others, "The Psychology of Imprisonment: Privation, Power, and Pathology," in *Theory and Research in Abnormal Psychology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., edited by David L. Rosenhan and Perry London (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1975), 283.

<sup>119</sup> Philip G. Zimbardo, Christina Maslach, and Craig Haney, "Reflections on the Stanford Prison Experiment: Genesis, Transformations, Consequences," in *Obedience to Authority: Current Perspectives on the Milgram Paradigm*, ed. Thomas Blass (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., 2000) 206-207.

actions are further driven by the need to control the situation, increase predictability, and reduce uncertainty.

William Saletan argues that other factors were left out from the controlled experimental setting; he mentions three such factors which serve to accentuate perceptions and reactions. The first of these factors is personality, namely that the participants in the experiment were screened and found to be physically and mentally stable in comparison to real life individuals who do not go through the same process. The second is race, because all the participants, except for one Asian-American, were all white Americans, which does not carry to many real-life situations. Third, supervisors' input, which is the role institutions play in directing individuals or in creating the situation in which individuals have to function. He further stresses the fact that the situation that people are put in should not be used as an excuse to absolve their excesses and wrongdoings—an argument that domestic realism embraces.<sup>120</sup>

From a domestic realism perspective, the Stanford Prison Experiment shows that in the face of threats, individuals, who were actually screened for stability and who came from a democratic society that values individual rights, became quite abusive. The situation affected their behavior as they tried to lessen the threat, control their environment, increase predictability and decrease uncertainty. The fact that this was not a regular job for the guards that they risked losing shows that self-esteem and success is a major driving factor in meeting threats.

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<sup>120</sup> William Saletan, "Situationist Ethics: The Stanford Prison Experiment Doesn't Explain Abu Ghraib," slate.com (May 12, 2004), <http://www.slate.com/id/2100419> (accessed February 24, 2007).

The threat posed by the prisoners, their characterization as an out-group, and the fear of failure adversely affected the guards' behavior.

#### **B. UNREST AT KENT STATE: THIRTEEN SECONDS AND THIRTEEN STUDENTS**

The events that took place on the campus of Kent State University in Ohio during the period of May 1 to May 4, 1970, were unprecedented. Those events culminated in the unfortunate incident of National Guardsmen firing live ammunition at protesting students. The shooting that lasted for thirteen seconds<sup>121</sup> resulted in the injury of thirteen students,<sup>122</sup> four of them fatally. According to William A. Gordon this was a:

rare incident in American history in which American soldiers killed American citizens who were trying to petition their government for a redress of their grievances. Killings of civilians by governments or armies in Beijing, South Africa, or in unstable Central American countries might not seem that unusual. However, in this country, we generally settle our differences in a somewhat more civilized manner.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> The duration of the shootings is well documented in several references, one such reference is: Joe Eszterhas and Michael D. Roberts, *Thirteen Seconds: Confrontation at Kent State* (Cornwall, NY: The Cornwall Press, 1970).

<sup>122</sup> The number, names, maps, and distances of the injured students is also well documented in several references, one such reference is: Peter Davies and The Board of Church and Society of The United Methodist Church, *The Truth about Kent State: A Challenge to the American Conscience* (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1973), 52-57.

<sup>123</sup> William A. Gordon, *The Fourth of May: Killings and Coverups at Kent State* (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1990), 17-18.



## 1. Causes of Campus Unrest

The direct cause of student protests at Kent State and other institutions of higher learning was the decision a few days earlier by President Nixon to send U.S. forces into the country of Cambodia during the course of the Vietnam War. In denunciation of the decision, there were many student protests, and the students at Kent State protested and even held a rally to bury the Constitution claiming: "If a nation can launch a war on Cambodia without declaring it, the Constitution as we knew it is really dead."<sup>124</sup>

Student protests, however, were not new; they had their origins further back in history, and in the modern era were propelled by events that took place at the University of California at Berkeley in 1964. The report of The President's Commission on Campus Unrest called those events the "Berkeley Revolt" and the "Berkeley Invention." This revolt, the Commission argues in its report, did not take place in a vacuum, was driven by the events of the 1950's and 1960's, and expanded to other locations because of media coverage.<sup>125</sup>

The environment in which these protests took place was characterized by opposition to the war in Indochina with the increased possibilities for young people of being drafted into the war effort, and was further driven by the activism of the civil rights movement of the 1960's. The President's Commission Report sums up the motivations by stating: "[i]ts

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<sup>124</sup> James A. Michener, *Kent State: What Happened and Why* (New York: Random House, 1971) 13-14.

<sup>125</sup> The President's Commission on Campus Unrest, *The Report of The President's Commission on Campus Unrest* (New York: Arno Press, 1970) 20-28.

focus was on the unresolved issues of war and peace, on civil rights, on the quality of education, and on the plight of the poor." One aspect of the opposition to the war was the demand to end defense research and to eliminate the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) at university campuses including Kent State.<sup>126</sup>

## **2. Unfolding of Events and the Official Response**

On Friday May 1<sup>st</sup>, the two rallies held at Kent State were peaceful, including the act of burial of the Constitution. Later in the evening, youth gathered in and outside Kent bars; some were discussing the extension of the war to Cambodia, and some started to throw objects at passing police cars. The police could not control the situation without enforcements; a bonfire was started downtown, and trashing of the downtown area began. The mayor declared a state of emergency and contacted the governor's office. The crowd eventually dispersed on its own.<sup>127</sup>

On Saturday May 2<sup>nd</sup> and as a precautionary measure, the mayor declared a curfew and stopped sale of alcohol; he further asked the governor's office to send elements of the National Guard to Kent. Students gathered in Kent State that evening as it was not subject to curfew. The number grew to about 1,000, and several instigated to burn the wooden ROTC building which was a symbol of the school's support of the war; the building was indeed set to fire at 8:45. The students were seen as threatening and destructive. Guard

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<sup>126</sup> The President's Commission on Campus Unrest, 21-22, 34.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid., 239-243.

troops arrived in town about 9:30 with the flames lighting up the area. The troops moved into the campus without permission.<sup>128</sup>

The campus was initially quiet on Sunday May 3<sup>rd</sup> and school officials worked to maintain calm. The governor, however, vowed to "eradicate the problem." As students started to gather in the evening, a curfew was declared and tear gas was used by the Guard to disperse the crowd. The situation worsened, and no less than three students suffered injuries as they were bayoneted.<sup>129</sup>

The tragic events of Monday, May 4<sup>th</sup>, started with Guard units being on campus with little sleep, and students planning a noon rally to protest among other things the presence of the Guard. By 11:45, 500 students had gathered; they were asked to disperse and tear gas was used. The guardsmen marched down Blanket Hill through the crowd which kept reforming around the guardsmen. They later withdrew and their commanding officer wrongly thought they had run out of tear gas; some students were aggressive and used insulting and threatening language and threw rocks at the guards. No account is clear on how order broke down, but shots were fired for thirteen seconds killing four students and injuring nine others.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> The President's Commission on Campus Unrest, 243-253.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid., 253-259.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid., 259-274.

### 3. Contending Explanations

The reason that we include this incident under individual level analysis is that subsequent investigation showed there was no order by the Guard command to fire at the students; in other words, it was a reaction by the individual troops that was labeled as "instinctive" and might have been due to their military training.<sup>131</sup> It is worth mentioning that none of the guards were convicted in the following trial.

There are of course contending explanations for what took place at Kent State, with one side arguing that the response was because of threats to the guards, and the other side talking about cover-ups and conspiracies. Many argue that the distance between the shooters and the injured, ranging from 71 to 730 feet, shows that the students did not pose a threat to the troops. Furthermore, a summary of a Justice Department investigation states that shooting was not necessary, the guards were not surrounded nor threatened, they only sustained minimal injuries, and they still had tear gas.<sup>132</sup>

But on the other hand, from the Guard's perspective, "the attitude of the crowd ... was menacing and vicious;" moreover, the public initially accepted the view that actions taken were inevitable on the basis of official statements made by a Guard general and later by the President, until the media reported details and published

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<sup>131</sup> Joe Eszterhas and Michael D. Roberts, *Thirteen Seconds: Confrontation at Kent State* (Cornwall, NY: The Cornwall Press, 1970), 281.

<sup>132</sup> Davies, 3, 5, 48, 52-55.

photos of the event.<sup>133</sup> Disbelief of aberrations by the public unless visual proof is presented is in line with the notions of domestic realism presented earlier. At a later time, the President's Commission on Campus Unrest reported that it values the work of peace officers, but warned against "dangerous and sometimes fatal instances of unnecessary harshness and illegal violence by law enforcement officers." The report called for extra training "to deal with campus disorders firmly, justly, and humanely" and "to avoid both uncontrolled and excessive response." It further calls for the avoidance of sending forces armed for war and killing to a disturbance site, for further National Guard training in controlling civil disorders, and for equipping its units with protection equipment and non-lethal weapons.<sup>134</sup>

#### **4. Putting Ourselves in the Guard's Shoes**

The argument against the Guard is that the guardsmen were not threatened by the distant students to fire their rifles; that there was no riot at the time tear gas was used; that the Guard violated the students' constitutional rights to assemble peacefully; and that they used deadly force following their questionable march down Blanket Hill.<sup>135</sup>

But on the basis of our previous discussion of threats for the purposes of domestic realism, one could also argue

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<sup>133</sup> Davies.

<sup>134</sup> The President's Commission on Campus Unrest, 10-12, 288.

<sup>135</sup> Davies, 52-59; The President's Commission on Campus Unrest, 288.

that even though the guardsmen might not have been 'physically' threatened, the situation in general was 'perceived' as being quite threatening. The combination of large crowds, rock throwing, defiance, refusal to disperse, insulting language, as well as the previous trashing of the town and arson especially of the ROTC building certainly are all factors that do contribute to the notion of a perceived threatening setting. According to our previous discussion on threats which is based on psychological research, several factors contribute to this perception of threat: loss of control and lack of predictability, loss of self esteem by members of a proud military unit, inability to disperse a crowd of teenage students with all the tear gas and rifles at their disposal, and the subsequent effect of infantilizing the guards and reducing their potency to that of children according to the aforementioned reporting by Milburn and Watman. This is further amplified by the feeling that the students were widely perceived as an out-group that is anti-military, as evident by the apparent protest, the chanting, and the burning of the ROTC building.

The shootings are certainly tragic and not excusable, but we can trace the psychology leading to it. In a video documentary done in 2001, interviews were conducted with students and guards 30 years following the events of 1970. Students on the one hand felt that they had actually surrounded the guards; and guards on the other hand seemed to be still struggling in the search for answers; one of them, who seemed quite saddened by what happened and about to cry, was guessing that it might have been the fear of

being overrun and the desire to retreat safely.<sup>136</sup> Again here, and in line with domestic realism, we see that the situation or the structure imposes certain realities that give rise to subjective perceptions of threat, reduce trust of the other side, and produce what seem to be inexplicable norm-violating reflex reactions to the threat. The reactions are carried out to assure safety, security, and mission success, to maintain self-esteem, to control the environment, and to achieve predictability and reduce uncertainty.

There is agreement that the gesture that the guards took of kneeling and pointing their guns was not appropriate.<sup>137</sup> But according to Philip Tetlock, stress "impairs complex information processing" and decision making "especially in crises, may be more driven by wishful thinking, self-justification, and the ebb and flow of human emotions."<sup>138</sup> Looking back at the event, one could reason that one of the guards reached the tipping point of insecurity and snapped. His "first shot may have touched off a chain reaction."<sup>139</sup> This is nowadays known in police circles as sympathy firing or contagious firing and is caused by experiencing what is called associative threat assumption. In this mode of behavior the firing by one law enforcement officer leads the others to fire because they

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<sup>136</sup> Documentary DVD *13 Seconds, Kent State: The Day the War Came Home* (2005; Harmony Entertainment Management Inc.) which is Companion DVD to Philip Caputo, *13 Seconds: A Look Back at the Kent State Shootings* (New York: Chamberlain Bros, 2005).

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> Philip E. Tetlock, "Social Psychology and World Politics," in *The Handbook of Social Psychology*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1998), 883.

<sup>139</sup> The President's Commission on Campus Unrest, 284-285.

all feel threatened.<sup>140</sup> As he was talking with students at the time, one of the Kent professors felt that the guardsmen were "scared to death ... a bunch of summertime soldiers. They're not professionals. They're scared kids."<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> Thomas J. Aveni, "Officer-Involved Shootings: What We Didn't Know Has Hurt Us," *The Police Policy Studies Council*, [http://www.theppsc.org/Staff\\_Views/Aveni/OIS.pdf](http://www.theppsc.org/Staff_Views/Aveni/OIS.pdf) (accessed February 17, 2007); Thomas J. Aveni, "Critical Analysis of Contemporary Police Training," *The Police Policy Studies Council*, [http://www.theppsc.org/Staff\\_Views/Aveni/Police-Training.pdf](http://www.theppsc.org/Staff_Views/Aveni/Police-Training.pdf) (accessed February 17, 2007); another reference to term available at [http://www.agonybooth.com/forum/post.asp?method=ReplyQuote&REPLY\\_ID=105470&TOPIC\\_ID=4568&FORUM\\_ID=6](http://www.agonybooth.com/forum/post.asp?method=ReplyQuote&REPLY_ID=105470&TOPIC_ID=4568&FORUM_ID=6) (accessed February 17, 2007).

<sup>141</sup> The President's Commission on Campus Unrest, 278.



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#### IV. DOMESTIC REALISM AT THE INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL

In the following discussion on the manifestations of domestic realism at the institutional level, examples will be discussed to show how certain government institutions act without a state-wide authorization in order to protect what they perceive as the national security of the state. The examples to be discussed are those having to do with experiments conducted on humans, especially the human radiation experiments that were sponsored by the Atomic Energy Commission, the predecessor to the Department of Energy, and by the Department of Defense.

It is indeed inconceivable that such experiments were ever conducted in the United States with the high value the country places on individual rights and liberties, and further in light of the recent memory of experiments on humans by the Nazis during the Second World War which were prosecuted mostly by Americans and led to the Nuremberg Code. The Code was supposed to regulate and streamline the conduct of experiments involving humans in order to maintain ethics of research. But from a domestic realism perspective, without being apologetic for the experiments, and without trying to excuse the deeds, one has to know where the people directing and conducting the experiments were coming from, and we need to put ourselves in their shoes. For us looking back in retrospect, these experiments do not meet the ethical standards applied today, but one has to remember that these people had just lived the horrors of the total war environment of the Second World War where upwards of

fifty five million people had lost their lives and tens of millions were injured. They had just witnessed the dawn of the nuclear age and realized that there is this prospect of a nuclear war that threatened the annihilation of cities and large masses of people. The need to understand the effects of nuclear weapons and the situation that administrators and physicians found themselves in justified to them the conduction of those experiments. It was again the power of the situation they found themselves in, and the adoption of the utilitarian approach of benefiting the largest number of people which appears to have motivated them.

What is peculiar about these experiments is that the subjects of the experiments were neither the enemy nor sympathizing with the enemy. They were neither subversive elements nor were they acting against the state. Surprisingly, most of them were patients, average citizens, and soldiers who were actually the ones to protect the state in the face of danger. The experiments provide a clear case of domestic realism according to which the external threat induces a stark departure of domestic behavior from the espoused norms and ethics of a society, which in turn leads to grave consequences for citizens of that society.

#### **A. THE NUREMBERG CODE**

After the end of the Second World War, twenty Nazi doctors and three other officials were tried at Nuremberg for their role in experiments on humans. The trials and the adoption of what is known as the Nuremberg Code influenced further experiments as after

Nuremberg those who would conduct human experiments in the name of national security, including those intending to uphold democratic values in the face of tyranny, were forced to reckon with the grotesqueries committed by the Nazi doctors.<sup>142</sup>

Second to the ancient code of ethics known as the Hippocratic Oath, the Nuremberg Code evolved to include ten points. The primary requirement is the informed consent of the subject so that the subject may volunteer after having full knowledge of the nature of the experiment and the dangers involved.<sup>143</sup>

During the Second World War, the Japanese also experimented on humans, but the "Japanese exploitation of tens of thousands of people in China in horrid biological warfare experiments has received precious little attention in the West."<sup>144</sup>

## **B. THE SETTING**

The title of Eileen Welsome's book *The Plutonium Files: America's Secret Medical Experiments in the Cold War*<sup>145</sup> summarizes succinctly part of what was done in the experiments. First, the experiments were conducted during the Cold War which entailed the possibility and the threat of nuclear war. Second, they involved the use of radioactive

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<sup>142</sup> Jonathan D. Moreno, *Undue Risk: Secret State Experiments on Humans* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 54.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, 79-80.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, 102.

<sup>145</sup> Eileen Welsome, *The Plutonium Files: America's Secret Medical Experiments in the Cold War* (New York: The Dial Press, 1999).

sources to study their effects on humans. Third, they were conducted in secret initially because of national security considerations, but later to avoid embarrassment.<sup>146</sup> One would expect, however, that besides embarrassment there would have been a public outcry and a loss of office for those responsible.

It is worth noting how perspectives change with the change in circumstances; Jonathan Moreno states that during the initial stages of research and as the military was dealing with proposals to govern the experiments,

the medical and military critics in the Pentagon were opposed to any written policy that threatened to restrict human experiments for national security needs, or that questioned the moral integrity of physicians and commanding officers and their ability to make tough ethical calls.<sup>147</sup>

At a later stage, however, and during the investigations by the so called Advisory Committee in which he was a staffer,

no one was more eager to get the truth out than the uniformed officers who were our contacts in the Pentagon. They were as outraged as anyone else at the thought that soldiers, sailors, or airmen might have been abused in government experiments - perhaps more, given their sense of comradeship with previous generations of armed forces personnel.<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>146</sup> Eileen Welsome, *The Plutonium Files: America's Secret Medical Experiments in the Cold War* (New York: The Dial Press, 1999), 469.

<sup>147</sup> Jonathan D. Moreno, *Undue Risk: Secret State Experiments on Humans* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 168.

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*, XII.

### C. THE REVELATION

Several people attempted to investigate the experiments on humans and to write about them in spite of the secrecy. Martha Stephens tried to investigate total body irradiation experiments at the Cincinnati General Hospital in Ohio in the 1960s.<sup>149</sup> But it was not until Eileen Welsome wrote a series of articles for *The Albuquerque Tribune* on the experiments that an official investigation was initiated. In 1994, President Clinton formed a "special commission that was to investigate allegations of government-sponsored radiation research on unknowing citizens during the cold war."<sup>150</sup> The formation of the Advisory Committee on Human Radiation Experiments by President Clinton was preceded by disclosures from the Department of Energy Secretary Hazel O'Leary. She discussed in a press conference aspects of the nuclear program and the experiments with the aim of greater openness following the end of the Cold War.<sup>151</sup>

After receiving the report of the Advisory Committee, President Clinton offered an apology, and

He admitted that thousands of government-sponsored radiation experiments took place at hospitals, universities, and military bases throughout the United States during the Cold War. "While most of the tests were ethical by any standards, some were unethical, not by today's standards, but by the standards of the time in

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<sup>149</sup> Martha Stephens, *The Treatment: The Story of Those Who Died in the Cincinnati Radiation Tests* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002).

<sup>150</sup> Jonathan D. Moreno, *Undue Risk: Secret State Experiments on Humans* (New York: Routledge, 2001), IX.

<sup>151</sup> Eileen Welsome, *The Plutonium Files: America's Secret Medical Experiments in the Cold War* (New York: The Dial Press, 1999), 424-425, 447.

which they were conducted. They failed both the test of our national values and the test of humanity."<sup>152</sup>

#### **D. THE EXPERIMENTS**

Thousands of experiments involving different aspects of radioactive substances and nuclear blasts were conducted. For example, ninety people sick with cancer were "irradiated over their whole bodies as if they were soldiers in nuclear war" at the Cincinnati General Hospital in Ohio.<sup>153</sup>

To assess the effects of plutonium which at the time was feared for being carcinogenic, "eighteen unsuspecting patients in hospital wards throughout the country were secretly injected with the cancer-causing substance." The amounts used were very small, but no one knew what their effect was at the time.<sup>154</sup>

In other experiments involving radioactive iron, 829 pregnant women were given a drink containing the iron that was described as being a nutritious cocktail at a prenatal clinic at the Vanderbilt University Hospital.<sup>155</sup>

Experiments aiming at indoctrination of troops, psychological observation, and flash blindness assessment were conducted by placing troops close to the site of an

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<sup>152</sup> Welsome, 469.

<sup>153</sup> Martha Stephens, *The Treatment: The Story of Those Who Died in the Cincinnati Radiation Tests* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002).

<sup>154</sup> Eileen Welsome, *The Plutonium Files: America's Secret Medical Experiments in the Cold War* (New York: The Dial Press, 1999), front flap, 482.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*, 219-228.

above ground nuclear explosion. More than 200,000 troops were involved in what became known as the "atomic soldiers," or later "atomic veterans."<sup>156</sup>

Other experiments related to tissue analysis involved the collection of "body parts of more than 15,000 humans ... In countless instances, scientists took the corpses and organs of deceased people without getting permission from the next of kin."<sup>157</sup>

Various groups of people were subjected to experiments involving radioactive tracers; they included impaired children at institutions.<sup>158</sup> Prisoners were subjected to experiments involving chemical agents with the aim of hardening the skin against irritants on the battle field.<sup>159</sup>

Eileen Welsome, in her analysis of the attitudes of the scientists involved, reports:

Working behind their security fences, the scientists developed a them-against-us mentality. This attitude was often manifested in a distrust of the public and disdain for scientific opponents. The "cleared" researchers even began to think alike, which accounts in part for the remarkably similar statements issued whenever a controversy erupted.<sup>160</sup>

This again is in line with the notions of domestic realism, specifically the supremacy of righteousness and work for the greater good, the trusted networks of "us" versus "them" and the in-group versus the out-group.

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<sup>156</sup> Moreno, 200-201; Welsome, 441-442.

<sup>157</sup> Welsome, 299-300.

<sup>158</sup> Moreno, 213-216.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid., 226-230.

<sup>160</sup> Welsome, 484.



There were numerous other experiments related to biological warfare effects. "During the period 1949-1969 more than two hundred open-air tests of U.S. vulnerability to biological warfare attacks took place. Sites for these tests included Panama City, Florida; Washington National Airport, Washington, D.C.; Oahu, Hawaii; Minneapolis, Minnesota; and St. Louis, Missouri." The used substances involved what was believed to be "harmless" bacteria and zinc cadmium sulfide which was also believed to have no health hazards at the time; the public was not informed of the tests. The city of San Francisco was also sprayed from an offshore boat, and the subway tunnels in New York City were also studied for dispersal patterns.<sup>161</sup>

In agreement with the tragic nature of domestic realism and the inevitability of adverse behavior in the face of threats, Jonathan Moreno expects that similar research will continue. "Short of a miraculous and fundamental change in the human personality, nations and political movements will always be interested in novel weapons that might gain them at least a temporary strategic advantage over their adversaries." To perfect such weapons and to counter their effects human subjects will be needed. He further adds that "[n]or will such research only be done by countries or leaders we might find of dubious moral standing ... Even the esteemed Nelson Mandela, when he learned about the South African biological weapons development program, is alleged not to have ordered its dissolution."<sup>162</sup>

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<sup>161</sup> Moreno, 233-235.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid., 294.

## V. DOMESTIC REALISM AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

The actions taken by the French Government in Algeria from 1954 to 1962 provide an example of domestic realism at the national level. France is the country where the French revolution took place; a revolution that provided the impetus for many freedom movements worldwide; the country is also steeped in a proud democratic tradition. Furthermore, during the late 1950s, the memory of the Nazi occupation of France was still fresh in the minds of the French. All this, however, did not prevent the adoption of harsh measures, including torture, when faced with threats in Algeria. Of course, one could look at the French presence in Algeria in one of two ways. First, as a colonial presence during which the actions taken still exhibited a stark departure from what would be expected from a democratic country that was recently liberated from occupation. Second, the presence in Algeria, as was seen by the French themselves, was a presence on French territory because they considered Algeria an integral part of the country; as such the actions seem even worse in the sense that atrocities were committed against citizens of the state in what might be considered either a civil war or a war of secession. France always enjoyed a high standard on issues involving human rights, but as a clear case of domestic realism in the face of threats, the moral guard was down and morality certainly took a second place to security and territorial integrity. Unfortunately, the measures employed were quite severe and

unexpected, thereby "tarnishing and weakening France's claim to epitomize 'Western civilization' and carry the banner of the 'Rights of Man'."163

#### **A. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

France conquered and colonized Algeria which was under Ottoman rule in 1830. France further made it a French territory when the Constitution of the Second Republic declared it an integral part of France in 1848.<sup>164</sup> Algeria remained under French rule until it was granted independence in 1962 after mounting international pressure and following a vicious war that lasted for eight years. "The Algerian War (1954-1962) - which until 1999 was denied by France as a war or just known as the 'War with no Name' - in fact saw fighting on a massive scale."<sup>165</sup>

Expectedly, Algeria was never integrated into France. After all, the Algerians were of a different culture, religion, and ethnicity. Martha Crenshaw states that "France was a democracy, but the majority of Algerians were excluded from its benefits despite the legal fiction of 'integration.'"<sup>166</sup> Following decades of French rule, the Algerians called for their liberty; a cause that was championed by different groups including the National Liberation Front (FLN); but France would not give up Algeria

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<sup>163</sup> Martin S. Alexander and J. F. V. Keiger, eds., *France and the Algerian War 1954-62: Strategy, Operations and Diplomacy* (London: Frank Cass, 2002), 19.

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*, ix.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>166</sup> Martha Crenshaw Hutchinson, *Revolutionary Terrorism: The FLN in Algeria, 1954-1962* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1978), 129.

that easily. Furthermore, as domestic realism argues, this out-group status of Algerians contributed to the adoption of the harsh measures used against them.

## **B. ATTACHMENT TO ALGERIA**

Over their long presence in Algeria which spanned more than 130 years, the French developed a strong attachment to the country, and the number of French as well as other Europeans in Algeria increased steadily over time. According to George Kelly, "this population was simply under no circumstances prepared to leave; it had literally nowhere to go, no other place where it could feel at home."<sup>167</sup> He further states that the French developed a fascination with Algeria and the beauty of the land:

Above all, they discovered a curious wonderland of its own dimensions that seemed strangely suited to be called "France." This "Algerian intoxication" struck people on the Left and people on the Right, and was far from being an artificial excuse.<sup>168</sup>

The discovery of oil in Algeria in 1956 and the shipping of its first supply to France in 1958<sup>169</sup> might have added an economic motive to the attachment.

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<sup>167</sup> George Armstrong Kelly, *Lost Soldiers: The French Army and Empire in Crisis 1947-1962* (Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1965), 145.

<sup>168</sup> George Armstrong Kelly, *Lost Soldiers*, 145.

<sup>169</sup> Martin S. Alexander and J. F. V. Keiger, eds., *France and the Algerian War 1954-62: Strategy, Operations and Diplomacy* (London: Frank Cass, 2002), xii.

### C. THE ALGERIAN WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

In light of what might be considered the inferior status of the vast majority of the Algerian population under a basically colonial rule, a revolution leading to an all-out war was bound to take place. George Kelly sums up the perspectives of the warring parties: "[f]or the nationalists, the Algerian War was, officially, a 'war of reconquest' against the colonialists ... For the French Army, reeling from Indochina, it was the war that, even against the will of God or man, could not be lost."<sup>170</sup>

Of course, the French Army in Algeria represented the French government and was observing the state policy of keeping Algeria French. Speaking to parliament following the start of the insurrection in November 1954, the prime minister at the time, Mendes France, said:

Let no one expect of us any circumspection with respect to the sedition or any compromise with it. We don't compromise when it comes to defending internal peace of the nation and the republic's integrity. The departments of Algeria are part of the Republic, they have been French a long time. Between it [the Algerian population] and the mainland, no secession is conceivable ... Never will France, never will any parliament nor any government, yield on this fundamental principle.<sup>171</sup>

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<sup>170</sup> George Armstrong Kelly, *Lost Soldiers*, 145.

<sup>171</sup> John Talbott, *The War Without a Name: France in Algeria, 1954-1962* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1980), 39.

The minister of the interior at the time and later president of France, Francois Mitterrand, "was equally adamant. 'Algeria,' he said, announcing the theme to be sounded endlessly in parliament and press, 'is France.'"<sup>172</sup>

#### D. FALL FROM GRACE

The war was costly to both sides; but with a clear disparity in military power and resources, one can expect the Algerian nationalists to have suffered the most. The French army had the training, the tanks, the air force, and a military presence totaling 500,000. Algeria is known regionally as "the land of the million martyrs;" indeed, the Encyclopedia Americana states that "[l]iberation had come at a high price: estimates range from 300,000 to 1 million dead as a result of the war."<sup>173</sup>

But it was not the casualties that brought infamy to the "War Without a Name." It was the pervasive, "organized,"<sup>174</sup> and "institutionalized"<sup>175</sup> use of torture by the French authorities. Reservists gave lengthy accounts of

the army's uses of the sun, of beatings, of water and deprivation of water, of splinters pushed under the nails of fingers and toes, of lighted cigarettes pressed to the flesh, of bottles rammed into vaginas, of bodies twisted and contorted by means of pulleys and ropes. But the appliance that evidently impressed the reservists

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<sup>172</sup> Talbott.

<sup>173</sup> The Encyclopedia Americana: International Edition, 1999 ed., s.v. "Algeria."

<sup>174</sup> Alf Andrew Heggoy, *Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in Algeria* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1972), 242.

<sup>175</sup> George Armstrong Kelly, *Lost Soldiers*, 200, 203.

most, perhaps because of its ubiquity, was the hand-cranked field generator, or "magneto." Torture by means of electric shock was simple and efficient.<sup>176</sup>

John Talbott quotes American writer Paul Zweig as saying that a "moral numbness" developed towards death, torture, and humiliation. He further quotes the French writer Simone de Beauvoir as saying: "[o]ne gets used to it. But in 1957, the burns in the face, on the sexual organs, the nails torn out, the impalements, the shrieks, the convulsion, outraged me."<sup>177</sup>

Other measures besides torture and the large scale killing of people included: summary execution, reprisals, "accidents of war,"<sup>178</sup> and the disappearance of thousands of prisoners.<sup>179</sup> Moreover, there was the indiscriminate killing of thousands of villagers and the wiping out of whole villages.<sup>180</sup> In addition, there was the "socially and economically devastating relocations of millions of Algerians to resettlement camps."<sup>181</sup> There does not seem to be any indication that these actions were state-ordered, but from a domestic realism perspective it is analyzed under the state level because, as in any colonial setting, the French Army represented the French government, and was carrying out

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<sup>176</sup> John Talbott, *The War Without a Name: France in Algeria, 1954-1962* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1980), 92.

<sup>177</sup> John Talbott, *The War Without a Name*, 93.

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid.*, 90-93.

<sup>179</sup> Alf Andrew Heggoy, *Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in Algeria* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1972), 240-241.

<sup>180</sup> David C. Gordon, *The Passing of French Algeria* (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), 63.

<sup>181</sup> Martin S. Alexander and J. F. V. Keiger, eds., *France and the Algerian War 1954-62: Strategy, Operations and Diplomacy* (London: Frank Cass, 2002), 21.

as its instrument the state policy of keeping Algeria French. Thus, even though the government (under Mollet) established a committee of inquiry into torture charges, the "government showed that it was not eager to have the committee find out anything."<sup>182</sup>

It is worth noting that the threats posed by the war in Algeria affected not only Algerians, but native French intellectuals and the behavior in mainland France too, in accordance with domestic realism. The disappearance of antiwar activist Professor Maurice Audin while in the custody of the paratroopers led to what became known as the Audin Affair. The later revelation that he and another European by the name of Henri Alleg "had been tortured at the hands of the French army shook the conscience of France."<sup>183</sup> The war also led to government restrictions on the freedom of the press and to censorship.<sup>184</sup> As was mentioned, violence spread to the mainland. One such example is the "[m]assacre in Paris by French police and security services of 200 peaceful anti-OAS Algerian protestors;" the OAS was "the secretive and violently extremist" group supporting a French Algeria.<sup>185</sup>

The narrative given above affirms the claims of domestic realism; namely, that the democratic system of a country, its culture, and the values that the country

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<sup>182</sup> John Talbott, *The War Without a Name*, 113.

<sup>183</sup> Alf Andrew Heggoy, *Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in Algeria* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1972), 237; John Talbott, *The War Without a Name*, 108-112.

<sup>184</sup> John Talbott, *The War Without a Name*, 106-107.

<sup>185</sup> Martin S. Alexander and J. F. V. Keiger, eds., *France and the Algerian War 1954-62: Strategy, Operations and Diplomacy* (London: Frank Cass, 2002), xvi.



espouses do not moderate its reaction to threats. In the particular case of France, the recent bitter occupation of its land also did not serve to offset the harsh measures employed in quelling the Algerian uprising in a land that France itself was occupying at the time. The policies in Algeria did upset the French conscience and evoke cognitive dissonance between the ideals held and the acts perpetrated. Nonetheless, it took eight years of war, the pressure of world opinion that recognized Algeria's right to be independent in the United Nations General Assembly in December 1960,<sup>186</sup> and the strong presence of General Charles de Gaulle who spoke early in 1960 of an Algerian Algeria.<sup>187</sup> He "abandoned the policy of keeping Algeria French, entered into negotiations with the Algerian revolutionaries, and relieved France of a ruinous obsession."<sup>188</sup> It is worth mentioning that there was a failed putsch attempt headed by four French generals in Algeria to overturn the democratically-elected president, General de Gaulle and his policies; there were also subsequent assassination attempts.<sup>189</sup>

Along the lines of domestic realism that there is bound to be a deviation in behavior under threat even in a liberal democratic state, George Kelly states, but unfortunately with an apologetic tone, that:

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<sup>186</sup> Alexander and Keiger, xv.

<sup>187</sup> Ibid.

<sup>188</sup> John Talbott, *The War Without a Name*, xiii.

<sup>189</sup> Alexander and Keiger, xvi, xviii.

The shallowest argument was the one, sometimes proclaimed by Western "liberals," which held that the "higher" European civilization was above such baseness and obliged to give battle under gentlemanly rules.<sup>190</sup>

Affirming the deviation in behavior under threat that is predicted by domestic realism regardless of culture and the state's political system, John Talbott refers to the first essay on the war by Pierre-Henri Simon in which he

took the position that in Algeria France had fallen away from the behavior every citizen of a liberal-democratic state had a right to expect and demand as a condition of his own membership in it. France was historically the champion of human rights, the liberator of oppressed peoples, the civilizer of less advanced societies. The use of torture in Algeria betrayed this tradition and threatened the existence of liberal democracy itself.<sup>191</sup>

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<sup>190</sup> George Armstrong Kelly, *Lost Soldiers*, 204-205.

<sup>191</sup> John Talbott, *The War Without a Name*, 102.

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## VI. CONCLUSION

### A. THE TRAGEDY OF DOMESTIC REALISM

The theory of domestic realism was introduced using a dual track approach. The first is eclectic and deductive; this track adapted concepts from diverse fields, especially from International Relations theory, to build a theory of state behavior at the domestic level under the perception of threat. The second track was inductive and made use of cases and observations to enforce the theory's generalization. International Relations theory, and realism in particular, provided two major concepts: the similar behavior of actors across cultures and political systems under threat, and the primacy of security and self-preservation over morality when faced with threatening situations.

The theory of domestic realism highlights the adverse domestic behavior of states and sub-state actors, namely institutions and individuals, under a perceived high level of internal or external threat. Utilizing the concepts adapted from realism, the theory assumes that all peoples under severe threats act in a similar manner and that the primary concern for security and self-preservation supersedes any ethical considerations and legal implications that restrain and condition behavior under normal circumstances. The previous theory-building chapters and the following case studies show that the actors deviate from their espoused norms, laws, and values in ways that seem inconceivable even to them considering their status and

their role in championing and promoting individual liberties and human and civil rights. In spite of its tragic and unsettling nature, it behooves us to accept the basic proposition of domestic realism that aberrations in behavior are inevitable in the face of looming threats. Only through increased awareness can we educate leaders at different levels to account for the manifestations of domestic realism as they formulate policies, and prompt them to be proactive and to incorporate mechanisms for oversight, accountability, and the enforcement of a code of conduct.

Usually we, as individuals or as groups, take pride in our history, our culture, our role, and our moral standing, thereby overlooking the fact that some of us while acting on our behalf to protect our well-being feel compelled to sacrifice some of our mores. In the course of their work for what they perceive as the greater good of the society against the threat of what they see as evil, they jeopardize the very basics of what defines us and what makes us good, caring, compassionate, and human.

The adoption of this utilitarian perspective by the actors seems to justify to them any and all measures to counter the impending threats. Moreover, threats diminish the actors' self-esteem and their control over the situation, decrease predictability and increase uncertainty, thereby eliciting a harsh response. There is usually too much at stake for the actors to allow threats to overwhelm them: loss of image, reputation, prestige, job security, and relevance of institutions. There are also other factors such

as the expectations of the society, feelings of righteousness, distrust of out-groups, and the morality of obeying a higher authority.

It is important to stress that domestic realism strives to provide a better understanding of the world around us and to provide insight into events and factors that shape them. There is a perennial need to shed light on negative actions and shortcomings, which we all wish did not exist, in order to inoculate people at all levels and to empower them with the knowledge to counter, or at least mitigate, the tragic repercussions predicted by domestic realism. In spite of the inevitable impact of the threat on the response, the severity of that response by the different actors still falls across a spectrum, and we stand to gain by helping the actors move from the less favorable end to the more favorable one. Furthermore, by increasing awareness of domestic realism and increasing the understanding of threats and their perception, determinism is in essence reduced and more choice is provided to the actors. The change is primarily due to the changed perception of the situation, the shifted threshold level, and the increased tolerance. The notion of choice, even with a narrowed range of choices, is important as domestic realism holds that the actors are still accountable for their actions and that situational pressure does not absolve wrongdoings.

## **B. WHO SHOULD CARE?**

Everybody. Whether in government, the military, law enforcement, nongovernmental organizations, or private citizens, everybody needs to develop an awareness of how

things in the past have gone awry in certain settings and how they could very well do so in the future. Only with awareness and understanding could we hope to steadfastly adhere to our moral compass.

### **C. THE VANGUARDS**

Even though the introduction of domestic realism presented examples that were critical of how democracies acted in some historical settings, it is still at its heart an argument for democracy, for more democracy, and for a system of more abundant democracy as the best means of governance. Nonetheless, domestic realism, contrary to conventional wisdom and to writings that extol the virtues of democracy without qualification and frame it as the ultimate panacea, argues that democracy under threat is not immaculate and that the behavior of democratic states and their citizens is replete with transgressions on individual liberties, human rights, and on democracy itself and its spirit. In other words, democracy is a necessary but not a sufficient condition as people move from the abstractions of theory to practical implementation. The best way to inch democracy towards perfection is by studying and pointing out the settings in which fear trumps democracy; settings in which the mechanisms of democracy seem to fail us altogether. The insight gained from domestic realism regarding responses to threats, in spite of the inevitable nature of the response, helps to mitigate the effects and prompts policy makers to account for it in formulating policies and reactions.

#### D. MAINTAINING OUR HUMANITY

In spite of the provocative claims of the theory of domestic realism and what might seem like a pessimistic outlook regarding behavior under threat, domestic realism still offers some hope by advocating equality, transparency, accountability, and tolerance.

The basic simple rule that should be kept in mind is the equality of people on the basis of their humanity alone. Respect for people and their rights should be based upon their mere belonging to humanity and should transcend subdivisions such as class, nationality, ethnicity, religion, or political affiliation. Prophets, philosophers, and religions preached equality. All of us should strive towards the German philosopher Immanuel Kant's notion of the "categorical imperative" which states: "act only on that maxim through which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law."<sup>192</sup>

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<sup>192</sup> Rushworth M. Kidder, *How Good People Make Tough Choices: Resolving the Dilemmas of Ethical Living* (New York: Quill, 2003), 24. The categorical imperative is restated in the form of a practical imperative as: "Act in such a way that you always treat humanity, whether in your own person or in that of any other, never simply as a means, but always at the same time as an end;" this is found in Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals*, extracts in John Cottingham, ed., *Western Philosophy: An Anthology* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), 381-387.



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