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**Use of naval force in crises: A theory of stratified crisis
interaction. (Volumes I-III)**

Bouchard, Joseph Frederick, Ph.D.

Stanford University, 1989

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USE OF NAVAL FORCE IN CRISES:
A THEORY OF STRATIFIED CRISIS INTERACTION

A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
AND THE COMMITTEE ON GRADUATE STUDIES
OF STANFORD UNIVERSITY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

by

Joseph Frederick Bouchard

December 1988

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USE OF NAVAL FORCE IN CRISES:
A THEORY OF STRATIFIED CRISIS INTERACTION

Joseph Frederick Bouchard, Ph.D.
Stanford University, 1988

Previous studies of international crises have implicitly viewed all of the political and military interactions between the two sides as a single interaction sequence. This fails to capture the complexity of crisis interaction and crisis stability. The theory of stratified interaction developed in this dissertation states that crisis interaction occurs at three levels: political, strategic, and tactical. Interactions at each level evolve separately and can independently influence whether or not a crisis escalates to war.

The objective is to develop a differentiated theory of crisis interaction cast in the form of contingent generalizations that offer discriminating explanations for the occurrence of crisis stability problems. The method of structured, focused comparison is used to conduct empirical research on two sets of historical cases. The first set consists of four case studies of United States naval operations in crises: the 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis, the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, and

the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. The second set consists of four case studies of peacetime attacks on United States Navy ships: the 1964 Tonkin Gulf Incidents, the 1967 Israeli attack on the USS Liberty, the 1968 North Korean seizure of the USS Pueblo, and the 1987 Iraqi attack on the USS Stark.

Structured comparison of these cases reveals that the stratified interaction model provides an accurate description of international crises. Tactical-level interactions normally are not under the direct control of national leaders, and under certain conditions can become decoupled from the political-military objectives and strategy of national leaders. Five patterns of tactical-level interactions are identified: parallel stratified interactions, momentary decoupling, decoupling followed by disengagement, decoupling followed by tactical-level escalation, and decoupling causing escalation at the strategic or political levels. The factors that can cause decoupling of tactical-level interactions and the factors that determine whether or not decoupled interactions escalate uncontrollably to war are identified. Additionally, three political-military tensions that can arise in crises are identified: tension between the needs of diplomatic bargaining and the needs of military operations, tension between the need for top-level control of military operations and the need for tactical-level flexibility and initiative, and tension between crisis military operations and readiness for wartime missions.



PREFACE

The opinions expressed in this dissertation are the author's alone and are not to be construed as representing views or policies of the Department of the Navy. All source material cited in this dissertation is unclassified. Portions of this dissertation were submitted for security review in accordance with applicable Department of Defense and Department of the Navy instructions. That review did not result in any changes in the substance of the dissertation, and did not in any way restrict the academic freedom of the author.

My foremost acknowledgement is to the United States Navy, which funded my graduate studies at Stanford University through the Junior Line Officer Advanced Education Program (Burke Scholar Program) and provided me time off from my Navy duties to pursue the degree. The scholarship program was managed by the Civilian Institutions Program at the Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California. The staff of the Civilian Institutions Program provided superb support for me while I was at Stanford.

I am particularly appreciative of the Stanford University Department of Political Science graduate program

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Studies of international crises have repeatedly concluded that the success of crisis management efforts is critically dependent upon top-level political authorities maintaining close control of the actions of their military forces. This essential crisis management requirement has been identified as a potentially serious problem area.

Several concerns have been raised: Preplanned military operations and contingency plans may not be appropriate for the unique circumstances of a particular crisis, and may not support the political-diplomatic strategy adopted by national leaders to resolve a crisis. Delegated command of military operations could allow unintended military incidents to occur, which the adversary could misperceive as a deliberate escalation of the crisis or signal of hostile intent. Military alerts ordered to deter the adversary and increase the readiness of the armed forces could set in motion a chain of events exceeding the control of national leaders. Such problems are sources of concern because they could cause national leaders to lose

control of events in a crisis, starting an escalatory spiral leading to war.¹

On the other hand, some scholars believe that while inadvertent military actions can contribute to crisis management problems and the occurrence of inadvertent war, attention should be focused on the political and psychological pressures on top-level decisionmakers. Thomas C. Schelling, in a passage particularly relevant to this study, has expressed such a view:

This is why there is a genuine risk of major war not from "accidents" in the military machine but through a diplomatic process of commitment that is itself unpredictable. The unpredictability is not due solely to what a destroyer commander might do at midnight when he comes across a Soviet (or American) freighter at sea, but to the psychological process by which particular things become identified with courage or appeasement or how particular things² get included in or left out of a diplomatic package.²

Thus, there is disagreement among students of crisis and war over the effects of inadvertent military incidents on crisis

¹For examples of such concerns, see Alexander L. George, David K. Hall, and William E. Simons, The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy (New York: Little, Brown and Co., 1971), p. 14; John Steinbruner, "An Assessment of Nuclear Crises," in Franklin Griffiths and John C. Polanyi, eds., The Dangers of Nuclear War (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), p. 40; Phil Williams, Crisis Management (New York: John Wiley, 1976), p. 202; Richard N. Lebow, Between Peace and War (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981), p.287; Alexander L. George, "Crisis Management: The Interaction of Political and Military Considerations," Survival 26 (September/October 1984), pp. 227-228; Scott D. Sagan, "Nuclear Alerts and Crisis Management," International Security 9 (Spring 1985): 99-139.

²Thomas C. Schelling, Arms and Influence (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1966), p. 93.

stability. Inadvertent military incidents are viewed as dangerous in and of themselves because they can directly trigger escalation, or, alternatively, are viewed as dangerous because of the manner in which they can influence the perceptions held by national leaders. This issue is of practical relevance in crisis decisionmaking, as well as being of theoretical interest in the study of international crises.

The focus of this study is on the problems that can arise when using military force as a political instrument in crises. In an international crisis, military forces commonly perform two missions: political signalling in support of crisis bargaining, and preparing for localized fighting and war should crisis management efforts fail. Inadvertent escalation--any increase in the level or scope of violence in a crisis that was not directly ordered by national leaders or anticipated by them as being the likely result of their orders--is a significant danger in these circumstances. A distinction can be drawn between the general political requirements of crisis management, such as limiting political objectives and military means, and the operational requirements of crisis management, such as maintaining control of military operations.³ The focus of this study is on the operational requirements of crisis

³This distinction pointed out to the author by Alexander L. George.

management.⁴ The use of United States naval forces in four crises that occurred since the end of World War II will be examined to develop contingent generalizations on crisis military interaction.

In the introduction to his study of international crises, Richard N. Lebow discusses the distinction long made between the underlying causes of war, the long-term sources of hostility and tension, and the immediate causes of war, the particular events, such as a crisis, sparking a war. Lebow argues that, while students of international relations since Thucydides have focused on underlying causes, immediate causes are at least as important as underlying causes, in that immediate causes can determine whether or not war erupts from the underlying hostility and tension.⁵ This study starts from the premise that Lebow is correct, that immediate causes are important for understanding how and why wars occur.

The causes of war can be viewed as falling on a time-span spectrum, with long-term underlying causes working their effects over years, decades or even centuries toward the left end, and immediate causes occurring over days or weeks toward the right end. The underlying causes toward

⁴Scott Sagan refers to this as the operational dimension of crisis management. See Sagan, "Managing Strategic Nuclear Alert Operations," (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, forthcoming 1988).

⁵Lebow, pp. 1-4.

the left end of the spectrum include the structure of the international system, history, culture, economic development and resources, ideology, geography, and military technology. System structure has a strong influence on how "war-prone" international politics are at a given time.

Historical, cultural, economic, and ideological variables help to shape the political framework within which rivalries arise between particular nations and contribute to the intensity of the hostility and tensions between them.

Geographic factors, and the state of military technology shape the strategic relationships between nations and contribute to the level of tensions between them.

This study will be addressing causes of war at the far right end of that spectrum--events occurring over hours, or even just minutes at the speed of modern warfare. There is no intent to slight the importance of underlying causes or longer-term immediate causes, which arrange the political and strategic circumstances for war to occur. Rather, the intent is to supplement those causes with greater understanding of how military interactions in a crisis could inadvertently trigger war.

One of the fundamental problems in international relations is to identify the necessary and sufficient conditions for war to occur. This study makes two assumptions on the necessary and sufficient conditions for war. The first is that an international environment marked

by confrontation over national interests, hostility, and tension--all arising from the underlying causes of war--are a necessary condition for war to arise from a crisis. The implication of this assumption is that inadvertent military incidents will not spark escalation leading to war in the absence of confrontation, hostility and tensions. This study thus focuses on inadvertent escalation arising under conditions of acute international crises, when the necessary condition for war are present.

The second assumption is that the underlying causes of war are not sufficient conditions for war. War can be avoided even under conditions of confrontation, hostility, and tension so long as national leaders on each side are willing to continue bargaining with the other side, are willing to sacrifice certain interests in order to protect or advance others, and perceive that the other side intends to continue bargaining rather than resort to war. This suggests that a number of factors can provide conditions sufficient for war once the necessary conditions are present. Examples include a belief that vital national interests cannot be protected through bargaining, an unwillingness to concede some interests to protect others (perhaps because the price would be too high or domestic political repercussions too severe), a misperception that the other side will not bargain seriously or intends to resort to war at an opportune moment, and loss of control

over military operations. These factors can give rise to either deliberate decisions to go to war or to inadvertent war. The immediate causes of war can thus provide sufficient conditions for war if the necessary conditions are present. The focus of this study is on a specific subset of the immediate causes of war: those arising from interaction of the military forces of the two sides and resulting in inadvertent escalation to war.

The remainder of this introduction will present a brief critique of the literature on crises and crisis management, an overview of the theory being proposed, the research design, the historical cases and case selection criteria, and a summary of the organization of the study.

Critique of Crisis Theories

The existing literature on crises and crisis management has three serious weaknesses. First, the various political and military interactions that occur between the two sides in a crisis are assessed in the context of an implicit single interaction sequence model of crises. Second, the frequently observed phenomenon of United States leaders exercising close control over military operations in crises, combined with a lack of familiarity with military command and control procedures, has produced an erroneous view of the manner in which military forces are controlled in crises. Third, and derived from the two previous

weaknesses, the concept of crisis stability is poorly developed and there is a poor understanding of the escalation processes that could cause a crisis to escalate to war. These three weaknesses in the crisis management literature are discussed in Chapter II. They are summarized here to provide an overview of the study.

The first weakness is that previous studies of international crises have implicitly viewed the various political and military interactions that occur between the two sides as a single interaction sequence. The flow of events in a crisis is viewed as a single sequence of actions and reactions. A consequence of this perspective is the implicit assumption that all the actions taken by a nation during a crisis either are ordered by national leaders in pursuit of their policy objectives, or should not have occurred and therefore represent a loss of control over events. Under the single interaction sequence model of crisis interaction, a policy objective desirable for avoiding war--control of crisis military operations by top-level political authorities--is treated as the norm against which actual crisis management efforts are compared. The occurrence of military interactions not directly controlled by national leaders is then viewed as a potentially dangerous breakdown of crisis management.

The single interaction sequence model does not accurately describe international crises. What actually

occurs is multiple interaction sequences that only partially influence each other. Multiple interaction sequences, evolving simultaneously but semi-independently, arise when national leaders do not make all operational decisions themselves, but must delegate significant decisionmaking authority to subordinates. This is the basis for the stratified interaction model of international crises, described in detail in Chapter III.

The second weakness in the crisis management literature is that it is based on an erroneous view of the manner in which military forces are controlled in crises. This apparently resulted from the frequently observed phenomenon of United States leaders exercising close control over military operations in crises, combined with a lack of familiarity with military command and control procedures. The crisis management literature typically describes the control of crisis military operations as being highly centralized, with top-level civilian authorities exercising direct control--in contrast to routine peacetime operations, which are described as highly decentralized and having little involvement of civilian political authorities. This description fails to grasp the true complexity of military command and control, leading to inaccurate assessments of the crisis management problems arising from the employment of military forces in crises and how those problems can affect crisis stability.

Even in crises, military commanders are delegated significant authority to make operational decisions on the employment of their forces--including decisions on the use of force. Under certain circumstances military commanders can use conventional weapons without seeking permission from higher authorities. The scope of their authority is spelled out in a variety of documents, which collectively will be referred to as mechanisms of indirect control. There are even provisions for commanders to act contrary to their written instructions when circumstances dictate.

Although some scholars have recognized that these features exist in the United States military command and control system, the actual complexity of that system has not been reflected in the literature on crisis management. The literature is founded on a simple distinction between policy-making and policy implementation, and turns to concepts such as bureaucratic politics and organizational process to explain why actions are taken that were not ordered by national leaders. This fails to recognize that military commanders at all levels in the chain of command have important policy-making roles and are not simply bureaucrats executing policy decisions. Thus, an understanding of the mechanisms through which authority to make operational decisions is delegated to military commanders is essential for accurately assessing the crisis management problems that arise when military forces are employed in crises.

The third weakness in the crisis management literature is that the concept of crisis stability is poorly developed and there is a poor understanding of the escalation processes that could cause a crisis to escalate to war. Crisis stability is viewed as being primarily a function of weapons technology, particularly the degree to which it gives an advantage to the offense. Lacking is an appreciation of the operational factors that affect crisis stability once a decision is made to employ military forces in a crisis. The escalation processes that could cause a crisis to escalate to war are also poorly developed. Although there is growing concern over inadvertent or accidental war, these concepts are not well defined and the scenarios in which they could occur lack plausibility. Crisis military operations can indeed trigger or contribute to an escalatory process leading to war, but the manner in which they do so are subtle and complex--and best understood in the context of stratified interactions.

To summarize, the weaknesses in the crisis management literature are an implicit and misleading single interaction sequence model of the political and military interactions that occur in a crisis, an erroneous view of the manner in which military forces are controlled in crises, and poor development of the concept of crisis stability and the escalation processes that could cause a crisis to inadvertently escalate to war.

Overview of Concepts and Theory

Three central concepts form the foundation for this study: stratified interaction, stratified crisis stability, and the tensions that arise from the interaction of political and military objectives in a crisis. The theory and its corollaries are developed and explained in detail in Chapter III. They are summarized here to provide an overview of the concepts presented in the research design.

The scope of this study is limited to international crises in which two fundamental conditions are present: The first is that both sides in a crisis seek to protect or advance vital national interests and, conversely, have vital interests at stake that they are unwilling to sacrifice for the purpose of avoiding war. Both sides thus take military actions intended to support crisis bargaining and to counter military moves by the other side. The second assumption is that neither side desires war as the outcome of the crisis. National leaders on each side limit their objectives and restrain their military moves to avoid being misperceived by the other side as intending to launch a war. Both sides thus seek to avoid inadvertent escalation of the crisis while deterring escalation by the other side. When both of these conditions are met, the primary danger is of war arising from inadvertent escalation. These conditions and the nature of international crises are discussed in detail in Chapter II.

The theory of stratified interaction states that, given conditions of delegated control, tight horizontal coupling between the military forces of the two sides, and acute crisis, interactions between the two sides will be stratified in three levels: political, strategic and tactical. The first corollary to the theory is that tactical-level interactions can become decoupled from the political-military objectives of national leaders. The term decoupled is used to mean that vertical command and control links to operational military forces at the scene of a crisis are severed or otherwise fail to ensure that tactical-level decisionmaking supports the crisis management strategy of national leaders. Decoupling occurs to the extent that operational decisions on the employment of military forces made at the strategic and tactical levels differ from the operational decisions political level decisionmakers would have made to coordinate those military actions with their political-diplomatic strategy for resolving the crisis. This is an inductive theory arrived at through empirical historical research into crisis interactions.

Crisis stability exists to the extent that neither side has an incentive to strike the first military blow. The crisis security dilemma is that, in a crisis, many of the actions a state takes to increase its security and improve its bargaining position decrease the security of the adversary. The theory of stratified interaction directly

affects this dilemma. The stratified crisis security dilemma is that, in a crisis, the security dilemma is stratified, arising from the interaction processes occurring separately at each of the three levels, and affecting the likelihood of violence separately at each level. This in turn leads to the concept of stratified escalation dynamics: in an acute crisis, in which tactical-level interaction between the two sides has become decoupled from direct control by national leaders, the security dilemma, operating separately at the tactical level, can trigger an escalatory spiral, which under certain circumstances can cause the crisis to escalate uncontrollably to war. Identifying those circumstances is a primary objective of this study.

An important issue is whether these phenomena--stratified interaction, decoupling of tactical-level interactions, and stratified crisis stability--are strictly symmetrical or can also be asymmetrical. That is, must the conditions necessary for these phenomena to occur be present on both sides in a crisis, or can the phenomena arise when the conditions are present on only one side. This issue will be addressed in the empirical research on the theory, but the focus of the study will be on the United States and the role of U.S. forces in crises. The preliminary assessment is that stratified interaction tends to be symmetrical (both sides in a crisis normally experience the conditions for stratification), but that

decoupling and stratified crisis stability can be either symmetrical or asymmetrical. This has important implications for crisis management: war could arise through a process in which one side has lost effective control of its forces and is experiencing inadvertent escalation, while the other side retains control over its forces and is deliberately escalating the level of violence. This is probably a more likely and dangerous scenario than one in which symmetrical decoupling occurs and both sides experience inadvertent escalation.

Another aspect of crisis stability is the danger of misperception under conditions of stratified interaction. The concept of the misperception dilemma describes the inadvertent results that can occur when military forces are used for signalling in a crisis. When signalling adversaries, the dilemma is between inadvertent signals of hostility and inadvertent signals of acquiescence. When signalling an ally or friend, the misperception dilemma is between inadvertent signals of encouragement and inadvertent signals of retrenchment. Given stratified interactions, then perceptions of the adversary can also be stratified, with different perceptions being held at different levels of interaction. Misperceptions can arise at one level without other levels necessarily being aware of them, providing a mechanism by which stratified interactions can become decoupled.

The interaction of political and military considerations when military force is employed as a political instrument in crises will be a central focus of the study. The interactions generate what will be described as political-military tensions--actual and potential conflicts between political and military considerations which force decisionmakers, either knowingly or tacitly, to make trade-offs among individually important but mutually incompatible objectives. These political-military tensions, which can give rise to difficult policy dilemmas in a crisis, are inherent in the use of force as a political instrument under conditions of stratified interaction.

There are three political-military tensions. The first is tension between political considerations and the needs of diplomatic bargaining, on the one hand, and military considerations and the needs of military operations, on the other. The second is tension between the need for top-level control of military options in a crisis, and the need for tactical flexibility and instantaneous decisionmaking at the scene of the crisis. The third is tension between performance of crisis political missions and readiness to perform wartime combat missions. These three tensions between political and military considerations affect the degree to which stratified interactions become decoupled in a crisis, thus having a significant impact on crisis decisionmaking and crisis stability.

Research Design

There is an inherent element of randomness and unpredictability in the occurrence of war that structural or system-level theories cannot eliminate or define out of existence. Addressing the immediate causes of war gets at that element of randomness and unpredictability, allowing identification of various sets of specific circumstances in which the probability of war is increased--which is both theoretically significant and policy relevant. This study will examine a particular subset of the immediate causes of war, those arising from the use of force as a political instrument in crises.

The type of theory this study seeks to develop is what Alexander L. George describes as a "differentiated" theory, an explanatory theory cast in the form of contingent generalizations and offering discriminating explanations for the occurrence of a phenomenon. Contingent generalizations are regularities that occur only under certain specific conditions. Collectively they offer a differentiated typology of situations in which the phenomenon of interest manifests itself. The objective of a differentiated theory is to identify the variety of different causal patterns that can occur for the phenomenon, and the conditions under which each distinctive causal pattern occurs. The value of a differentiated theory is that it has greater policy

relevance than theories cast in the form of probabilistic generalizations, providing policy-makers a means of diagnosing the significance of specific situations.⁶

The nature of the phenomena being addressed dictate a focus on decisionmaking and the details of how crisis military operations are controlled. This, in turn, requires a research design in which a small number of cases are examined in detail using the method of structured focused comparison, rather than a research design using a large number of cases and statistical methods to identify significant variables. The purpose of structured comparison of a small number of cases is to reveal the different causal patterns that can occur for the phenomena, and the conditions under which each distinctive causal pattern occurs.⁷

The dependent variable is whether or not inadvertent escalation occurs in an international crisis. For the purposes of this study, inadvertent escalation will be defined as any increase in the level or scope of violence in a crisis that was not directly ordered by national leaders

⁶Alexander L. George and Richard Smoke, Deterrence in American Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974), pp. 509-512; Alexander L. George, "Case Studies and Theory Development: The Method of Structured, Focused Comparison," in Paul Gordon, ed., Diplomacy: New Approaches in History, Theory, and Policy (New York: The Free Press, 1979), pp. 59-60.

⁷Ibid.

or anticipated by them as being the likely result of their orders. The specific phenomena to be explained in this study are the interaction of military forces in crises and the impact of such interactions on crisis stability.

Empirical research on the use of United States naval forces in crises will be used to develop a set of contingent generalizations explaining three aspects of the theory: (a) the conditions under which crisis interactions become stratified and decoupled, (b) the conditions under which tensions between political and diplomatic objectives arise and affect crisis decisionmaking in particular ways, and (c) the conditions that prevent stratified escalation dynamics from occurring. The analysis will define discrete patterns of tactical-level crisis interaction, each associated with a particular causal pattern. Because the patterns of tactical-level interaction are arrived at empirically, the patterns identified in this study probably will not cover the universe of interaction patterns--additional patterns could well be identified through further empirical research.

The research design is divided into three phases. The first phase will be an examination of the mechanisms of delegated command, the nature of tactical-level military interactions, and the use of United States naval forces as a political instrument. These topics address some of the greatest weaknesses in the crisis management literature. The purpose of this phase of the research is to clarify

existing concepts and, when necessary, to present new concepts of crisis military operations before commencing the case studies. This first phase of the research design will encompass Chapters IV, V, and VI.

The second phase of the research design will consist of a structured focused comparison of four cases in which United States naval forces were employed in crises: the 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis, the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, the 1967 Middle East War, and the 1973 Middle East War. The purpose of this phase will be to develop contingent generalizations on the theory of stratified interaction. This second phase of the research will be presented in Chapter VII.

To develop the contingent generalizations, eight questions addressing specific aspects of the theory will be answered through structured focused comparison. The first three questions address the conditions necessary for stratified interaction to occur: delegated control, tight coupling, and acute crisis.

Question 1. To what degree were interactions between the forces of the two sides at the scene of the crisis the result of actions taken in accordance with mechanisms of delegated control, rather than direct control by national leaders? If direct control was attempted, to what degree were national leaders able to exercise constant, real-time, positive control of operational decisions? If direct

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that every entry should be supported by a valid receipt or invoice. This not only helps in tracking expenses but also ensures compliance with tax regulations.

In the second section, the author outlines the various methods used for data collection and analysis. These include surveys, interviews, and focus groups. Each method has its own strengths and limitations, and the choice depends on the specific research objectives.

The third section delves into the statistical analysis of the collected data. It covers topics such as descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, and regression analysis. The goal is to identify patterns and trends in the data that can inform business decisions.

Finally, the document concludes with a summary of the findings and recommendations. It highlights the key insights gained from the research and provides practical advice for implementing these findings in the organization.

control was nominally in effect but not in fact being exercised on a real-time basis, to what degree did on-scene commanders rely on guidance in mechanisms of delegated control relative to the direct guidance they received?

Question 2. Were the forces of the two sides at the scene of the crisis tightly coupled? Were on-scene (tactical level) commanders vertically integrated with sensors providing sufficient information on the adversary's on-scene forces to allow them to develop a picture of the adversary's moves and intentions independent of information provided to national leaders? Were tactical moves by each side quickly detected by the other side, prompting on-scene commanders to make (or request authorization to make) counter moves in order to preserve or improve their tactical situation?

Question 3. Were the forces of the two sides being used by their national leaders as a political instrument to convey deterrent or compellent military threats toward the other side in support of crisis bargaining? Were the forces of the two sides engaged in a test of capabilities under restrictive ground rules as a result of a challenge to a commitment being met by an effort to defeat that challenge without escalation? To what degree did interactions between the on-scene forces of the two sides influence the perceptions held by national leaders of the probability of war breaking out?

The fourth question addresses the first corollary to the theory of stratified interaction, that interactions can become decoupled in a crisis. There are seven potential causes of decoupling: communications and information flow problems, impairment of political-level decisionmaking, a fast-paced tactical environment, ambiguous or ambivalent orders, tactically inappropriate orders, inappropriate guidance in mechanisms of indirect control, and deliberate unauthorized actions by military commanders. More than one of these factors can occur simultaneously, further increasing the likelihood of unexpected escalation. The causes of decoupling are explained in Chapter III.

To establish that stratified interactions became decoupled in a crisis requires two findings: The first is that one or more of the seven seven potential causes of decoupling was present, creating opportunities for decoupling to occur. The second, and usually more difficult to establish, finding is that operational decisions made by tactical-level decisionmakers differed from the decisions that political-level decisionmakers probably would have made in order to coordinate those actions with their political-diplomatic strategy for resolving the crisis.

Question 4. Did interactions at the tactical and political levels become decoupled during the crisis? Did any of the potential causes of decoupling arise during the crisis? If conditions for decoupling existed, did national

leaders perceive the operational decisions made by the on-scene commander as interfering with or not supporting their political-diplomatic strategy for resolving the crisis? If momentary decoupling occurred in the crisis, was direct command immediately reimposed or did it initiate a decoupled interaction sequence?

The fifth question addresses the second corollary to the theory of stratified interaction, that the security dilemma is stratified in crises. The implication of this is that decisionmakers at the political and tactical levels can hold different perceptions of the offense-defense balance, vulnerability to preemption, and the need to strike first.

Question 5. Did national leaders and on-scene commanders hold different perceptions of the vulnerability of on-scene forces to preemption and the need to strike first in the event of an armed clash? Did actions taken with on-scene forces by national leaders for political signaling purposes generate tactical situations in which the on-scene commander perceived a vulnerability to preemption and a need to strike first should an armed clash erupt? Did actions taken for political purposes prompt the adversary's forces to take compensatory actions to reduce their vulnerability or to improve their ability to strike first?

The sixth question addresses the third corollary to the theory of stratified interaction, that escalation dynamics can be stratified in a crisis. A limitation

imposed on this study by the circumstances of post-World War II history is that no crises during the period escalated to a war in which the United States was a participant.⁸ The absence of cases resulting in war precludes using the outcomes of the crises, in the sense of whether or not war occurred and the manner in which crises escalate to war, as dependent variables. Thus, the research design cannot address what would otherwise be the most interesting question, the circumstances under which decoupled, stratified interactions generate stratified escalation dynamics leading uncontrollably to war. Although this question cannot be addressed directly, research will be done to identify conditions which may have inhibited stratified escalation dynamics from occurring.

Question 6. When stratified interactions become decoupled, what factors inhibit escalation dynamics from occurring at the tactical level? When tactical-level interactions do begin escalating, what factors inhibit escalation dynamics from being transmitted upward to the

⁸ I exclude the 1964 Tonkin Gulf Incident as a crisis that escalated to war because the incident did not lead to immediate and sustained U.S. intervention in the war. Although the U.S. commenced bombing North Vietnam after the incident, the bombings were in retaliation for subsequent attacks on U.S. forces in the South. Significant escalation of the U.S. role in the war, in the form of ground combat troops, did not occur until seven months after the Tonkin Gulf Incident. The decisions to escalate the U.S. role were made after months of deliberation, not under conditions of crisis as defined in this study.

strategic and political levels of interaction? Under what circumstances could these escalation-inhibiting factors break down, allowing a crisis to escalate uncontrollably to war?

The seventh question addresses the crisis management problems that arise when military forces are used as a political instrument in crises: the misperception dilemma and inadvertent military incidents.

Question 7. Did actions taken with military forces send inadvertent signals of hostility or acquiescence to adversaries, or inadvertent signals of encouragement or retrenchment to allies and friends? Were national leaders aware of the possibility of their military actions being misperceived and did this affect their decisionmaking? Did inadvertent military incidents occur and how did they affect efforts to manage the crisis? Under what circumstances did the inadvertent incidents occur and what factors contributed to their occurrence? Were national leaders aware of the possibility of inadvertent incidents and did this affect their decisionmaking?

The eighth question addresses the three tensions between political and military considerations that arise when military forces are used as a political instrument in crises: tension between political considerations and the needs of diplomatic bargaining, on the one hand, and military considerations and the needs of military operations, on



the other; tension between the need for top-level control of military options in a crisis, and the need for tactical flexibility and instantaneous decisionmaking at the scene of the crisis; and tension between performance of crisis political missions and readiness to perform wartime combat missions. Although the first source of tension (political versus military considerations) tends to pit military men against their civilian superiors, these tensions are not simply issues of civil-military relations. The second source of tension (level of operational control) can generate disputes between military commanders at the political, strategic, and tactical levels. The third source of tension (crisis missions versus readiness for wartime missions) involves significant conflicts between crisis military objectives and wartime military objectives, as well as conflicts between crisis political objectives and wartime military objectives. But all three tensions arise from the requirements of crisis management, the essence of which is placing political constraints on military operations.

Question 8. Did tensions arise between political considerations and the needs of diplomatic bargaining, on the one hand, and military considerations and the needs of military operations, on the other? Did tensions arise between the need for direct, positive, top-level control of military operations, and the need for tactical flexibility and instantaneous decisionmaking at the scene of the



crisis? Did tensions arise between performance of crisis missions and maintaining or increasing readiness to perform wartime missions? If any of these three tensions arose, how did they affect political-level and tactical-level decisionmaking? Are such tensions related to decoupling of stratified interactions and the occurrence of stratified escalation dynamics?

The third phase of the research design will consist of a structured, focused comparison of four cases in which a U.S. Navy ship was attacked during peacetime or crisis operations: the 1964 Tonkin Gulf Incidents, the 1967 Israeli attack on the USS Liberty, the 1968 North Korean seizure of the USS Pueblo, and the 1987 Iraqi attack on the USS Stark. Peacetime attacks on Navy ships are a particular concern due to their escalatory potential (which is discussed in the following section). The purpose of this phase will be to further develop and refine contingent generalizations on the theory of stratified interaction. The focus will be on how the naval and military chain of command reacted to the attack and whether or not crisis management problems arose from that reaction. The third phase will be presented in Chapter VIII.

To further develop the contingent generalizations, four of the previous eight questions will again be answered in a structured, focused comparison. The four questions address decoupling of stratified interactions, stratified

escalation dynamics, misperceptions, and political-military tensions.

Question 1. Did interactions at the tactical and political levels become decoupled during or after the attack on the Navy ship? Did conditions for decoupling arise during the crisis? If conditions for decoupling existed, did national leaders perceive the operational decisions made by the on-scene commander as interfering with or not supporting their political-diplomatic strategy for dealing with the attack? If momentary decoupling occurred in the crisis, was direct command immediately reimposed or did it initiate a decoupled interaction sequence?

Question 2. When stratified interactions become decoupled, what factors inhibit escalation dynamics from occurring at the tactical level? When tactical-level interactions do begin escalating in violence, what factors inhibit escalation dynamics from being transmitted upward to the strategic and political levels of interaction? Under what circumstances could these escalation-inhibiting factors fail, allowing a crisis to escalate uncontrollably to war?

Question 3. Did actions taken with military forces send inadvertent signals of hostility or acquiescence to adversaries, or inadvertent signals of encouragement or retrenchment to allies and friends? Were national leaders aware of the possibility of their military actions being misperceived and did this affect their decisionmaking? Did

inadvertent military incidents occur and how did they affect efforts to manage the crisis? Under what circumstances did the inadvertent incidents occur and what factors contributed to their occurrence? Were national leaders aware of the possibility of inadvertent incidents and did this affect their decisionmaking?

Question 4. Did tensions arise between political considerations and the needs of diplomatic bargaining, on the one hand, and military considerations and the needs of military operations, on the other? Did tensions arise between the need for direct, positive, top-level control of military operations, and the need for tactical flexibility and instantaneous decisionmaking at the scene of the crisis? Did tensions arise between performance of crisis missions and maintaining or increasing readiness to perform wartime missions? If any of these three tensions arose, how did they affect political-level and tactical-level decision-making? Are such tensions related to decoupling of stratified interactions and the occurrence of stratified escalation dynamics?

Focus on Naval Forces

As was noted in the research design, the cases to be examined all concern the use of United States naval forces as a political instrument in crises and peacetime attacks on U.S. Navy ships. There are four reasons for this. First,

of the branches of the U.S. armed forces, the Navy is the service called upon most often to respond to crises. The Navy is on the cutting edge of crisis management. Second, American leaders and many analysts perceive naval forces as having important advantages over other types of forces for crisis response. Third, in spite of the frequency of use and perceived advantages of naval forces, some U.S. Navy officers and civilian analysts feel that the role of naval forces as a political instrument is not well understood. Fourth, some analysts believe that naval forces have a greater escalatory potential than do other forces.

Naval forces have long had an important role in the foreign policies of maritime nations. The United States Navy in particular has often been called on to serve as an instrument of national policy. Data on the employment of the U.S. armed forces as a political instrument collected by Barry M. Blechman and Stephen S. Kaplan show that U.S. Navy units were employed in 177 of 215 incidents (83%) between 1945 and 1975, while a follow-on study by Philip D. Zelikow found that U.S. Navy units were employed in 31 of 44 incidents (70%) between 1975 and 1982.⁹ The U.S. Navy supports peacetime foreign policy objectives through a variety of missions, ranging from routine port visits and

⁹ Barry M. Blechman and Stephen S. Kaplan, Force Without War (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1978), pp. 38-44; Philip D. Zelikow, "Force Without War, 1975-82," Journal of Strategic Studies 7 (March 1984): 29-54.

"showing the flag," to presence in strength at the scene of a conflict and retaliatory attacks against hostile nations. Wartime combat missions are the fundamental raison d'etre of navies, but peacetime political missions are their most common employment.

The U.S. Navy is the branch of the armed forces most commonly employed as a political instrument due to naval forces being perceived as having several inherent advantages for that role. The greatest advantage of naval forces stems from the medium in which they operate: naval vessels are free to roam the high seas (the oceans outside of territorial waters) without restrictions, asserting freedom of the seas--a principle well-established in international law.¹⁰ The ability of naval forces to establish a visible U.S. presence in international waters near the scene of a crisis without intruding into disputed territory or immediate need of politically sensitive shore bases is an advantage not shared by land-based forces. The oceans provide naval forces with wide geographic reach, only the few nations without sea coasts and beyond the reach of carrier aircraft are not readily influenced by sea power.

¹⁰Laurence W. Martin, The Sea in Modern Strategy (New York: Praeger, 1967), p. 67; Ken Booth, Navies and Foreign Policy (New York: Crane Russak, 1977), pp. 33-35; Hedley Bull, "Sea Power and Political Influence," in Jonathan Alford, ed., Sea Power and Influence: Old Issues and New Challenges (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1980), p. 8.

The mobility and flexibility of naval forces are assets highly valued by national leaders. Naval forces are readily moved to a tension area, maneuvered to signal intentions and resolve, and withdrawn when U.S. objectives are achieved. Endurance, the ability to remain on station in a tension area for a prolonged period of time, is another important attribute of naval forces. The endurance of naval forces allows national leaders to send Navy ships to a tension area and then wait and see what develops. Although naval forces in a presence role serve primarily as a visible symbol of U.S. power and influence, their combat strength is a central element in their role. The ability of naval forces to project power ashore on short notice with naval gunfire, carrier airpower, cruise missiles, and Marine troops provides national leaders with a wide range of military options for conveying carefully crafted threats in support of diplomatic bargaining. Equally important, these combat capabilities also provide options for seeking a military solution to the crisis should it become necessary.¹¹

¹¹James Cable, Gunboat Diplomacy, 1919-1979, Second Edition (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981), p. 67; Edward N. Luttwak, The Political Uses of Sea Power (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), p. 1. For an illustration of the range of options that naval forces provide the President in a crisis, see Floyd D. Kennedy, Jr.'s description of the 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis in "The Creation of the Cold War Navy, 1953-1962," in Kenneth J. Hagan, ed., In Peace and War: Interpretations of American Naval History, 1775-1984, Second Edition (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1984), pp. 316-317.

In contrast, land-based air and ground forces face numerous political, legal, and logistical constraints on their ability to be inserted into a tense area. They often require prepared bases (at least runways), and may not be welcome on foreign soil. Nationalism is a powerful emotion in many countries, particularly former colonies, and even nations desiring U.S. support may be hesitant to incur the domestic political strife that a foreign military presence can ignite. Land-based forces have a long and heavy logistical tail that makes them a cumbersome political instrument--they cannot be rapidly deployed other than in small units with low endurance, and once inserted can be difficult to withdraw. Deployment of land-based forces by air, or even use of long-range bombers for a show of force, can be precluded by reluctant allies and other nations refusing passage through their air space or refusing landing rights to refuel.

Employment of land-based forces normally entails inherently greater risks than employment of naval forces due to the much stronger political signals sent by forces ashore and their vulnerability to a wider range of threats. Because land-based forces imply a greater degree of permanence than do naval forces, land-based forces can signal a stronger and less flexible of commitment. Even if a strong signal of commitment was intended, the fact that land-based forces are difficult to move can inadvertently

create an actual degree of commitment greater than had been intended.¹²

Observers of naval diplomacy have concluded that changes in the structure and conduct of international politics since the end of World War II have been the primary factors causing maritime powers, particularly the United States, to place greater emphasis on the use of naval forces as a political instrument relative to land-based air and ground forces. Starting from the perspective of Robert E. Osgood and Robert W. Tucker that the destructiveness of nuclear war and the danger of conflicts escalating to nuclear war impose constraints on and "regulate" the use of force,¹³ James A. Nathan and James K. Oliver contend that the superpowers have had to search for usable and controllable forms of military power--instruments of force which are both potent and responsive to the need for limits

¹²Martin, pp. 143, 146; Cable, p. 67; Luttwak, p. 1. The superiority of naval forces over land-based troops and aircraft was clearly demonstrated during the 1958 Lebanon Crisis, when Marines were landed with carrier air cover exactly when the President specified with only twelve hours notice. Severe logistical problems delayed the deployment of Air Force and Army units to the theater. See Kennedy, pp. 320-322.

¹³Robert E. Osgood and Robert W. Tucker, Force, Order and Justice (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1967), pp. 2-40. U.S. naval officers, in somewhat less analytic terms, had been asserting the existence of a "regulated" strategic environment for some time. See Admiral Arleigh A. Burke, "The U.S. Navy's Role in General War and Conflict Short of General War," Naval War College Review 11 (April 1959): 7-11.

on their use. They conclude that naval power has been the type of force best suited for use under these constraints, largely due to the advantages described above.¹⁴ Similarly, James Cable has observed that "some of the constraints on the use of American military power to exert international influence are also such as almost to encourage reliance on limited naval force for this purpose."¹⁵ Other observers have suggested that domestic political constraints in the United States have also caused naval forces to be favored over the other armed forces.¹⁶ Thus, there is reason to believe that in the future naval forces will continue to be

¹⁴James A. Nathan and James K. Oliver, The Future of United States Naval Power (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1979), pp. 17-18, 35. Also see Burke, pp. 9-11; and Rear Admiral John D. Chase, "The Function of the Navy," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 95 (October 1969): 30-32. Chase's description of Pax Ballistica is essentially the same as the regulated strategic environment described by Osgood and Tucker, but preceded it by a decade.

¹⁵Cable, p. 28.

¹⁶Commander Dennis R. Neutze, a Navy lawyer, has suggested that the 1973 War Powers Act, which requires the President to consult with Congress when U.S. forces are introduced into hostilities or a situation of imminent involvement in hostilities, makes naval forces preferable to land-based forces. Because naval forces can be deployed near the scene of a conflict without actually being introduced into hostilities, they do not activate the consultation requirement or the sixty-day limit in the War Powers Act until hostilities are actually initiated. See Commander Dennis R. Neutze, "Bluejacket Diplomacy: A Juridical Examination of the Use of Naval Forces in Support of United States Foreign Policy," JAG Journal 32 (Summer 1982): 133-134. Although his argument has merit, Presidents have tended in practice to ignore the War Powers Act when compliance with it would have interfered with their policy objectives--much to the displeasure of Congress.

the branch of the armed forces favored by United States leaders for crisis response.

The role of naval forces as a political instrument in peacetime received a great deal of attention in the U.S. Navy in the early 1970s. Despite the efforts made to develop concepts and principles of "naval presence," as peacetime naval employment was known, there remains dissatisfaction with our understanding of such political missions. Admiral Stansfield Turner stated in 1977, "I think that we who exercise naval presence do not know enough about how to fit the action to the situation: how to be sure that the force we bring to bear, when told to help in some situation, is in fact the one most appropriate to the circumstances."¹⁷ Civilian analysts have echoed his concern. In a discussion of the relative importance of peacetime naval missions, Geoffrey Till emphasized that assessment of such issues "requires a full and proper understanding what naval diplomacy is, exactly how it works and what its requirements are." But he goes on to warn that "formulations of the strategy of naval diplomacy have as yet some way to go before these things are achieved."¹⁸ When naval officers

¹⁷ Stansfield Turner, "Designing a Modern Navy: A Workshop Discussion," in "Power at Sea: II. Super-Powers and Navies," Adelphi Papers No. 123 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1976), p. 28.

¹⁸ Geoffrey Till, Maritime Strategy and the Nuclear Age, Second Edition (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984), p. 214.

and analysts alike express concern that the use of United States naval forces as a political instrument is not well understood, there are grounds for questioning how well United States leaders understand the implications of employing naval forces for crisis response.

Several observers have expressed concern over the escalatory dangers associated with the employment of naval forces. Of particular concern to some observers is the escalatory pressure that can arise when a U.S. Navy ship is attacked. Former White House aide Chester Cooper, commenting on the strong Senate reaction to the 1964 Tonkin Gulf Incident, described the emotions aroused by attacks on United States ships:

There is something very magical about an attack on an American ship on the high seas. An attack on a military base or an Army convoy doesn't stir up that kind of emotion. An attack on an American ship on the high seas is bound to set off skyrocketing and the 'Star Spangled Banner'¹⁹ and 'Hail to the chief' and everything else.

George H. Quester and Sean M. Lynn-Jones have expanded upon Cooper's remarks. Noting that "It is dreadfully dangerous to sink a major power's warship today," Quester warns that "the warships of the world have become highly prized investments, such that their loss would be likely to enrage the publics and governments that matter back home--enrage them enough to trigger off escalations that neither side might

¹⁹"The 'Phantom Battle' that Led to War," U.S. News and World Report, July 23, 1984, p. 66.

have wanted, thus setting up the deterrence and bluff mechanisms that are at the heart of 'chicken'."²⁰ Along the same lines, Lynn-Jones observed that "Under conditions of international tension and superpower rivalry, public opinion in a liberal democracy is likely to demand retaliation after a provocation by a major rival. Naval incidents seem to elicit particularly emotional responses in the United States." He goes on to add that "It is, of course, relatively unlikely that a naval incident could provoke a nuclear exchange between the United States and the Soviet Union. ...An incident could, however, increase tensions and needlessly disrupt negotiations or other political discourse, much as the U-2 incident of 1960 forced the cancellation of the Khrushchev-Eisenhower summit."²¹

Another view is that there is a greater risk of nuclear war erupting at sea than ashore. This argument has been made forcefully by Desmond Ball:

The possibility of nuclear war at sea must be regarded as at least as likely as the occurrence of nuclear war in other theaters. Indeed, there is probably a greater likelihood of accidental or unauthorized launch of sea-based nuclear weapons, and the constraints on the authorized release of nuclear weapons are possibly more relaxed than those that pertain to land-based systems. Further, there are

²⁰George H. Quester, "Naval Armaments: The Past as Prologue," in George H. Quester, ed., Navies and Arms Control (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1980), pp. 6-7.

²¹Sean M. Lynn-Jones, "A Quiet Success for Arms Control: Preventing Incidents at Sea," International Security 9 (Spring 1985): 164.

several important factors that make it likely that any major conflict at sea would escalate²² to a strategic nuclear exchange relatively quickly.

Incidents at sea between American and Soviet forces have been identified as a potential catalyst for the nuclear escalation dangers described by Ball. As John Borawski notes: "The 1967 Israeli sinking [sic] of the USS Liberty, and the subsequent US uncertainty as to whether a Soviet ship had attacked the Liberty, is often cited as an example of the type of nuclear Sarajevo that could inadvertently lead to war."²³ Thus, there are at least prima facie reasons for concern that the use of naval forces as a political instrument in crises has an escalatory potential

²² Desmond Ball, "Nuclear War at Sea," International Security 10 (Fall 1985): 28-29. The factors Ball identifies are the occurrence of accidents at sea, the attractiveness of ships as nuclear targets, the nuclear weapons launch autonomy of naval commanders, dual-capable weapons systems and platforms, offensive Navy anti-submarine warfare (ASW) strategy (including attacks on Soviet strategic ballistic missile submarines), incentives for Soviet preemption arising from the vulnerability of Navy ASW and command and control systems, the Navy doctrine of offensive operations in forward areas, Navy tactical nuclear weapons doctrine, Soviet doctrine for war at sea, and lack of Navy contingency planning for limiting escalation in a war at sea. Also see Barry R. Posen, "Inadvertent Nuclear War? Escalation and NATO's Northern Flank," International Security 7 (Fall 1982): 28-54; Eric J. Grove, "The Maritime Strategy and Crisis Stability," Naval Forces 8 (6/1987): 34-44.

²³ John Borawski, "Risk Reduction at Sea: Naval Confidence-Building Measures," Naval Forces 3 (1/1987): 18. It must be noted that Liberty was not sunk in the attack. As will be discussed in Chapter VII, no U.S. Navy commander in the chain of command thought that the Soviets had conducted the attack, and the commanders in the Mediterranean knew for a fact that the Soviets could not have conducted the attack.

that has not been adequately addressed in studies of naval diplomacy and crisis management.

The characteristics of naval forces that give them their advantages as a political instrument also generate three serious potential problems for crisis management. First, the political signals sent by naval forces are particularly prone to being misperceived, inadvertently sending the wrong signals to allies and adversaries. Second, the nature of the maritime environment, in which forces of the two sides in a crisis routinely operate at point blank range, exacerbates problems of maintaining control of events. Third, the nature of the naval warfare environment, which places a premium striking first in tactical engagements, exacerbates problems of crisis stability and escalation control. These problems of using naval forces as a political instrument are examined in greater detail in Chapter VI.

To summarize, U.S. Navy crisis operations and peacetime attacks on U.S. Navy ships will be used as the historical cases for this study because the Navy is the service called upon most often to respond to crises, American leaders and many analysts perceive naval forces as having important advantages over other types of forces for crisis response, some U.S. Navy officers and civilian analysts feel that the role of naval forces as a political instrument is not well understood, and some analysts believe

that naval forces have a greater escalatory potential than do other forces.

Cases and Case Selection

Two sets of historical cases will be used as sources of empirical data, one set of cases for each phase of the research design. These cases will be used as sources of empirical data for deriving the contingent generalizations. Although essentially the same questions will be asked in each case, full-scale case studies will not be conducted.

Empirical data for the second phase of the study will come from four cases in which United States naval forces were employed in crises: the 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis, the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, the 1967 Middle East War, and the 1973 Middle East War. The criteria for case selection in the first phase of the research were (a) significant U.S. naval operations were conducted which influenced the outcome of the crisis, (b) naval operations were conducted in the immediate proximity of adversary naval forces or land-based forces that could threaten naval forces, and (c) there was a possibility of fighting erupting between the United States and the other side in the crisis.

Given the large number of crises in which the U.S. navy has played an important role, case selection was particularly difficult for this phase of the study. Among the more prominent cases considered and rejected were the

1954 Quemoy-Matsu Crisis, the 1958 Lebanon Crisis, the 1970 Jordanian Crisis, and the 1971 Indo-Pakistani War. Although the 1954 Quemoy-Matsu Crisis and the evacuation of the Tachen Islands were perhaps as serious as the 1958 case, there was less tactical-level interaction because China ceased its harassment of the islands while the U.S. Navy was on the scene (thus making a naval confrontation an unlikely source of escalation). The Navy role in the 1956 Suez Crisis was limited to evacuation of civilians, there was little tactical-level interaction, and little concern that the crisis would escalate to war. There was little tactical-level interaction in the 1958 Lebanon Crisis, little concern that the crisis would escalate to war with the Soviet Union, and, after the Marines were landed, little concern that the U.S. would be involved in a civil war. There was minor tactical-level interaction in the 1970 Jordanian Crisis, but the Navy role was small and there was little concern that the crisis would escalate to war. Although there was tactical-level interaction and concern among Navy officers over the Soviet naval threat in the 1971 Indo-Pakistani War, the Navy role was limited and there was little concern that the crisis would escalate to war.

Empirical data for the third phase of the study will come from four cases in which U.S. Navy ships were attacked in peacetime: the 1964 Tonkin Gulf Incident, the 1967 Israeli attack on the USS Liberty, the 1968 North Korean

seizure of the USS Pueblo, and the 1987 Iraqi attack on the USS Stark. The criteria for case selection were (a) the attack was on a U.S. naval vessel, and (b) the attack occurred during a crisis or under circumstances that could have provoked a U.S. military response. The second criterion excludes limited war situations, such as the Korean War and the Vietnam War. The four cases that were selected are of interest because they come closest to illustrating the circumstances in which stratified interactions could become decoupled and stratified escalation dynamics occur.

Although this study will focus on the use of naval forces as a political instrument, the limitations of this approach are recognized. Non-naval activities, particularly diplomatic efforts, may be as important to the success of naval diplomacy as the actions of the ships at the scene of tensions. As Ken Booth has reminded, "naval diplomacy is a matter of diplomats on land as well as ships at sea and of the role the former can play to ensure that naval messages are not misperceived."²⁴ Furthermore, it can be difficult to separate the particular contribution of naval force from the overall diplomatic and military effort made to resolve a dispute. Commander James F. McNulty has observed that "it

²⁴Ken Booth, "Foreign Policies at Risk: Some Problems of Managing Naval Power," Naval War College Review 29 (Summer 1976): 15.

is usually difficult to assess the effect of Naval Presence alone on decisions which of necessity are made as the outcome of reaction to a broad range of American signals--military, economic, and political--perceived by other nations."²⁵ Thus, caution must be exercised when attempting to assess the role of naval forces in achieving a given political outcome.

Organization of the Study

This study will begin, in Chapter II with a review and critique of the literature on crises and crisis management. Chapter III defines the theory of stratified interaction and its corollaries. Chapter IV examines the mechanisms of indirect control, providing background on the command and control procedures that influence the stratification of crisis interactions. Chapter V discusses tactical-level military interaction, illustrating the range of interactions that can occur in crises. Chapter VI explores the use of naval force as a political instrument in crises, applying the theory of stratified interaction under the particular operational circumstances surrounding the use of naval forces. Examining crisis naval operations will also reveal the political-military tensions that arise when crisis

²⁵ Commander James F. McNulty, "Naval Presence -- The Misunderstood Mission," Naval War College Review 27 (September-October 1974): 28.



management objectives and military objectives are pursued simultaneously.

The next two chapters present the case studies.

Chapter VII presents the second phase of the empirical research, the four case studies on crisis naval operations. Chapter VIII presents the third phase of the empirical research, the four case studies on peacetime attacks on navy ships. Chapter IX presents the findings of the case studies and presents the contingent generalizations on stratified interaction. Internal and external factors that appear to prevent stratified interactions from decoupling will also be discussed. Chapter X presents conclusions on the theory and suggests the policy implications of the findings.

CHAPTER II
USE OF FORCE IN CRISES:
A REVIEW AND CRITIQUE

Current concepts and theories on crises and crisis management have three serious weaknesses. First, the various political and military interactions that occur between the two sides in a crisis are assessed in the context of an implicit single interaction sequence model of crises. Second, the frequently observed phenomenon of United States leaders exercising close control over military operations in crises, combined with a lack of familiarity with military command and control procedures, has produced an erroneous view of the manner in which military forces are controlled in crises. Third, and derived from the two previous weaknesses, the concept of crisis stability is inadequately developed and there is a poor understanding of the escalation processes that could cause a crisis to escalate to war.

This chapter will review and critique the literature on crises and crisis management, developing in detail three major weaknesses in current concepts and theories. The first section will review basic concepts on international

crises, presenting the perspective on crises that will be used in this study. The second section will critique the concept of crisis interaction and explain the weaknesses in the single interaction sequence model that implicitly underlies existing crisis theories. The third section will review basic concepts of crisis management, focusing on the measures required for national leaders to maintain control of events in crises. The fourth section will review and critique the concept of crisis stability, explaining the weaknesses in current conceptions of crisis stability and presenting a definition that more accurately reflects the nature of crisis interaction. The final section will review a serious problem in crisis management--misperception of intentions and resolve--and present concepts that more accurately describe the problems decisionmakers face in trying to avoid misperceptions when using force in crises.

International Crises

Through journalistic and political license the term "crisis" has been stretched to describe a wide range of phenomena. Essentially any problem for which national leaders do not have a ready solution can, at the whim of pundits or politicians, be labeled a crisis. The broad definition of crisis used in the vernacular lacks sufficient precision for this study because it covers far too wide a range of political situations.

The focus of this study is on a particular category of international crisis: the "acute" international crisis.¹ This type of crisis has been defined by Oran R. Young as "a process of interaction occurring at higher levels of perceived intensity than the ordinary flow of events and characterized by: a sharp break from the ordinary flow of politics; a rise in the perceived prospects that violence will break out; and significant implications for the stability of some system or subsystem (or pattern of relationships) in international politics."² Phil Williams defines such a crisis as "a confrontation of two or more states, usually occupying a short time period, in which the probability of an outbreak of war between the participants is perceived to increase significantly."³ Along these same lines, Glenn H. Snyder and Paul Diesing define a crisis as "a sequence of interactions between the governments of two or more sovereign states in severe conflict, short of actual war, but involving the perception of a dangerously high probability of war."⁴ Finally, the definition of crisis

¹Charles A. McClelland, "The Acute International Crisis," World Politics 14 (October 1961): 182-205.

²Oran R. Young, The Politics of Force (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1968), p. 15.

³Phil Williams, Crisis Management (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1976), p. 25.

⁴Glenn H. Snyder and Paul Diesing, Conflict Among Nations (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1977), p. 6.

used in International Crisis Behavior Project headed by Michael Brecher is that:

a crisis is a situation with three necessary and sufficient conditions, deriving from a change in its external or internal environment. All three are perceptions held by the highest level decision-makers:

1. threat to basic values, with a simultaneous or subsequent
2. high probability of involvement in military hostilities, and the awareness of
3. finite time for response to the external value threat.⁵

Thus, the essential features of acute international crises are a confrontation, short of war, between two sovereign states, and a perception by national leaders of a significantly increased danger of war breaking out, or at least greatly increased uncertainty that war can be avoided.

Shortness of duration is has been used by some observers to distinguish an acute crisis from other crises.⁶ This is normally done because national leaders tend to feel severe time constraints and an urgent need to take immediate action in crises, and because crises that drag out for weeks or months lose their intense sense of danger as implicit norms of behavior are tacitly established through actual practice. However, prolonged crises are at least as likely to occur as are acute crises, can have as great a potential to escalate to war, and can be just as threatening to the

⁵Michael Brecher, Decisions in Crisis: Israel, 1967 and 1973 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), p. 1 (emphasis is his).

⁶Young, p. 15; Williams, p. 25.

national interests of the parties involved. Prolonged crises are certainly worthy of investigation, and have been somewhat neglected in the crisis literature due to the focus on short-duration crises.⁷ Additionally, an acute crisis can arise during a prolonged crisis if either side takes an action seriously violating the tacit norms of behavior being observed. Although the phenomena of interest in this study are most prominent in short-duration acute crises, they also occur during the periods of acute crisis that can arise during a prolonged crisis. Thus, while prolonged crises are not excluded from this study, when they are addressed attention will be focused on the periods of acute crisis within them.

A feature of some crises, which can contribute to crises being of short duration, is that national leaders perceive themselves as acting under time constraints--action must be taken immediately to avert unacceptable losses to vital national interests.⁸ The perception of time constraints held by leaders of one nation is usually induced or

⁷ Eliot A. Cohen, "Why We Should Stop Studying the Cuban Missile Crisis," The National Interest No. 2 (Winter 1985/6): 6.

⁸ Ole R. Holsti, Crisis Escalation War (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1972); p. 9; Charles F. Hermann, "Some Issues in the Study of International Crisis," in Charles F. Hermann, ed., International Crises: Insights from Behavioral Research (New York: The Free Press, 1972), p. 13; Richard N. Lebow, Between Peace and War: The Nature of International Crises (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981), p. 12; Brecher, p. 1.

exacerbated by the actions of the other side in the crisis, particularly if the crisis was provoked by an attempt at a fait accompli, or if an ultimatum was presented. The effect of a perception of time constraints is to raise the level of stress experienced by national leaders, possibly reducing the effectiveness of their analysis and decisionmaking. Perception of time constraints is a variable rather than a parameter in crises, and can vary widely in intensity. In a prolonged crisis all the features of crisis are present except the perception of time constraints. Perception of time constraints tends to be strong in the type of crisis of interest to this study, but is not a necessary condition for an international crisis to exist.

Another feature of international crises is that national leaders perceive important national interests to be at stake in the conflict.⁹ Such perceptions are particularly intense in acute crises. Examples of national interests commonly perceived as important enough to warrant a crisis include the security of the nation and its allies, spheres of influence or positions of regional political prominence, international principles such as freedom of the seas or rights of neutrals, and sources of strategic minerals or foodstuffs. The nation's reputation as a world power and its bargaining reputation have sometimes been included as

⁹Holsti, p. 9; Hermann, p. 13; Williams, p. 25; Lebow, Between Peace and War, p. 10.

interests which when threatened can provoke a crisis, but such interests normally become involved when a threat to one of the more concrete interests listed above arises, thus compounding the importance of the interest at stake. It is the threat to important national interests that generates the sense of urgency and perceived danger of war in crises.¹⁰

A crisis is fundamentally a bargaining relationship between the two sides.¹¹ Bargaining relationships are marked by interdependence: the ability of each side to achieve its objectives depends on the decisions and actions of both sides. Thus each side, in planning its own course of action, must take into account the objectives and anticipated course of action of the other side.¹² In crisis

¹⁰This definition of acute crisis omits surprise as a characteristic, which is included by Holsti, p. 10, and Hermann, p. 13. However, a crisis need not surprise national leaders by its occurrence, and could build up gradually from a prolonged dispute, so long as it arises in such a way as to give national leaders the perception that it threatens serious damage to important national interests. See Snyder and Diesing, p. 17.

¹¹Thomas C. Schelling, The Strategy of Conflict (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960), pp. 187-203; Glenn H. Snyder, "Crisis Bargaining," in Charles F. Hermann, ed., International Crises: Insights from Behavioral Research (New York: The Free Press, 1972), pp. 217-256.

¹²A decision by one side to seek a military solution to a crisis, as in a fait accompli, does not necessarily eliminate bargaining as a feature of the crisis. The outcome still depends of the decision by the other side whether to resist or to sacrifice its interests in order to avoid war. Furthermore, bargaining may continue to achieve a final resolution of the dispute.



bargaining the two sides have common or complementary interests, as well as conflicting interests, otherwise one or both sides would opt for war rather than engage in crisis bargaining.¹³ The advantage of viewing international crises as a bargaining relationship is that it highlights their fundamental political nature, which can be obscured by the military actions taken during crises. To emphasize bargaining is not to deny that crises are an intense form of strategic competition over interests perceived as being vital by national leaders on the two sides. Rather, the focus on bargaining provides a useful means for conceptualizing how strategic competition is conducted in crises.

Bargaining of some sort is, of course, present across the entire spectrum of international intercourse, from routine peacetime negotiations to full-scale war. But international crises stand apart from both peacetime diplomatic disputes and wartime military conflict due to their unique political-military nature. In crisis bargaining, varying combinations and sequences of persuasion, coercion and/or accommodation are applied in an effort at resolving the conflict on favorable terms. Although the threat of resort to force, even if only as a latent coercive

¹³Coral Bell refers to this as an "adverse partnership," which is marked by "solid common interests as well as sharp conflicting interests." The Conventions of Crisis (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 50.

threat, is rarely ever totally excluded in peacetime diplomacy, and political accommodation is rarely ever totally excluded in wartime hostilities, in crises both the political and military dimensions are prominent. In an acute crisis the confrontation has intensified to the point that coercion--direct, implied, or even latent, including standing deterrent threats as well as specific threats related to the crisis--begins to dominate the relationship and the grounds for accommodation begin to shrink toward little more than a mutual desire to avoid war. The prominence of coercion has led some observers to classify crises as an intermediate status of relations between peace and war, combining elements of both peacetime accommodation and wartime coercion.¹⁴

Crises consist of a series of bargaining interactions between the two sides. Bargaining interactions include formal negotiations, official diplomatic communications, informal communications via intermediaries or the media, and actions taken to convey political signals. Focusing on interaction highlights the interdependence between the two sides. Decisions made by each side reflect decisions made by the other side as well as their own objectives, and the ability of either side to achieve its objectives is dependent upon decisions made by the other side.

¹⁴Glenn H. Snyder, "Crisis Bargaining," pp. 218, 240; Snyder and Diesing, p. 10.

Although a particular type of international crisis--the acute crisis--has been identified as the focus of this study, that category still covers a broad range of crisis phenomena. Not all types of crises are relevant to this study. It will thus be useful to review the typologies of crises that have been proposed in the crisis literature. Coral Bell distinguishes between adversary crises, those between nations regarding themselves as adversaries, and intramural crises, those among allies or members of a regional organization. Williams, and Snyder and Diesing, draw a similar distinction, excluding intra-alliance crises from their analyses.¹⁵ This is a useful because intra-alliance crises, though they may be acute politically and involve explicit coercion, rarely entail risk of war. Thus, the scope of this study will be limited to adversary crises.

More extensive typologies of crises have also been proposed. Young proposed six types of crises, based on how they are initiated: an attempt at a fait accompli, applying coercive pressure as an indirect response to undesirable actions, a military response to nonviolent provocation, military probe provoking a military response, a military invasion provoking military resistance, and mutual intervention in political upheaval in a third country.¹⁶

¹⁵Bell, p. 7; Williams, p. 24; Snyder and Diesing, p.7.

¹⁶Young, p. 22.

These categories are not particularly useful for analysis of crises, and serve mainly to illustrate the range of actions that can provoke a crisis.

A more useful approach is to distinguish among different motives for provoking a crisis. Snyder and Diesing distinguish among three types of crises: the "coercive bargaining type," a confrontation arising from a challenge met by resistance, the "war scare" or "security dilemma" type, arising from fear of imminent attack, and the "prelude or pretext to an intended attack" type, provoked to justify a preplanned military move. A hypothetical category, "accidental crises," is excluded by Snyder and Diesing for lack of empirical evidence that such a crisis has occurred.¹⁷

Lebow has proposed a similar scheme of four types of crises: the "justification of hostility" crisis, used as a causus belli for war, the "spinoff" crisis, a deliberate hostile act toward a third country taken to further the prosecution of a war in progress, the "brinkmanship" crisis, a challenge to a known interest or commitment of another country in expectation that the other country will be compelled to back down rather than fight, and the "accidental" crisis, caused by an undesired and unsanctioned provocation.¹⁸

¹⁷ Snyder and Diesing, pp. 11-17.

¹⁸ Lebow, Between Peace and War, pp. 23-97. Lebow states the 1905 Dogger Bank Incident was an accidental crisis. See his "Accidents and Crises: The Dogger Bank Affair," Naval War College Review 31 (Summer 1978): 66-75.

Contrasting these two schemes, Snyder and Diesing's coercive bargaining crisis is the same as Lebow's brinkmanship crisis, and Snyder and Diesing's pretext to attack crisis is the same as Lebow's justification of hostility crisis. Snyder and Diesing's arguments for treating a war scare as a separate category of crisis are not persuasive. War scare crises are better viewed as a form of coercive bargaining crisis in which the security dilemma has a major impact on crisis stability. Lebow's spinoff crisis also will not be addressed as separate category because it does not address the motives for the crisis so much as the circumstances in which it arose. All spinoff crises fall into either the coercive bargaining or pretext to attack categories.

Accidental crises, which were excluded by Snyder and Diesing but included by Lebow, have not been adequately addressed in the crisis literature. The role of military accidents in provoking or exacerbating crises has received attention, but as yet there are not adequate concepts for dealing with the effects of accidents. This study will not treat accidental crises as a separate category. Rather, inadvertent military incidents will be viewed as provoking or exacerbating one of the other two major categories of crises--coercive bargaining (brinkmanship) or pretext to attack (justification for war)--depending on how the two sides respond to the incident.

We are thus left with two major categories of crises: coercive bargaining (brinkmanship) and pretext to attack (justification for war). Of these two categories, the coercive bargaining or brinkmanship crisis is the type of interest in this study. While a pretext to attack or justification of hostility crisis is certainly an acute crisis, and could well entail intensive bargaining, the outcome is preordained to be war.¹⁹

Because the role of force as a political instrument in crises can vary significantly depending on the nature of the crisis, this study will distinguish between two categories of crises: direct and indirect. A direct crisis is one in which the United States is in direct confrontation with

¹⁹Analytical problems can arise when trying to distinguish between "pretext to attack" and "coercive bargaining" crises. That the outcome of a crisis was war is insufficient to establish that crisis as having been a pretext, it must also be shown that the nation which precipitated the crisis desired war to be the outcome regardless of the response by the other side. Complicating this analysis is the possibility of dual motives in a coercive bargaining crisis: if the target nation immediately capitulates to all demands, the initiator suspends his war plans, but if the target nation resists, the initiator launches war using the crisis as a pretext. The motives of the nation precipitating the crisis can also change during the crisis. A crisis provoked as a pretext for war could have a non-war outcome if the target nation were to offer much larger concessions than the initiator had expected to gain through coercion. Conversely, a crisis provoked for coercion could result in war if the target nation is unwilling to accept the initiator's demands and the initiator then decides to use the crisis as grounds for war. Thus, while it is useful to distinguish among crises on the basis of motives, the possibility of dual motives and changes in motives must be recognized.

another nation. The seizure of the USS Pueblo in 1968 generated a direct crisis between the United States and North Korea. The term direct superpower crisis will be used to describe a direct crisis in which the Soviet Union is the adversary. The 1962 Cuban missile crisis was a direct superpower crisis. An indirect crisis is one in which the United States is involved because it is supporting a friend or ally who is a direct participant. The 1958 Taiwan Straits crisis was an indirect crisis between the United States, supporting allies on Taiwan, and China. The term indirect superpower crisis will be used to describe an indirect crisis in which the United States and the Soviet Union are brought into confrontation by a conflict between their respective allies or clients. The 1967 and 1973 Middle East Wars generated indirect superpower crises. The term indirect is used to convey the sense that the outcome of the crisis, whether or not a Soviet-American war results, can be influenced by the decisions of the third parties as well as the decisions made by the two superpowers.²⁰

²⁰ See Williams, pp. 130-34. What is referred to in this study as an "indirect superpower crisis" is described as a "limited local war" by Yaacov Bar-Simon-Tov. The difference is primarily one of perspective: this study focuses on the crisis between the superpowers brought on by the limited local war, whereas Bar-Simon-Tov's study focuses on the local war itself. Bar-Simon-Tov provides a superb analysis of bargaining relationships in this type of crisis in The Israeli-Egyptian War of Attrition, 1969-1970 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), pp. 17-20.

In summary, this study will address acute international crises, which are characterized by a confrontation, short of war, between two sovereign states, and a perception by national leaders of a significantly increased danger of war breaking out. A crisis is a bargaining relationship between the two sides, and, as such, consists of a series of interactions between them. Additional features of acute international crises are that national leaders perceive important national interests to be at stake in the conflict and tend to perceive themselves as acting under severe time constraints. This study will be limited to adversary crises, excluding intra-alliance crises. Of the two major categories of crises--coercive bargaining (brinkmanship) and pretext to attack (justification for war)--the coercive bargaining crisis is the type that is of interest in this study. Finally, this study will distinguish between two categories of crises: direct, in which the United States is in direct confrontation with another nation, and indirect, in which the United States is involved through support of a friend or ally that is a direct participant.

Interaction in Crises

Previous studies of international crises have implicitly viewed the various political and military interactions that occur between the two sides as a single interaction sequence. This can be seen in the definitions

of crisis given above: Young describes a crisis as "a process of interaction," while Snyder and Diesing describe a crisis as "a sequence of interactions."²¹ Because both of these analytical schemes focus primarily on top-level decisionmaking, with little attention to decisionmaking by military commanders at the scene of a crisis, the flow of events in a crisis is implicitly viewed as a single sequence of actions and reactions. This perspective on crisis interaction will be referred to as the single interaction sequence model.

The single interaction sequence model does not accurately describe the complexity of crisis interaction. What actually occurs in a crisis is multiple interaction sequences that only partially influence each other. In a crisis, national political leaders on the two sides are interacting through diplomatic communications and political signalling, national military leaders are interacting through the actions taken with their forces, and military forces in the field are interacting as they respond to orders from higher authorities and the actions of adversary forces. Such multiple interaction sequences, evolving simultaneously and semi-independently, arise when national leaders do not make all operational decisions themselves, but must delegate significant decisionmaking authority to

²¹Young, p. 15; Snyder and Diesing, p. 6.

subordinates. The single interaction sequence model views these multiple interaction sequences as a single flow of events.

The weakness of the single interaction sequence model is that in subtle ways it leads towards a unitary actor perspective of national behavior. In its pure form, the unitary actor model assumes that all actions taken by a nation are at least authorized, if not specifically ordered, by national leaders. The unitary actor model is typically used in strategic analyses of the national interests, objectives, and strategies that lead to crises. Countries are treated as entities having interests, objectives, and strategies. The role of organizations and individuals in the formulation and execution of policy are essentially ignored. Accidents and the possibility of national leaders losing control of the momentum of military actions receive scant attention. The single interaction sequence model is compatible with the implicit, even inadvertent, assumption that national leaders have authorized or are in direct control of the actions taken by their forces in a crisis.

The weaknesses in the unitary actor model are well recognized, which has led to widespread use of the bureaucratic politics and organizational process models for analysis of international crises. The bureaucratic politics model recognizes that the policy perspectives held by participants in decisionmaking are shaped by the organizations

they represent, and that the policy recommendations made by participants will be influenced by the parochial interests of their organizations. In the organizational process model governmental action is viewed as organizational output: the decisions of government leaders trigger organizational routines, which primarily determine the nature of the actions taken. Organizational activity consists largely of enactment of preestablished routines--the standard operating procedures and programs which constitute an organization's repertoire.²²

Although the bureaucratic politics and organizational process models provide a more accurate description of decisionmaking than does the unitary actor model, they are not without their faults. The bureaucratic politics model tends to treat all policy recommendations made to the President and his closest advisors as having been motivated primarily by parochial bureaucratic self-interests. There is thus an inherent bias toward interpreting evidence of policy disagreements or actions not ordered by the President as evidence of bureaucratic politics.²³ The model does not

²²Graham T. Allison, Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1971), pp. 78-96, 162-181.

²³Stephen D. Krasner, "Are Bureaucracies Important? (Or Allison Wonderland)," Foreign Policy No. 7 (Summer 1972): 159-79; Robert J. Art, "Bureaucratic Politics and American Foreign Policy: A Critique," Policy Sciences 4 (December 1973): 467-90; Donald Hafner, "Bureaucratic Politics and 'Those Frigging Missiles': JFK, Cuba and U.S.

recognize two other possibilities: first, that conflicting policy recommendations may be based on considerations of national interest and the feasibility of various courses of action, rather than bureaucratic self-interest, and, second, that cabinet-level officials may well base recommendations on personal policy preferences or political considerations, rather than on the interests of their bureaucracies.²⁴

The bureaucratic politics model fails to recognize that national policies can be shaped by factors other than the interplay of bureaucratic politics. This is apparent in the "cult of the offensive" theory of the origins of World War I. According to this theory, a principle cause for the outbreak of war was that the armed forces of the European powers had a bias for offensive military doctrines. Their bias for the offensive is portrayed as being the result of parochial organizational interests--autonomy from civilian control, larger budgets, and prestige--as opposed to rational analysis of national strategic interests.²⁵

Missiles in Turkey," Orbis 21 (Summer 1977): 307-33; Barton J. Bernstein, "The Cuban Missile Crisis: Trading the Jupiters in Turkey?" Political Science Quarterly 95 (Spring 1980): 103.

²⁴Alexander L. George, Presidential Decisionmaking in Foreign Policy (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1980), pp. 114-16.

²⁵Steven Van Evera, "The Cult of the Offensive and the Origins of the First World War," International Security 9 (Summer 1984): 58-107; Jack Snyder, "Civil-Military Relations and the Cult of the Offensive, 1914 and 1984," International Security 9 (Summer 1984): 108-146.

The "cult of the offensive" theory has come under criticism for failing to recognize that factors other than the parochial interests of the militaries also drove the preference for offensive doctrines. In particular, some of the European powers needed offensive strategies to fulfill alliance commitments and others had definite policies of expansion and aggrandizement. Thus, in this example, the bureaucratic politics model resulted in explanatory factors other than parochial organizational interests being ignored and over-emphasis of the role of such interests in shaping national strategies. Additionally, Jack S. Levy criticizes the theory for its emphasis on bureaucratic routines as the causal link between crises and war. Levy argues that while bureaucratic factors may well lead to an offensive bias, that bias does not inevitably cause crises to escalate to war--additional, non-bureaucratic, conditions must be present for war to erupt.²⁶

The organizational process model has similar problems. It implicitly accepts the simple public administration distinction between policymaking and policy implementation. Once the President has decided on a course

²⁶ Jack S. Levy, "Organizational Routines and the Causes of War," International Studies Quarterly 30 (June 1986): 193-222; and Scott D. Sagan, "1914 Revisited: Allies, Offense, and Instability," International Security 11 (Fall 1986): 151-75. Also see the exchange between Snyder and Sagan in "Correspondence," International Security 11 (Winter 1986-87): 187-98.

of action, government organizations serve only to carry out his orders--essentially devoid of their own policymaking authority. Organizational routines serve only to explain how presidential orders are corrupted in the process of implementation. This, in turn, leads to the implicit assumption that all actions taken by a nation during a crisis either are ordered by national leaders in pursuit of their policy objectives, or should not have occurred and therefore represent a loss of control over events.

This raises the second weakness in the crisis management literature, which is that it is based on an erroneous view of the manner in which military forces are controlled in crises. This apparently resulted from the frequently observed phenomenon of United States leaders exercising close control over military operations in crises, combined with a lack of familiarity with military command and control procedures. The crisis management literature typically describes the control of crisis military operations as being highly centralized, with top-level civilian authorities exercising direct control--in contrast to routine peacetime operations, which are described as highly decentralized and having little involvement of civilian political authorities. This description fails to grasp the complexity of military command and control.

Even in crises, military commanders are delegated significant authority to make operational decisions on the

employment of their forces--including specified decisions on the use of force. Under certain circumstances, spelled out when the delegation of authority was made, military commanders can use conventional weapons without seeking permission from higher authorities. The scope of their authority is spelled out in a variety of documents, which collectively will be referred to as mechanisms of delegated command. There are even provisions for commanders to act contrary to their written instructions when circumstances dictate.²⁷

Although some scholars have recognized that these features exist in the United States military command and control system, the actual complexity of that system has not fully grasped in the literature on crisis management.²⁸ In the conduct of military operations, commanders at all levels in the chain of command have significant decisionmaking authority and can do much more than simply execute presidential policy decisions. An understanding of the mechanisms through which authority to make operational decisions is delegated to military commanders is essential

²⁷ See Chapter VII for a detailed description of military command and control.

²⁸ Two notable exceptions to this lack of awareness are John Steinbruner, "An Assessment of Nuclear Crises," in Franklin Griffiths and John C. Polanyi, eds., The Dangers of Nuclear War (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), pp. 34-49; Scott D. Sagan, "Nuclear Alerts and Crisis Management," International Security 9 (Spring 1985): 99-139.

for accurately assessing the crisis management problems that arise when military forces are employed in crises.

Returning to the organizational process model, its two serious flaws can now be seen. First, it fails to recognize that many government organizations, the armed forces in particular, are delegated significant authority to make detailed decisions on how to carry out policies.²⁹ The normal state of affairs--in crises as well as in peacetime and war--is for there to be innumerable military actions taking place that the President is not directly controlling. Second, the organizational process model fails to account for the fact that decisionmakers in many government organizations, particularly military commanders, often face circumstances that had not been anticipated by national leaders when deciding upon a course of action. Lower-level decisionmakers can be confronted with a requirement to make what is essentially a policy decision without specific guidance on how to make it or sufficient time to seek further guidance from higher authority. Thus, the organizational process model must be modified to account

²⁹Allison, pp. 85-6, recognizes that "Government action requires decentralization of responsibility and power," but mentions this only as being the reason why national leaders intervene in the internal processes of organizations dealing with military and foreign policy. His model recognizes only one legitimate policymaker, the President, and treats all other governmental actors as advisors or administrators without autonomous policymaking authority.

for the substantial legitimate decisionmaking authority routinely delegated to military commanders.

Replacement of the single interaction sequence model of crises in favor of a model recognizing the existence of multiple interaction sequences corrects many of these weaknesses in crisis theory. Each interaction sequence consists of a series of actions and reactions between specific groups of decisionmakers on each side. Although any number of interaction sequences could be postulated, limited only by the number of decisionmakers capable of affecting the crisis, this results in a model of excessive complexity. Instead, a relatively simple model of three interaction sequences will be used. Each of the three interaction sequences will be associated with a specific level in the chain of command, leading to a depiction of crisis interaction as being stratified into three levels. This will be referred to as the stratified interaction model. The stratified interaction model is described in detail in Chapter III.³⁰

³⁰ Although this study is limited to interactions among military forces, the stratified interaction model can be applied to any organization that is sufficiently large and complex that top-level decisionmakers are incapable of exercising continuous direct control of its myriad interactions with the environment. Thus, in the U.S. Government, the stratified interaction model would apply to the Department of State and other large departments as well as to the Department of Defense. The model would also apply, for example, to large corporations and universities. The organization theory foundations of the stratified interaction model are discussed in Chapter IV.

The fundamental condition necessary for crisis interaction to be stratified is for the military establishment to be sufficiently large and complex that national leaders are incapable of exercising constant, direct, positive control of the actions of all operational units which might have an impact on the crisis. This condition is clearly met in the military establishments of the United States and the Soviet Union.³¹ It can also be met in the military establishments of much smaller nations if national leaders do not have the capability or desire to exercise direct control of their forces.

When constant, direct, positive control of operational forces is not being exercised, different sets of decision-makers are delegated authority to make specified operational decisions. Their decisionmaking authority is bounded by the existing conditions of delegated command, which could range from being tightly controlled to being essentially autonomous. Even forces under the direct control of the

³¹ Paul Bracken contends that this condition arises in the control of nuclear weapons: "In neither country [the United States and the Soviet Union] do leaders have the tight central control over nuclear arsenals offered in public relations statements. Instead, they rely on the vast organizations which are needed to manage the complex integration process. This has profound implications for maintaining political control over nuclear forces as they go on alert and operate in war." The Command and Control of Nuclear Forces (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1983), p. 8. He also demonstrates that similar conditions pervade military command and intelligence systems--conventional as well as nuclear.

President retain a certain amount of decisionmaking authority, which can be substantial in some circumstances.

The fact that different sets of decisionmakers are responsible for making different operational decisions does not in itself lead to stratified interaction. Hypothetically, if all of those decisionmakers possessed identical beliefs, objectives, and perceptions, the operational decisions they make would be the same ones that national leaders would make if exercising positive control.³²

Organization theory explains why this hypothetical situation will not necessarily be the case. Different organizations and sub-organizations possess distinct belief systems, referred to as an "organizational essences" or "bureaucratic ideologies" in organization theory, which shape the perceptions of their members. In military organizations, organizational belief systems become formalized in the strategic and tactical doctrines formulated for employment of their forces. Such doctrines typically vary widely among military organizations. Decisionmaking in organizations is bounded by cognitive limits on rationality, which generate a range of mechanisms for simplifying environmental complexity, coping with ambiguity, and dealing with value complexity. A principle

³²This is the assumption that is made in the "unitary actor" model of national behavior. For example, see Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, The War Trap (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1981), pp. 20-23.

effect of the cognitive limits on decisionmaking is to give prominence to the beliefs and perceptions held by individual decisionmakers. Thus, there are ample theoretical grounds for expecting that military commanders will make operational decisions different from those that national leaders would have made if they had been in a position to make them.³³

Paul Bracken's concept of "tightly coupled forces" is an important contribution toward a more accurate understanding of how the U.S. command and control system affects crisis interaction. Bracken contends that U.S. and Soviet nuclear forces are tightly coupled due to two features of their respective command and control systems: vertical integration of early warning sensors with operational

³³On organizational ideology see Philip Selznick, TVA and the Grass Roots (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1953), pp. 47-50; Anthony Downs, Inside Bureaucracy (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1967), pp. 237-46; Morton H. Halperin, Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1974), pp. 26-8. On military doctrine as a belief system see Richard K. Betts, Soldiers, Statesmen, and Cold War Crises (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1977), pp. 115-26.

On cognitive limits on decisionmaking see Herbert A. Simon, "A Behavioral Model of Rational Choice," in Herbert A. Simon, ed., Models of Man: Social and Rational (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1957), pp. 241-60; James G. March and Herbert A. Simon, Organizations (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1958), Chapter 6; Herbert A. Simon, "Theories of Decision-Making in Economics and Behavioral Science," American Economic Review 49 (June 1959): 253-83; Richard M. Cyert and James G. March, A Behavioral Theory of the Firm (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1963), pp. 116-125; John D. Steinbruner, The Cybernetic Theory of Decision: New Dimensions of Political Analysis (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1974), pp. 88-139. On methods of coping with cognitive limits, see George, Presidential Decision-making, pp. 25-53.

nuclear forces on each side, necessary to reduce their vulnerability to surprise attack, and a de facto coupling of U.S. and Soviet forces through each side's warning and intelligence networks.³⁴ Mutual coupling can drive an interaction process between Soviet and American nuclear forces:

This mutual coupling occurs because a threatening Soviet military action or alert can be detected almost immediately by American warning and intelligence systems and conveyed to force commanders. The detected action may not have a clear meaning, but because of its possible consequences protective measures must be taken against it. The action-reaction process does not necessarily stop after two moves, however. It can proceed to many moves and can, and often does, extend from sea-based forces to air- and land-based forces because of the effect of tight coupling.³⁵

This action-reaction process can produce what Bracken calls "a mutually reinforcing alert," in which U.S. and Soviet actions prompt increasingly higher alert levels on both sides. A mutually reinforcing alert, in turn, would exacerbate political tensions because of the near impossibility of distinguishing precautionary military moves from hostile political moves.³⁶

Bracken's concept of tight coupling is an important contribution to understanding crisis interaction, but it does not convey the actual complexity of the relationships

³⁴ Bracken, pp. 54-65.

³⁵ Ibid., pp. 59-60.

³⁶ Ibid., pp. 64-65.

between American and soviet forces. Two modifications to Bracken's concept are needed to derive the stratified interaction model. First, national leaders are not necessarily an integral element in all aspects of the vertical integration of sensors with forces: some major warning and intelligence systems are directly linked to the commanders of operational military forces, who have been delegated authority to take certain actions on the basis of warning provided by those systems without further orders from national leaders. Bracken makes this clear in his description of the command and control system, but includes national leaders in the action-reaction loop when describing the process of mutually reinforcing alerts. To a degree, that process can proceed without national leaders specifically having to order alerting actions as military commanders act in compliance with their standing orders.

The second modification to Bracken's model is that U.S. conventional forces are vertically integrated with warning and intelligence systems, and tightly coupled with Soviet conventional forces, in a manner similar to nuclear forces. The reasons for this are the same: the ability of U.S. conventional forces to successfully execute their wartime missions can be crucially dependent on strategic warning of an impending Soviet attack. This is most clear in NATO, where the alliance defense strategy is based on having sufficient warning to complete essential defensive

preparations. It is also true for the U.S. Navy, whose Maritime Strategy is founded on early and rapid surging of naval forces to key forward operating areas. An action by either side to increase the readiness of major conventional force commands is readily detected by the command on the other side responsible for dealing with that threat, which then takes actions to compensate for the changed strategic situation. This is the normal state of affairs in peacetime. As a crisis situation emerges the tightness of coupling between the conventional forces of the two sides actually increases as surveillance efforts are stepped up and focused on those adversary forces most likely to play an immediate role in the crisis.

In some military environments, particularly in naval warfare, U.S. and Soviet forces are tightly coupled down to the tactical level. At any given moment U.S. and Soviet tactical forces are operating in close proximity in several parts of the world: their naval forces routinely intermingle on the high seas, their ground forces are within sight of each other along the border between East and West Germany, and their surveillance aircraft are monitoring and being monitored by each other's air defense systems. Because a surprise attack by either side could be tactically decisive in an individual engagement, operational forces on both sides keep their adversary under close and constant surveillance. An action by either side's tactical forces to

increase their readiness or improve their tactical situation is readily detected by the other side's tactical forces in the vicinity, which then take actions to compensate for the changed tactical situation. Again, this is the normal state of affairs in peacetime, and the intensity of surveillance increases as the level of tensions rise in a crisis--further tightening the coupling between the forces of the two sides.

Thus, the actual situation is that the tight coupling of U.S. and Soviet forces is stratified into tight coupling at two levels: the major command level, including strategic nuclear forces and other major commands, and the tactical level, encompassing operational units in close proximity in the field or at sea. Significant information on the status of the other side's forces flows directly to military commanders at these levels from organic sensors under their control and dual reporting from intelligence sources outside their commands. Military commanders are only partially dependent on the chain of command to tell them what the adversary is doing, and are delegated authority to take certain specified measures to adapt the readiness of their forces to changes in the adversary's forces. Military commanders are obligated to immediately report such actions to their superiors, thus allowing their orders to be countermanded, if necessary.³⁷ The key point is that within

³⁷ See Chapter IV for a detailed discussion of military command and control.

specified limits, control of U.S. operational forces is delegated widely to commanders with their own sources of intelligence on Soviet forces.

In summary, interaction between the two sides in crises has been viewed in terms of an implicit single interaction sequence model that does not accurately describe the complexity of crisis interaction. The weakness of the single interaction sequence model is that in subtle ways it leads toward an implicit assumption that national leaders are in control of the actions taken by their nation in a crisis. The bureaucratic politics and organizational process models do not entirely correct this weakness and have serious problems of their own. The key to correcting these weaknesses is a more accurate understanding of the complexity of the military command and control system, in which military commanders are delegated significant decisionmaking authority.

A model containing three interaction sequences--each sequence associated with a specific level in the chain of command--will be used. Crisis interaction is stratified when the military establishment of a country is sufficiently large and complex that national leaders are incapable of exercising direct control over all operational units that could have an impact on a crisis. Paul Bracken's concept of "tightly coupled forces"--modified by the observation that tight coupling is stratified, occurring separately at the

strategic and tactical levels--then explains how interaction sequences can arise.

Crisis Management

A nation confronted by a crisis can choose from among three general strategies for dealing with it: capitulation, war, or crisis management. As defined by Williams, "crisis management is concerned on the one hand with the procedures for controlling and regulating a crisis so that it does not get out of hand and lead to war, and on the other hand with ensuring that the crisis is resolved on a satisfactory basis in which the vital interests of the state are secured and protected."³⁸ These two elements are also central to the definition of crisis management used by Snyder and Diesing: first, exercise of detailed control by the top leadership in order to to avoid war, and, second, efforts by national leaders "to advance or protect their state's interests, to win or at least to maximize gains or minimize losses, and if possible to settle the issue in conflict so that it does not produce further crises."³⁹ This is the definition of crisis management that will be used in this study.

The essence of the crisis management problem is to find the optimum balance between efforts to advance or

³⁸Williams, p. 30.

³⁹Snyder and Diesing, p. 207.

protect national interests, and efforts to avoid war. Williams describes crisis management as an attempt to balance attainment of national goals in the bilateral competition against efforts to avoid the shared danger of war.⁴⁰ Similarly, Snyder describes crisis management as balancing coercion against disaster avoidance, and balancing accommodation against loss avoidance.⁴¹ This conceptualization of crisis management as balancing between pursuit of national interests and avoidance of war will be a foundation for the concept of political-military tensions to be developed in Chapter III.

The ability of national leaders to maintain control over events is a central problem in crises. Decisionmakers commonly perceive that a crisis can develop a self-sustaining force or impetus of its own, degrading their ability to control events.⁴² According to Thomas C. Schelling, "It is the essence of a crisis that the participants are not fully in control of events; they take steps and make decisions that raise or lower the danger, but in a realm of risk and uncertainty."⁴³ Thus, maintaining

⁴⁰Williams, p. 29.

⁴¹Glenn H. Snyder, "Crisis Bargaining," p. 240. Also see Snyder and Diesing, p. 270.

⁴²Young, pp. 19-20; Williams, p. 26.

⁴³Thomas C. Schelling, Arms and Influence (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1966), p. 97.

control over events also means maintaining control of risks, particularly the risk of war breaking out inadvertently.

On the other hand, Schelling's description of brinkmanship as "manipulating the shared risk of war," and his concept of "the threat that leaves something to chance" do not convey an accurate image of how national leaders manage crises.⁴⁴ Snyder has observed that, while delegating control of military operations to subordinate commanders (or threatening to do so) can be used as a coercive tactic in crisis bargaining, national leaders normally emphasize maintaining direct control of military forces in order to avoid war.⁴⁵ Thus, Schelling's concepts of manipulation of risk and the threat that leaves something to chance are better viewed as interpretations of the nature of crisis interaction, rather than as strategies consciously employed by national leaders in crises.

National leaders can be confronted with serious problems in attempting to maintain control over events in a crisis. Glenn Snyder identifies four "autonomous risks" that could cause a loss of control over events: military action being driven by its own logic and momentum, national leaders losing control over their military commanders, lack of military options other than escalatory war plans, and

⁴⁴ Ibid., pp. 99-105; Schelling, Strategy of Conflict, pp. 187-203.

⁴⁵ Glenn H. Snyder, "Crisis Bargaining," pp. 244-245.

impairment of rational calculation by psychological factors under the stress of a crisis.⁴⁶ This study will treat these problems somewhat differently, but Snyder's list of autonomous risks is a useful summary of the types of concerns that have been raised in the crisis management literature.

A wide range of actions can be taken with military forces during a crisis in pursuit of military and political objectives. Coral Bell identifies "signals," threats or offers communicated to the other side, as the basic instrument of crisis management, and notes that some of the most effective signals are movements of military resources.⁴⁷ As Bell suggests, political signalling is a primary function of military forces in crises, competing with or even overshadowing their nominal military missions. Alexander L. George lists five general uses to which military forces can be put in crises: reducing the vulnerability and increasing the readiness of theater and strategic nuclear forces, signaling limited intentions and an interest in avoiding escalation, engaging in a test of military capabilities within restrictive ground rules, conveying military threats for coercive pressure in bargaining, and deterring escalation by the adversary and

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 241.

⁴⁷ Bell, p. 73.

neutralizing his coercive threats.⁴⁸ These categories show the ways in which military forces serve both political and military purposes in crises.

Although attempts have been made to draw distinctions between actions taken for military purposes and actions taken for political purposes, virtually all military actions undertaken in a crisis have a dual political-military nature. Actions taken for military purposes, such as increasing the readiness or reducing the vulnerability of military forces, can have political impact if perceived as a signal of hostile intent. Conversely, actions taken for political purposes, such as withdrawing forces from a contested area to signal limited objectives or increasing forces in a contested area to apply coercive or deterrent pressure, can have military impact by shifting the local balance of forces and altering the capabilities available to local military commanders. In a crisis, political missions such as coercion and signalling intentions are assigned to forces that must also be ready for limited combat operations and the possibility of sudden escalation to full-scale war.

Studies of crisis management have identified stringent requirements for its success. Foremost among these, as Bell points out, are imposing limits on the military means

⁴⁸Alexander L. George, "Crisis Management: The Interaction of Political and Military Considerations," Survival 26 (September/October 1984): 229-33.

employed that are commensurate with the limited ends of military action in crises, and maintaining close diplomatic control of military measures.⁴⁹ The basic requirement that national leaders maintain close control of military operations is central to the more detailed lists of requirements and techniques proposed in other studies.

In addition to the "political" requirements of crisis management--limiting objectives and the means employed to secure those objectives--George also identifies seven "operational" requirements for crisis management: First, political authorities must control military operations, including details of deployments and low-level actions as well as selection and timing of the moves. Second, the tempo of military operations may have to be deliberately slowed, creating pauses for the exchange of diplomatic signals, assessment, and decisionmaking. Third, military actions have to be coordinated with diplomatic actions in an integrated strategy for resolving the crisis acceptably without war. Fourth, military actions taken for signalling purposes must send clear and appropriate signals consistent with diplomatic objectives. Fifth, military options should be avoided that give the adversary the impression of an impending resort to large-scale warfare, possibly prompting him to pre-empt. Sixth, military and diplomatic options

⁴⁹Bell, 49.

should be chosen that signal a desire to negotiate a solution to the crisis rather than to seek a military solution. Seventh, military options and diplomatic proposals should leave the adversary a way out of the crisis compatible with his fundamental interests.⁵⁰ These crisis management requirements have important implications for manner in which military force is used and controlled in crises.

Ole R. Holsti has identified six crisis management techniques, four of which address the use of force in crises: First, avoiding steps that seal off "escape routes." This precludes military actions which the other side would perceive as leaving it no way out of the crisis other than war. This technique places limits on military options, calling for carefully limited use of force as opposed to drastic, precipitous military actions. Second, orchestrating actions, particularly military actions, with declarations of intent so as to use multiple channels of communication to convey the same message. This also affects the employment of military forces, requiring that their actions be coordinated with diplomatic moves for signaling purposes. Third, making efforts to slow the pace of crisis

⁵⁰George, "Crisis Management," p. 226. An earlier, slightly different version of this list appeared in his "The Development of Doctrine and Strategy," in Alexander L. George, David K. Hall, and William E. Simons, The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy (New York: Little, Brown and Co., 1971), pp. 8-11.

events. This requires dampening the tempo of military operations, which typically emphasize speed of execution for tactical success. Fourth, keeping responsible policy makers in control of the details of implementation as well as broad strategic decisions. This raises the civil-military relations issue of who is to control execution of military operations in the field, and whether political or military considerations should govern operational decisions.⁵¹

The requirements and techniques identified by George and Holsti are similar. Both emphasize close control of military operations by national leaders, and tailoring of military options to support crisis bargaining and avoid escalation of the crisis.

A significant weakness in the crisis management literature is that, with few notable exceptions, there has been scant recognition that tensions can arise in attempting to reconcile military considerations with crisis management requirements. This arises from the nature of crisis management: the objective is to protect vital national interests as well as to avoid war, and military force is being employed for signaling and coercion. Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara contributed to, and may have originated, the lack of attention to the military dimension of crisis management when he asserted in the wake of the

⁵¹Holsti, pp. 221-226.

Cuban Missile Crisis that "Today there is no longer any such thing as strategy, there is only crisis management."⁵²

McNamara overlooked that there are requirements for effective employment of military force just as there are requirements for effective crisis management, and conflicts may arise between the two sets of requirements.

Alexander L. George rejects McNamara's antithesis between strategy and crisis management, observing that "in reality, policy-makers need to employ broad strategic principles to help them to reconcile and integrate, however imperfectly, the often competing requirements of force and diplomacy."⁵³ Although he makes it clear that political considerations are paramount and that close presidential control of military operations is crucial for effective crisis management, George points out that "there are likely to be severe limits on the ability of top-level political authorities to orchestrate military operations and serious risks if they attempt to carry 'micro-management' of military forces too far."⁵⁴ This is an crucial point that has received little attention in crisis management studies.

The nature of the tensions that can arise between political and military considerations in a crisis have been

⁵²Quoted in Bell, p. 2.

⁵³George, "Crisis Management," p. 224.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 233.

described by Eliot A. Cohen in an assessment of the Cuban Missile Crisis:

The events of October 1962 created considerable tension between military men seeking to protect those under their command, in the event of an outbreak of war, and politicians seeking to give the other side time to think and give in. Had men in fact died as a result, had ships sunk or airplanes fallen by the score, the crisis in civil-military relations would have taken a more dramatic turn, one in which, I suspect, civilian leaders would have accommodated commanders far more than they actually did.⁵⁵

Thus, the weakness in the crisis management literature is that it has not recognized that important, legitimate military considerations arise when military forces are employed as a political instrument in crises, and that tensions can arise in attempting to reconcile military requirements with crisis management requirements. Crisis management did not replace military strategy--other than in the minds of some social scientists--it created complex challenges for effective formulation and execution of military strategy on behalf of political-diplomatic objectives.

In summary, crisis management is the exercise of detailed control of diplomatic and military activities by national leaders in order to to avoid war while attempting to advance their state's interests or protect those interests against losses during a crisis. The essence of the crisis management is to find the optimum balance between

⁵⁵ Eliot A. Cohen, p. 6.

efforts to advance or protect national interests, and efforts to avoid war. Political signalling is a primary function of military forces in crises. Virtually all military actions undertaken in a crisis have a dual political-military impact: sending political signals and affecting the balance of military capabilities. Foremost among the requirements for the success of crisis management are imposing limits on the military means employed which are commensurate with the limited ends being sought, maintaining close top-level control of military measures, and carefully tailoring military options to support crisis bargaining and avoid escalation. A serious weakness of the crisis management literature is that it has not adequately addressed the tensions that can arise between these crisis management requirements and military considerations.

Crisis Stability

The third weakness in the crisis management literature is that the concept of crisis stability is poorly developed and there is a poor understanding of the escalation processes that could cause a crisis to escalate to war. Crisis stability is viewed as being primarily a function of weapons technology, particularly the degree to which it gives an advantage to the offense, and military doctrine, particularly doctrines emphasizing the superiority of the offensive. Lacking is an appreciation of the operational

factors that affect crisis stability once a decision is made to employ military forces in a crisis. The escalation processes that could cause a crisis to escalate to war are also poorly developed. There is growing concern over inadvertent or accidental war, but these concepts are not well defined and there is a very low probability that any of the scenarios would occur.

The definition of crisis stability generally accepted in the crisis management literature is that crisis stability exists when neither side has an incentive to strike the first military blow, launching a preemptive attack on the other side. Alexander George adds a second dimension: crisis stability exists when neither side perceives that crisis management had broken down and cannot be restored. Thus, crisis stability is a function of the strategies each side is pursuing in the crisis as well as a function of weapons technology. This will be discussed further below.

The concept of crisis stability has generally been used to assess the stability implications of particular weapons technologies and force postures. Weapons that enhance crisis stability are survivable, providing an assured retaliatory capability, and do not provide first strike capabilities for use against the other side. Weapons that degrade crisis stability are vulnerable to preemption, potentially confronting leaders with a "use them or lose them" dilemma in a crisis. The most destabilizing weapons

are those which are valuable for launching a first strike-- such as by providing a rapid, precise hard-target kill capability--but which are themselves vulnerable to preemption. Crisis stability as a technological characteristic is also applied to command and control systems: survivable systems enhance stability by ensuring that retaliation can be executed, while vulnerable systems degrade stability by providing the other side an incentive to preempt for damage limitation purposes.⁵⁶

Although this definition of crisis stability is useful for assessing weapons and force postures, it is too narrowly focused on technology for the purposes of this study. What is needed is a broader definition encompassing the full range of factors which could cause efforts at crisis management and escalation control to fail, resulting in war.

The concept of the security dilemma, originally proposed by Herbert Butterfield, provides a useful foundation for defining a broader concept of crisis

⁵⁶ Bernard Brodie, Strategy in the Missile Age (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1959), pp. 300-303; Lebow, Between Peace and War, pp. 238-242; Holsti, pp. 228-233; and Schelling, Arms and Influence, pp. 224-225, 234-235. On the role of command and control system vulnerability in the security dilemma, see Phil Williams, "Crisis Management: The Role of Command, Control and Communications," RUSI Journal 128 (December 1983): 33-39; Garry D. Brewer and Paul Bracken, "Some Missing Pieces of the C I Puzzle," Journal of Conflict Resolution 28 (September 1984): 451-469; and Bruce G. Blair, Strategic Command and Control: Redefining the Nuclear Threat (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1985), pp. 284-285.

stability.⁵⁷ The security dilemma, as defined by Robert Jervis, is that "many of the means by which a state tries to increase its security decrease the security of others."⁵⁸ According to Jervis the intensity of the security dilemma is a function of three factors: (a) the condition of anarchy in international politics, in which states tend to pursue security unilaterally rather than accept the risks of cooperation with potential adversaries; (b) geography, commitments, and beliefs, which can create the perception that the security of the state and its interests (such as territories abroad, commerce, and allies), requires the ability to take offensive action against others; and (c) the perception that military technology and geography give offense a strategic advantage over defense, which can be exacerbated by difficulty in distinguishing defensive from offensive weapons. When a decisive advantage can be gained by striking first, such as when military forces are vulnerable to preemption, even a status quo power without expansionist objectives has an incentive to strike first.⁵⁹

The security dilemma is used by Butterfield and Jervis primarily to explain how arms races and international

⁵⁷ Herbert Butterfield, History and Human Relations (London: Collins, 1951), pp. 19-20.

⁵⁸ Robert Jervis, "Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma," World Politics 30 (January 1978), p. 169.

⁵⁹ Ibid., pp. 167-214.

tensions arise from unilateral efforts by states to protect their security and maintain the balance of power. But Jervis suggests it also applies to crisis stability: "The second aspect [of the offense-defense balance]--whether it is better to attack or defend--influences short-run stability. When the offense has the advantage, a state's reaction to international tension will increase the chances of war." The reason for this is that when there are incentives for preemption and reciprocal fear of surprise attack, "There is no way for the state to increase its security without menacing, or even attacking, the other."⁶⁰ In Jervis' view, this problem arises from the existence of the security dilemma as a feature of international politics, as opposed to being a phenomenon unique to crises.

Before applying the security dilemma to crisis stability, a expansion of Jervis' definition is needed. Reciprocal fear of surprise attack and incentives for preemption arise from three sources: the perceived impact of weapons technology on the nature of warfare, perceptions of the adversary's military strategy and doctrine, and the operations being conducted by military forces.⁶¹

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 188.

⁶¹This is derived from Schelling's description of how weaponry influences the nature of crises and the processes by which wars start: "To impute this influence to 'weaponry' is to focus too narrowly on technology. It is

The perceived impact of weapons technology on the nature of warfare exacerbates the security dilemma in crises. The offense-defense balance applies to all aspects of warfare: conventional ground, air, and naval warfare, as well as strategic nuclear warfare. When the prevailing weapons technologies in a particular area of warfare are perceived as giving an inordinate advantage to offensive action or being the first to strike, military commanders will have a strong incentive to preempt. The offense-defense balance varies across warfare areas: as will be explained in the next chapter, naval warfare is especially offense-dominant, resulting in great stress being placed on striking first.

The perceived impact of weapons technology on the offense-defense balance is not the only factor exacerbating the security dilemma, perceptions of military strategy and doctrine are equally important. In fact, the difficulty of distinguishing offensive from defensive weapons tends to make strategy and doctrine more important than technology. Most weapons, including virtually all conventional weapons not emplaced in fixed fortifications, can be used with nearly equal effectiveness for offense or defense. Their offensive or defensive nature is predominantly a function of

weapons, organization, plans, geography, communications, warning systems, intelligence, and even beliefs and doctrines about the conduct of war that together have this influence." Arms and Influence, p. 234.

the military strategy and doctrine prescribing how those weapons will be used in war.

In assessing the threat posed by a potential enemy's forces and in making contingency plans against that threat, decisionmakers attempt to estimate the adversary's intentions.⁶² Estimating intentions, in turn, requires either estimating or make assumptions about how the adversary would use its forces in wartime, which is the essence of military strategy and doctrine. Thus, the security dilemma can arise from perceptions held by each side that the other side has adopted an offensive military strategy or a military doctrine emphasizing preemption or surprise attack. In circumstances of mutual perceptions of offensive strategies, actions taken by each side to increase its security, even when motivated by defensive intentions, will be perceived by the other side as decreasing its security.⁶³ This idea is implicit in Jervis' definition of

⁶²J. David Singer, "Threat Perception and the Armament Tension Dilemma," Journal of Conflict Resolution 2 (March 1958): 93-94; Dean G. Pruitt, "Definition of the Situation as a Determinant of International Action," in Herbert C. Kelman, ed., International Behavior: A Social-Psychological Analysis (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1965), p.400; Raymond Cohen, Threat Perception in International Crisis (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1979), p.5.

⁶³The worst case from a crisis stability perspective is when both sides in a conflict have adopted offensive strategies, and accurately perceive that the other side has adopted an offensive strategy. Under these circumstances each side has an incentive to strike first so as to be able to effectively execute its own strategy and preempt the enemy from executing his. The "cult of the offensive"

the security dilemma, but is subordinated to his emphasis on technology.

The third source of the security dilemma is the operations being conducted by military forces.⁶⁴ In his study of threat perception, Dean G. Pruitt identifies military actions as an important source of evidence used to infer the intentions of an adversary.⁶⁵ That military operations are used as an indicator of intent is, of course, the basis for using military forces for signalling in crises. But crisis military operations also help to define whether the forces being employed have an offensive or defensive purpose. Military operations can thus perform the same function as strategy and doctrine: defining or signalling the offensive or defensive nature of forces that whose technological characteristics make them suitable for either role. Naval vessels, for example, may appear defensive when kept close to their homeports, far from the scene of a crisis, but appear offensive to an adversary when deployed off his coast. This can occur regardless of the

school of thought contends that this was the strategic environment in 1914, when a relatively minor incident rapidly escalated to war. See Van Evera, pp. 58-107; and Jack Snyder, "Civil-Military Relations," pp. 108-146

⁶⁴Scott Sagan refers to this as "the operational dimension of crisis stability." See Sagan, "Managing Strategic Nuclear Alert Operations," (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, forthcoming, 1988).

⁶⁵Pruitt, pp. 403-404.

intention of the deployment, which could well be defensive or deterrent. Similarly, forward deployed naval vessels can appear to have offensive purposes even when the national strategy they support is essentially defensive or deterrent. Military operations can also reinforce perceptions of strategy and doctrine, appearing to confirm estimates or assumptions that an adversary holds an offensive strategy.

To apply the security dilemma idea to analysis of crisis stability, this study will use the concept of the crisis security dilemma: In a crisis, many of the actions a state takes to increase its security and improve its bargaining position decrease the security of the adversary, at least in his perception. This is a particular case of the security dilemma as defined by Jervis. The primary difference is that in a crisis the most important sources of the dilemma are the military strategies and doctrines of the two sides, and especially the military operations being conducted by the two sides. Under normal (non-crisis) peacetime conditions, the "many actions" Jervis refers to are primarily force posture and weapons procurement decisions, in which the technological characteristics of the forces play an important role in determining the offense-defense balance. In a crisis, decisionmakers focus on the adversary's immediate intentions and the actions he is taking with his military forces, making these factors predominant in determining the offense-defense balance. The

implication is that the security dilemma can be much more severe in a crisis, when military forces are being used for coercive and deterrent threats.

A second aspect of crisis stability that is not well developed in the existing literature is escalation from crisis to war. Concepts that have been used to address this topic include the escalation spiral and accidental or inadvertent paths to war. Although some of these concepts are useful, they have not been well integrated with other crisis and crisis management concepts. Even the point at which a confrontation shifts from being a crisis to being a war is unclear in the literature. We lack a separate term to describe the transitional state of conflict that exists during the period after violence erupts but before a limited war exists. Some analyses implicitly limit crises to political disputes in which use of military force is only threatened, not actually carried out. Other analyses encompass the use of force, such as to achieve a military fait accompli in a crisis. Both approaches have merit, but for the purposes of this study the definition of crisis will include limited use of force as well as the threat of force.

The distinction between crisis and limited war will be based on the perceptions and strategies held by national leaders on the two sides. If they perceive themselves as involved in a crisis or as attempting to prevent a conflict from erupting in war, then the conflict is a crisis even if

fighting has broken out. If they perceive themselves as launching or fighting a limited war, then the conflict has transitioned to a state of war, no matter how limited.

There are potential problems with this approach. The point at which a confrontation shifts from being a crisis to being a war could be difficult to ascertain in actual cases, and even be unclear in the minds of leaders on the two sides. Nations can be involved in a "phony war," in which there is a declared state of war but no fighting, as were Britain and France with Germany from September 1939 to May 1940. Nations can also be involved in recurring episodes of intense but brief fighting without there being a declared state of war, as were the Soviet Union and Japan along the Manchurian border from July 1938 to September 1939, and the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China in 1969. Nevertheless, basing the distinction between crisis and war on the perceptions of the participants is superior to an arbitrary definition of crisis that excludes the use of force.

Several studies of conflict and war have proposed that an escalation spiral can cause tensions and insecurities to erupt in war.⁶⁶ In a refinement of this theory, Richard Smoke concludes that there is an escalation dynamic driven

⁶⁶For a discussion of spiral theories of escalation, see Robert Jervis, Perception and Misperception in International Politics (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), pp. 58-113.



by rising stakes in the outcome of a conflict and an action-reaction cycle. Rising stakes increase the motivation of national leaders to prevail in the crisis. In the action-reaction process an escalatory action by one side provokes an escalatory reaction by the other side in recurring cycles.⁶⁷ Although Smoke's analysis is limited to the escalation processes that occur after war has broken out, it is equally applicable to the escalation processes that can arise after fighting erupts in a crisis.

The escalation spiral that led to the outbreak of World War I is often cited as the classic example of escalation dynamics at work. Bell has described the 1914 case as being an example of a "crisis slide," in which a series of crises gather irresistible momentum toward war. The escalatory impact of a crisis slide is that "the decisionmakers of one or more of the dominant powers believe that they see the options available to them steadily closing down to the single option of war or unlimited defeat."⁶⁸ The events of 1914 have also led to the view that inflexible war plans and offensive military doctrines can create a strategic environment in which national leaders are unable to control the momentum of events and seek a diplomatic

⁶⁷Richard Smoke, War: Controlling Escalation (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1977), pp. 23-35, 268-297. Also see Williams, pp. 97, 101.

⁶⁸Bell, pp. 14-15.

solution to a crisis.⁶⁹ Thus, the danger of escalation is not limited to the effects of individual events, but includes the danger of an uncontrollable escalatory cycle leading to war.

Understanding the events or pressures that can trigger an escalatory spiral is at least as important as understanding the dynamics that drive the spiral after it starts. Glenn Snyder has identified four "autonomous risks" that could trigger uncontrollable escalation: military action being driven by its own logic and momentum, national leaders losing control over their military commanders, lack of military options other than escalatory war plans combined with pressure to take action, and psychological factors impairing rational calculation under the stress of a crisis. Of these, Snyder views psychological factors impairing rational calculation as most likely and losing control over military commanders as least likely.⁷⁰ All of these factors are compatible with Smoke's theory of escalation dynamics.

Several possible paths to war have been proposed. The basic categories are premeditated attack, catalytic war, accidental war, preemption, and inadvertent war. A premeditated war is launched deliberately, usually (but not

⁶⁹Van Evera, pp. 63-65, 71-79; Jack Snyder, "Civil-Military Relations," pp. 112-114, 125-129.

⁷⁰Glenn H. Snyder, "Crisis Bargaining," p. 241.

always) by surprise attack, and is often described as a "bolt from the blue" attack. Catalytic war is one started by a third party, which can be either a nation or some other group, such as a terrorist organization. The typical scenario is the launching of a nuclear weapon at one of the two superpowers, which responds by retaliating against the other superpower thinking it to be the source of the initial blow. Accidental war is the result of either equipment malfunctions or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons by military commanders. Equipment malfunctions can occur in strategic warning systems, providing false warning of an attack; in command and control or battle management systems, again providing false indications of attack or spurious orders to launch an attack; or in nuclear weapons and their control systems, resulting in accidental launch of nuclear weapons.⁷¹ These three paths to war are generally regarded as much less likely than the other two. Additionally, although these three paths to war can occur whether or not a crisis is in progress, they are probably more likely to occur in crises as military forces are alerted for readiness and political signalling purposes.

⁷¹Thomas C. Schelling and Morton H. Halperin, Strategy and Arms Control (New York: Twentieth Century Fund, 1961), pp. 10-17; Herman Kahn, On Escalation (New York: Praeger, 1965), pp. 284-6; Graham T. Allison, Albert Carnesale, and Joseph S. Nye, Jr., "Introduction," in Graham T. Allison, Albert Carnesale, and Joseph S. Nye, Jr., eds., Hawks, Doves & Owls: An Agenda for Avoiding Nuclear War (New York: W.W. Norton, 1985), pp. 10-13.

The remaining two paths to war are particularly relevant to the study of crises. Preemption is motivated by perceptions and fears that the other side is about to strike first.⁷² This is the path to war that results from the crisis security dilemma. Preemption can, of course, also result from correct perceptions that the other side is about to launch a premeditated attack. There are thus two preemption paths, one generated by the crisis security dilemma and the other generated by an actual impending premeditated attack. They are much different in terms of the analytical questions they raise: the first focuses on the dynamics of the security dilemma, while the second focuses on deliberate decisions to resort to war rather than continue crisis management. This study will address the preemption path that arises from the crisis security dilemma.⁷³

Inadvertent war arises from an escalation process in which the two sides employ increasingly threatening military and diplomatic moves--including alerts, mobilizations, deployments of forces, small-scale demonstrative use of conventional weapons, and ultimatums--in an effort at gaining leverage in crisis bargaining and improving their

⁷²Allison, Carnesale and Nye, pp. 10-13.

⁷³Derived from Paul Bracken, "Accidental War," in Graham T. Allison, Albert Carnesale, and Joseph S. Nye, Jr., eds., Hawks, Doves & Owls: An Agenda for Avoiding Nuclear War (New York: W.W. Norton, 1985), pp. 29-37.

military positions in the event diplomacy fails. Accidents and other inadvertent military actions can contribute to this process. Such deliberate and inadvertent actions increase tensions and harden resolve (similar to the manner described by Smoke) until the process results in a war that neither side wanted or expected when the crisis first arose. This is a useful concept, but suffers from insufficient specificity as to how the individual actions contribute to an escalation process and omits significant factors that can also contribute to inadvertent war.

There are two weaknesses in the inadvertent war concept. First, it does not directly address the nature of the decision for war that arises out of the escalation process. There is just an "unintended eruption" of war, in Bracken's words.⁷⁴ Even in the inadvertent war scenario, the decision for war falls into one of two categories: deliberate or preemptive. A deliberate decision for war could result from the perception that the other side cannot be bargained or coerced into making the concessions being demanded, leaving war as the only perceived means for avoiding severe damage to vital national objectives. The distinction between this type of inadvertent war and premeditated war is that in the inadvertent path the deliberate decision for war is made under the stress of a

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 29.

crisis, after an escalatory process defeats crisis bargaining. A decision for preemptive war could result from the crisis security dilemma--the escalatory process generates perceptions that the adversary is preparing to strike first.

The second weakness in the inadvertent war concept is that it does not capture the true complexity of the crisis escalation process. In a crisis, interaction is stratified into multiple interaction sequences that can evolve semi-independently of each other. It is theoretically possible for fighting to erupt and an escalation process to be set in motion between the forces of the two sides at the scene of a crisis without escalation occurring in other interaction sequences between the two sides. There appear to be factors that inhibit the crisis escalation process from occurring and inhibit inadvertent war from resulting even when escalation does occur in a crisis. Identifying those factors will make a significant contribution to our understanding of the inadvertent war path and the strengths and weaknesses of crisis management.

In summary, the crisis security dilemma is that in a crisis, many of the actions a state takes to increase its security and improve its bargaining position decrease, or can appear to decrease, the security of the adversary. The most important sources of the dilemma are the military doctrines and the military operations being conducted by the

two sides. The definition of crisis used in this study will include limited use of force as well as the threat of force, with the distinction between crisis and limited war based on the perceptions held by national leaders on the two sides. There is an escalation dynamic driven by rising stakes in the outcome of a conflict, which increase the motivation of national leaders to prevail, and an action-reaction process, in which an escalatory action by one side provokes an escalatory reaction by the other side in recurring cycles.

The preemption and inadvertent paths to war are particularly relevant to the study of crises. Preemption is motivated by perceptions that the other side is about to strike first. The preemption path to war that results from the crisis security dilemma is the path that will be addressed in this study. Inadvertent war arises from an escalation process in which the two sides employ increasingly threatening military and diplomatic moves in an effort at gaining leverage in crisis bargaining and improving their military positions. Inadvertent military incidents contribute to this process. The escalation process increases tensions and hardens resolve until it results in a deliberate or preemptive decision for war.

Misperception in Crises

One of the most difficult problems of crisis management is avoiding misperceptions of intentions and

objectives. Misperceptions can affect crisis management in three ways. First, they can erode the credibility of deterrent threats. Second, they can defeat attempts to signal limited objectives and a desire to resolve the conflict without war. Third, they can exacerbate the problem of the crisis security dilemma.

Deterrent threats often play a major role in crisis management. The effectiveness of a deterrent threat is dependent upon its credibility. For a variety of military, political, and cognitive reasons, the nation to be deterred may not perceive the deterrent threat as being credible, or may miscalculate the consequences of challenging a deterrent threat, leading to a failure of deterrence.⁷⁵ The credibility of extended deterrence can be particularly difficult. Once again, a variety of factors can cause an adversary to doubt the credibility of a commitment to defend an ally or client.⁷⁶ The relevant points for this study are that national leaders are generally concerned about the

⁷⁵William W. Kaufmann, The Requirements of Deterrence (Princeton, NJ: Center for International Studies, 1954), pp. 6-8; Henry A. Kissinger, The Necessity for Choice (New York: Harper, 1960), pp. 40-41; Alexander L. George and Richard Smoke, Deterrence in American Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974), p. 64; Schelling, Arms and Influence, pp. 36-43.

⁷⁶Schelling, Arms and Influence, pp. 49-50; George and Smoke, pp. 550-65; Lebow, Between Peace and War, pp. 82-90. On extended deterrence see Brodie, pp. 252-55; and Warner R. Schilling, et al., American Arms and a Changing Europe (New York: Columbia University Press, 1973), pp. 5-15.

credibility of commitments and deterrent threats, and that in spite of their efforts to enhance the credibility of deterrent threats, failures of deterrence can occur for reasons beyond their control.

Concerns over credibility and misperception affect the use of military force as a political instrument in crises: the role of military forces is often to enhance the credibility of deterrent threats, but the threats those forces are intended to convey may be misperceived or otherwise fail to deter. Due to credibility problems with extended deterrent threats, particularly when threatening punishment by nuclear retaliation, many actions taken with military forces in crises are intended to enhance the credibility of extended deterrence by adding a specific threat of denial with conventional forces to the standing threat of punishment with strategic nuclear forces.⁷⁷

Misperception of the intentions of an adversary, and miscalculation of the costs he is willing to endure or capable of exacting, can arise from several sources: the normal cognitive constraints on decisionmaking, from the particular psychological factors that affect decisionmaking

⁷⁷On the concept of deterrence by denial and punishment, see Glenn H. Snyder, Deterrence and Defense (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1961), pp.14-16, and Deterrence by Denial and Punishment (Princeton, NJ: Center for International Studies, 1959), p. 1; George H. Quester, Deterrence Before Hiroshima (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1966), p. 2-4.

under stress, from the political and organizational perspectives of participants in decisionmaking, and from incomplete or inaccurate information on the adversary and the status of the conflict.⁷⁸ Although national leaders often make efforts to anticipate how adversary decision-makers will perceive various crisis moves, attempting to predict perceptions and reactions is inherently the weakest aspect of crisis management. Thus, careful attention to the clarity of signals being sent to the adversary may not suffice to prevent escalation of the conflict.

The sources of misperceptions and their general role in crises are well developed in the crisis management literature. However, the effect that decisionmaker awareness of the danger of misperception has on decisions concerning the use of force in crises remains a weak point. The danger of signals sent by military forces being misperceived creates a dilemma for decisionmakers attempting to use force as a political instrument in a crisis. The misperception dilemma, as this problem will be called, pervades all decisions on the use of force in a crisis. There are actually two misperception dilemmas: the first affects signals to adversaries, and the second affects signals to allies and friends. The dilemma in signaling

⁷⁸ Charles Lockhart, Bargaining in International Conflicts (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), pp. 37-87; Holsti, pp. 7-25; Snyder and Diesing, pp. 340-418; Lebow, Between Peace and War, pp. 148-228.

adversaries is between inadvertent signals of acquiescence and inadvertent signals of hostility. This misperception dilemma is present in both of the categories of crises: a direct crisis between the United States and another nation, and an indirect crisis arising from a conflict between two nations, one of whom is an ally or friend of the United States. The dilemma in signaling allies and friends is between inadvertent signals of encouragement and inadvertent signals of retrenchment. This misperception dilemma only arises in indirect crises, in which the U.S. role arises from its support for an ally or friend.

Efforts to signal limited objectives and interest in a negotiated solution, and to limit the level of tension and violence in a crisis, can send an inadvertent signal of acquiescence to an adversary, and be misperceived as showing lack of resolve, lack of capability, or a willingness to sacrifice the interests at stake in the crisis in order to avoid an armed clash. The result can be erosion of credibility, undercutting of the nation's bargaining position, and debilitation of efforts to negotiate a solution to the crisis. Even worse, such misperceptions could induce an adversary to preempt in an effort at seeking a military solution with low expectation of concerted resistance. Thus, an inadvertent signal of acquiescence can trigger an inadvertent war of the type begun with a deliberate decision during a crisis.

Efforts to signal resolve or support for an ally, to convey coercive military threats for deterrence or compellence, and to maintain readiness for potential wartime contingencies, can send an inadvertent signal of hostility to an adversary, and be misperceived as showing an intention to seek a military solution to the conflict or to escalate to full-scale war. The result can be an appearance of bad faith which interferes with efforts to negotiate a solution to the crisis, escalation of tensions and hostility in the crisis, and, worst case, a perception by the adversary that war is inevitable leading to a decision by him to preempt rather than suffer the first blow. Thus, an inadvertent signal of hostility can trigger inadvertent war. This can be either the type begun with a preemption decision motivated by the crisis security dilemma--fear of imminent attack--or the type begun with a deliberate decision motivated by the perception that the crisis cannot be satisfactorily resolved short of war.

When a crisis involving the United States arises from a dispute between two other nations, one of whom is an ally or friend of the U.S., the second misperception dilemma comes into play. Studies of naval diplomacy have noted that allies and friends as well as adversaries can misperceive the signals sent by naval forces.⁷³ Two problems have been

⁷³Edward N. Luttwak, The Political Uses of Sea Power (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), p. 13,

described: first, the danger that signals of support may encourage a friend or ally to be overly aggressive in a conflict, and, second, the danger that reduction in a standing presence, regardless of reason, can be misperceived as signaling reduction in political commitment or even abandonment. These problems comprise the misperception dilemma as it affects signals to allies and friends.

Efforts to signal resolve or support for an ally, to convey coercive military threats for deterrence or compellence, and to maintain readiness for potential wartime contingencies, can send an inadvertent signal of encouragement, and be misperceived by the friend or ally as tacit consent for intensification of hostilities and escalation of political demands, or even as overt direct support for initiating fighting which previously had been viewed as infeasible. The result can be an appearance of unlimited commitment which interferes with efforts to negotiate a solution to the crisis, escalation of tensions in the crisis, and outbreak or escalation of fighting in the crisis.

Efforts to signal limited objectives and interest in a negotiated solution, and to limit the level of tension and violence in a crisis, can send an inadvertent signal of retrenchment, particularly when the signaling entailed

35; Charles D. Allen, Jr., The Uses of Navies in Peacetime (Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute, 1980), p. 19.

reduction or withdrawal of a standing presence, and be misperceived by the friend or ally as a signal to restrain his objectives, as wavering commitment or a desire to avoid involvement in the crisis at hand, or even as abandonment. The result can be erosion of credibility with the friend or ally, thus undercutting influence on his behavior, a decision by the friend or ally to seek support from other powers or to build up his military power for autonomous action, or, worst case, a decision by the friend or ally to preempt and seek a fait accompli before his strategic situation worsens further.

Although it would appear logical that an inadvertent signal of hostility to an adversary would tend to be paired with an inadvertent signal of encouragement to an ally or friend, and that an inadvertent signal of acquiescence to an adversary would tend to be paired with an inadvertent signal of retrenchment to an ally or friend, there is no inherent reason for misperceptions to occur in these pairs. Misperceptions result from the individual decisionmaking processes in each nation, responding to stimuli and cognitive factors which can be much different. Thus, while there may be grounds for postulating that certain combinations of perceptions and misperceptions are more likely than others, the occurrence of such combinations should be couched in probabilistic terms rather than described as inherent or inevitable.

In summary, one of the most difficult problems of crisis management is misperception of intentions. The danger of signals sent by military forces being misperceived creates the misperception dilemma. The dilemma in signaling adversaries is between inadvertent signals of acquiescence and inadvertent signals of hostility. The dilemma in signaling allies and friends is between inadvertent signals of encouragement and inadvertent signals of retrenchment. These concepts clarify the problems facing national leaders as they make decisions on employment of military force as a political instrument in crises.

Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed and critiqued the crisis management literature, explaining the major weaknesses in current concepts and presenting new concepts to correct those weaknesses. It began with a review of basic crisis concepts, presenting the perspectives that will be used in the study, followed by a critique of the concept of crisis interaction, particularly the weaknesses in the single interaction sequence model that implicitly underlies existing crisis theories. It then reviewed crisis management concepts, focusing on measures required to maintain control of events in crises, and critiqued the concept of crisis stability, presenting a definition that more accurately reflects the nature of crisis interaction.

Finally, it reviewed the crisis management problem of misperception of intentions and resolve, and presented concepts that more accurately describe the problems decisionmakers face in trying to avoid misperceptions when using military force in crises. The following paragraphs summarize the key new concepts that were presented.

Interaction between the two sides in crises has often in the past been viewed in terms of an implicit single interaction sequence model that does not accurately describe the complexity of crisis interaction. The bureaucratic politics and organizational process models do not entirely correct this weakness and have serious problems of their own. To correct these weaknesses a model containing three interaction sequences--each sequence associated with a specific level in the chain of command--was presented. Crisis interaction is stratified when the military establishment of a country is sufficiently large and complex that national leaders are incapable of exercising direct control over all operational units that could have an impact on a crisis. Paul Bracken's concept of "tightly coupled forces"--modified by the observation that tight coupling is stratified, occurring separately at the strategic and tactical levels without national leaders necessarily being involved--then explains how separate interaction sequences can arise.

One of the most important requirements for the success of crisis management is maintaining close control of

military operations by top-level political authorities. A weakness in the crisis management literature is that it has not adequately addressed the tensions that can arise between crisis management requirements and military considerations.

The crisis security dilemma is that in a crisis, many of the actions a state takes to increase its security and improve its bargaining position decrease the security of the adversary. The most important sources of the dilemma are the military doctrines and the military operations being conducted by the two sides.

The preemption and inadvertent paths to war are particularly relevant to the study of crises. Preemption is motivated by perceptions and fears that the other side is about to strike first. The preemption path to war that results from the crisis security dilemma is the path that will be addressed in this study. Inadvertent war arises from an escalation process in which the two sides employ increasingly threatening military and diplomatic moves in an effort at gaining leverage in crisis bargaining and improving their military positions. Accidents and other inadvertent military actions contribute to the process. The escalation dynamic is driven by rising stakes in the outcome of a conflict, which increase the motivation of national leaders to prevail, and an action-reaction process, in which an escalatory action by one side provokes an escalatory reaction by the other side in recurring cycles.

This escalation dynamic increases tensions and hardens resolve until it results in a deliberate or preemptive decision for war.

One of the most difficult problems of crisis management is misperception of intentions. The danger of signals sent by military forces being misperceived creates the misperception dilemma for national leaders. The dilemma in signaling adversaries is between inadvertent signals of acquiescence and inadvertent signals of hostility. The dilemma in signaling allies and friends is between inadvertent signals of encouragement and inadvertent signals of retrenchment.

The next chapter will build on these concepts to present the theory of stratified interaction and its corollaries of decoupled interactions, the stratified crisis security dilemma, and stratified escalation dynamics.

CHAPTER III

THE THEORY OF STRATIFIED INTERACTION

Studies of crisis management invariably emphasize the importance of top-level political authorities maintaining close control of crisis military operations in order to prevent them from triggering an uncontrollable escalation spiral. Underlying this emphasis on control is concern that interactions between the military forces of the two sides in a crisis could develop their own momentum, decoupled from the political-diplomatic objectives and strategies of national leaders. Although this concern has often been expressed in crisis management studies, the factors that could cause such a decoupling have not been adequately addressed in theories of crisis bargaining and escalation dynamics.

The principle contention of this study is that the single interaction sequense model is inadequate for understanding the manner in which nations interact in crises, the complexities and difficulties of crisis decisionmaking, and the ways in which crises can get out of control and escalate to war. The theory of stratified interaction developed

in this chapter provides a better understanding of these crisis phenomena.

This chapter will begin by describing the stratified interaction model of crisis interactions. With the underlying model in place, the theory of stratified interaction and its first corollary, decoupled interactions, will be defined. The theory of stratified interaction will then be applied to the concept of crisis stability, producing the concepts of the stratified crisis security dilemma and stratified escalation dynamics. Finally, crisis management will be reexamined to show how efforts to prevent stratified interactions from becoming decoupled generate tensions between political objectives and military objectives in a crisis.

The Stratified Interaction Model

The stratified interaction model holds that there are three levels of interaction between the two sides in a crisis: political interaction, strategic interaction, and tactical interaction. These are separate interaction sequences between distinct groups of decisionmakers at each level on both sides in a crisis. In the model, these interactions represent horizontal linkages between decisionmakers at the same level.

Vertical linkages connect decisionmakers at the three levels within each nation. Two types of vertical linkages

connect the three levels: a policy channel and an information channel. There are flows in both directions, downward and upward, in each channel. In the policy channel, there is a flow of orders and policy guidance downward from national leaders to strategic and tactical military commanders, and from strategic level commanders to tactical level commanders. There is also an upward flow of requests for permission to take action, recommended courses of action, reports of intended actions that have not yet been taken, and reports of actions already initiated that had not been ordered by higher authority. In the information channel, there is a downward flow of intelligence on the adversary, assessments of the adversary's intentions and likely moves, and background information on the objectives and strategy being pursued in the crisis. There is also an upward flow of requests for these types of information, intelligence and assessments on the adversary from lower levels, and background information on the situation at the lower levels (such as force readiness data). Vertical interaction between decisionmakers at the three levels in each country takes place through these policy and information channels.

Political interaction is between the top-level political authorities in each nation--the head of government and his immediate advisors, what I have been calling national leaders. In the United States this consists of the

President and those officials present with him during crisis decisionmaking, which normally includes the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of State, the National Security Advisor, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff (sometimes represented by the Chairman alone). On the Soviet side the political level includes the General Secretary of the Communist Party and certain members of the Politburo, the Defense Council, and the Headquarters (Stavka) of the Supreme High Command (verkhonoye glavnokommandovaniye, V GK, the command element of the Soviet General Staff).¹ Although the term "political" is used to label this top level of interaction, military considerations will, of course, be at least as prominent as political considerations in decision-making. Interactions between the two sides at the political level encompass the full range of diplomatic and military interactions under the cognizance of national leaders.

Strategic interaction is between the strategic nuclear forces and major military commands on each side, thus encompassing conventional as well as nuclear forces. In the United States this includes the Commander in Chief, Strategic Air Command (CINCSAC), the Commander in Chief, Space Command (CINCSPA, which includes the North American

¹John G. Hines and Phillip A. Petersen, "Changing the Soviet System of Control," International Defense Review 19 (3/1986): 281-289; U.S. Department of Defense, Soviet Military Power, 1986 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1986), pp. 12-18.

Air Defense Command, NORAD), the Commander in Chief, Atlantic Command (CINCLANT, who is also the NATO Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic, SACLANT), the Commander in Chief, U.S. European Command (CINCEUR, who is also the NATO Supreme Allied Commander Europe, SACEUR), the Commander in Chief, Pacific Command (CINCPAC), the Commander in Chief, Central Command (CINCCENT), and the Commander in Chief, U.S. Southern Command (CINCSOUTH, headquartered in Panama). In the Soviet Union, the strategic interaction level includes the Strategic Rocket Forces, the National Air Defense Forces (PVO Strany), and the Commanders in Chief (glavnokommanduyushchiy) of the Western, Southwestern, Southern, and Far Eastern Theaters of Strategic Military Action (teatr voyennykh deystiviy, TVD, often translated as Theater of Military Operations).²

Tactical interaction is between the operational units (troops, aircraft, and naval vessels) of the two sides. Tactical interaction occurs primarily at the scene of a crisis, but can take place anywhere the military forces of the two sides are operating in close proximity to each other. Examples, in descending size of the units involved, would include interaction between the U.S. Sixth Fleet and the Soviet Mediterranean Eskadra, interaction between a U.S.

² Ibid. Of the several TVDs identified in Soviet writings, only the four listed have CINCs appointed to command them in peacetime.

naval battle group (a carrier or battleship and its escorts) and a Soviet naval task group, and interaction between individual U.S. and Soviet ships or planes. Generally, the small-scale encounters are part of a larger interaction between the military commands on each side responsible for operations in the region encompassing the scene of a crisis. Thus, in the naval realm, tactical interaction will generally be regarded as being between larger units, such as fleets or task forces.

In the stratified interaction model, coupling between the forces of the two sides in a crisis is stratified. Tight coupling at each of the three levels of interaction--political, strategic, and tactical--can occur because decisionmakers at each level receive direct inputs from warning and intelligence systems. The degree or "tightness" of coupling at each level can be different, depending on the availability of intelligence and sensors and the strategic and tactical environment (i.e., whether or not tactical-level forces are in close enough proximity for interaction to occur).

The overall U.S. surveillance, intelligence, and early warning system can be viewed as stratified into three levels: national-level assets, strategic warning systems, and tactical sensors. National-level assets include Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and National Security Agency (NSA) intelligence sources, such as reconnaissance satellites,

electronic and communications intelligence (ELINT and COMINT), human intelligence, and certain reconnaissance missions by military units. Inputs from national-level assets go to decisionmakers at the political level, but much of the intelligence also goes to appropriate lower levels in the military chain of command. The sensitivity and content of the intelligence determine the recipients of it.

Distribution of certain intelligence can be restricted to a small group of decisionmakers (and the analysts supporting them), who then make the decision whether or not to promulgate it to lower levels.

Strategic warning systems include the distant early warning (DEW) radar system, early warning satellites, Pave Paws SLBM warning radars, certain ELINT and COMINT systems. Inputs from strategic early warning systems initially go to appropriate decisionmakers at the strategic interaction level. With modern computerized command and control and military data systems, however, certain crucial elements of the information gathered by strategic warning systems can be automatically transmitted to appropriate political level control centers, such as the National Military Command Center and the White House situation room.

Tactical sensors include radar, sonar, visual and photographic reconnaissance, electronic support measures (ESM), and tactical ELINT and COMINT systems. Most inputs from tactical sensors initially go to decisionmakers at the

tactical level, and from there are reported up the chain of command. However, information from certain of the more capable tactical sensor systems is simultaneously reported directly to strategic level commanders, and, with specific prior arrangements, can be transmitted directly to political level control centers.

Two important features these warning and intelligence systems must be noted. First, dual reporting--simultaneous transmission of intelligence to multiple users at various levels in the chain of command--is widely used to expedite the flow of crucial information. Dual reporting generally involves the political and strategic levels, but can also be used with certain tactical sensors. Dual reporting has two effects on the command and control system. On the one hand, it enhances the ability of national leaders to exercise close control of military operations in crises by keeping them better informed of events at the strategic and tactical levels. But, on the other hand, it can increase the autonomy of decisionmakers at the strategic and tactical levels by reducing their dependence on higher authority as a source of warning and intelligence. Which of these two competing tendencies prevails in a particular crisis, or in a particular incident in a crisis, depends upon the specific circumstances in which operational decisions must be made.

The second important feature is that there can be substantial overlap in the coverage of sensors at the three

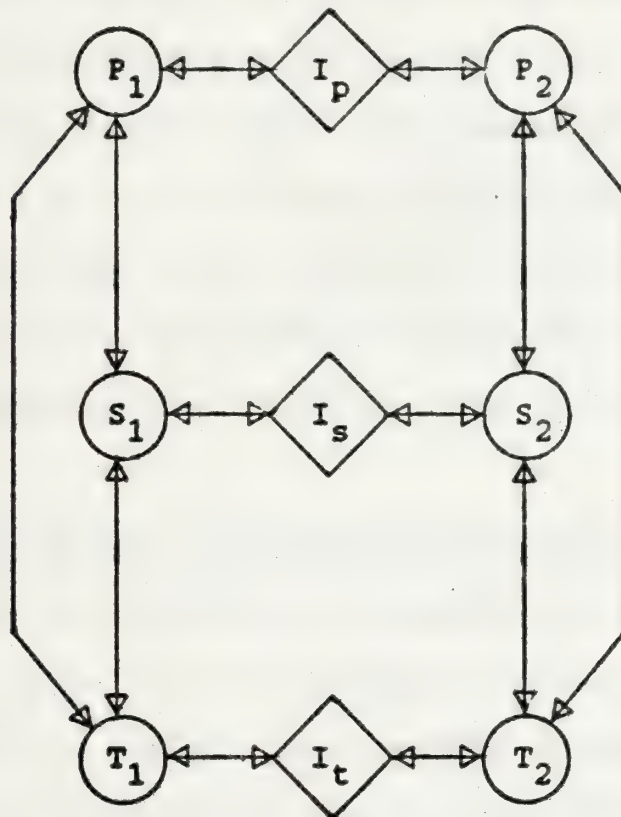
levels. For example, national-level assets and strategic warning systems can simultaneously detect some military actions. Even tactical sensors can detect some military actions being monitored by strategic warning systems and national-level assets. The effect of overlapping coverage is the same as that of dual reporting: it can enhance top-level control of military operations, or it can increase the autonomy of decisionmakers at the strategic and tactical levels. Overlapping coverage thus can either intensify or inhibit stratification of crisis interaction.

Figure 1 provides a diagram of the stratified interaction model. The circles represent decisionmakers on the two sides: P designates political level decisionmakers, S designates strategic level decisionmakers, and T designates tactical level decisionmakers, with the subscripts designating the two sides. The diamonds represent interactions between the two sides: I_p is political interaction, I_s is strategic interaction, and I_t is tactical interaction. Horizontal arrows from circles to diamonds represent actions the two sides take toward each other, horizontal arrows from diamonds to circles represent detection of the other side's actions.³ Vertical arrows represent flows of information (upward and downward), orders

³This is a simplification of the interaction loop used by Paul Bracken, The Command and Control of Nuclear Forces (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1983), p. 62.

(downward), and requests for permission to take specific actions or recommendations that specific actions be taken (upward). The P_1-T_1 arrow and the P_2-T_2 arrow represent efforts by political level decisionmakers to exercise direct, positive control of operational forces in a crisis.

Figure 1. The Stratified Interaction Model



In summary, the stratified interaction model states that there are three levels of interaction between the two sides in a crisis: political interaction, strategic interaction, and tactical interaction. Political interaction is between the top-level political authorities in each nation. Strategic interaction is between the

strategic nuclear forces and major military commands on each side, encompassing conventional as well as nuclear forces. Tactical interaction is between those operational military units (troops, aircraft, and naval vessels) of the two sides that are in direct contact. Separate interaction sequences at these three levels is possible because military commanders are delegated significant decisionmaking authority and receive direct inputs from warning and intelligence systems on the adversary's military activities. In addition to these three horizontal interaction sequences between the two sides, there is also vertical interaction between decisionmakers at the three levels in each country. These vertical interactions take place through the policy and information channels that link the three levels.

The Theory of Stratified Interaction

The theory of stratified interaction can now be stated: Given conditions of delegated command, tight coupling, and acute crisis, interactions between the two sides will have a tendency to become stratified into separate political, strategic and tactical interactions. The definitions of the political, strategic, and tactical levels of interaction are as given above for the stratified interaction model.

As stated in the definition of the theory, three conditions contribute to stratified interaction. First, the

military establishments of the two sides are sufficiently large and complex that top-level political authorities cannot exercise constant, direct, positive control over the actions of all operational units, and must therefore rely to a large degree on delegated command. Second, the military forces of the two sides are tightly coupled through warning and intelligence systems that are vertically integrated with major military commands and operational forces. This condition is driven by perceptions that striking first will accrue significant strategic or tactical advantages, thus requiring warning of attack to ensure the survival of operational forces and the ability to effectively execute wartime contingency plans. Third, stratified interaction occurs in an acute international crisis, when military forces are being used as political instrument for crisis bargaining. This results in actions being taken with military forces that deliberately or inadvertently convey a military threat to the other side.

Strategic and tactical level interactions also occur under normal peacetime conditions and in lesser crises that do not pose a danger of war. In fact, under normal peacetime conditions, when national leaders are paying very little attention to routine military operations, there could be numerous interaction sequences taking place between forces in direct contact with the other side's forces. But such peacetime interactions are normally not of great

interest because they do not gather momentum or seriously affect the overall state of relations between the two sides. This is because the perception of an acute danger of war is not present and the interactions do not occur in the context of deliberate efforts to convey military threats to the other side.

An example of this is peacetime incidents at sea between U.S. and Soviet naval forces. The U.S. and Soviet fleets are almost always in close proximity somewhere in the world and their interactions occasionally produce incidents, such as shouldering (forcing a ship clear of a formation), threatening actions with weapons, and even collisions. But such incidents have never produced more than diplomatic protests, even at the height of the cold war before the 1972 U.S.-Soviet Incidents at Sea Agreement was signed. Another example is the dozens of American military aircraft fired on or shot down by the Soviet Union, China, and the Warsaw Pact countries during the 1950s and 1960s.⁴ None of these Cold War incidents resulted in tactical level interactions between the forces of the two sides that gained their own local momentum, even though U.S. leaders responded to a few of the incidents with military shows of force.

The existence of stratified interaction in a crisis is not in itself important. The interaction sequences at the

⁴See Chapter V for a detailed discussion of these incidents.

strategic and tactical levels can be expected to parallel the interaction sequence at the political level so long as national leaders are able to control the overall magnitude and momentum of military operations--even if they cannot control every operational decision in the interaction sequence. The three interaction sequences are described as being parallel when the intensity of the hostilities and magnitude of threat (or reassurance) being signaled by strategic and tactical level interactions are roughly what national leaders desire to implement their political-diplomatic strategy for managing the crisis.

What is of analytical interest is the decoupling of interactions at the three levels, which could cause national leaders to lose control of events in a crisis and touch off an escalatory spiral. Decoupled interactions are defined to be an interaction sequence at the strategic or tactical level in which the intensity of hostilities, level of violence, and magnitude of threat being conveyed to the other side are not under the control of national leaders. This can occur when there is some sort of interruption or severe degradation of the vertical policy and information channels between decisionmakers at the three levels.

When interactions are decoupled, the three interaction sequences are no longer parallel. The intensity of hostilities at the strategic or tactical levels no longer supports the political-diplomatic strategy being pursued by

national leaders in the crisis. In principle, decoupling can lead to the intensity of hostilities at the strategic and tactical levels being either greater or lesser than that desired by national leaders. Although the escalation dynamics theory predicts that the tendency would normally be toward escalation of hostilities, this is a question for empirical research.

The first corollary to the theory of stratified interaction is that decoupling of interactions will occur to the extent that operational decisions on the employment of military forces made at the strategic and tactical levels differ from the operational decisions political level decisionmakers would have made to coordinate those military actions with their political-diplomatic strategy for resolving the crisis. Conversely, decoupling of stratified interaction is averted to the extent that political level decisionmakers exercise constant, direct, positive control over operational military forces, or ensure that the guidance contained in mechanisms of delegated command produce operational decisions at the strategic and tactical levels that support their political-diplomatic strategy for resolving the crisis.

This is not to imply that national leaders always act wisely while exercising direct control over their military forces, or that tactical-level military commanders have a propensity to disrupt crisis management efforts when not

under direct top-level control. Inept or indiscriminate employment of military force by national leaders can defeat crisis management efforts as easily as inappropriate operational decisions by on-scene commanders. Additionally, as will be seen in the case studies, on-scene commanders are quite able to act with prudence and caution when not under direct control by national leaders. This is discussed in detail in Chapter IX.

Military commanders are never without operational guidance of some sort. When direct control is interrupted, for whatever reason, they will base operational decisions on the last direct guidance received until the tactical circumstances change sufficiently to make that guidance inapplicable--which can happen very quickly. At that point they revert to the operational guidance contained in the mechanisms of delegated command. This is an entirely rational system of command, reflecting the reality that decisionmaking at the tactical level does not cease simply because national leaders are unable to make the decisions. Once operational forces make this de facto shift to delegated command, even though nominally still under direct command, decoupling of interactions can occur.

There are seven potential causes of decoupling: communications and information flow problems, impairment of political level decisionmaking, a fast-paced tactical environment, ambiguous or ambivalent orders, tactically

inappropriate orders, inappropriate guidance in mechanisms of indirect control, and deliberate unauthorized actions by military commanders. As these potential causes suggest, decoupling can occur even when national leaders are attempting to exercise constant, direct, positive control over operational forces.

Communications problems can sever the links from national leaders to operational forces, leaving those forces at least temporarily under delegated command. The problems can take many forms, including outright loss of radio contact, garbled messages, delays in message delivery due to system overload, misrouting of messages, and deliberate interference by the adversary. Although the U.S. military communications system has been vastly improved over the last four decades--without which the President could not even attempt to exercise close control of military operations--it is still not infallible.

A wide range of information problems can contribute to decoupling. Information flows can be interrupted by communications problems, excessive secrecy and compartmentation, or even a simple failure to realize that a particular report warrants the immediate attention of decisionmakers. Exclusive information is a resource that confers influence on policy decisions, which can lead to hoarding or hiding of crucial facts. Too much information can also cause problems, particularly when large amounts of inaccurate and

irrelevant information must be sifted out to reveal what is accurate and relevant. Accurate assessment and effective use of information can be degraded by the cognitive limits on analysis and decisionmaking.⁵ Information problems such as these can prevent national leaders from exercising effective direct control over crisis military operations by leaving them unaware of the need to make certain operational decisions, denying them the capability to make those decisions, or convincing them that they should delegate the decisions to lower levels.

Impairment of top-level decisionmaking under the stress of a crisis, or preoccupation with a particular aspect of a crisis, can result in real-time guidance not being provided to operational forces even when communications channels are intact. Selective and sequential attention to problems is a well-recognized cognitive limit on decisionmaking. When decisionmakers become overloaded with information and urgent problems, "load shedding," to use Coral Bell's apt expression, can occur, producing

⁵See Roberta Wholstetter, Pearl Harbor: Warning and Decision (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1962), p. 394; Harold L. Wilensky, Organizational Intelligence: Knowledge and Policy in Government and Industry (New York: Basic Books, 1967), Chapter 3; Anthony Downs, Inside Bureaucracy (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1967), p. 75; Ole R. Holsti, Crisis Escalation War (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1972), pp. 104-118; Alexander L. George, Presidential Decisionmaking in Foreign Policy (Boulder CO: Westview Press, 1980), pp. 121-36; Ronald H. Hinkly, "National Security in the Information Age," The Washington Quarterly 9 (Spring 1986): 125-40.

inaction or much delayed reactions when a new problem arises.⁶ Such impairment of decisionmaking by national leaders can rob them of effective direct control of military operations, resulting in tactical or strategic level interactions being decoupled from political level guidance.

In a fast-paced tactical environment, tactical decisionmakers may not have time to describe their circumstances to national leaders and await a decision before having to take action. To use an exaggerated example, when missiles are inbound the captain of a ship cannot wait for the National Security Council to convene and haggle over his fate. For this reason, operational commanders always have a certain amount of decisionmaking authority delegated to them, regulated by the rules of engagement. When urgent operational decisions must be made on the basis of delegated command rather than on consultation with national leaders, what might be called momentary decoupling occurs. If direct command is immediately reimposed, decoupling ceases. But if an action-reaction sequence starts at the tactical level,

⁶ Coral Bell The Conventions of Crisis (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), pp. 88-89. Also see the discussions of sequential attention to goals and problemistic search in James G. March and Herbert A. Simon, Organizations (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1958), Chapter 6; Richard M. Cyert and James G. March, A Behavioral Theory of the Firm (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1963), pp. 118-122; John D. Steinbruner, The Cybernetic Theory of Decision: New Dimensions of Political Analysis (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1974), pp. 72-74; George, Presidential Decisionmaking, pp. 25-53.

with operational commanders on both sides making decisions on the basis of delegated command, momentary decoupling could lead to an interaction sequence that is decoupled from the political-diplomatic strategy of national leaders.

National leaders, uncertain as to the implications of their political-diplomatic strategy for tactical military operations or even uncertain as to the strategy itself, may issue orders to military forces that are ambiguous or ambivalent. To some degree this problem is inherent in the nature of crisis management, which consists of the dual goals of protecting vital national interests while avoiding unwanted escalation of the confrontation. Ambiguous or ambivalent orders are particularly likely when they must be formulated under the stress and time pressures of a crisis. Thorough evaluation of alternative tactical options may not be possible before an order must be given. A military commander faced with ambiguous or ambivalent orders may not have time to seek guidance on how to interpret them in a specific situation, forcing him to rely on his own best judgement. If his decisions, no matter how carefully reasoned or tactically appropriate they may be, do not support the political-diplomatic initiatives being pursued to manage the crisis, then decoupling has occurred. If top-level control can be immediately re-established, the decoupling will only be momentary. But if it cannot, the momentary decoupling could lead to an interaction sequence

that is decoupled from the political-diplomatic strategy of national leaders.

National leaders could well decide to exercise only a small degree of direct control over certain military operations during a crisis, relying instead on military commanders to carry out their wishes. When this occurs, the guidance contained in mechanisms of indirect control--the alert system, standing orders, mission orders, contingency plans, and rules of engagement--becomes crucial to effective crisis management. If national leaders do not pay sufficient attention to that guidance, military actions could occur that they had not anticipated and which exceed the scope of operations they had desired.⁷ This could cause momentary decoupling and lead to an interaction sequence that is decoupled from the political-diplomatic strategy being pursued by national leaders.

The final possible cause of decoupling is a deliberate unauthorized action by a military commander. In this case the commander has specific orders for the mission he is to carry out, but knowingly decides to disobey those orders and carry out an action contrary to the letter and intent of his orders. A military commander might do this because he

⁷ Scott D. Sagan has suggested that this was the case with the scope of U.S. Navy anti-submarine warfare operations during the Cuban Missile Crisis. "Nuclear Alerts and Crisis Management," International Security 9 (Spring 1985): 117-118.

disagrees with the political-diplomatic strategy being pursued by national leaders and seeks to achieve what he considers to be a superior resolution of the crisis. More likely, however, would be the case in which a military commander deliberately takes an unauthorized action because he perceives his local tactical situation as being much more threatening than do national leaders, or believes that his orders are infeasible under the conditions he faces. The military commander's assessment of the situation could be entirely correct, but the action is still unauthorized.

In summary, the theory of stratified interaction states that, given conditions of delegated command, tight coupling, and acute crisis, interactions between the two sides will become stratified into separate political, strategic and tactical interactions. A corollary to the theory is that decoupling of stratified interactions will occur to the extent that operational decisions on the employment of military forces made at the strategic and tactical levels differ from the operational decisions political level decisionmakers would have made to coordinate those military actions with their political-diplomatic strategy for resolving the crisis.

Stratified Interaction and Crisis Stability

The concept of the crisis security dilemma, as defined in the previous chapter, is that in a crisis, many of the

actions a state takes to increase its security and improve its bargaining position decrease the security of its adversary. Applying the theory of stratified interaction to the concept of crisis stability produces the second corollary to the theory, the stratified crisis security dilemma: In an acute crisis, the security dilemma is stratified, arising from the interaction processes occurring separately at each of the three levels, and affecting the likelihood of war separately at each level.

This corollary contends that the adversary's military intentions--whether they are essentially offensive or defensive--can be perceived differently by decisionmakers at the political, strategic, and tactical levels of crisis interaction. Many military moves are ambiguous as to their offensive or defensive intent, and can increase capabilities in both areas. Interactions at the strategic and tactical levels can generate circumstances in which actions taken by one side to increase the security of their forces or improve their tactical position can decrease, or appear to decrease, the security of the other side's forces. Actions by one side prompt countermeasures by the other side that in turn contribute to an escalatory action-reaction spiral as military commanders on both sides seek to maintain or increase their strategic or tactical advantages.

The danger at the strategic and tactical levels is that at some point in the interaction one side will take an

action that increases the perceived threat of attack against the other side to an intolerable level, prompting the adversary to preempt. Military commanders could have authority to preempt for self-defense under conditions specified in their standing orders or rules of engagement, or could be required to seek authority to preempt from national leaders. The key point is that the interaction process that created the circumstances in which preemption was perceived to be necessary was not under control of national leaders.

The mutually reinforcing alert phenomenon described by Bracken is an example of the stratified security dilemma at the strategic level of interaction.⁸ An example at the tactical level of interaction would evolve like this: movements of naval forces intended to signal resolve by placing them within striking range of the adversary's naval forces increase the vulnerability of the adversary's forces, prompting them to take measures--authorized in their standing orders--to increase their ability to defend themselves. Those defensive measures, in turn, increase the

⁸ Bracken, pp. 64-65. In this example, actions taken by the commanders of one side's strategic forces (in accordance with their standing orders) intended to reduce the vulnerability of those forces are quickly detected by the commanders of the other side's strategic forces, who cannot distinguish those actions from preparations for offensive action, and must therefore take actions to decrease the vulnerability and increase the readiness of their own forces.

vulnerability of the first side's naval forces, prompting them to take measures--once again, authorized in standing orders--to increase their ability to defend themselves.

This type of interaction occurred between U.S. carrier battle groups and Soviet anti-carrier forces in the Mediterranean during the 1973 Middle East War. Soviet ships and submarines armed with anti-ship cruise missiles moved into positions where they could launch preemptive strikes against the U.S. Sixth Fleet on short notice. This in turn prompted the Sixth Fleet to maneuver to evade being targeted, and to deploy ships, submarines, and armed aircraft into positions where they could strike Soviet cruise missile platforms upon indication of an attack.⁹ This maneuvering for tactical advantage continued throughout the crisis until U.S.-Soviet tensions subsided and national leaders on both sides ordered their naval forces in the Mediterranean to standdown and resume peacetime operations.

⁹ Lieutenant F.C. Miller, "Those Storm-beaten Ships, Upon Which the Arab Armies Never Looked," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 101 (March 1975): 23-24; Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr., On Watch: A Memoir (New York: Quadrangle, 1976), pp. 436-47; Robert G. Weinland, "Superpower Naval Diplomacy in the October 1973 Arab-Israeli War: A Case Study," in The Washington Papers, vol. 6, no. 61 (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1979), pp. 68-88; Charles D. Allen, Jr., The Uses of Navies in Peacetime (Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1980), pp. 30-33. Also see Admiral Isaac C. Kidd, Jr., "View From the Bridge of the Sixth Fleet Flagship," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 98 (February 1972): 18-29; Admiral Stansfield Turner and Commander George Thibault, "Countering the Soviet Threat in the Mediterranean," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 103 (July 1977): 25-32.

The stratified crisis security dilemma provides the basis for the third corollary to the theory of stratified interaction, stratified escalation dynamics: In an acute crisis, in which strategic or tactical interactions between the two sides have become decoupled from political level interactions (meaning that the strategic or tactical interactions are no longer under the direct or indirect control of national leaders), the security dilemma, operating separately at each level, can trigger an escalatory spiral at the strategic or tactical levels of interaction, which under certain circumstances can cause the crisis to escalate uncontrollably to war.¹⁰ An escalation spiral can be touched off at any of the three levels. If it starts at the political level, with national leaders making the escalatory decisions, it immediately encompasses all three levels and thus is not stratified.

If an escalation spiral starts at the tactical or strategic level, it will not necessarily be transmitted upward to higher levels of interaction. National leaders could, for example, decide to let an uncontrollable escalation spiral between their forces in direct contact in the field or at sea (the tactical level) play itself out, and decide not to escalate the war at the strategic level.

¹⁰On how such escalation processes work, see Phil Williams, Crisis Management (New York: John Wiley, 1976), pp. 97, 101.

National leaders of the two sides could, in effect, decide to stand back, wait for the tactical engagement to finish, then disengage what remained of their forces.

While this scenario is theoretically possible, it is not likely under the stress of a crisis, when a sudden outbreak of fighting at the tactical level would appear to confirm perceptions of the other side's offensive intent and fears of war being imminent. It is even less likely that national leaders would be able to let an escalation spiral at the strategic level, even one involving only conventional forces, play itself out without a full-scale war resulting. An escalation spiral at the tactical or strategic levels would be the loss of control over events that crisis management is intended to prevent.

Escalation dynamics of this type are possible because of two factors. First, reliance on delegation of decisionmaking authority to military commanders at the strategic and tactical levels can allow interaction sequences to gain momentum without the direct involvement of national leaders. Second, decisionmakers at the strategic and tactical level could, for a number of reasons, base their operational decisions on their standing orders and operational doctrines, rather than on direct guidance from national leaders.

Stratified escalation dynamics are prevented or controlled by two means: national leaders exercising

constant, direct, positive control of operational forces at the strategic and tactical level, or national leaders ensuring that the operational guidance in the mechanisms of indirect control supports their political-diplomatic strategy for resolving the crisis. Both of these means of controlling escalation can be difficult to implement in practice. As was discussed earlier, direct control can be interrupted or degraded by a wide range of technical, operational and even psychological impediments. Ensuring that the mechanisms of indirect control support the political-diplomatic strategy in a crisis is made exceedingly difficult by the near impossibility of anticipating every possible tactical situation that a military commander might face. Thus, there are ample grounds for postulating that an escalation spiral beyond the control of national leaders could arise at the tactical or strategic levels.

A key point of the stratified escalation dynamics concept is that the phenomenon can exist under an assumption of rational decisionmaking. Fully rational strategic and tactical level decisionmakers, acting strictly in accordance with approved operational guidance, could well initiate an action-reaction sequence that becomes an uncontrollable escalation spiral. There is no need to assume military evasion of civilian control, as is done in one definition of inadvertent escalation, or crazed officers disobeying

orders, which is one of the accidental war scenarios.¹¹

Both are highly unlikely and the record of U.S. and Soviet behavior in superpower crises shows a great deal of caution on the part of operational commanders, rather than excessive aggressiveness.

To contend that stratified escalation dynamics can occur under an assumption of rational decisionmaking is not to deny that the stress and confusion of a crisis can exacerbate the cognitive constraints on decisionmaking. Misperception and miscalculation are highly likely during a crisis, and increase the possibility that crisis military operations could touch off an escalation spiral. The crisis security dilemma creates a decisionmaking environment in which misperception and miscalculation are not only more likely to occur, but are also more likely to touch off an escalation spiral.

Stratified interactions can cause misperceptions of the intentions of adversaries. Strategic and tactical level interactions that result from military commanders acting on their own initiative, responding within the bounds of their

¹¹Military evasion of civilian control is a central element of Barry R. Posen's definition of inadvertent escalation. See his "Inadvertent Nuclear War? Escalation and NATO's Northern Flank," International Security 7 (Fall 1982): 31-32. For a description of the accidental war thesis see Paul Bracken, "Accidental War," in Graham T. Allison, Albert Carnesale, and Joseph S. Nye, Jr., eds., Hawk Doves & Owls: An Agenda for Avoiding Nuclear War (New York: W.W. Norton, 1985), pp. 25-53.

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions and activities. It emphasizes the need for transparency and accountability in financial reporting. The text also mentions the role of various stakeholders, including management, board members, and external auditors, in ensuring the integrity of the financial statements.

In addition, the document highlights the significance of internal controls and risk management. It states that a robust internal control system is essential for preventing and detecting errors and fraud. The text also discusses the importance of identifying and assessing risks that could impact the organization's financial performance and reputation.

The document further elaborates on the requirements for financial reporting, including the need for timely and accurate disclosure of financial information. It mentions the importance of providing clear and concise explanations of the numbers and the underlying business operations. The text also discusses the role of the auditor in providing an independent opinion on the financial statements.

Overall, the document stresses the importance of a strong financial reporting framework. It encourages organizations to adopt best practices and to continuously improve their financial reporting processes. The text also mentions the need for ongoing communication and collaboration between all parties involved in the financial reporting process.

The document concludes by reiterating the commitment to transparency and accountability. It states that the organization is dedicated to providing high-quality financial reporting and to maintaining the trust of its stakeholders. The text also mentions the organization's commitment to ethical conduct and to the highest standards of professional behavior.

The document also includes a section on the organization's financial performance. It provides a summary of the key financial metrics and trends over the reporting period. The text discusses the organization's progress in achieving its financial goals and its plans for future growth and development. It also mentions the organization's commitment to social and environmental responsibility.

In conclusion, the document provides a comprehensive overview of the organization's financial reporting process and its commitment to transparency and accountability. It emphasizes the importance of accurate and timely financial reporting and the role of all stakeholders in ensuring the integrity of the financial statements. The document also includes a summary of the organization's financial performance and its plans for the future.

authority to actions by the other side, can be misperceived as having been deliberately instigated. If viewed as having been ordered by national leaders, strategic and tactical level interactions are interpreted in the overall political and military context of the crisis, rather than the more limited immediate circumstances that surrounded the interaction. This can result in strategic and tactical level interactions being viewed as signals of the intentions of the adversary's leaders, which may not have been the case at all. Misperception of intentions can thus arise from interactions among forces at the strategic and tactical levels as well as from the signals being exchanged at the political level.

Inadvertent military incidents are most likely to occur under conditions of stratified interaction, when national leaders are relying on mechanisms of delegated command for indirect control of military forces. An inadvertent military incident could spark an action-reaction escalation sequence at the tactical or strategic level decoupled from interaction at the political level as military commanders acted in accordance with mechanism of delegated command. If national leaders then misperceive the escalating military engagement as a deliberate signal of hostile intent or as a direct military threat to their security, a situation likely under the conditions of the crisis security dilemma, stratified escalation dynamics



could spread upward, affecting all three levels of interaction and leading to war.¹²

Serious fighting could also erupt without escalation dynamics spreading to the political level, that is, while national leaders on the two sides were still trying to resolve the crisis without war. An intense engagement between the forces of the two sides in direct contact in the field or at sea (the tactical level) could spread upward to the major theater commands in charge of those forces (the strategic level) through the operation of delegated decision-making authority at the strategic level. Actions taken by strategic-level military commanders on both sides for essentially defensive purposes, such as increasing the readiness of conventional and nuclear forces and initiating measures to support the forces already engaged at the tactical level, could set in motion an escalating action-reaction cycle at the strategic level decoupled from the objectives of national leaders.¹³ The most likely scenario

¹²The crisis management technique of deliberately slowing the tempo of military operations and creating pauses for exchange of diplomatic communications is intended to halt such an escalation process. See Alexander L. George, "The Development of Doctrine and Strategy," in Alexander L. George, David K. Hall and William E. Simons, The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1971), p. 9; and "Crisis Management: The Interaction of Political and Military Considerations," Survival 26 (September/October 1984): 226.

¹³The mutually reinforcing alert described by Paul Bracken is an extreme example of this. See Bracken, Command and Control of Nuclear Forces, pp. 64-65.

for war under these conditions would be for conventional forces in the field, brought to a wartime readiness posture by escalation dynamics at the strategic level, to react to deliberate or inadvertent actions taken by the adversary's forces--actions allowing a defensive response under their rules of engagement--by initiating combat actions in accordance with wartime contingency plans.

In summary, the stratified crisis security dilemma is that, in an acute crisis, the security dilemma is stratified, arising from the interaction processes occurring separately at each of the three levels, and affecting the likelihood of war separately at each level. This leads to the the stratified escalation dynamics corollary: in an acute crisis, in which interaction between the two sides has become stratified and decoupled, the security dilemma, operating separately at each level, can trigger an escalatory spiral at the strategic or tactical levels of interaction, which under certain circumstances can cause the crisis to escalate uncontrollably to war.

Political-Military Tensions

Awareness of the problems inherent in crisis management and the escalatory impact they could have on a crisis underlies the emphasis national leaders place on maintaining close control of military forces in crises. An irony of crisis management is that efforts to prevent

interactions at the strategic and tactical levels from becoming decoupled from the political-diplomatic strategy being pursued to manage a crisis can generate tensions between political and military considerations that create further difficulties for managing the crisis. These tensions and the manner in which they are resolved directly affect, and are directly affected by, stratified interaction. Tensions between political and military considerations are inherent in the use of military force as a political instrument. They would arise in a crisis even without stratified interaction, but their impact on the ability of national leaders to manage a crisis are exacerbated under conditions of stratified interaction.

These tensions are actual or potential conflicts between political and military considerations which force decisionmakers, knowingly or tacitly, to make trade-offs among individually important but mutually incompatible considerations.¹⁴ Three such tensions arise in crises: crisis objectives tensions, operational control tensions, and wartime readiness tensions.

The first source of tension is conflicts between political and military considerations: tensions between political considerations and the needs of diplomatic

¹⁴The concept of tensions between political and military considerations is derived from Alexander L. George's concept of "interaction of political and military considerations." George, "Crisis Management," pp. 223-234.

bargaining, on the one hand, and military considerations and the needs of military operations, on the other. Both sets of considerations are those being pursued to influence the outcome of the crisis. Tensions between political and military considerations arise because military forces must always be prepared for the possibility of combat even when being used for political signaling. Thus, such tensions arise well before force is actually used in a crisis.

There are two approaches to using military forces deployed to the scene of a crisis for political signaling. In the first approach--the symbolic or indirect threat--token forces are sent to signal resolve to protect vital national interests and as a symbol of the overall military power of the nation. Token deployments are often used in conjunction with increases in the readiness of other forces in the theater or forces held in strategic reserve for rapid deployment to the scene. The token forces at the scene convey a threat that other, more powerful forces will be used if the target nation does not respond in a satisfactory manner to the threat being conveyed. In some circumstances token forces serve as a tripwire, enhancing, through the likelihood of their being involved in any fighting that erupts, the credibility of a deterrent threat.¹⁵

¹⁵Thomas C. Schelling, Arms and Influence (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1966), p. 47; Henry A. Kissinger, Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957), p. 242; Glenn H. Snyder,

Tension between political and military considerations can arise even when military forces are used in this limited manner. The token forces typically do not have a mission other than to be present at the scene of the crisis, leaving them without a clear military objective other than survival, and even that may be compromised when the forces are placed in an exposed position as a tripwire. Military moves by the adversary that are hardly worth the attention of national leaders can present an imminent threat to the token force. It is thus to be expected that on-scene military commanders will have perceptions and priorities much different from those of national leaders in this situation.

In the second approach to using military forces for political signaling, strong forces (well beyond what would be needed for a token force) are used to convey a direct threat with their intrinsic warfighting capabilities. Alerting strategic nuclear forces during a crisis is an example of a direct threat, intended to achieve deterrence by threat of punishment. Deployment of substantial ground, air, or naval forces capable of engaging the adversary's forces at the scene of a crisis is another example of a direct threat, intended to achieve deterrence by threat of denial.

Deterrence and Defense (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1961), pp. 130-131; Lawrence Freedman, The Evolution of Nuclear Strategy (New York: St. Martin's, 1983), pp. 90, 290-291.

When military forces are used in a crisis to convey a direct threat, the tension between political and military considerations can become acute. This is because the credibility of the threat being conveyed by the forces is a function of the adversary's perception of their capability to carry out the military actions being threatened, as well as the credibility of the threat to use them if necessary. The adversary's perception of the likelihood of the forces actually being used is certainly the more important consideration, but his perception of their capabilities can influence that assessment. For example, a threat to intervene with a battalion of troops to halt an invasion by a division-sized force would probably not be credible. Additionally, three separate groups of adversary decision-makers--at the political, strategic, and tactical levels--are assessing the credibility of the force. Different decisionmakers could well focus on different indicators of intent. Military commanders, particularly those commanding forces in contact with the adversary force, are likely to be more attentive to capabilities as an indicator of intentions than are national leaders weighing a broader range of considerations.

The capability of forces at the scene of a crisis to carry out the military actions being threatened is a function of three factors: strength, readiness, and tactical situation. Strength, the material dimension of credibility,

is the warfighting capability of the forces employed relative to the adversary forces they would have to fight. It is a product of quantity of forces and specific types of forces and weapons weapons employed. Readiness and tactical situation are the operational dimension of credibility. Readiness refers to the readiness posture of the forces employed: the degree to which they are prepared to conduct combat operations. It is a product of manpower, logistics (fuel and ammunition for combat), and the operational procedures in effect (arming of aircraft on patrol, manning of weapons on ships, or deploying troops in combat units). Tactical situation refers to the impact of geographic position, relative to adversary forces, on the the ability of the forces employed in a crisis to effectively carry out combat operations. The degree to which a particular tactical situation is advantageous (and therefore credible) or disadvantageous (and therefore not credible) is a complex calculation involving geography, the capabilities of each side's weapons, surveillance and warning capabilities, and the speed required by each side to react to threats and launch attacks.

The nature of the tensions between political and military considerations will be illustrated by contrasting military considerations with three of the requirements for crisis management identified by Alexander George: (a) deliberately slowing the tempo of military operations in

order to create pauses for the exchange of diplomatic signals, assessment, and decisionmaking, (b) coordinating military actions with diplomatic actions in an integrated strategy for resolving the crisis acceptably without war, and (c) avoiding military options that give the adversary the impression of an impending resort to large-scale warfare.¹⁶ These crisis management requirements can have two effects on the military forces deployed to the scene of a crisis: they can adversely affect the three elements of warfighting capability--strength, readiness, and tactical situation--and they can severely complicate the tactical planning of military commanders.

The elements of warfighting capability (strength, readiness, and tactical situation) were described above. The second military consideration affected by crisis management, tactical planning, requires elaboration. In formulating tactical plans for the conduct of combat operations, military commanders seek to adhere to or exploit certain operational considerations believed to provide tactical advantages in combat, commonly referred to as the principles of war.¹⁷ Four of these principles are

¹⁶George, "Crisis Management," p. 226.

¹⁷Arguments over the value and proper formulation of the principles are irrelevant to the point being made. Regardless of their specific wording or ranking, the principles provide a convenient describe of what military commanders try to do in battle. On the origins of the principles, see John I. Alger, The Quest for Victory

especially affected by crisis management requirements: objective, initiative, concentration, and surprise.

The principle of the objective is that military operations must be directed toward a clearly defined, decisive, and attainable military objective. The principle of initiative, often called the principle of the offensive, is that seizing the initiative with offensive action is almost always necessary to achieve decisive results, to maintain freedom of action (choosing when and where to engage the enemy, so as to exploit his weaknesses), and to control the pace and course of battle. Exploitation (or pursuit)--rapidly following up initial success with further offensive action--is an element of initiative, intended to keep the enemy off balance and on the defensive. The principle of concentration, often called the principle of mass, is that superior combat power, a function of quality as well as quantity of arms, must be concentrated at the critical time and place for a decisive purpose. The principle of surprise is that striking the enemy at an unexpected time and place, and in a manner for which he is not prepared, can decisively shift the balance of combat

(Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1982). For a critique of the principles see Bernard Brodie, "Strategy as a Science," World Politics 1 (July 1949): 467-488. For contemporary applications of the principles see Colonel Harry G. Summers, On Strategy: The Vietnam War in Context (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, April 1981), pp. 53-100; Major Robert L. Earl, "A Matter of Principle," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 109 (February 1983): 29-36.

power, achieving much greater success for the effort expended.¹⁸

Having defined the elements of warfighting capability (strength, readiness, and tactical situation) and selected principles of tactical planning (objective, initiative, concentration, and surprise), we can now examine why tensions arise between crisis management requirements and military considerations. For brevity, this discussion will present only one aspect of the tensions: the impact of crisis management requirements on military considerations. The reverse aspect--the impact of military considerations on crisis management requirements--should be obvious in each case. Essentially, unrestrained pursuit of the military principles will usually preclude meeting the crisis management requirements.

Deliberately slowing the tempo of military operations violates the principle of initiative, particularly its component principle of rapidly exploiting initial success with further offensive action, and makes it difficult to use surprise, which depends in part on speed of execution. By not allowing one's forces to seize the initiative, thus granting the adversary's forces at least partial control

¹⁸ Definitions are taken from U.S. Department of the Army, Field Manual 100-5, Field Service Regulations: Operations (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 19 February 1962), pp. 46-48, but are simplified and reflect some terms used by Summers and Alger.

over the tactical situation, deliberately slowing the tempo of military operations can place military forces in an unfavorable tactical situation.

Coordinating military actions with diplomatic actions can have a wide range of negative impacts. Coordination is sought to support an integrated strategy for resolving the crisis acceptably without war, often with the result that the military objectives of crisis operations are not well defined--violating the principle of the objective. In military planning, objectives are specific and concrete: such as defending or seizing a specific location, or defeating a specific force. A principle objective of crisis management is to avoid war or unwanted escalation of a limited use of force, which is difficult for military planners to use as the basis for planning tactical operations. Resolving the crisis acceptably is achieved through political-diplomatic bargaining, in which military forces are used primarily as a means of signaling intentions and conveying coercive threats, a political mission difficult for military planners to address as an objective in the military sense.

Coordinating military actions with diplomatic actions can also require limiting the size and composition of the forces employed, violating the principle of concentration and constraining the strength of the force, an element of its warfighting capability. Political signaling can require

deploying military forces close to or in the midst of fighting, or close to the adversary's forces, as a visible signal of commitment, thereby placing one's forces in an unfavorable tactical situation. Limiting the actions that military forces can take in self-defense or to improve their tactical situation, normally done for escalation control purposes, can violate the principle of initiative and constrain their readiness for combat. Informing the adversary of one's military operations, an action normally taken to reinforce the signal being conveyed by military forces but which can also serve escalation control purposes, deliberately violates the principle of surprise and secondarily violates the principle of initiative (It is hard gain control of the tactical situation when the adversary knows what you are doing and why you are doing it). Using force in gradually increasing increments, a common tactic of coercive bargaining, is the military planner's second worst nightmare (second only to being the victim of strategic surprise), violating the principles of initiative (particularly exploitation), concentration, and surprise.

Avoiding military options that give the adversary the impression of an impending resort to large-scale warfare can also have a broad range of impacts on military considerations. This crisis management requirement, which is essentially application of the escalation avoidance strategy under crisis conditions, can require limiting the size and

composition of the forces employed, limiting the tactical actions they are permitted to take, and using force in gradually increasing increments. These approaches to the use of military force violate all four of the principles of tactical planning (objective, initiative, concentration, and surprise), and constrain the elements of warfighting capability (strength, readiness, and tactical situation). The principles of tactical planning essentially dictate that the military options favored by military planners will be precisely those which give the adversary the impression of an impending resort to large-scale warfare, or the appearance of an actual resort to large-scale warfare in the case of surprise attack. An optimum battle plan calls for seizing the initiative by concentration of superior force and launching a surprise attack against a strategic objective, and then rapidly exploiting that attack with further offensive action. Such a battle plan is precluded by the requirements of crisis management.

The second source of tension between political and military considerations is the issue of operational control: tensions between the need for direct, positive, top-level control of military operations in a crisis, and the need for tactical flexibility and instantaneous decisionmaking at the scene of the crisis. This tension arises from, and is a symptom of, stratified interaction. The manner in which it is handled by national leaders and the military chain of

command is a major determinant of whether or not stratified interactions become decoupled in a crisis.¹⁹

A fundamental and ubiquitous issue in civil-military relations is at what level in the chain of command should operational decisions on the employment of military forces and their weapons be made? Delegating decisionmaking authority to lower levels can deprive national leaders of the ability to control the momentum of a conflict and to coordinate military operations with diplomatic initiatives. On the other hand, centralizing decisionmaking authority in the hands of national leaders can rob on-scene forces of tactical flexibility, leaving them incapable of adapting to a rapidly changing situation and vulnerable to surprise attack. This is a dilemma inherent in the use of military force in crises. It cannot be resolved, it must be managed on an on-going basis every time a crisis occurs.

The nature of the interactions at the political and tactical levels can be quite different, and probably often are. Given a crisis in which national leaders on the two sides are pursuing strategies of coercive diplomacy, efforts by each side to enhance the credibility of its coercive threats or to counter the adversary's coercive threats by

¹⁹ Although operational control tensions can also arise over the control of strategic level forces, this study will concentrate on tensions arising over the control of tactical level forces. On operational control tensions affecting strategic nuclear forces, see Sagan, pp. 99-139; Bracken, Command and Control of Nuclear Forces, pp. 196-202, 224-232.

deploying forces to the scene of the crisis will generate tactical level interaction. The commanders of those forces are constantly evaluating their tactical situation relative to adversary forces--assessing the seriousness of the threat they represent and the ability of his own forces to counter that threat. When the tactical situation is dynamic, with both sides acting to maintain or improve their tactical situation, the result is a test of capabilities at the tactical level. The test of capabilities is no less real for no shots having been fired. The tactical commanders are constantly calculating the likely outcome of an engagement with each new development in the tactical situation. Thus, even though political level interaction may be marked by coercive diplomacy, tactical level interaction can become a test of capabilities.

This illustrates why the level of control issue can be a source of tensions. The tactical situation can appear much different to the on-scene commander, operating under the guns of the adversary, than it does to top-level political leaders, negotiating with that same adversary. A military move by the adversary that is viewed as a political signal by national leaders can be viewed as an immediate military threat to the tactical commander. Under the conditions of a test of capabilities, a tactical commander is going to perceive an urgent need for as much decision-making authority as he can get from his chain of command.

At the same time, national leaders, particularly when engaged in coercive diplomacy, are going to perceive an urgent need for a high degree of direct control over the actions of their military forces. The result is tension between the tactical commander's need for flexibility and initiative, and the political leader's need for close control of military operations.

The third source of tension is wartime readiness: tensions between performance of crisis missions and maintaining or increasing readiness to perform wartime missions. This is a tension between present operations and possible future contingencies: the immediate political and military objectives being pursued in a crisis conflicting with the military objectives that would be pursued if the crisis escalates to war. This tension arises for four reasons, which may occur individually or together: dual crisis-wartime tasking, replacement of crisis forces, alliance commitments, and execution of contingency plans.

The first reason is that military forces do not necessarily drop their wartime contingency tasking when assigned to crisis operations. Their wartime tasking may change to make it more compatible with their crisis tasking, for example by assigning them wartime missions in the vicinity of the crisis, but their wartime tasking is rarely dropped altogether. The more capable and mobile a military unit is, the more likely it is to retain significant wartime

contingency tasking while assigned to crisis operations. Forces equipped with dual-capable weapons--aircraft and missiles capable of carrying nuclear as well as conventional warheads--are most likely to have simultaneous crisis and wartime tasking.

Tensions arise from simultaneous crisis and wartime contingency tasking because the military requirements of the two missions can be significantly different. As an example, such differences in mission requirements would be particularly pronounced for U.S. forces when their crisis tasking entailed small-scale conventional operations against a much smaller nation (like Libya), while wartime contingency tasking entails large-scale conventional or nuclear operations against the Soviet Union.

The second reason why tensions arise between crisis objectives and wartime objectives is that forces detached from major operational units to respond to a crisis may be replaced by other forces in order to maintain readiness for wartime missions. For example, moving an aircraft carrier battle group out of the Western Pacific into the Arabian Sea for the possibility of operations against Iran can require that another carrier battle group be surged from its homeport in the United States to the Western Pacific in order to cover the wartime commitments of the first battle group. During an acute Soviet-American crisis, such surging of forces to replace crisis forces could send an inadvertent

signal of hostility to the Soviet Union--an example of the crisis security dilemma.

The third reason why tensions arise between crisis objectives and wartime objectives is that alliance commitments can inhibit forces deployed for support of allies in wartime from being used in a crisis. Alternatively, if forces normally committed to the defense of an ally are diverted to a crisis, other forces may have to be deployed from their home bases to avert sending an inadvertent signal of retrenchment to the ally. For example, U.S. forces in Korea are not readily available to respond to crises elsewhere in Asia.²⁰ Similarly, U.S. ground and air forces deployed in Western Europe to support NATO commitments are rarely employed for out-of-area contingencies. The frequent refusal of U.S. allies, notably NATO and Japan, to provide forces in support of U.S. military actions in crises--even crises affecting their interests more than American interests--further compounds crisis-wartime trade-offs for the United States.²¹ In such

²⁰ Joseph F. Bouchard, "The American View of Korean Peninsula Security," in The Security Challenge in Northeast Asia: Report of a Conference (Stanford, CA: Stanford University, Northeast Asia-United States Forum on International Policy, December 1982), pp. 52-55.

²¹ On NATO, see Gregory F. Treverton, "Global Threats and Trans-Atlantic Allies," International Security 5 (Fall 1980): 142-158; Edward A. Kolodziej, "Europe: The Partial Partner," International Security 5 (Winter 1980-1981): 104-131; Karl Kaiser, "NATO Strategy Toward the End of the Century," Naval War College Review 38 (January-February

situations the U.S. must divert forces from unilateral U.S. wartime contingencies in order to respond to a crisis without diverting forces from alliance wartime contingencies.

The fourth reason why tensions arise between crisis objectives and wartime objectives is that as a crisis escalates and military forces are placed at increasingly higher levels of readiness (DEFCON), initial preparations to execute wartime contingency plans commence. Certain of these preparations can be initiated by strategic level military commanders on the basis of authority delegated to them in mechanisms of delegated command, without an increase in DEFCON or other orders from political level leaders.²²

Increased surveillance of the potential enemy is an immediate measure. For conventional forces preparations for wartime operations include increased security measures to thwart enemy surveillance and deployment to wartime battle positions. If not carefully integrated with the diplomatic actions being taken to resolve the crisis, preparations to

1984): 69-82. On the NATO out-of-area issue, see A.W. DePort, "The North Atlantic Alliance: External Threats and Internal Stress," Naval War College Review 37 (November-December 1984): 71-79; William T. Tow, "NATO's Out-of-Region Challenges and Extended Containment," Orbis 29 (Winter 1985): 839-840. On Japan, see Joseph F. Bouchard and Douglas J. Hess, "The Japanese Navy and Sea-Lanes Defense," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 110 (March 1984): 88-97.

²²Sagan, pp. 99-139; John Steinbruner, "An Assessment of Nuclear Crises," in Franklyn Griffiths and John C. Polanyi, eds., The Dangers of Nuclear War (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979), pp. 34-49.

execute wartime contingency plans can touch off stratified escalation dynamics at the tactical and strategic levels of interactions.

In summary, tensions between political and military considerations are inherent in the use of military force as a political instrument. The first source of tension is conflict between political considerations and the needs of diplomatic bargaining, on the one hand, and military considerations and the needs of military operations, on the other. Tensions between political and military considerations arise because military forces must always be prepared for the possibility of combat even while carrying out political signaling missions. The second source of tension is the issue of operational control: tensions between the need for direct, positive, top-level control of military operations in a crisis, and the need for tactical flexibility and instantaneous decisionmaking at the scene of the crisis. This is a dilemma that cannot be resolved, it must be managed on an on-going basis every time a crisis occurs. The third source of tension is wartime readiness: tensions between performance of crisis missions and maintaining or increasing readiness to perform wartime missions. This tension arises for four reasons, which may occur individually or together: dual crisis-wartime tasking, replacement of crisis forces, alliance commitments, and execution of contingency plans.

Conclusion

This chapter began by describing the stratified interaction model and defining the theory of stratified interaction. The first corollary to the theory, decoupled interactions, was then presented. The theory of stratified interaction was then applied to crisis stability, producing the second corollary to the theory, that of stratified crisis stability. Extending this corollary to the problem of escalation resulted in the third corollary to the theory, stratified escalation dynamics. Finally, stratified interaction was used to explore the tensions that arise between political and military considerations when military force is used as a political instrument in crises.

With the theory of stratified interaction and its corollaries defined, we can now begin to explore the use of force as a political instrument in crises. The first task, which will be undertaken in the next chapter, is to examine the mechanisms of delegated command. These mechanisms are important in crisis management because the President, and even top-level military commanders, cannot possibly exercise real-time direct control over all the activities of the U.S. armed forces. The mechanisms of delegated command strongly influence the degree to which crisis interactions are stratified, the likelihood of stratified interactions becoming decoupled, and the intensity of the tensions between political and military considerations.

CHAPTER IV

MECHANISMS OF INDIRECT CONTROL

There are three major reasons for examining military command and control and the mechanisms of indirect control. First, and most important, there is always a danger that national leaders could lose control of events in a crisis, allowing crisis military operations to escalate uncontrollably to war.¹ The methods, capabilities, and limitations of military command and control are important factors in the ability of national leaders to maintain control over events. Second, the occurrence of stratified interaction in crises is largely a function of the military command and control procedures being employed to direct crisis military operations. Third, the nature and intensity

¹See Alexander L. George, "The Development of Doctrine and Strategy," in Alexander L. George, David K. Hall, and William E. Simons, The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy (New York: Little, Brown and Co., 1971), pp. 8-15; John Steinbruner, "An Assessment of Nuclear Crises," in Franklin Griffiths and John C. Polanyi, eds., The Dangers of Nuclear War (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), p. 40; Phil Williams, Crisis Management (New York: John Wiley, 1976), pp. 94-134; Richard N. Lebow, Between Peace and War (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981), p.287; Alexander L. George, "Crisis Management: The Interaction of Political and Military Considerations," Survival 26 (September/October 1984): 227-228.

of the tensions between political and military considerations that arise in crises are heavily influenced by military command and control procedures. Thus, greater familiarity with military command and control will enhance our understanding of escalation dangers in crises and the problems of crisis management.

The methods and problems of military command and control have received scant attention in studies of warfare and virtually no attention at all in studies of crisis management.² Virtually all the attention paid to command and control has been narrowly focused on technical issues--maintaining reliable and rapid communications, improving information processing and display, and reducing vulnerability to enemy attacks and countermeasures. The recent spate of books and articles on the command and control of strategic nuclear forces has not corrected this deficiency. These studies have made an important

²For commentaries on this lack of attention, see Roger A. Beaumont, "Command Method: A Gap in Military Historiography," Naval War College Review 31 (Winter 1979): 61-74; Martin Van Creveld, Command in War (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985), p. 11. On the role of command and control systems in crisis management, see Davis B. Bobrow, "Communications, Command, and Control: The Nerves of Intervention," in Ellen P. Stern, ed., The Limits of Military Intervention (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1977), pp. 101-120; Phil Williams, "Crisis Management: The Role of Command, Control and Communications," RUSI Journal 128 (December 1983): 33-39; Garry D. Brewer and Paul Bracken, "Some Missing Pieces of the C³I Puzzle," Journal of Conflict Resolution 28 (September 1984): 451-469. These articles address a neglected topic, but are focused on problems of maintaining connectivity.

contribution by exploring how operational problems in command and control systems can impair crisis management and escalation control.³ Connectivity issues--ensuring that operational forces are reliably and securely linked with National Command Authority--are important, but there is much more to effective command and control.

The purposes of this chapter are to set military command and control in the context of theories on delegation and control in organizations, and to explain how delegation and control are exercised in the U.S. military command system. The first section will present organization and management theories on delegation and control, and show how they apply to military command and control. The second section will explore basic concepts of delegation and control used in the U.S. military command system. The third section will examine four of the mechanisms of indirect control: the alert system, standing orders, mission orders, and contingency plans. The final section will examine rules of engagement--the fifth mechanism of indirect control.

³Vice Admiral G.E. Miller, "Existing Systems of Command and Control," in Franklyn Griffiths and John C. Polanyi, eds., The Dangers of Nuclear War (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979), pp. 50-66; Paul Bracken, The Command and Control of Nuclear Forces (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1983); Scott D. Sagan, "Nuclear Alerts and Crisis Management," International Security 9 (Spring 1985): 99-139; Bruce G. Blair, Strategic Command and Control: Redefining the Nuclear Threat (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1985); Ashton B. Carter, John D. Steinbruner, and Charles A. Zraket, eds., Managing Nuclear Operations (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1987).

Delegation and Control in Organizations

The principle analytical concept currently employed for analysis of organizational behavior and the effect of that behavior on crisis interaction is the organizational process model.⁴ That model has serious deficiencies when used as a tool for analysis of military command and control. Its weaknesses stem from two sources. First, it is based on a narrow and critically flawed conception of delegation and control in organizations. This weakness will be discussed in this section. Second, it fails to account for the manner in which military command and control is exercised, particularly the significant delegation of decisionmaking authority and the role of mechanisms of indirect control. This weakness will be addressed in the following section.

The organizational process model implicitly accepts the simple public administration distinction between policy-making and implementation. In the organizational process model, the President makes policy decisions and government organizations implement those those decisions. Organizational processes explain why the actions taken during implementation differ from the actions the President desired or expected when he made the decision. There is no provision in the model for government organizations to have

⁴Graham T. Allison, Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1971), pp. 78-96.

been delegated significant discretion in making operational decisions on how to implement policy decisions.⁵

This conception of implementation has long been discredited by political scientists and organization theorists. In their study of implementation, Jeffrey L. Pressman and Aaron Wildavsky note that the distinction between policymaking and implementation is an oversimplification, and that "the passage of time wreaks havoc with efforts to maintain tidy distinctions" between the two functions. They contend that "In the midst of action the distinction between the initial conditions and the chain of causality begins to erode. Once a program is underway implementers become responsible both for the initial conditions and for the objectives toward which they are supposed to lead."⁶ The implication of this is that the persons charged with carrying out a policy also have an

⁵Allison recognizes that "Government action requires decentralization of responsibility and power." However, his model is based on the observation that "The necessity for coordination and the centrality of foreign policy to the welfare of the nation guarantee the involvement of government leaders in the processes of the organizations that share power." This observation, while essentially correct, leads to an oversimplified model of governmental behavior as consisting of policy decisions by government leaders, and subsequent efforts by those leaders to control organizational routines so as to achieve desired results. The model thus ignores the deliberate delegation of decisionmaking authority and the role of such delegated authority in shaping policy. See Allison, pp. 85-87.

⁶Jeffrey L. Pressman and Aaron Wildavsky, Implementation (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), p. xxi.

important role in shaping the policy. Michael Lipsky had made the same argument earlier in even stronger terms:

There are many contexts in which the latitude of those charged with implementing policy is so substantial that studies of implementation should be turned on their heads. In these cases, policy is effectively "made" by the people who implement it. Where considerable discretion characterizes the jobs of people who implement public agency activities, people "make" policy in hidden concert with others in similar positions through their patterned responses to the situation and circumstances in which they find themselves.

Thus, while organizational processes do have an influence on policy outcomes, the organizational process model needs to be revised to reflect the significant decisionmaking authority--authority to define objectives and design programs--delegated to certain officials in government organizations.

The necessity for delegation of discretionary powers and the coordination problems that can arise from this have long been recognized in organization and management theory. Chester Barnard recognized that delegation of discretion results in policies being defined at all levels in an organization, rather than just at the top.⁸ According to Anthony Downs, "At every level there is a certain

⁷Michael Lipsky, "Standing the Study of Policy Implementation of Its Head," in W. Dean Burnham and Martha W. Weinberg, eds., American Politics and Public Policy (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1968), p. 397.

⁸Chester I. Barnard, The Functions of the Executive (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1961), pp. 231-2.

discretionary gap between the orders an official receives from above and the orders he issues downward, and every official is forced to exercise discretion in interpreting his superior's orders."⁹ This decentralization of decisionmaking is driven by limitations on the analytical capabilities of decisionmakers, which are rapidly exceeded as an organization increases in size and complexity. John W. Sutherland emphasizes this point: "Simply, as the scope of a decision-maker's authority increases (as the number of units for which he is responsible expands), the probability that he will make rational, accurate decisions about the properties of those programs decreases."¹⁰ Thus, authority to define policies is diffused throughout organizations by the necessity of delegating discretionary powers in order to carry out top-level policy decisions.

In a useful refinement of this concept, Jay R. Galbraith has drawn a distinction between two methods of delegating decisions in organizations. In the first approach, rules, programs, and procedures are used to move repetitive decisions to lower levels in the organization without delegation of discretion. Decisionmaking by lower-level officials is guided by directives that specify the

⁹Anthony Downs, Inside Bureaucracy (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1967), p. 134.

¹⁰John W. Sutherland, Administrative Decision-Making: Extending the Bounds of Rationality (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Co., 1977), p. 277.

actions to be taken those situations that can be anticipated in advance. According to Galbraith, "The primary effect is an information processing one--the elimination from hierarchical channels of communications concerning routine events. Rules serve the same function as habits for individuals. They preserve the scarce information processing, decisionmaking capacity for novel, consequential events."¹¹ Rule-governed delegation of decisionmaking is the type recognized in the organizational process model.

The second approach is to delegate discretionary decisionmaking authority. According to Galbraith, this is driven by an inability to anticipate situations for rule-governed decisions:

The combination of rules and hierarchy, like hierarchy alone, is vulnerable to task uncertainty. As the organization's subtasks increase in uncertainty, fewer situations can be programmed in advance and more exceptions arise which must be referred upward in the hierarchy. As more exceptions are referred upward, the hierarchy will become overloaded. Serious delays will develop between the transmission of information upward and a response to that information downward. In this situation, the organization must develop new processes to supplement rules and hierarchy.

As the task uncertainty increases, the volume of information from the points of action to points of decision making overload the hierarchy. In this situation, it becomes more efficient to bring the points of decision down to the points of action where the information exists. This can be accomplished by increasing the amount of discretion exercised¹² by employees at lower levels of the organization.

¹¹Jay R. Galbraith, Organization Design (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1977), pp. 43-44.

¹²Ibid, p. 44. This is similar to Sutherland, p. 277.

Organizations typically use both methods of delegating decisions: rule-governed delegation of decisionmaking for standard, recurring situations, and discretionary delegation of decisionmaking for situations that cannot be anticipated.¹³

Discretionary delegation of decisionmaking raises the problem of ensuring that the decisions made by lower-level officials support the goals established by top-level officials. When this is not the case, delegated discretion results in "authority leakage," a divergence of goals between top-level and lower-level officials.¹⁴ There thus arises an inherent tension between autonomy and control when discretionary delegation of decisionmaking is used to cope with uncertainty.

Various methods of control can be used by organizations. Galbraith emphasized two: professionalism, a reliance on professional training and socialization to ensure that officials make decisions that support organizational goals; and goal-setting, in which planned

¹³Ibid, p. 46. In practice, at least a small amount of discretion is allowed under rule-governed delegation--even if only discretion to determine which rules are applicable in specific situations--and at least minimal rules govern discretionary delegation. Thus, it is more accurate to portray delegation of decisionmaking as a spectrum ranging from highly rule-governed to highly discretionary, rather than as a dichotomy between the two types.

¹⁴Gordon Tullock, The Politics of Bureaucracy (Washington, DC: Public Affairs Press, 1965), pp. 142-93; Downs, pp. 134-5.

objectives are set and officials allowed to select appropriate means for attaining the goals.¹⁵ A scheme of three categories of organizational controls is now commonly used in organization and management studies: hierarchical control, which include rules, procedures and directives (which is Galbraith's rule-governed delegation); collegial control, which is based on professional training and identification; and nonhierarchical control, which is based on internalization of the organization's norms and values.¹⁶ Organizations use all three of these categories to varying degrees in order to maintain control under conditions of discretionary delegation of decisionmaking.

These concepts of delegation and control have been widely used in studies of school administration. As Kent D. Peterson points out, the relationship between school district officials and the principals of individual schools highlights the issue of autonomy versus control:

Functioning as the linkage between central office and classrooms as well as between parents and teachers, principals must keep resources, personnel, and students working efficiently toward organizational goals and

¹⁵Galbraith, pp. 45-6. Also see Arthur L. Stinchcombe, "Bureaucratic and Craft Administration of Production: A Comparative Study," Administrative Science Quarterly 4 (September 1959): 168-87.

¹⁶Tom K. Reeves and Joan Woodward, "The Study of Managerial Control," in Joan Woodward, ed., Industrial Organizations: Behavior and Control (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), pp. 37-56; William G. Ouchi, "A Conceptual Framework for the Design of Organizational Control Systems," Management Science 25 (September 1979): 833-848.

objectives. To do this, they must neither be so tightly constrained that they cannot respond to changing conditions, nor so loosely controlled that they seek personal rather than organizational goals. Superiors must afford the principal enough autonomy to cope with unexpected problems or variable local conditions, while still keeping schools in line. In short, superiors seek an appropriate balance of control and autonomy that will maximize organizational effectiveness.¹⁷

Studies of school principals consistently find that they are accorded significant autonomy and depict school districts and the schools within them as being "loosely coupled." Although all three forms of control are used in conjunction, school principals typically are controlled largely by collegial and nonhierarchical controls, rather than by hierarchical controls.¹⁸

The organizational process model described by Graham Allison in 1971 is incapable of accurately analyzing organizational behavior in this type of situation. The model would begin with the assumption that top-level school district officials knew exactly what policies they wanted implemented, ignoring the fact that they often do not know what policies would be best for the specific conditions

¹⁷ Kent D. Peterson, "Mechanisms of Administrative Control over Managers in Educational Organizations," Administrative Science Quarterly 29 (December 1984): 573.

¹⁸ Dan C. Lortie, "The Balance of Control and Autonomy in Elementary School Teaching," in Amitai Etzioni, ed., The Semi-Professions and Their Organizations (New York: Free Press, 1969), pp. 1-53; Karl Weick, "Educational Organizations as Loosely-Coupled Systems," Administrative Science Quarterly 21 (March 1976): 1-19; Peterson, 573-97.

faced by each school and delegate substantial policymaking authority to the principals. The model would then assume that the sole function of school principals is to carry out school district policies, attributing policy differences among schools and policy disputes between principals and school district officials to organizational processes.

Allison's organizational process model leads to three serious analytical errors in this type of organizational setting. First, his model must assume that school district officials are always "right" and principals always "wrong" in order for the actions of principals to be attributable to organizational processes. The model needs to allow for the possibility that the policies decided upon by the implementers (principals) may be more appropriate or rational than those preferred by the policymakers (school district officials). Second, Allison's model must assume that the specific policy preferences expressed by school district officials when a dispute arises with a school principal were the policies that they had decided upon to begin with. The model needs to allow for the possibility that school district officials may not have known exactly what policy they preferred until after they saw what the principal had decided upon. Third, Allison's model excludes the effect of variation in the environment of different decisionmakers, particularly the effect of differences in constituencies and political influences. School district

officials could well face much different political pressures than those faced by individual principals. The model needs to allow for such variations in the external environment. With these modifications, the organizational process model becomes applicable to an organization composed of several independent operating unit--such as a school district or operational military forces.

Studies of business management reveal patterns of delegation and control similar to those seen in public administration. Large business organizations face an inherent tension between the need to delegate decisionmaking and the need for centralized control, particularly when composed of diverse, autonomous operating units. They employ combinations of management controls (the business equivalent of the term organizational controls used in organization theory), including business variants of hierarchical, collegial, and nonhierarchical controls. The interesting point, however, is that businesses that decentralize decisionmaking authority typically perform better than do businesses that centralize decisionmaking. They are better able to respond to diverse and rapidly changing market, resource and regulatory conditions. Centralization of decisionmaking is widely regarded as stifling creativity, responsibility, loyalty, and entrepreneurship.¹⁹

¹⁹ Kenneth A. Merchant, "The Control Function of Management," Sloan Management Review 23 (Summer 1982):

Several observers have noted a trend toward decentralization of decisionmaking in American businesses that is increasing their productivity and competitiveness.²⁰ This includes allowing autonomous operating units to define their own goals and strategies within broad, flexible guidelines (that are often little more than a corporate philosophy). Thus, in business management as well as in public administration there is recognition of the need to balance delegation and control, and of the advantages of decentralized decisionmaking authority

43-55; C.W.L. Hill and J.F. Pickering, "Divisonalization, Decentralization and Performance of Large United Kingdom Companies," Journal of Management Studies 23 (January 1986): 26-50; Michel Lebas and Jane Weigenstein, "Management Control: The Roles of Rules, Markets and Culture," Journal of Management Studies 23 (May 1986): 259-72; Vijay Govindarajan, "Decentralization, Strategy, and Effectiveness of Strategic Business Units in Multibusiness Organizations," Academy of Management Review 11 (October 1986): 844-856. For business views, see Barry A. Liebling, "Is it time to (de)centralize?" Management Review 70 (September 1981): 14-20; Don Collier, "Strategic Management in Diversified, Decentralized Companies," Journal of Business Strategy 3 (Summer 1982): 85-89; J.H. Smith, "How Can Management Survive in a Decentralized Environment?" Canadian Business Review, Spring 1983, pp. 11-13; Robert E. Levinson, "Why Decentralize?" Management Review 74 (October 1985): 50-53; Roy Hill, "Centralization or autonomy: which way should a company jump?" International Management, March 1986, pp. 17-18.

²⁰ In particular, see Thomas J. Peters and Robert H. Waterman, Jr., In Search of Excellence (New York: Harper and Row, 1982). Also see Michael Maccoby, The Leader (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1981); Allan Cox, The Cox Report on the American Corporation (New York: Delacorte Press, 1982); Terrence E. Deal and Allan A. Kennedy, Corporate Cultures (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1982); Rosabeth M. Kanter, The Change Masters (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983).

when used with appropriate--primarily collegial and nonhierarchical--control mechanisms.²¹

In summary, the study of organizational behavior must account for significant delegation of decisionmaking authority. Delegation of decisionmaking is driven by the limits on decisionmaking, which cause decision-making by top-level officials to deteriorate as the size and complexity of the organization increase. Delegation of decisionmaking can range from highly rule-governed, for standard, repetitive situations, to highly discretionary, for situations that cannot be anticipated. Three types of control mechanisms are used in various combinations: hierarchical (rules and procedures), collegial (professionalism), and nonhierarchical (organizational and societal norms and culture). Tension between autonomy and control is always present, particularly in organizations consisting of numerous independent operating units. Studies in public administration and business management repeatedly show that optimum results are achieved with decentralized decisionmaking combined with appropriate controls.

²¹The trend toward decentralization in American business management has been accompanied by scathing criticism of the highly centralized management style that Robert S. McNamara adopted at Ford and brought with him to the Department of Defense in 1961. See Robert E. Levinson, "The high cost of remote control management," Management Review 72 (April 1983): 12-20; and Gordon Pearson, "Business strategy should not be bureaucratic," Accountancy, April 1986, pp. 109-12.

Military Command and Control

Command and control is generally viewed in narrow terms of organizational structures, communications systems, and information processing systems. Attention to communications and information processing is certainly warranted, for the effective exercise of command and control is crucially dependent on the commander's ability to build a clear picture of the operational situation. As Martin van Creveld notes: "From Plato to NATO, the history of command in war consists essentially of an endless quest for certainty-- certainty about the state and intentions of the enemy's forces; certainty about the manifold factors that together constitute the environment in which the war is fought, from the weather and the terrain to radioactivity and the presence of chemical warfare agents; and, last but definitely not least, certainty about the state, intentions and activities of one's own forces."²² This imperative applies to crisis military operations as well as to wartime operations. Even before the shooting starts, it is crucial that the chain of command up to top-level national leaders have as clear a picture as possible of the situation at the scene of a crisis.

The attention paid to communications and information processing systems has overshadowed and distracted attention

²²Creveld, p. 264.

from the fundamental command and control functions supported by those systems. From a crisis management perspective, ensuring that the radios and computers operate properly is the lesser problem--knowing how to effectively control military operations with them is the more difficult problem. Outside of the military training courses that train officers for leadership and command, little attention is paid to the methods, procedures, and mechanisms of command. Rapid advances in communications and information processing technology are having a tremendous impact on military command and control, but the manner in which the systems are employed operationally is still primarily a function of the command and control philosophy held by the personnel using the systems.

Prior to examining command and control procedures and mechanisms, it is necessary to understand the fundamental concepts of command and control as they are defined by the military. The Joint Chiefs of Staff define command and control as "the exercise of authority and direction by a properly designated Commander over assigned forces in the accomplishment of his mission." The essence of command is authority and responsibility. Authority is the power to direct the operations and movements of the forces under one's command. Responsibility is being held accountable for the performance and well-being of the forces and men under one's command. A key tenant of military leadership is that

while authority can be delegated, responsibility cannot.²³ That is, a commander can delegate authority over a portion of his forces to a subordinate, but retains responsibility for those forces.

A closely related principle--unity of command--states that if a commander is given responsibility for forces, he must have authority over them commensurate with that responsibility. This is the principle of command that is most difficult to uphold. Military commanders and civilian authorities alike face a constant temptation to restrict the authority of subordinates even while holding them accountable for the actions of their forces.²⁴ Ambiguous delegation of authority almost invariably leads to diffusion of responsibility, a phenomenon highly visible when military operations fail. Diffusion of authority and responsibility can be unintended but nonetheless deleterious side-effects of modern communications systems.

²³See Joint Chiefs of Staff, Department of Defense Directory of Military and Associated Terms, JSC Publication No. 1 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1979); United States Navy Regulations, 1973 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1973), p. 13; Admiral James D. Watkins, "The Principle of Command," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 109 (January 1983): 32-33.

²⁴See Admiral Harry D. Train III, "Decision Making and Managing Ambiguity in Politico-Military Crisis," in James G. March and Roger Weissinger-Baylon, eds., Ambiguity and Command: Organizational Perspectives on Military Decision Making (Marshfield, MA: Pitman Publishing, 1986), p. 307; Lieutenant D.J. Marchall, "Communications and Command Prerogative," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 100 (January 1974): 29-33.

Another important principle of military command is the distinction is drawn between command and control. The two functions can be exercised separately. A commander can delegate control over forces he commands. He retains responsibility for the forces, but grants the subordinate authority over them. The subordinate commander is then responsible for the forces under his control. For example, when a company commander sends a squad out on patrol, he delegates control of the men to the squad leader, but is still in command of them. When military command functions in accordance with this principle, the superior commander exercises authority over the subordinate commander, not over the forces placed under the control of the subordinate commander. The military chain of command is founded on the principle of delegating control while retaining command.

A key point that is often missed in studies of command and control is that this distinction between command and control starts with the commander in chief of the armed forces--the President. Under the United States constitution, the President is, in principle, in command of every unit and individual member of the U.S. armed forces at all times. However, while retaining that command, he delegates substantial control over the armed forces to the Secretary of Defense, who in turn delegates substantial control to subordinate commanders. Presidential delegation of control over military forces varies widely in extent and

method. For example, the President retains tight control over release of nuclear weapons, but exercises very little control over routine peacetime military operations.

Understanding the distinction between command and control and the delegation of control to military commanders is thus essential for understanding how crisis military operations are controlled.

This section will examine four aspects of military command and control. First, the tension between delegation and control in the military command system will be explored, presenting the arguments for and against centralized control of military operations. Second, the methods of exercising control--direct versus delegated, and positive versus by negation--will be explained. Third, the differences between initiatory actions and contingent responses will be defined. Finally, the authority of U.S. Navy commanding officers will be discussed and illustrated with historical examples.

Delegation and Control

Tension between delegation of discretionary decisionmaking authority and maintenance of control is always present in organizations, particularly in large organizations consisting of numerous independent operating units. There is no better example of such an organization than the United States armed forces. The Department of

Defense is by far the single largest organization in the U.S. government, and it consists of innumerable independent operating units with varying degrees of autonomy. Moreover, unlike any other organization in the U.S., the armed forces are charged with a mission crucial to the survival of the nation. Organization theory would thus lead to the expectation that there would be significant tension between delegation of discretionary decisionmaking authority and maintenance of control in the military chain of command.

That expectation is borne out by substantial empirical evidence. In fact, centralization versus decentralization in the control of military operations had been a major issue in American civil-military relations and the design of the U.S. military command system since the National Security Act of 1947. The Truman-MacArthur dispute during the Korean War and military dissatisfaction with Johnson Administration "micro-management" of the air war against North Vietnam are only two of the most prominent examples of such tensions. It is thus important to understand the roots of such tensions--the reasons advanced for centralized control and the opposing reasons advanced for decentralized delegation of control.

Three primary reasons or explanations for the trend toward centralized control of military operations have been advanced. The first is that the increasing complexity of warfare and concomitant specialization of military forces

has increased the need for centralized control over military operations in order to effectively coordinate diverse weapons and units.²⁵ This affects almost every aspect of military operations and is widely recognized within the military. Since World War II U.S. Air Force doctrine has called for centralized (theater level) control of tactical air power.²⁶ Similar control problems arise in amphibious operations and combined arms ground operations. The second reason for centralized control, the one most important to civilian leaders, is the threat of nuclear war.²⁷ This, in turn, leads to the emphasis on top-level control of military operations for escalation control and crisis management.²⁸

²⁵ Sir Solly Zuckerman, "Judgement and Control in Modern Warfare," Foreign Affairs 40 (January 1962): 203-5; Creveld, pp. 236-7.

²⁶ For a description of Air Force command doctrine for tactical air power, see General William Momyer, Airpower in Three Wars (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1978).

²⁷ Rear Admiral Donald T. Poe, "Command and Control: Changeless--Yet Changing," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 100 (October 1974): 23-4; Roger A. Beaumont, "The Paradoxes of C³," in James H. Buck and Lawrence J. Korb, eds., Military Leadership (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1981), p. 123-4; Barry R. Posen, "Inadvertent Nuclear War? Escalation and NATO's Northern Flank," International Security 7 (Summer 1982): 28-54; Steinbruner, p. 40; Williams, pp. 94-134; Lebow, p.287.

²⁸ See George, "Development of Doctrine and Strategy," pp. 8-15, and "Crisis Management," pp. 227-228; Richard G. Head, Frisco W. Short, and Robert C. McFarlane, Crisis Resolution: Presidential Decision Making in the Mayaguez and Korean Confrontations (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1978), pp. 246-51.

The third, and most controversial, reason for centralization is the "force multiplier" concept. The contention is that effective command and control systems in effect multiply the combat utility of available forces by allowing them to be rapidly applied where they are most needed or where they can achieve the greatest results.²⁹ In principle, the higher the level in the chain of command at which control is centralized, the broader the force multiplier effect can be applied. Of these three reasons for centralized control, escalation control and crisis management concerns are the most important factors prompting civilian control of military operations.

Two primary reasons are advanced for decentralized control of military operations. First, the ability of top-level decisionmakers to effectively exercise close control of military operations is severely constrained by limits on decisionmaking and information processing. Top-level decisionmakers can be overwhelmed by information overload, preventing effective assessment of tactical options. They may not have sufficient time to effectively control multiple operations, or may have their attention diverted by one aspect of the operations, neglecting others. They almost invariably do not understand the complexities of modern warfare, which can make even a small-scale operation

²⁹For a discussion of the force multiplier concept, see Beaumont, "The Paradoxes of C₃," pp. 116-20.

impossible to effectively control from the White House. As Ernest R. May has pointed out, there have been quantum leaps in the level of knowledge that the President must have of military forces in order to be able to employ them effectively. Communications channels typically become overloaded with the vast amounts of information needed to exercise close control of military operations, causing excessive delays in decisionmaking and transmission of orders to operating forces. Compounding these problems, the quality of modern communications systems can give top-level officials a false sense of having complete information and being in control.³⁰ That these problems should arise in centralized control of military operations is not surprising because, as was noted above, essentially the same phenomena drive decentralization in all types of large organizations.

The second set of arguments for decentralized control of military operations are based on the on-scene commander's superior ability to control the employment of his forces. His information about the current tactical situation is normally superior that of his superiors. The on-scene commander requires initiative and flexibility to

³⁰ Ernest R. May, "Eisenhower and After," in Ernest R. May, ed., The Ultimate Decision: The President as Commander in Chief (New York: George Braziller, 1960), pp. 233-5; Captain W.T.T. Pakenham, "The Command and Control of Naval Operations: Principles and Organisation," Naval Forces 7 (1/1986): 50; Beaumont, "Command Method," pp. 65-7, and "The Paradoxes of C³," p. 133; Creveld, p. 247-51; Poe, pp. 28-9.

effectively cope with the "fleeting opportunities and sudden dangers" of combat, to use Edward N. Luttwak's apt expression. In recognition of the importance of initiative and flexibility, the German army has since the eighteenth century based its tactical doctrine and command procedures on the concept of auftragstaktik, which emphasizes granting subordinate commanders the maximum possible freedom of action in carrying out assigned missions. Only the on-scene commander can fully appreciate and adapt to the inevitable "friction" in military operations, the multitude of problems that shape the execution of military plans. Centralized control of military operations can stifle initiative, weaken morale, erode authority, and cause diffusion of responsibility.³¹ These are the concerns in the minds of military commanders when the White House gets on the radio to dictate their tactics.

³¹Colonel H.A. Hadd, "Orders Firm But Flexible," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 88 (October 1962): 87-8; Admiral Thomas B. Hayward, "An Ex-CNO's Reflection of the Garbage Can Theory of Naval Decision Making," in James G. March and Roger Weissinger-Baylon, eds., Ambiguity and Command: Organizational Perspectives on Military Decision Making (Marshfield, MA: Pitman Publishing, 1986), p. 267; Edward N. Luttwak, Strategy: The Logic of War and Peace (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1987), p. 13; Dan Horowitz, "Flexible Responsiveness and Military Strategy: The Case of the Israeli Army," Policy Sciences 1 (Summer 1970): 191-205; Beaumont, "The Paradoxes of C", pp. 123, 133; Creveld, p. 269-70; Poe, p. 28-9; Train, p. 302-3; Blair, Strategic Command and Control, p. 75. For a description of auftragstaktik, see Lieutenant Colonel Walter von Lossow, "Mission-Type Tactics versus Order-Type Tactics," Military Review 57 (June 1977): 87-91.

The argument is frequently made that improved communications and information processing systems can overcome most of the problems that constrain top-level control of military operations. Such optimism is not supported by historical evidence. The historical trend has been for increases in the scale, speed, and complexity of warfare to exceed the ability of command and control systems to keep higher level commanders fully in control.³² Martin van Creveld has reached the same conclusion:

Taken as a whole, present-day military forces, for all the imposing array of electronic gadgetry at their disposal, give no evidence whatsoever of being one whit more capable of dealing with the information needed for the command process than were their predecessors a century or even a millennium ago. Though modern technical means undoubtedly enable present-day command systems to transmit and process more information faster than ever before, regardless of distance, movement and weather, their ability to approach certainty has not improved to any marked extent. Nor, given the fact that this goal has proved elusive through every one of the many revolutions in organization, technology and procedure that have taken place in the past, does there appear to be much hope of achieving it in the foreseeable future.

³²Beaumont, "Command Method," pp. 62-5; Lieutenant Colonel Kenneth F.A. Openchowski, "The Role and Location of the Commander: How Will They Be Affected by C³ Facilities Available in the 1980s?" Military Review 57 (April 1977): 12-19.

³³Creveld, pp. 265-6.

The trend toward complexity is particularly acute in naval operations, which are conducted with a wider array of sensors, platforms, and weapons than any other type of military operation--making it the most difficult form of warfare to explain to civilian leaders and advisors.³⁴

There is thus little reason to expect that innovations in communications and information processing systems will solve crisis command and control problems.

Methods of Control

The military chain of command, from the President down to the lowest levels, is founded upon the principle of delegating control of forces to subordinate commanders. The methods of exercising control cover a "tightness of control" spectrum ranging from positive direct control at the tight end to autonomous delegated control at the loose end.³⁵

³⁴ See Karl Lautenschlager, "Technology and the Evolution of Naval Warfare," International Security 8 (Fall 1983): 3-51; Admiral James D. Watkins, "The Maritime Strategy," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 112 (January 1986), special supplement, The Maritime Strategy, pp. 12-14. Modern naval command and control systems add to the complexity of warfare, rather than simplifying its control, by allowing a wider variety of weapons covering larger ocean areas to be brought to bear on the enemy. This has led to enemy command and control systems becoming a primary wartime target. See Norman Friedman, "C³ War at Sea," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 103 (May 1977): 126-41.

³⁵ The terms used in this section are derived from terms used by the three services, but are not the exact terms used by any of the services. There are two reasons for this. First, terminology varies widely among the three services

The tightest form of control is positive direct control. In this method, communications links with operational forces are used to control their movements and actions on a real-time basis. Positive direct control allows subordinate commanders the least amount of initiative and flexibility: movements and actions are taken only on direct orders. If the on-scene commander wants to take an action other than that ordered by higher authority, he must request and receive permission to do so before initiating the action. The effectiveness of positive direct control is crucially dependent on communications connectivity and having the full, undivided attention of higher authority. This form of control is rarely used for wartime or large-scale crisis operations because it is cumbersome and incapable of keeping pace with a rapidly changing tactical situation.

Toward the center of the tightness of control spectrum is a method that will be referred to as direct control by negation. As in positive direct control, communications links with operational forces are used to control their movements and actions on a real-time basis. However, the on-scene commander is delegated partial authority to control his forces. The scope of the on-scene commander's decisionmaking authority is defined in his mission orders,

and the joint commands despite efforts by the JCS to standardize it. Second, the terminology used by the services is much more complex than the scheme used here, employing myriad terms for different types of control.

and can vary widely. The key feature of this method of control is that the on-scene commander reports his proposed course of action to higher authority, and then carries it out unless it is specifically vetoed. Like positive direct control, the effectiveness of direct control by negation is crucially dependent on communications connectivity and having the full, undivided attention of higher authority.

Higher authorities can specify either or two forms of direct control by negation: tight or loose. In the tight form, the on-scene commander reports proposed actions before initiating them (except when immediate action is needed in an emergency). In the loose form, the on-scene commander initiates action before reporting it. The loose form of direct control by negation is the method of control that military commanders typically prefer when they must be placed under direct control.

Toward the loose end of the tightness of control spectrum are the various forms of delegated control. In this method of control the immediate commander of a force is delegated direct control over its operations. The commander is issued orders to perform a certain mission and then allowed to carry out that mission on his own initiative. The scope of his authority and the actions he is permitted to take in pursuit of the mission are spelled out in his mission orders, and can range from granting him wide freedom of action to restricting him to a specific plan of action.

When direct communications links are available, monitored delegated control is the form commonly employed. In monitored delegated control, the on-scene commander is required to keep his superiors informed of the status of his forces, the progress of his mission, and his operational intentions through periodic situation reports and, if possible, real-time reports of crucial information. The chain of command intervenes in the conduct of the operation only when absolutely necessary to ensure that it supports the overall strategy being pursued or to correct serious (mission-threatening) errors by the on-scene commander. Control by negation is often employed in monitored delegated control, as well as under direct control by negation. The difference between the two methods is that monitored delegated control allows the on-scene commander greater freedom of action than does direct control by negation. Monitored delegated control is viewed by most military officers as the ideal method of control, striking an effective balance between autonomy and control.

When direct communications links are not available or not feasible, autonomous delegated control is the form of control that is employed. In autonomous delegated control the on-scene commander is given his mission orders and is not expected to report again to higher authority until he successfully completes or aborts the mission. This type of control is necessary in covert operations, such as by

special forces, when stealth is crucial to the effectiveness of a platform, such as attack submarines, and in situations where electronic emissions must be curtailed, such as in a surprise attack or when deception is used in battle. This method of control is not often favored by military commanders because it lacks flexibility, and is therefore only used when absolutely necessary.

The approach the United States armed forces have taken is to rely on a flexible combination of direct and delegated methods of control. The balance between autonomy and control is based on the nature of the operations being conducted and the tactical environment--including the political environment. In some cases, different methods of control can be used in conjunction. For example, an on-scene commander could be under monitored delegated control, but have certain tactical options placed under positive direct control. Admiral Joseph Metcalf, commander of the Grenada invasion force in 1983, used this approach to allow his subordinate commanders maximum freedom of action while retaining control over weapons with the greatest destructive power (such as attack aircraft and naval gunfire).³⁶ Forces

³⁶Vice Admiral Joseph Metcalf III, "Decision Making in the Grenada Rescue Operation," in James G. March and Roger Weissinger-Baylon, eds., Ambiguity and Command: Organizational Perspectives on Military Decision Making (Marshfield, MA: Pitman Publishing, 1986), p. 281-2. Also see Poe, p. 28, on flexible command procedures.

can be rapidly shifted between the different methods of control as the tactical situation dictates.

Initiatory Actions and Contingent Responses

Another concept useful for understanding military command and control is the distinction between initiatory actions and contingent responses.³⁷ Initiatory actions are taken to initiate a new course of action intended to achieve specific objectives. They may be directed by higher authority (directly or in advance), or taken by the on-scene commander on his own authority (based on general operational guidance and tactical doctrine). Although initiatory actions usually are taken on the basis of an assessment of the overall political-military environment and the local tactical situation, they are not the product of rules designating a particular response to a specific action. The on-scene commander is taking the initiative, acting rather than reacting.

Contingent responses, on the other hand, are actions taken in response to specific actions. The taking of such actions is contingent upon the prior occurrence of specified actions or the existence of specified tactical

³⁷As in the previous section, these terms are derived from terms used by the three services, but are not the exact terms used by any of the services. The basic idea conveyed by these terms is deeply ingrained in military thought on command, and underlies certain commonly-used procedures (such as rules of engagement).

circumstances. Contingent responses are rarely ever fully automatic, they usually require a deliberate operational decision by the on-scene commander.³⁸ The principle variable is the level in the chain of command at which various contingent responses can be ordered. Decisions on the use of force governed by rules of engagement are a form of contingent response. Other contingent responses, usually broader in scope, can be included in operations orders, operations plans, and contingency plans. As a general rule, the broader the scope and the greater the level of violence involved in a contingent response, the higher up the chain of command the decision to employ that response must be made.

This distinction between initiatory actions and contingent responses cannot be pushed too far--they can be

³⁸ Certain naval weapon systems have automatic reaction capabilities: they can proceed from initial detection of a target to firing of weapons without an orders from an operator. The best-known example is the MK 16 Close-In Weapon System (the white-domed 20mm Vulcan gun installed on almost all U.S. Navy warships), which in the automatic mode will detect, track, and fire on any air target that meets its engagement parameters. The new Aegis combat system also has sophisticated automatic reaction and engagement capabilities. See Captain Joseph L. McClane, Jr. and Commander James L. McClane, "The Ticonderoga Story: Aegis Works," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 111 (May 1985): 118-29; Thomas B. Blann, "The State of Surface Antiair Warfare," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 111 (November 1985): 133-37. However, all such systems have semi-automatic modes that require an operator to make the decision to engage a target, and ships are usually given detailed guidance on the operation and programming of automatic systems so as to ensure that they are employed in accordance with the rules of engagement.

difficult to distinguish in a fast-paced tactical environment. For example, a retaliatory attack can be either a contingent response authorized in operational guidance (other than the rules of engagement), or an initiatory action ordered by national leaders--even though taken as a reprisal for a specific hostile act. Contingent responses and initiatory actions can have the same political-military intentions and objectives. A retaliatory attack, to continue the example, could have as its purpose the signaling of a coercive threat regardless of whether it was a contingent response or an initiatory action. The primary difference between these two types of military actions is that operational commanders can, on their own authority, execute contingent responses under specified tactical circumstances, whereas appropriate higher authority (normally the President in peacetime) must approve initiatory actions.

An important feature of the flexible system of direct and delegated command used by the U.S. military is that authority to order contingent responses can be delegated separately from authority to order initiatory actions. Orders for a particular mission can specify positive direct control of initiatory actions, while at the same time employing monitored delegated control of contingent responses. This approach is particularly useful when ships are deployed to a tense crisis situation marked by a high-threat tactical environment: top-level decisionmakers

retain control of actions most likely to be escalatory (initiatory actions) while providing on-scene decision-makers the tactical flexibility they need to defend themselves (contingent responses). As always, a careful balance must be struck between direct and delegated command when using this differentiated approach. The important point is that the decision on direct versus delegated command is not an "all or nothing" proposition--flexible combinations of the two methods are possible.

Authority of Commanding Officers

An important aspect of United States Navy command and control philosophy, which has no equivalent in the other services, is the extremely high delegation of authority granted to the commanding officers of ships and other operational commanders. This is a tradition in the U.S. Navy, one inherited from the Royal Navy and centuries-old traditions of the sea. During the age of sail, when it could take longer to exchange letters with the homeland than to fight a small war, British and American naval officers often played important foreign policy roles on their own initiative. British naval officers were under standing orders to "act in the best interests of the Queen" when deployed to distant stations, granting them freedom of action to handle situations not covered in their sailing orders. During the nineteenth century, naval officers



played an important role in U.S. foreign Policy, often with considerable autonomy.³⁹ This tradition exerts a strong influence on Navy command and control philosophy today.

Because the actions of individual commanding officers could have a major impact on the management of a crisis, it is important to understand their authority as spelled out in United States Navy Regulations. Both the 1948 and 1973 editions state the following:

The responsibility of the Commanding Officer for his command is absolute, except when, and to the extent, relieved therefrom by competent authority, or as provided otherwise in these regulations. The authority of the Commanding Officer is commensurate with his responsibility, subject to the limits proscribed by law and these regulations.⁴⁰

A commanding officer's authority and responsibility are thus "absolute," limited only by law and Navy Regulations.

³⁹ See Samuel Eliot Morison, "Old Bruin": Commodore Matthew C. Perry, 1794-1858 (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1967); Kenneth J. Hagan, American Gunboat Diplomacy and the Old Navy, 1877-1889 (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1973); Robert E. Johnson, Far China Station: The U.S. Navy in Asian Waters, 1800-1898 (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1979); William N. Still, Jr., American Sea Power in the Old World: The United States Navy in European and Near Eastern Waters, 1865-1917 (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1980); Frederick C. Drake, The Empire of the Seas: A Biography of Rear Admiral Robert Wilson Shufeldt, USN (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1984); David F. Long, Gold Braid and Foreign Relations: Diplomatic Activities of U.S. Naval Officers, 1798-1883 (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1988).

⁴⁰ U.S. Department of the Navy, United States Navy Regulations, 1948 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1948), p. 75; U.S. Department of the Navy, United States Navy Regulations, 1973 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1973), p. 13.

Commanding officers are, of course, required to carry out lawful orders from superiors, but Navy Regulations even has a provision covering situations in which a commanding officer believes he must act contrary to his orders:

A Commanding Officer who departs from his orders or instructions, or takes official action which is not in accordance with such orders or instructions, does so upon his own responsibility and shall report immediately the circumstances to the officer from whom the prior orders or instructions were received.⁴¹

This is a key provision: It permits a commanding officer, under unanticipated extraordinary circumstances, to exercise initiative--even when contrary to his orders--so long as he immediately informs his chain of command of his action. In practice, commanding officers are extremely cautious about taking such an action. Their professional training and experience instill in them strong respect for the chain of command and orders issued by higher authority.

Two examples of Navy officers acting on their own initiative, in one case contrary to orders, will illustrate how the provisions of Navy Regulations are applied in practice. The first case occurred in July 1953, two days after the end of the Korean War. On July 29, 1953, a U.S. Air Force RB-50 reconnaissance plane patrolling in international airspace over the Sea of Japan was shot down by Soviet fighters about thirty miles off the coast of the Soviet Union (apparently in retaliation for the downing of a

⁴¹Ibid.

Soviet transport over North Korea two days earlier). All but one of the crew were able to bail out, and several were spotted in the water by American search planes.⁴² Six ships, a cruiser and five destroyers under the command of Vice Admiral Walter G. Schindler, were detached to rescue the survivors. Vice Admiral Schindler's orders did not specify how close to the Soviet coast he was allowed to search, so he sent the following message to his superiors:

Request you relay via appropriate channels to Russian authorities that if warranted by situation I intend to take my ships as close to Russian territory as is necessary to recover the airmen from the crashed aircraft and that furthermore,⁴³ in the event I do, I will brook no interference.

By the time Vice Admiral Schindler received a response directing him to remain clear of Soviet territorial waters, he had already recovered the only survivor that could be located. As it turned out, the lone survivor was found in international waters, none of Vice Admiral Schindler's ships entered Soviet territorial waters, and there was no harassment of his force by Soviet ships or planes.⁴⁴

⁴²James A. Field, Jr., History of United States Naval Operations: Korea (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1962), pp. 457-9.

⁴³Rear Admiral Daniel V. Gallery, The Pueblo Incident (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Co., 1970), p. 57; Vice Admiral Walter G. Schindler, letter to author, March 19, 1988. Admiral Schindler confirmed that he sent the message reproduced in Gallery's book.

⁴⁴Field, p. 459; Gallery, p. 58; Schindler, letter to author, March 19, 1988.

This episode illustrates two points. First, it illustrates monitored delegated control in practice. Admiral Schindler informed his superiors of his intentions, allowing control by negation. Second, it illustrates the authority of a Navy commander. Vice Admiral Schindler had the authority to order the actions taken by his force, used a message to his superiors stating his intentions in order to clarify ambiguous orders, and, by keeping his force clear of Soviet territorial waters, acted with appropriate caution in the absence of a timely response.

The second case occurred in Zanzibar, an island nation off the eastern coast of Africa (now part of Tanzania), in January 1964. Zanzibar, a former British protectorate, had gained independence on December 10, 1963. On January 12, 1964, African rebels overthrew the government of sultan Seyyid Jamshid Bin Abdullah in a bloody coup. Little was known about the rebel group or its intentions, leading to grave concern for the safety of foreigners on the island.⁴⁵

The United States immediately ordered the destroyer USS Manley (DD 940) to proceed to Zanzibar from Mombassa, Kenya, where it had been making a port visit, and to establish a visible presence off the port city of Zanzibar, the island's

⁴⁵"The Sultan Banished," Tanganyika Standard (Dar Es Salaam), January 14, 1964, p. 1; "African Revolt Overturns Arab Regime in Zanzibar," New York Times, January 13, 1964, p. 1; Jules Davids, The United States in World Affairs, 1964 (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), p. 278.

capital. While the destroyer was en route, however, a rebel leader broadcast a warning that they would not tolerate interference by foreign powers. In response to this development, U.S. authorities in Washington (the Secretary of Defense was directly involved) first ordered Manley to remain out of sight over the horizon from the island, then later cancelled Manley's orders entirely and recalled the destroyer.⁴⁶

Manley received the first message, ordering her to remain over the horizon, just as she arrived at Zanzibar and established radio communications with the American embassy on the island. The sixty-three Americans on the island, including the staff of a NASA space tracking station, had fled to the English Club on the Zanzibar city waterfront. The American Charge d'Affairs, Frederick P. Picard, informed the destroyer that their situation on the island was desperate and that they were in grave danger. He requested that Manley evacuate the Americans immediately. Manley's Commanding Officer, Commander Robert Ruxton, reported the evacuation request to his immediate superior, Rear Admiral

⁴⁶ Ibid.; "Coup in Zanzibar Stirs U.S. Concern," New York Times, January 14, 1964, p. 1; Captain John H. Carmichael, Assistant Director of the Fleet Operations Division, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations in 1964, letter to author, March 8, 1988; Captain Joseph E. Murray, Jr., Executive Officer of USS Manley (DD 940) in 1964, letter to author, 31 March 1988; Captain Murray, letter to his wife, January 14, 1964 (Provided to author by Captain Murray).

Arnold F. Schade, Commander Middle East Force. Rear Admiral Schade, acting on his own authority and contrary to the orders, that had been sent from Washington, ordered Manley to evacuate the Americans on the island.⁴⁷

Manley sent the ship's Executive Officer, Lieutenant Commander Joseph E. Murray, Jr., ashore--unarmed and in a white uniform--to organize the evacuation. Murray and Picard negotiated with the rebel leaders, assuring them that the U.S. warship would not interfere in Zanzibar's internal affairs. At one point in the talks, the rebel leader, John Okello, put a gun to Murray's head and threatened to kill him if the U.S. ship did not depart. Murray and Picard persevered, gaining permission from the rebel leaders to evacuate American women and children. When they returned to the English Club, Murray and Picard convinced the rebel guards that they had permission to evacuate all of the Americans. Murray succeeded in ferrying all of the Americans (and several non-U.S. citizens) to Manley before the rebel leaders discovered what had happened. Manley embarked 61 Americans and 30 other foreign nationals, and departed for Dar Es Salaam, Tanganyika (leaving behind Picard and the third secretary to handle relations with the new government). Washington was unable to participate because it did not have radio or cable communications with

⁴⁷ Ibid.

Zanzibar, and did not learn of the evacuation until after Manley departed. After Manley departed Zanzibar, the order from Washington cancelling the mission was received.⁴⁸

This episode clearly illustrates the authority of Navy commanding officers, including their authority to disregard orders from superiors when the situation warrants. Rear Admiral Schade and the Commanding Officer of Manley acted on their own authority and immediately informed their superiors of their actions, as specified in Navy Regulations.⁴⁹ The episode also illustrates why Navy commanders have such broad authority. U.S. officials in Washington were incapable of staying abreast of a rapidly changing political situation. Knowing only that rebel leaders had broadcast a warning

⁴⁸ Ibid; "Four to be Hanged in Zanzibar," Mombasa Times (Mombasa, Kenya), January 15, 1964, p. 1.

⁴⁹ Manley received commendations from the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Chief of Naval Operations, Commander in Chief U.S. Forces Europe, Commander in Chief U.S. Naval Forces Europe, and Commander Middle East Force for "outstanding performance, vigilance, and prompt and correct reactions to unusual conditions." See Chief of Naval Operations message, CNO 081628Z FEB 64, February 8, 1964 (Unclassified, copy provided to author by Captain Murray); Commander Middle East Force message, COMIDEASTFOR 170205Z FEB 64, February 17, 1964 (Unclassified, copy provided to author by Captain Murray); Ship's History, USS Manley (DD 940), 1964 (Ships History Branch, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC). Manley's Executive Officer was personally commended for his role in the evacuation. See James R. Ruchti, First Secretary, U.S. Embassy, Nairobi, Kenya, letter to Commanding Officer USS Manley (DD 940), March 17, 1964 (provided to author by Captain Murray); "Three Manley Crewmen Commended for Heroism," Charleston Evening Post (Charleston, SC), December 10, 1964, p. 10A.

against interference, but not knowing that Manley's Executive Officer and the American Charge d'Affairs were in contact with the rebels and had gained their permission for an evacuation, Washington prematurely cancelled the mission. That the situation was indeed serious enough to warrant immediate evacuation is shown by what happened to the American Charge d'Affairs four days later: Picard was arrested at gun point and expelled from the island due to U.S. refusal to recognize the new government.⁵⁰ The situation could have been much more serious with sixty-one potential hostages on the island, as the United States would learn later in Iran.

Allison's original organizational process model would seriously misconstrue both of these incidents. The model does not account for the substantial authority delegated to Navy commanders, including authority to disregard orders when warranted by unanticipated extraordinary circumstances and lack of immediate communication with higher authority. In both the 1953 Sea of Japan and 1964 Zanzibar cases, Allison's organizational process model would view the commanders as mindlessly carrying out pre-established organizational routines regardless of the desires of higher authorities--missing the crucial points that in the 1953 case there was ambiguity as to how close the search

⁵⁰ "Zanzibar Regime Seizes U.S. Consul at Gunpoint," New York Times, January 17, 1964, p. 1; Davids, p. 279.

and rescue force could approach the Soviet Union, and that in the 1964 case authorities in Washington lacked sufficient information to effectively control the operation. Admiral Schindler allowed his superiors to exercise control by negation when he sent the message stating his intention, and in the absence of a timely response acted with prudence and kept his ships clear of Soviet territorial waters. Rear Admiral Schade disregarded orders issued by the Secretary of Defense via the military chain of command in order to respond to the evacuation request, and Manley carried out the evacuation with caution to avoid incidents in a volatile situation. Neither organizational routines nor evasion of civilian control was a factor in these two cases.⁵¹

⁵¹The behavior of Navy and Marine Corps commanders during the 1958 landings in Lebanon was much different from that of Navy commanders in the Zanzibar episode. In the Lebanon case, Navy and Marine officers twice refused requests from the American ambassador to modify their plans for the landing, which could be cited as an example of the organization process model at work. The first request was that the Marines not be landed over the beach to seize the airport, that they be kept aboard ship and brought into the harbor. This request was made after the first battalion of Marines was ashore and deployed, which would have required lengthy backloading of the men and their equipment. Additionally, President Eisenhower had already announced the landing to the world. This request simply came too late to be executed effectively. The second request, made about thirty minutes after the first, was for a company of Marines to be sent from the airport to the presidential palace to guard against a possible coup. Note that in making this request Lebanese officials and the U.S. ambassdor completely reversed their position from the earlier request. This request was refused because the Marine commander thought that the small force would have been in an exposed and vulnerable position, and cut off from the main force. He was also concerned that he would not have sufficient troops

Summary

In summary, the military chain of command, from the President down to the lowest levels, is founded on the principle of delegating control while retaining command. Tension between delegation and control is always present in the military chain of command. Pressures toward centralized control are driven by the complexity of modern warfare, fear of nuclear war, and efforts to exploit the force multiplier effect. Pressures toward decentralized control are driven by severe constraints on the ability of top-level authorities to effectively control tactical operations, and by the advantages gained by granting the on-scene commander flexibility to exercise initiative. Improvements in communications and information processing systems are unlikely to reduce the need for delegation of control.

The methods of exercising control cover a "tightness of control" spectrum ranging from very tight to very loose control. Toward the tight end of the spectrum are positive

to secure the airport and landing area until the second battalion had been landed. The Marine commander's caution appears to have been warranted given that when the first column of Marines attempted to leave the airport the next day, they met Lebanese tanks and artillery massed on the road into Beirut, almost causing an armed clash. Thus, although even the Marine commander ashore felt his orders were excessively rigid, valid political and military considerations were at least as important as organizational routines in determining the decisions that were made. See Robert, McClintock, "The American Landing in Lebanon," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 88 (October 1962): 65-79; Hadd, pp. 81-89.

direct control, and direct control by negation. Toward the loose end of the spectrum are monitored delegated control and autonomous delegated control. The United States armed forces rely on a flexible combination of direct and delegated control. Certain of the methods of control can be used in conjunction, and forces can be rapidly shifted from one method to another as the situation warrants. A distinction between initiatory actions and contingent responses is used to delegate authority to take certain actions, while withholding authority to take others. Navy command and control doctrine is unique in the scope of the authority granted to commanding officers, which even allows them to act contrary to orders when the situation warrants.

These are the basic concepts on which military command and control procedures are based. Emphasis is on delegation of discretionary decisionmaking authority in conjunction with appropriate methods of control. In addition to direct control via communications links, commanders can exercise indirect control of subordinates even after having delegated them substantial autonomy. The mechanisms of indirect control are the subject of the next section.

Mechanisms of Indirect Control

When a military commander delegates control of operational forces, he does not relinquish all control of those forces to his subordinate. In most cases, he retains

a certain amount of direct control, which can vary widely in tightness. Additionally, the commander has at his disposal various mechanisms of indirect control. Mechanisms of indirect control are orders, instructions, or detailed guidance issued to a commander prior to the start of a mission in order to ensure that the operational decisions he makes support the objectives and intentions of his superiors. Such instructions can range from being very detailed and specific to very general in nature. As the method of control being used moves across the "tightness of control" spectrum from tight to loose--that is, as the subordinate is granted increasing freedom from direct control--the importance of the mechanisms of indirect control increases. When a subordinate is operating under autonomous delegated control, with no direct communications links at all, the mechanisms of indirect control are the only means of control available.

There are five principle mechanisms of delegated control: the alert system, standing orders, mission orders, contingency plans, and rules of engagement. The first four will be discussed in this section. Rules of engagement will be discussed separately in the next section. The focus of attention in the following discussion will be on how the mechanisms are supposed to function in principle, rather than on how they actually function in practice, which will be addressed in the case studies in Chapters VII and VIII.

The Alert System

The U.S. alert system is based on five levels of Defense Readiness Condition (DEFCON), ranging from normal peacetime readiness (DEFCON 5 and 4) to wartime readiness (DEFCON 1). The DEFCON system defines the overall framework for controlling the readiness of U.S. forces, providing a uniform system for all operational commands. Within this framework, following guidance from the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), individual commands formulate alert procedures and readiness postures applicable to their forces. The system is highly flexible, allowing different major commands to be placed at different DEFCON levels as the world situation warrants. It is not unusual for U.S. forces in different parts of the world to be at different DEFCON levels.⁵²

Much of the detailed guidance for operational forces is not part of the alert system per se, it is included in standing orders and contingency plans activated as higher levels of DEFCON are declared. Thus, the primary impact of the alert system is that it activates a wide range of operational guidance contained in previously prepared standing orders and contingency plans.

⁵² Joseph J. Kruzal, "Military Alerts and Diplomatic Signals," in Ellen P. Stern, ed., The Limits of Military Intervention (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1977), pp. 83-99; Bruce G. Blair, "Alerting in Crisis and Conventional War," in Ashton B. Carter, John D. Steinbruner, and Charles A. Zraket, eds., Managing Nuclear Operations (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1987), pp. 75-120; Sagan, pp. 100-102.

The alert system serves as a mechanism of indirect control by ensuring a uniform response to an order to increase (or decrease) readiness. A commander need not issue detailed orders to every subordinate command specifying the measures he wants them to take. The measures required for each level of readiness are spelled out in their standing orders, all the commander needs to do is state the level he desires and then monitor the messages that come in reporting attainment of the specified readiness condition. This frees the commander from having to directly manage details of implementing the alert, leaving him free to concentrate on assessing the situation and planning subsequent military operations.

An important feature of the alert system is that certain military commanders are delegated authority to increase the readiness of their forces independent of the DEFCON set by the JCS. They must maintain the minimum readiness level set by JCS, but can place their forces at a higher condition of readiness if warranted by the particular threat facing their commands. The Commanders in Chief of the unified and certain of the specified commands--such as the Atlantic Command, Pacific Command, U.S. European Command, and Strategic Air Command--have authority to increase the DEFCON of their forces independently of the worldwide DEFCON. They are required to immediately report such an action to the JCS and, time permitting, would normally confer with JCS before

changing the DEFCON level of their forces. The Commanders in Chief can also select from among various readiness postures--tailored for different types of threats--within a given DEFCON level.⁵³ Lower level commanders (who do not have authority to order changes in DEFCON) can also increase the readiness of their forces independent of the worldwide or theater DEFCON level. For example, the commanding officer of a Navy ship can place his crew at Condition I ("general quarters," when the crew is at battle stations) on his own authority without regard to DEFCON. A Navy battle group or fleet commander can place his entire force in an increased readiness status on his own authority. Similar procedures exist throughout the armed forces.

Standing Orders

Standing orders are detailed guidance on operational procedures prepared on a routine basis during peacetime. Although they are revised periodically, the intent is that they provide stable guidance, thereby minimizing uncertainty over operational procedures and facilitating the exercise of delegated control. Standing orders fall into four general categories: doctrinal publications, operations orders, operations plans, and long-range schedules.

⁵³JCS SM-833-59, August 25, 1959; JCS 1968/84, Record Group 218, JCS Records, National Archives, Washington, DC. Also see Blair, "Alerting in Crisis and Conventional War," pp. 114-117; Sagan, pp. 134-135.

Doctrinal publications define strategic principles, standard tactics, and routine operational procedures. U.S. Army Field Manuals (FMs), U.S. Navy Naval Warfare Publications (NWP), and NATO Allied Tactical Publications (ATPs) are examples of doctrinal publications.⁵⁴ Doctrine serves as a mechanism of indirect control by allowing a commander to issue a very brief order directing that a particular tactic or procedure be executed without having to specify all the details of the actions every unit is to take. Doctrine can be taught and rehearsed in peacetime, thus reducing confusion arising from unfamiliar procedures. Certain procedures require amplifying information for coordination purposes, such as direction of movement and timing of actions, but the prior formulation of a doctrine for carrying out the action still facilitates controlling it. Doctrine also reduces communications up the chain of command by reducing the amount of details that must be included in situation reports in order to explain the progress of an operation.

A common misconception about doctrine is that it specifies only a single tactic to be used in each situation. This misconception leads to the view that a military

⁵⁴ For a description of U.S. Navy doctrinal publications, see Commander George Galdorisi, "The Quiet Revolution," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 112 (April 1986): 42-43; "Surface Tactical Doctrine," Surface Warfare 10 (September/October 1985): 15-17.

organization's repertoire is limited to a small range of standard operating procedures, and consequently to overemphasis of the organizational process model for analysis of military organizations. In fact, doctrinal publications typically define a range of options for any given situation, and provide criteria for selecting among them. The complexity of doctrine and the range of options it encompasses has increased in direct proportion with the complexity of warfare. The greater the variety of sensors, platforms, and weapons at a commander's disposal, the greater are his options in any given situation.

The easy part of tactical training is teaching standard tactical procedures, the difficult part is teaching tactical decisionmakers how to select the most appropriate option, or combination of options, for a particular situation. Most doctrinal publications explicitly recognize that not every tactical situation can be anticipated, and that the standard procedures they contain should be used as building blocks for constructing an appropriate plan of action.⁵⁵ Command and control would not be as complex as it is if doctrine were in fact as simple as it is often incorrectly portrayed.

⁵⁵ Lieutenant Christopher H. Johnson, "Tactics," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 104 (October 1978): 37-43; Lieutenant Commander Miles A. Libbey, III, "Time Out for Tactics," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 104 (January 1979): 52-57; Captain Robert C. Powers, "The Return of Tactical Thought," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 109 (June 1983): 21-27.

Standing operations orders (OPORDs) are issued by operational commands to provide guidance for the routine peacetime operations conducted by their forces. The term "operations order" is a Navy term, but the other services have equivalent documents. A standing operations order typically defines command relationships, communications channels, logistics procedures, and other such routine information. It serves as a mechanism of indirect control by relieving a commander of having to repeatedly issue the same orders to cover repetitive routine situations. An important function of standing operations orders is to define the scope of decisionmaking authority delegated to subordinate commanders on a routine basis. Standing operations orders are a good example of hierarchical controls or rule-governed delegation of decisionmaking.

An operations plan (OPLAN) is a comprehensive set of plans for the conduct of a specific operation. Standing operational plans are those that have been activated for execution of particular peacetime operations. They serve a function similar to that of standing operations orders, but are limited in scope to a single operation. The single operation could well consist of a prolonged series of repetitive missions, such as reconnaissance flights. An operations plan includes the objective of the operation, the forces assigned to it, command relationships, communications channels, doctrinal guidance, intelligence procedures,

logistics, and a multitude of other information as appropriate. An operations plan serves as a mechanism of indirect control by relieving a commander of having to exercise direct control over the routine aspects of an operation. An important function of standing operations plans is to define the scope of decisionmaking authority delegated to subordinate commanders on a routine basis. Standing operations orders are another good example of hierarchical controls or rule-governed delegation of decisionmaking.

Long-range schedules are prepared for such recurring activities as surveillance missions, major maintenance periods for ships and aircraft, ship deployments, and exercises. Long-range schedules are often "nested," with shorter-term schedules filling in the details of longer-range schedules. Long-range schedules serve as a mechanism of indirect control by allowing a commander to approve a large number of recurring routine operations at one time, leaving the details of planning and executing each one to subordinates.

Long-range schedules are an important means of indirect presidential control of the U.S. armed forces. Long-range schedules function on the principle of control by negation: Once a schedule is approved, the operations listed in it are authorized for execution unless specifically cancelled. Schedules for certain operations that are especially

sensitive or visible, such as reconnaissance missions and major exercises, are reviewed by the Secretary of Defense and National Security Advisor after the long range schedule is approved (in some cases prior to specific operations). They review the schedules to ensure that the operations are still appropriate and will not interfere with U.S. foreign policy. If questions arise concerning the political implications of a particular operation, it may be cancelled or referred to the President for a final decision. Most long-range schedules for routine evolutions are not subjected to this close scrutiny after they are approved. Long-range schedules are subject to frequent changes due to the fickle nature of world politics, but they nonetheless serve important planning and control functions.

Mission Orders

Mission orders include letters of intent (LOIs), operations plans or operations orders issued for a specific short-term operation, and various other types of orders used to initiate routine and non-routine operations. Mission orders are important when the monitored delegated control method is used, and crucial when the autonomous delegated control method is used. They are less important when one of the direct control methods is used. Mission orders can range from being very detailed and specific to being very brief and general. At a minimum, a mission order includes

the objective of the operation, the forces assigned to it, the identity of the commander, and the time frame for the operation. But a mission order can include the same amount of detail as (and in fact be) an operations plan.

Mission orders serve as a mechanism of indirect control by relieving a commander of having to exercise direct control over the details of an operation's execution. An important function of mission orders is to define the scope of decisionmaking authority delegated to subordinate commanders. A mission order can specify which decisions must be referred to higher authority and which decisions the subordinate commander is authorized make himself. Thus, mission orders provide a means of allowing a commander to focus his attention on the most important decisions that come up in the course of an operation without being distracted by routine matters. This in turn helps to prevent communications channels and decisionmakers from becoming overloaded.

Contingency Plans

Contingency plans are those operations plans (OPLANs) prepared in advance for execution in the circumstances specified in the plans.⁵⁶ Contingency plans are commonly

⁵⁶Note that operations plans can serve as contingency plans, mission orders, and standing orders. An individual OPLAN can transition from being a contingency plan (prior to execution), to being a mission order (upon execution), to being a standing order (for a long-term operation not requiring direct control).

prepared for crisis and peacetime emergency scenarios, various limited war scenarios, and general war scenarios (the last two types are often collectively referred to as "war plans"). Contingency plans serve as a mechanism of indirect control by allowing a commander to rapidly issue a single order to execute an operation that he and his staff have had time to prepare in detail ahead of time. Contingency plans are distributed in advance, eliminating the burden of having to issue a large volume of orders when a decision is made to carry out the operation. The only direct orders that are needed are last-minute revisions to the contingency plan and the mission order directing that it be executed as modified. Once a contingency plan is executed, it serves the same functions described above for operations plans and operations orders.

The single most important U.S. contingency plan is the Single Integrated Operational Plan (SIOP) for the employment of U.S. strategic nuclear forces.⁵⁷ Contingency plans are often designed to be mutually supportive with other

⁵⁷ See Henry S. Rowen, "Formulating Strategic Doctrine," in Commission on the Organization of the Government for the Conduct of Foreign Policy, Report on the Organization of the Government for the Conduct of Foreign Policy, Volume 4, Appendix K, Part III (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, June 1975), pp. 219-34; Desmond Ball, "Targeting for Strategic Deterrence," Adelphi Papers No. 185 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, Summer 1983), pp. 8-25; Scott D. Sagan, "SIOP-62: The Nuclear War Plan Briefing to President Kennedy," International Security 12 (Summer 1987): 22-51.

contingency plans, as well as capable of being executed individually. For example, the overall U.S. strategic objective of attempting to prevent a general war with the Soviet Union from escalating to a strategic nuclear exchange requires that the war plans of the unified commands be capable of execution independently as well as in conjunction with the SIOP. An important feature of the U.S. alert system is that increasing the readiness condition activates preparations to execute designated contingency plans applicable to the conflict at hand. This type of preparation is closely linked to the alert system because the effectiveness of an increase in DEFCON is much greater when the forces have a specific mission that they are preparing to execute than when they simply increase their readiness without being assigned a specific mission.

There are two types of contingency planning: routine and crisis. Routine contingency planning takes place on a continuing basis in peacetime to prepare plans for the most likely and most dangerous situations that can be anticipated. The Joint Chiefs of Staff and the commanders in chief of the unified commands have primary responsibility for deciding what contingency plans are written. The National Security Council has only a very small role in routine contingency planning. There is limited liaison between the State Department and the Joint Chiefs in certain types of contingency planning, such as for evacuation of

embassy personnel and their families in crises.⁵⁸ The difficulties in routine contingency planning are anticipating the possible crises for which planning should be done, defining specific scenarios for the use of force in each situation, predicting the forces that will be available for executing various options, and assessing the political feasibility of different options.

Crisis contingency planning consists of revising existing plans or formulating new plans for a range of military operations after a crisis has arisen. The National Security Council plays a significant role in determining which contingency plans are updated or prepared during crisis contingency planning. Normally, the Joint Staff and the unified command responsible for the area in which the crisis is located begin crisis contingency planning as soon as indications are received that a crisis is about to break.⁵⁹ Although many of the difficulties in routine

⁵⁸ William A. Cockell, Jr., Director, Defense Policy Directorate, National Security Council, interview by author, February 11, 1988; Ronald St. Martin, Director, Office of Program Integration, Office of the Secretary of Defense, and formerly Director, Crisis Management Center, National Security Council, interview by author, February 8, 1988; Colonel Charles J. Bauer, "Military Crisis Management at the National Level," Military Review 55 (August 1975): 3-15; "Understanding Military Contingency Planning," Military Review 61 (July 1981): 33-43; Admiral Robert L. Dennison, "Reminiscences of Admiral Robert L. Dennison, U.S. Navy (Retired)," Oral History Program, U.S. Naval Institute, August 1975, pp. 296-297; Gallery, pp. 27-28, 85-86.

⁵⁹ Cockell interview; St. Martin interview; Hayward, p. 261.

contingency planning are eliminated because planning is being done for a specific crisis, new problems arise due time pressures on the planning process and the ambiguity and confusion that always surround a crisis.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff are often described as incapable or unwilling to provide a broad range of military options for dealing with a crisis, but this does not appear to be accurate. When asked about this, the consensus among present and former National Security Council staff members, Department of Defense officials, and Joint Staff officers is that the JCS will provide a range of options when directed to do so. They always have (and press for) a preferred option, which typically entails decisive use of superior force so as to reduce the risk of defeat and to deter escalation. It is thus not unusual for the option preferred by the JCS to be viewed as politically infeasible by civilian authorities. The JCS also tend to resist civilian involvement in the details of operational planning once the objectives and basic parameters of an operation have been defined.⁶⁰

Another aspect of military contingency planning for crises is that the Joint Chiefs and the Commanders in Chief

⁶⁰ Richard K. Betts, Soldiers, Statesmen, and Cold War Crises (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1977), pp.160-161; Marshall Bremant, "Civilian-Military Relations in the Context of National Security Policymaking," Naval War College Review 41 (Winter 1988):28-29; Cockell interview; St. Martin interview.

of the unified commands can execute a wide range of preparatory actions as soon as initial indications are received that a crisis is breaking. These include activating special crisis management staffs, informing subordinate commanders of the situation, assembling personnel with specialized training and experience in the area, canceling or modifying routine operations that might exacerbate the crisis or delay a military response, increasing surveillance in the area, clearing communications channels and setting up special channels, increasing the readiness of units identified in contingency plans, and even deploying certain units that might be needed on short notice. Many such actions can be executed without prior approval of the President, though he is normally informed of them via the Secretary of Defense or the National Security Advisor as soon as possible after they are taken.⁶¹

⁶¹ Hayward, p. 261; briefings for author at Navy Command Center, National Military Command Center, and National Security Council, February 1988. Admiral Arleigh Burke, Chief of Naval Operations 1955-1961, was particularly adept at quietly alerting Navy units and readying them for potential crises. It was due to such actions by the CNO that the Navy was able to conduct the 1958 landing in Lebanon on short notice. See Admiral Arleigh A. Burke, "The Lebanon Crisis," in Arnold A. Shapack, ed., Proceedings of the Naval History Symposium (Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Academy, April 27-28, 1973), pp. 72-75. On military crisis management procedures, see Head, Short and McFarlane, pp. 64-67; Joint Chiefs of Staff, "Crisis Staffing Procedures of the Joint Chiefs of Staff," SM-481-83 (1983); Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, "Navy Crisis Management Organization," OPNAVINST 1601.7G, January 8, 1988. Also see Blair, "Alerting in Crisis and Conventional War," pp. 114-117; Sagan, pp. 134-135.

Preparation of contingency plans for retaliatory attacks is a routine part of military planning for peacetime and crisis operations in which hostilities could occur. As a general rule, authority to order retaliatory attacks is not delegated to military commanders, it is closely held by the President. Contingency planning for such attacks makes an important contribution to the effectiveness of peacetime and crisis military operations by providing the President with military options for a prompt response to provocations. In contingency planning for retaliation, as in all other types of routine contingency planning, preparation of a plan is not an indication of intent to execute the plan.

Opinions vary widely as to the value of routine contingency planning for crisis management. One study found that from 1946 to 1975 (41 cases) no appropriate contingency plans were available in 58.5% of the cases, and that the available contingency plans were inadequate in another 24.4% of the cases.⁶² Although these would appear to be grim statistics, the study did not address the important value that contingency plans can have even when inappropriate or requiring modification (this will be discussed below). Contingency planning problems are caused by the difficulty of predicting where crises will arise, the specific

⁶⁰ Leo Hazelwood, John J. Hayes, and James R. Brownell, Jr., "Planning for Problems of Crisis Management," International Studies Quarterly 21 (March 1977): 93.

political-military circumstances that will surround a crisis, how the President will react to a crisis, and the options the President will view as politically feasible. These factors impose inherent constraints on the ability of routine contingency planning to provide plans that are ideally suited for management of particular crises.

Although the plans that are produced by routine contingency planning may not be appropriate or adequate for the specific crises that arise, the planning process itself can make an important contribution to crisis management.

Rear Admiral J.C. Wylie, former Deputy Commander in Chief U.S. Naval Forces Europe and an experienced Navy planner, has explained the value of contingency planning:

"Contingency planning rarely fits unexpected situations. Reliance must be placed on uniformed officers. The most important benefit of contingency planning is that it trains planners, which is important."⁶³ Admiral Horacio Rivero, Jr., former Commander in Chief Southern Europe and Vice Chief of Naval Operations, has offered similar views: "You will learn, if you didn't know it before, that available plans are never carried out as written. They have to be modified to fit the particular circumstances at the time, and you have to do a considerable amount of improvising outside the plans. However, the previously prepared plan is

⁶³Rear Admiral J.C. Wylie, letter to author, April 13, 1988.

essential to serve as a basis for modifications and improvements, and to make sure that you haven't forgotten anything under the pressure of time."⁶⁴ The United States conducted considerable contingency planning for military action against Cuba in the year prior to the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis. Although none of the plans were executed as written, Admiral Alfred G. Ward, commander of the Quarantine Force during the crisis, argues that the planning process contributed to U.S. readiness when the Soviet missiles were discovered: "This planning stood us in good stead at the time of the Cuban confrontation later, in which President Kennedy decided to take firm action to stop this movement of equipment, of goods and supplies, into Cuba. We were as ready as any nation has ever been to win a military victory in the period of October 1962."⁶⁵

The comments offered by Admirals Wylie, Rivero and Ward reveal three reasons for the value of contingency planning. First, contingency planning educates the staff officers that prepare the plans and the commanders that review them on the characteristics of the area in which the operations will be conducted. Second, the operational and logistical problems

⁶⁴ Admiral Horacio Rivero, Jr., letter to author, March 10, 1988.

⁶⁵ Admiral Alfred G. Ward, "Reminiscences of Admiral Alfred G. Ward, U.S. Navy (Retired)," (Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, Oral History Program), p. 171. See Chapter VII for a detailed description of U.S. contingency planning prior to the Cuban Missile Crisis.

likely to be encountered are identified in the planning process, even though the proposed solutions may not be deemed appropriate for the specific crisis that arises. Third, a contingency plan provides a baseline or starting point for further planning after a crisis arises. It is almost always easier to modify an existing plan than to create a new plan from scratch, and even when a plan requires extensive modification, it usually contains much valuable information.⁶⁶ Thus, the contingency planning process itself can contribute to crisis management.

The disadvantage of contingency planning is that the existence of a plan can preclude other options that might be superior for dealing with the crisis. A perception can arise that there is not sufficient time to prepare alternative plans. Support for an existing plan can restrict the search for alternatives, or can create a bias against alternative plans that have not been staffed as well due to time constraints. The officers who prepared the original plans sometimes resist modifications to them out of pride in authorship.⁶⁷ However, officials who have had

⁶⁶ Also see Philip A. Odeen, "Organizing for National Security," International Security 5 (Summer 1980): 118; John M. Collins, U.S. Defense Planning: A Critique (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1982), pp. 11, 158-159.

⁶⁷ Ole R. Holsti, Crisis Escalation War (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1972), pp. 215, 235-237; Betts, pp. 154-156; Lebow, pp. 232-237; Cockell interview; St. Martin interview.

first-hand experience with crisis contingency planning generally agree that momentum for an existing plan and pride of authorship tend not to be serious problems if the civilian leadership insists on a range of options and on tailoring a plan that suits its objectives.⁶⁸ On balance, then, routine contingency planning is far superior to doing no planning at all, but usually cannot eliminate the need for further planning after a crisis erupts and can create pressures that hamper the tailoring of military options to meet crisis management objectives.

Summary

In summary, this section has reviewed four of the five primary mechanisms of indirect control: the alert system, standing orders, mission orders, and contingency plans. The mechanisms of indirect control relieve higher authorities of the burden of having to closely monitor the details of military operations--a burden that can quickly exceed their information processing and decisionmaking capabilities when large-scale operations are being conducted in a fast-paced political-military environment. Relieved of this burden, top-level authorities are better able to concentrate on monitoring the overall political-strategic situation, formulating and revising their strategy for dealing with the

⁶⁸ Betts, pp. 160-161; Odeen, p. 118; Cockell interview; St. Martin interview.



confrontation, and coordinating the overall execution of military operations so that they support that strategy. The mechanisms of indirect control thus aid in striking an appropriate balance between autonomy and control in the execution of military operations, and, when used properly by national leaders, can contribute to crisis management.

Thus far this discussion of the mechanisms of indirect control has focused on how they are supposed to work in principle. Neither the mechanisms themselves nor the decisionmakers that use them are perfect. Many things can go wrong in the stress and confusion of crisis military operations. More importantly, there are inherent limits on the ability of these, or any, mechanisms to ensure that decisions made at one level are those that are most appropriate for the situation at another level. For example, national leaders could give tactical orders that are disastrous for the on-scene forces, or tactical commanders could take an action that seriously disrupts the crisis management efforts of national leaders. This problem is inherent because decisionmakers at the different levels are operating in different environments. They can develop much different threat perceptions, priorities of objectives, and expectations as to the future course of the crisis. How the mechanisms of indirect control perform in practice will be examined in Chapters VII and VIII, which present the case studies.

In addition to the four mechanisms of indirect control already discussed, there is a fifth mechanism: rules of engagement. Because rules of engagement are particularly important in crisis management, they will be discussed in greater detail in the next section.

Rules of Engagement

Rules of engagement are orders issued to define the circumstances in which the U.S. armed forces are authorized to use their weapons for defense against hostile forces in peacetime, and to specify the scope and level of violence of combat operations in wartime.⁶⁹ Rules of engagement serve as a mechanism of indirect control by allowing top-level authorities to specify policies on the use of force prior to situations in which direct control of the decision to use force is not possible. As Captain J. Ashley Roach has pointed out, rules of engagement are a tool for implementing top-level decisions on the use of force at the operational level, providing a means of ensuring that "national policy will be followed in wartime or sudden emergencies which do not allow time for communications between Washington and the

⁶⁹J. Ashley Roach, "Rules of Engagement," Naval War College Review 36 (January-February 1983): 46-48. The official JCS definition is that they are "Directives issued by competent authority which delineate the circumstances and limitations under which United States forces will initiate and/or continue combat engagement with other forces encountered." See JCS Publication No. 1.

field."⁷⁰ In short, the purpose of rules of engagement is to provide guidance to operating forces from National Command Authorities, via the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the operational chain of command, on how to respond to threat of attack in peacetime, and on limitations on fighting in wartime.

Wartime rules of engagement place limits on military action when U.S. forces are engaged in an armed conflict.⁷¹ Certain military options may be deemed undesirable in wartime due to escalation control, diplomatic, and humanitarian considerations. For example, an important

⁷⁰ Ibid, p. 47. Also see Rear Admiral J.R. Hill, Maritime Strategy for Medium Powers (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1986), p. 127.

⁷¹ Roach, p. 49; U.S. Department of the Navy, The Commander's Guide to the Law of Naval Operations, Naval Warfare Publication No. 9 (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, July 1987), pp. 5-3, 5-4 (Cited hereafter as NWP 9). This publication was formerly titled Law of Naval Warfare, (Naval Warfare Information Publication 10-2). On the wartime rules of engagement used by U.S. forces during the Korean War, see Field, pp. 395-6; Malcolm W. Cagle and Frank A. Manson, The Sea War in Korea (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1957), pp. 224-5, 243-7, 445, 458; Robert F. Futrell, The United States Air Force in Korea, 1950-1963 (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pierce, 1961): 142, 208-11, 453. On the wartime rules of engagement used by U.S. forces during the Vietnam War, see U.S. Congress, Congressional Record, Vol. 121, Part 14 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1975), pp. 17551-17558. On the role of rules of engagement in the 1982 war between Britain and Argentina over the Falkland Islands, see Christopher Craig, "Fighting by the Rules," Naval War College Review 37 (May-June 1984): 23-27; Max Hastings and Simon Jenkins, The Battle for the Falklands (New York: W.W. Norton, 1983), pp. 82, 124, 137, 147-8. For a discussion of how rules of engagement change from peacetime to wartime, see Hill, pp. 127-9, 133-4, 142.

escalation control function of wartime rules of engagement is to prevent incidents with the military forces of non-belligerents. Wartime rules of engagement can also be used to prevent geographic expansion of a conflict when it is politically and diplomatically desirable to confine the fighting to a limited area (i.e., prohibitions against attacking the homeland when fighting at sea). Wartime rules of engagement allow military action under such circumstances only for self-defense--the adversary is forced to make the decision to escalate or expand the conflict.

Peacetime rules of engagement are founded on the right of self-defense as defined under international law and in U.S. Department of Defense directives.⁷² Simply put, peacetime rules of engagement prohibit U.S. military commanders from shooting first in peacetime unless

⁷²On United States policy, see NWP 9, pp. 4-1 to 4-5; U.S. Department of Defense, "DoD Law of War Program," Department of Defense Directive 5100.77, July 10, 1979; U.S. Department of the Army, Law of Land Warfare, Army Field Manual FM 27-10 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1956); U.S. Department of the Air Force, International Law--The Conduct of Armed Conflict and Air Operations, Air Force Pamphlet 110-31 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1977). Also see Lieutenant Commander Bruce Harlow, "The Legal Use of Force...Short of War," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 92 (November 1966): 88-98. On international legal principles, see Derek Bowett, "Reprisals Involving Recourse to Armed Force," American Journal of International Law 66 (January 1972): 1-36; Ian Brownlie, "The Use of Force in Self-Defense," British Year Book of International Law, 1961 (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), pp. 183-268; D.P. O'Connell, The Influence of Law on Sea Power (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1975), pp. 70-84.

absolutely necessary for self-defense. Peacetime rules of engagement are intended to prevent unwanted military incidents and support crisis management. As George Bunn has pointed out, rules of engagement are intended "to restrain aggression, prevent the outbreak of hostilities, and to limit escalation if shooting starts."⁷³ Thus, peacetime rules of engagement are central to the problem of coordinating military policy with political and diplomatic objectives in a crisis.

There are two categories of peacetime rules of engagement: standing and special. Standing rules of engagement are written for routine peacetime operations. They are in effect at all times for the forces they cover. Special rules of engagement are issued to cover particularly sensitive situations, such as operations near a country openly hostile to the U.S. and operations during an international crisis. Special rules of engagement may replace or supplement standing rules of engagement, and may be either more or less restrictive than standing rules of

⁷³George Bunn, "International Law and the Use of Force in Peacetime: Do U.S. Ships Have to Take the First Hit?" Naval War College Review 39 (May-June 1986): 69. Also see Roach, pp.46-7; Norman Friedman, "The Rules of Engagement Issue," in E.F. Guertz, et al., NATO's Maritime Strategy: Issues and Developments (Washington, DC: Pergamon-Brassey's, 1987), pp. 23-4; Jacquelin K. Davis, et al., "NATO's Maritime Defenses," in Francis J. West, Jr., et al., Naval Forces and Western Security (Washington, DC: Pergamon-Brassey's, 1986), p. 46.

engagement, depending on the political-military circumstances. Examples of special rules of engagement include the rules issued for the 1958 Marine landings in Lebanon, the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, the August 1981 freedom of navigation operations in the Gulf of Sidra, the 1983 Marine peacekeeping force in Beirut, and the 1983 invasion of Grenada.⁷⁴ A standardized format for ordering and modifying rules of engagement is used throughout the U.S. armed forces for ease and clarity when issuing special rules of engagement and modifying standing rules of engagement.⁷⁵ This system allows for ease of adapting rules of engagement to changing political-military circumstances and to specific U.S. foreign policy objectives in situations of increased tensions.

The President, as commander in chief of the armed forces, is the ultimate source of all rules of engagement. At the top of the chain of command, overall guidance on

⁷⁴ See "Department of Defense Operations During the Cuban Missile Crisis," Naval War College Review 32 (July/August 1979): 85; Admiral William H. Rowden, "Sixth Fleet Operations: June 1981 to July 1983," in James G. March and Roger Weissinger-Baylon, eds., Ambiguity and Command: Organizational Perspectives on Military Decision Making (Marchfield, MA: Pitman Publishing, 1986), pp. 271-5; Metcalf, p. 281. Navy aircraft supporting the Marines ashore in Lebanon from July to October 1958 were ordered "not to return fire" when fired on by rebel forces. See USS Essex (CVA 9), Ship's History 1958, Ships History Branch, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC.

⁷⁵ C.C. Pease, "Comment and Discussion," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 108 (June 1982): 83; Roach, pp. 51.

rules of engagement is formulated by the JCS (with the support of the Joint Staff and individual service chief staffs). Civilian authorities are involved in the formulation, review and approval of rules of engagement, although in practice the level of their involvement varies widely. Routine revisions to standing rules of engagement receive little attention from civilian officials other than the Secretary of Defense (and his aides that deal with such matters). Civilian authorities become directly involved in the formulation and review of special rules of engagement and major revisions to standing rules of engagement. The NSC interdepartmental group chaired by the Deputy National Security Advisor and composed of top deputies from the Department of State, Department of Defense, and JCS (normally the Assistant to the Chairman)--currently known as the Policy Review Group--reviews proposed rules of engagement to ensure that they support overall presidential policies. The role of this group is especially prominent in crises. The National Security Advisor reviews important revisions to rules of engagement, and submits revisions involving relaxations of restrictions to the President for approval.⁷⁶

⁷⁶NWP 9, p. 5-3; Roach, p. 51; Cockell interview; St. Martin interview; briefings for author at Navy Command Center, National Military Command Center, and National Security Council.

Rules of engagement are promulgated via the operational chain of command, with increasing specificity at each successive level--reflecting the unique strategic and tactical circumstances of individual commands. These successive additions to the rules of engagement are not intended to modify the rules of engagement, their purpose is to tailor what is usually generalized guidance to specific circumstances. Commanders in chief of the unified commands and subordinate commanders under them must submit proposed revisions to their rules of engagement via the chain of command to the Joint Chiefs of Staff for approval. All rules of engagement promulgated by commanders with authority to promulgate their own rules are submitted to the JCS, and the Joint Staff maintains an up-to-date file of them. The JCS routinely sends copies of the rules of engagement to the NSC Staff, which keeps them on file for ready reference. The NSC has an individual on the Situation Support Staff charged with maintaining the NSC rules of engagement file and serving as the in-house expert on the rules currently in effect.⁷⁷ Thus, top-level military and civilian authorities directly involved in crisis management have ready access to all rules of engagement promulgated to U.S. forces.

⁷⁷ Ibid. For an excellent description of this process in action, see Department of Defense Commission on Beirut International Airport Terrorist Act of October 23, 1983, "Report of the DOD Commission on Beirut International Airport Terrorist Act, October 23, 1983," December 20, 1983, pp. 44-51. (Cited hereafter as Beirut Commission.)

Employment of rules of engagement as a method of indirect control entails a two-stage decision process. In the first stage, the Secretary of Defense, acting on behalf of the President, formulates rules of engagement that will support national political-diplomatic objectives and policies (the President normally reviews and makes the final decision on major or particularly sensitive revisions to the rules). In the second stage, the on-scene commander (the senior officer in command of the forces at the scene of a crisis) and the tactical decisionmakers under him (commanding officers of individual units and watch officers with authority to order the use of weapons) use the rules of engagement as guidance for making operational decisions on the use of force. Rules of engagement do not require that a commander attempt to consult with higher authority before taking action in self-defense. The rules exist specifically because commanders in the field or at sea may not have the means or sufficient time to contact higher authority. The fundamental objective of rules of engagement is for the operational decisions made by tactical commanders to support national objectives and policies as well as ensuring the defense of U.S. forces.

Rules of engagement are a central element in the flexible U.S. system of direct and delegated control. Rules of engagement are an important element in the guidance provided to the on-scene commander defining the scope of

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tactical decisions he is authorized to make. Restrictive rules of engagement narrow the tactical decision-making authority of the on-scene commander, in effect imposing a greater degree of direct control on him. Permissive rules of engagement broaden his decision-making authority, in effect shifting him toward greater delegated control.

The authority to revise rules of engagement is itself an important issue in the balance between direct and delegated control. Reserving authority to revise rules of engagement to top-level authorities can have the same negative impact as attempting direct control of operations, while delegating authority to revise rules of engagement to lower levels can raise the same problems of coordinating national policies as delegated control. Commanders in the chain of command, including the on-scene commander, usually have limited authority to revise the rules of engagement, when such revisions do not result in a significant relaxation of the rules. Authority to make broader revisions to the rules of engagement, particularly to issue significantly more permissive rules, is reserved for top-level authorities. Rules of engagement are thus affected by the same tension between delegation and control that affects all other aspects of command and control.

Guidance from other sources of operational guidance is often incorrectly attributed to rules of engagement. For example, there is an important distinction between rules of



engagement, which govern how to handle to potentially hostile forces, and measures to avoid mutual interference, which govern how to avoid engagements with friendly forces (these come under the category of standing orders as a mechanism of indirect control). The two categories overlap in that both address requirements for identifying unidentified contacts. At times during the evolution of rules of engagement, particularly during the Vietnam War (when fighter pilots were required to visually identify air targets in order to avoid firing on other U.S. planes), measures to avoid mutual interference were included in the rules, but this has subsequently been corrected. In some warfare environments, such as in NATO, where friendly forces from several countries may operate in the same battle area, measures to avoid mutual interference are particularly important, even overshadowing rules of engagement. However, measures to avoid mutual interference do not have a significant role in crisis management, so will not be discussed further.

The remainder of this discussion will focus on peacetime rules of engagement. Although wartime rules of engagement are of great importance, particularly in the study of limited war, they raise a different set of issues than those of interest in crisis management. The topics that will be examined are the reasons why rules of engagement are needed, the history of rules of engagement,



the nature of peacetime naval rules of engagement, how the decision to use force is made by an operational commander, the impact of political-military context on decisions to use force, the problem of rules of engagement being misinterpreted, and the coordination of rules of engagement among allies.⁷⁸

The Need for Rules of Engagement

Rules of engagement are necessary for five reasons. First, and foremost, commanders in the field or at sea may not have the means or sufficient time to contact higher authority. The speed of modern warfare causes the tactical situation to change much faster than it can be explained to higher authority, and the destructiveness of modern weapons can make decisionmaking delays fatal. Rules of engagement are a form of contingent response: action, in this case use of force, can only be taken under specified conditions. Initiatory actions, such as retaliatory attacks or

⁷⁸This discussion of peacetime rules of engagement is applicable to all of the U.S. armed forces. The basic principles and concepts presented in the section on peacetime naval rules of engagement are also applicable to the other services, although the focus is on how they apply to naval forces. Rules of engagement affect the day-to-day operations of the Navy and Air Force much more than those of the Army. This is because national borders tend to keep ground forces separated, but U.S. ships on the high seas and planes in international airspace are frequently in close proximity to those of potential adversaries. Differences in the three services' rules of engagement are primarily due to differences in their command structures and warfare environments, rather than differences in basic principles.

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records.

It is essential to ensure that all data is properly documented and stored.

This process involves regular audits and updates to the database.

The second section focuses on the challenges of data integration.

Combining data from different sources can be a complex task.

It requires careful planning and coordination between various departments.

Finally, the document addresses the need for data security.

Protecting sensitive information is a top priority for the organization.

Implementing robust security measures is crucial for maintaining trust.

The document concludes by emphasizing the value of data in decision-making.

By leveraging data effectively, the organization can gain a competitive edge.

Continuous monitoring and improvement are necessary for long-term success.

The following table provides a summary of the key findings.

Overall, the data indicates a positive trend in performance metrics.

There is a significant increase in customer satisfaction scores.

The implementation of the new system has resulted in higher efficiency.

However, there are still areas for improvement, particularly in data accuracy.

The organization should continue to invest in data management tools.

Regular training for staff is also essential to ensure data integrity.

The document is intended to provide a comprehensive overview of the current state.

It serves as a guide for future strategic planning and implementation.

The information presented here is based on the most recent data available.

For more detailed information, please refer to the full report.

The data was collected from various sources and analyzed using advanced techniques.

The results are subject to change as more data is gathered and analyzed.

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pre-emption in the absence of an imminent threat, are excluded. Thus, rules of engagement do not require that a commander attempt to consult with higher authority before taking action in self-defense.

The second reason why rules of engagement are necessary is that the lethality of modern weapons--particularly the anti-ship cruise missile--makes it exceedingly dangerous to take the first hit.⁷⁹ U.S. Navy ships and aircraft are generally authorized to take defensive action upon clear demonstration of hostile intent.⁸⁰ United States Navy Regulations, 1973 state that "The right of self-defense may arise in order to counter either the use of force or an immediate threat of the use of force."⁸¹ In especially volatile situations, a clear demonstration of hostile intent may be limited to actual use of weapons by the adversary. This can lead to what Rear Admiral Hill calls the "concept of initial casualty": "This is to say that it may be necessary, in the opening rules of engagement, to accept the risk of a casualty before the relaxations necessary to allow prudent self-defense can be made."⁸² Occasionally, the rules of engagement may prohibit use of force even when

⁷⁹Friedman, pp. 32-3; O'Connell, pp. 81-2.

⁸⁰Roach, pp. 49-50; Bunn, p. 69.

⁸¹United States Navy Regulations, 1973, p. 38. Also see NWP 9, p. 4-4.

⁸²Hill, p. 128. Also see O'Connell, pp. 82-4.

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fired upon, as was the case for Navy aircraft over Lebanon in 1958.⁸³ A primary function of rules of engagement is thus to define the actions and indicators that are to be used to determine that hostile intent is being demonstrated.

The third reason why rules of engagement are necessary is that not all nations that are potentially hostile to the U.S. present the same level of military threat to U.S. forces. U.S. forces legitimately need great leeway toward certain openly hostile and militarily unpredictable countries, particularly when they have attacked U.S. forces in the past. On the other hand, the U.S. has evolved fairly stable, tacit "rules of the game" in its military relationships with other countries, particularly the Soviet Union.⁸⁴ With such countries the threat is more predictable and greater care can be taken to avoid inadvertent incidents without unnecessarily risking U.S. forces. The interaction

⁸³USS Essex Ship's History.

⁸⁴On the concept of "rules of the game" in Soviet-American relations, see James N. McConnell, "The 'Rules of the Game': A Theory on the Practice of Superpower Naval Diplomacy," in Bradford Dismukes and James McConnell, eds., Soviet Naval Diplomacy (New York: Pergamon, 1979), pp. 240-280; Robert Legvold, "The Super-Rivals: Conflict in the Third World," Foreign Affairs 57 (Spring 1979): 755-778; Raymond Cohen, International Politics: The Rules of the Game (London: Longman, 1981); Joanne Gowa and Nils H. Wessel, Ground Rules: Soviet and American Involvement in Regional Conflicts (Philadelphia: Foreign Policy research Institute, 1982); and Neil Matheson, The 'Rules of the Game' of Superpower Military Intervention in the Third World, 1975-1980 (Washington, DC: University Press of America, 1982), pp. 99-117.

of U.S. and Soviet naval forces is also regulated by the international "rules of the road" governing the safe navigation of ships at sea, supplemented by the Soviet-American Agreement on the Prevention of Incidents On and Over the High Seas signed in 1972. The rules of engagement reflect this wide range in the stability and predictability potential military threats, providing more permissive rules when the danger is greater and more restrictive rules when interactions are better regulated.

The fourth reason why rules of engagement are necessary is to ensure that in responding to a hostile act or hostile intent, U.S. forces adhere to the international legal principles of proportional force and minimum force. The principle of proportional force requires that the force used in self-defense be proportional to the force used in the hostile act or threatened when hostile intent was shown. The principle of minimum force requires that the level of force used in response to a hostile act or hostile intent be limited to the minimum necessary to prevent the threat of further attack.⁸⁵ Rules of engagement provide guidance on the types of defensive actions that are authorized under various circumstances.

The fifth reason why rules of engagement are necessary is that U.S. forces can be tasked by the President to defend

⁸⁵Bunn, pp. 73-74; O'Connell, p. 171; Roach, p. 50.



civilian U.S. vessels and U.S. citizens ashore overseas, the military forces and civilian vessels of allies and friendly nations, and the territory of allies or friendly nations. Rules of engagement are used to spell out when defensive action may be taken in such circumstances.⁸⁶

History of Rules of Engagement

The United States Navy has had almost two centuries of experience with political limitations on the use of force due to its role as an implement of foreign policy in the nineteenth century. For example, when Commodore Matthew C. Perry was dispatched to negotiate a commerce treaty with Japan in 1853, the Secretary of State warned: "He will bear in mind that, as the President has no power to declare war, his mission is necessarily of a pacific character, and will not resort to force unless in self-defense in the protection of the vessels and crews under his command, or to resent an act of personal violence offered to himself or to one of his officers."⁸⁷ Provisions similar to this were not uncommon in the sailing orders given to American captains before they departed for distant stations.

⁸⁶Bunn, p. 69.

⁸⁷Quoted in Commander Dennis R. Neutze, "Bluejacket Diplomacy: A Juridical Examination of the Use of Naval Forces in Support of United States Foreign Policy," JAG Journal 32 (Summer 1982): 111.



Prior to World War II, there was little need for rules of engagement other than for Navy ships on diplomatic missions. The United States was far removed from potential enemies and its forces were rarely in contact with those of potential adversaries. All this changed with the advent of long-range aircraft and the growth of American global security commitments. As the Cold War with the Soviet Union intensified, confrontations between the superpowers became more frequent and dangerous. This was starkly apparent in the 1948 Berlin crisis, when Soviet closing of ground access to the city and harassment of supply flights threatened to cause armed clashes. In the late 1940s the Soviets began shooting down American aircraft patrolling the periphery of Soviet airspace, and there were air battles between American and Soviet planes during the Korean War.⁸⁸ There thus arose a need for guidance on the use of force in peacetime.

⁸⁸ On the 1948 Berlin Crisis, see Lucius D. Clay, Decision in Germany (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1950); W. Phillips Davison, The Berlin Blockade (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958); Frank Howley, Berlin Command (New York: Punam's, 1950). There were two serious incidents between American and Soviet aircraft during the Korean War, both involving Soviet planes threatening U.S. Navy ships, as well as several other lesser incidents. See Cagle and Manson, pp. 469-74; Field, pp. 167-9, 440-1; Futrell, pp. 142, 567. The first incident in which a Soviet fighter attacked an American plane off the Soviet coast occurred on October 15, 1945, less than two months after Japan surrendered. Between 1945 and 1950 there were at least nine instances of Soviet or Warsaw Pact fighters attacking American or British planes. See Office of the Chief of Naval Operations (OP-09B91R4), "Soviet Attacks on Western Planes," memorandum dated July 15, 1960 (Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC).

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In 1950 President Truman approved a comprehensive policy statement on interception of aircraft in United States airspace, the first such policy issued since the end of World War II. This initial guidance was later assessed to be overly restrictive, and was replaced by a revised interception policy in 1952. Although the term rules of engagement per se had not yet officially entered the military vocabulary, these two presidential directives constitute the origins of United States rules of engagement.

The U.S. Air Force was the first service to begin using the term rules of engagement to describe intercept and engagement policy, and in the fall of 1952 began using the term in the joint planning arena. In 1958 the Joint Chiefs of Staff officially adopted the term rules of engagement and defined them as "that body of authoritative law, instructions, policies, directives, measures, plans or decisions which authorize, restrict or describe the circumstances under which, and at times the means with which, U.S. forces will or may initially engage enemy forces and the extent to which the engagement will be carried."⁸⁹ The unified commands shifted over to the new term at about the same time. The Navy, which had long used the term "measures for self-preservation in peacetime" to describe the same idea, was slow to convert to the term rules of

⁸⁹ See JCS Publication No. 1.

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that every entry should be supported by a valid receipt or invoice. This ensures transparency and allows for easy verification of the data.

In the second section, the author outlines the various methods used to collect and analyze the data. This includes both primary and secondary data collection techniques. The analysis focuses on identifying trends and patterns over time, which is crucial for making informed decisions.

The third part of the report details the results of the study. It shows that there has been a significant increase in sales volume over the past year, particularly in the online market. This is attributed to several factors, including improved marketing strategies and a more user-friendly website.

Finally, the document concludes with a series of recommendations for future actions. It suggests that the company should continue to invest in digital marketing and explore new product lines to further expand its market reach. Regular monitoring of key performance indicators is also advised to ensure ongoing success.

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engagement. In fact, the term was not widely used in the fleet until the Vietnam War, when rules of engagement became a major factor in shaping combat operations.

All of the major concepts upon which United States rules of engagement are based were adopted during the 1950s. The Air Force first proposed allowing the use of force against aircraft "manifestly hostile in intent" in 1953, leading to adoption of the principle of anticipatory self-defense on the basis of hostile intent. The Navy adopted this principle in 1958, allowing anticipatory self-defense when there was "clear and present danger to the security of the U.S. or its forces."⁹⁰ Although this provision was adopted in 1958, it was not a significant factor in U.S. Navy operations until the late 1960s, when the Soviet navy began deploying anti-ship cruise missiles in large numbers.

In 1955 the National Security Council proposed and President Eisenhower approved two of the key provisions in U.S. rules of engagement: the doctrine of hot pursuit and the distinction between hot pursuit and punitive reprisals. Under the doctrine of hot pursuit, U.S. forces could pursue

⁹⁰Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, "Protective Measures to be Taken in Applying the Right of Self-Preservation in Peacetime," OPNAVINST 03300.8, February 21, 1958; NWP 9, p. 4-4. On the legal basis for anticipatory self-defense, see John R. Henriksen, "International Claims to Anticipatory Self-Defense: A Juridical Analysis," (Masters Thesis, National Law Center, George Washington University, Washington, DC, 1981), pp. 2-24.



a hostile force out of the area in which they were allowed to intercept in order to prevent that force from posing a further threat. Under certain circumstances, hot pursuit could even be carried into the airspace of another country. Punitive reprisals, on the other hand, could only be authorized by the President. Reprisals include attacks against the territory of the country whose forces had attacked U.S. forces, and attacks against forces of that country that were not directly involved in the attack and which were not an immediate threat to U.S. forces.⁹¹ That these important concepts originated in the National Security Council illustrates that civilian authorities have long had a direct role in shaping rules of engagement.

The next significant changes in the rules of engagement took place during the Vietnam War. The rules of engagement became detailed, complex, and cumbersome, requiring positive identification of targets on the basis of features that were exceedingly difficult to discern in combat. The rules of engagement for the air war over North Vietnam were viewed by military commanders as seriously and unnecessarily endangering the lives of American pilots. Military dissatisfaction with what was widely viewed as civilian "micro-management" of the war led to rules of engagement

⁹¹On hot pursuit and reprisals, see Roach, pp. 50-1; O'Connell, p. 176; Gallery, p. 25; Thomas C. Schelling, Arms and Influence (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1966), pp. 168-70.

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gaining a bad reputation among some officers who fought in Vietnam.⁹²

During the 1960s and 1970s the scope and complexity of U.S. rules of engagement grew as more sophisticated weapons and electronic systems entered the U.S. and Soviet inventories. The complexity of rules of engagement reflect the complexity of the warfare environment--the more ways in which an adversary can threaten one's forces and the more ways in which one's forces can counter those threats, the greater the number of contingencies that have to be covered by rules of engagement. There were two major reviews of U.S. rules of engagement in the 1970s. The first was in 1973-1975, and entailed deletion of the cumbersome and confusing Vietnam War provisions from the rules as the U.S. withdrew from the war. The second was in 1979-1981, and entailed standardization of the format of the rules among the major commands and expansion of the tactical options for dealing with threats. The 1979-1981 review produced the most significant changes to U.S. rules of engagement since the system of rules originated in the early 1950s. The result was reformulation of the rules of engagement to include a wide range of tactical options that allow rapid

⁹²For a critique of Vietnam rules of engagement, see W. Hays Parks, "Conventional Aerial Bombing and the Law of War," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 108 (May 1982): 98-117; Admiral U.S.G. Sharp, Strategy for Defeat: Vietnam in Retrospect (San Rafael, CA: Presidio Press, 1978); O'Connell, pp. 176-7; Momyer, pp. 133-5, 176-7, 338-9.

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that every entry should be supported by a valid receipt or invoice. This ensures transparency and allows for easy verification of the data. The second part of the document provides a detailed breakdown of the financial data, including a list of all items purchased and their respective costs. This information is presented in a clear and concise manner, making it easy to understand. The final part of the document summarizes the total amount spent and provides a comparison to the budget. This helps to identify any areas where the budget was exceeded and provides a basis for future planning. Overall, the document provides a comprehensive overview of the financial data and is a valuable tool for anyone responsible for managing a budget.

and precise tailoring of the rules to meet the political objectives of U.S. leaders while allowing on-scene commanders freedom of action.⁹³

Another major review of U.S. rules of engagement was conducted during the mid-1980s, partially in response to the Long Commission's finding that poorly written rules of engagement had contributed to the 1983 disaster at Beirut International Airport. In this review serious attention was devoted to ways in which the rules could better meet the needs of U.S. leaders without creating excessive risks for U.S. forces at the scene of a crisis.⁹⁴ No conceptual breakthroughs were made in that review, but the effort appears to have been worthwhile for educating civilian and military authorities as to each other's needs.

Peacetime Naval Rules of Engagement

United States Navy ships and aircraft have an inherent right of self-defense under international law--they may use their weapons to defend themselves if a hostile act of violence is committed against them.⁹⁵ The commanding

⁹³Pease, p. 83; Roach, p. 51; W. Hays Parks, "Crossing the Line," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 112 (November 1986): 43.

⁹⁴Cockell interview; Beirut Commission, pp. 44-51.

⁹⁵See "DoD Law of War Program," (DoD Directive 5100.77); United States Navy Regulations, 1973, p. 38; and Commander's Guide (NWP 9). Also see Bunn, 69; Burdick H. Brittin, International Law for Seagoing Officers, Fifth

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions and activities. It emphasizes the need for transparency and accountability in financial reporting. The second part details the various methods used to collect and analyze data, including surveys, interviews, and focus groups. The third part presents the findings of the study, highlighting key trends and insights. The final part concludes with recommendations for future research and practical applications of the findings.

The study was conducted over a period of six months, involving a team of researchers from various disciplines. The data collected was extensive, covering a wide range of subjects and locations. The analysis was thorough, taking into account both quantitative and qualitative factors. The results of the study are presented in a clear and concise manner, making it easy for readers to understand the findings. The conclusions drawn from the study are based on a solid foundation of evidence and are supported by statistical analysis. The recommendations provided are practical and actionable, offering valuable insights for stakeholders in the field.

The document is organized into several sections, each focusing on a specific aspect of the study. The first section provides an overview of the research objectives and the scope of the study. The second section describes the methodology used, including the selection of participants and the data collection process. The third section presents the results of the study, with a focus on the most significant findings. The fourth section discusses the implications of these findings and offers suggestions for further research. The final section provides a summary of the study and its contributions to the field.

The study has several strengths, including a large and diverse sample size, a rigorous data collection process, and a comprehensive analysis of the data. However, there are also some limitations to the study, such as the potential for bias in the selection of participants and the reliance on self-reported data. Despite these limitations, the study provides a valuable contribution to the understanding of the subject matter. The findings are particularly relevant for those interested in the role of data in decision-making and the importance of accurate record-keeping.

The document is a well-written and informative piece of research. It provides a clear and detailed account of the study, from the initial objectives to the final conclusions. The use of clear language and logical organization makes it easy to follow the progression of the study. The findings are presented in a way that is both accessible and compelling, making it a valuable resource for anyone interested in the subject. The recommendations provided are practical and based on a solid understanding of the data, offering a clear path forward for future research and practice.

officer of a U.S. Navy ship cannot claim that the rules of engagement prohibited him from taking defensive action, for he always has the right and obligation to defend his ship against attack.⁹⁶

The right of self-defense and the conditions under which a commanding officer may use force are defined in United States Navy Regulations. The 1948 edition stated the following:

1. The use of force by United States naval personnel against a friendly foreign state, or against anyone within the territory thereof, is illegal.
2. The right of self-preservation, however, is a right which belongs to states as well as to individuals, and in the case of states it includes the protection of the state, its honor, and its possessions, and the lives and property of its citizens against arbitrary violence, actual or impending, whereby the state or its citizens may suffer irreparable injury. The conditions calling for the application of the right of self-preservation cannot be defined beforehand, but must be left to the sound judgement or responsible officers, who are to perform their duties in this respect with all possible care and forbearance. In no case shall force be exercised in time of peace otherwise than as an application of the right of self-preservation as above defined. It must be used only as a last resort, and then only to the extent which is absolutely necessary to accomplish the end required. It can never be exercised with a view to inflicting punishment for acts already committed.⁹⁷

The term "friendly foreign state" in the first paragraph was interpreted as meaning any country with which the United

Edition (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1986), pp. 143-144; O'Connell, pp. 53-55, 175.

⁹⁶Roach, p. 49.

⁹⁷United States Navy Regulations, 1948, p. 73.

1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that this is crucial for the company's financial health and for providing reliable information to stakeholders. The text also mentions the need for regular audits and the role of the accounting department in ensuring compliance with relevant laws and regulations.

2. The second part of the document details the company's financial performance over the past year. It includes a summary of the income statement, balance sheet, and cash flow statement. The text highlights the company's strong growth and profitability, as well as its ability to manage its debt and maintain a healthy cash position. It also discusses the company's investment in research and development, which is expected to drive future growth.

3. The third part of the document outlines the company's strategic plan for the next five years. It includes a discussion of the company's market position, its competitive advantages, and its growth strategy. The text also mentions the company's commitment to sustainability and social responsibility, and its plans to invest in new technologies and talent. The document concludes with a statement of confidence in the company's future success.

States was not in a declared state of war. Note that this article allows use of force to protect American citizens and their property when "irreparable injury" is threatened. This was the guidance (amplified by applicable rules of engagement) governing the use of force by U.S. Navy commanding officers from 1948 to 1973.

The 1973 edition of Navy Regulations revised the wording of this article, but left its intent unchanged:

1. The use of force in time of peace by United States naval personnel against another nation or against anyone within the territories thereof is illegal except as an act of self-defense. The right of self-defense may arise in order to counter the use of force or an immediate threat of the use of force.

2. The conditions calling for the application of the right of self-defense cannot be precisely defined beforehand, but must be left to the sound judgement of naval personnel who are to perform their duties in this respect with all possible care and forbearance. the right of self-defense must be exercised only as a last resort, and then only to the extent which is absolutely necessary to accomplish the end required.

3. Force must never be used with a view to inflicting punishment for acts already committed.⁹⁸

The primary difference between the two editions is that the 1973 edition adds the principle of anticipatory defense, allowing use of force to counter an "immediate threat."

Emphasis in Navy Regulations is on caution and restraint. Rules of engagement typically take a similar tone, warning that decisions on the use of force must be "tempered with judgement and discretion." The right of self-defense is recognized in all Department of Defense

⁹⁸ United States Navy Regulations, 1973, p. 38.



directives related to the law of war and rules of engagement. For example, as Roach points out, rules of engagement always contain a statement to the effect that "Nothing in these rules shall be construed as precluding a commander from using all means at his disposal to exercise the inherent right and responsibility to conduct operations for self-defense of his forces."⁹⁹

Two terms used in rules of engagement are important for understanding the application of the right of self-defense in practice: hostile act and hostile intent. A hostile act is actual use of force--employment of weapons--against a Navy ship. Use of force is always authorized for self-defense when a hostile act is committed. Hostile intent is clear indication that a hostile act is imminent. Demonstration of hostile intent activates the principle of anticipatory self-defense, which authorizes first use of weapons for self-defense when attack is clearly imminent.¹⁰⁰

The 1981 U.S. Navy confrontation with Libyan forces in the Gulf of Sidra illustrate these rules of engagement provisions in action. On August 18, 1981, a Sixth Fleet battle force built around the carriers USS Forrestal (CV 59) and USS Nimitz (CVN 68) commenced a freedom of navigation exercise in the Gulf of Sidra, on orders from the President,

⁹⁹Roach, p. 49. Also see Parks, "Crossing the Line," p. 43.

¹⁰⁰Bunn, pp. 73-75; O'Connell, pp. 70-71; Roach, p. 50.



to demonstrate United States rejection of Libyan claims of sovereignty over the gulf. The battle force commander, Rear Admiral James E. Service, was dispatched to Washington to brief the JCS and the National Security Council on Navy plans for the operation, including the rules of engagement.¹⁰¹ The Commander of the Sixth Fleet at the time, Vice Admiral William H. Rowden, described the rules of engagement for the operation: "These rules provided for the right of self-defense; specifically, if fired upon, we had the right, indeed the obligation, to meet force with force. Execution of these rules provided that if we were to fire at any enemy target in self-defense, we intended to hit that target."¹⁰² It was with these rules that the battle force entered the Gulf of Sidra.

Libyan aircraft flew more than 130 sorties against the U.S. ships the first day, but none of the Libyan planes were engaged because they did not fire any weapons against U.S. forces. The next day, however, during an intercept of two Libyan Su-22 Fitters by two U.S. Navy F-14s, one of the Libyan planes fired an air-to-air missile at the Navy jets. This action was met the definition of "hostile act," and

¹⁰¹Dennis R. Neutze, "The Gulf of Sidra Incident: A Legal Perspective," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 108 (January 1982): 28-30; Rowden, p. 270; Hayward, p. 260; Parks, "Crossing the Line," pp. 43-4.

¹⁰²Rowden, p. 271.



the F-14s shot down both Libyan planes.¹⁰³ Admiral Rowden has pointed out an important lesson from this episode:

At the same time the shoot-down occurred, two other intercepts were in progress. All flight leaders were able to monitor the engagement on their radios, but no one else sought to engage the Libyans with whom they were in contact because, beyond the local F-14/Fitter incident, there had been no provocation. The rules of engagement called only for engagement in self-defense, where firing had actually occurred. This Libyan incident demonstrates the superb discipline of our naval aviators, even when the adrenaline is flowing in a crisis situation, and also refutes the notion that we are "trigger-happy gunmen" on the lookout to start an incident.¹⁰⁴

Similar restraint was shown by the battle force commander:

At the time of this attack, ten other Libyan fighters were in or near the exercise area. Each gave clear indications of hostile intent, as did a Libyan Osa missile patrol boat within the exercise area. . . Although his rules of engagement authorized him to fire, the task force commander elected not to do so. Just as damage to or loss of any part of the task force would be translated into a Libyan victory, it is likely that Gadhafi would have turned the loss of a missile patrol boat and a dozen fighters into a "victory" by a martyred David against a bullying Goliath. The commander's response was proportionate to the immediate threat. His judicious application of force suggests the nature of rules of engagement implementation in peacetime: however carefully articulated, and notwithstanding international legal rights of self-defense and a clear designation of authority, there is no substitute for the training, experience, and judgement of the on-scene commander.¹⁰⁵

The 1981 episode thus illustrates the manner in which rules of engagement govern U.S. Navy operations in highly tense

¹⁰³ Neutze, pp. 26-7; Parks, "Crossing the Line," p. 44.

¹⁰⁴ Rowden, pp. 271-2.

¹⁰⁵ Parks, "Crossing the Line," p. 43.



and volatile situations. When U.S. units needed to use force in self-defense, they had authority to do so. The on-scene commander adhered to the spirit of the rules, which is to use the minimum amount of force necessary for self-defense, rather than to the letter of the rules, which authorized much greater force than was actually employed.

Rules of engagement do not always function as effectively as they did in the Gulf of Sidra in 1981. Norman Friedman and other analysts have noted that there is an inherent tension between excessively tight rules that invite military disaster and excessively loose rules that allow excessively aggressive behavior.¹⁰⁶ Expanding on that idea, rules of engagement can fail in one of two modes: vulnerability failure or escalatory failure. A vulnerability failure is caused by rules of engagement that are excessively restrictive, ambiguous, or complex and confusing. In a vulnerability failure the on-scene commander is unable to take effective action in self-defense, resulting in a successful attacks on his forces that otherwise could have been defeated. An escalatory

¹⁰⁶Friedman, pp. 23-24. Also see Davis, et al., p. 46, who describe the two failures as "military disaster brought about by excessively tight rules, and political catastrophe caused by excessive looseness in the rules." There are three problems with this approach: the military disaster type of failure can have serious adverse political consequences, the political catastrophe type of failure can result in serious military losses, and both types of failure can be caused by excessive ambiguity or complexity in the rules, as well as by excessive tightness or looseness.



failure is caused by rules of engagement that are excessively permissive, ambiguous, complex, or confusing. In an escalatory failure the on-scene commander uses excessive force on grounds of self-defense, causing escalation of the scope or intensity of violence beyond that viewed as desirable by national leaders. Both failure modes have political as well as military consequences, and both can result from rules of engagement that are excessively ambiguous, or complex and confusing.

The deaths of 241 U.S. Marines in a suicide truck bombing of their quarters at Beirut International Airport (BIA) on October 23, 1983 is an example of a rules of engagement failure. It was a vulnerability failure caused by rules of engagement that were excessively ambiguous and restrictive. Responding to guidance from higher authority (originating initially in Washington) that emphasized the high-visibility, non-combat role of the Marines as part of the Multi-National Force, the on-scene commander issued two sets of rules of engagement: permissive rules for Marines guarding the temporary American Embassy (the original embassy had been destroyed by a suicide bomber in September, hence the permissive rules), and restrictive rules for Marines at the airport.

The commission that investigated the disaster concluded that poorly written rules of engagement were a major factor in the disastrous airport bombing. Updating of the rules of



engagement lagged behind the escalation of the threat to the Marines as Lebanese perceptions of the U.S. role in Lebanon shifted from supportive to hostile. Restrictive rules of engagement and the emphasis on their high-visibility, non-combat role created what the Long Commission described as a lax "mind-set" among the Marines at the airport: "In short, the Commission believes the Marines at BIA were conditioned by their rules of engagement to respond less aggressively to unusual vehicular or pedestrian activity at their perimeter than were those Marines posted at the Embassy locations."¹⁰⁷ Consequently, the Marines at the airport were unprepared to counter the suicide truck bomb attack that destroyed their quarters.

In addition to the two rules of engagement provisions described above--a hostile act activating the right of self-defense and hostile intent activating the right of anticipatory self-defense--there is a third provision somewhat broader in scope. Certain designated operational commanders have the authority to declare a force hostile when it presents a "continuing threat of use of force."¹⁰⁸ When a force is declared hostile it can be attacked without

¹⁰⁷ Beirut Commission, pp. 50-51. Nearly three decades earlier, Colonel Hadd, initial commander of the Marine landing force in Lebanon in 1958, had pointed out the critical importance of staying abreast of a rapidly changing local political environment. See Hadd, p. 86.

¹⁰⁸ Roach, p. 50. Also see Parks, "Crossing the Line," p. 43.

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further need to determine hostile intent--additional specific hostile acts or instances of hostile intent are not required to take defensive action. The criteria for declaring a force hostile are quite strict and the authority to declare a force hostile is reserved for senior operational commanders. Thus, this is not a provision that can be used to circumvent the intent of the incident-specific rules. Rather, it is a provision that provides additional tactical flexibility in circumstances of immediate, continuing danger to U.S. Navy ships.

In June 1967, the Commander of the Sixth Fleet, Vice Admiral William I. Martin, used his authority to declare a force hostile in response to reports from USS Liberty that she was under attack by unidentified planes and torpedo boats. After ordering the two U.S. carriers in the Mediterranean to launch eight attack aircraft with fighter escort to defend Liberty, he sent the following guidance to the carriers:

1. IAW [In accordance with] CINCUSNAVEUR [Commander in Chief U.S. Naval Forces Europe] INST [Instruction] P03120.5B forces attacking Liberty are declared hostile.
2. You are authorized to use force including destruction as necessary to control the situation. Do not use more force than required. Do not pursue any unit toward land for reprisal purposes. Purpose of counterattack is to protect Liberty only.
3. Brief all pilots [on the] contents [of] this msg [message].
4. In addition brief pilots that Egyptian territorial limit [is] only 12 miles and Liberty [is] right on

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edge. Do not fly between Liberty and shoreline except as required to carry out provisions [of] para [paragraph] 2 above. Brief fighter cover that any attacks on attack aircraft, Liberty, or they themselves is hostile¹⁰⁹ act and para [paragraph] two above applies.

In a separate message the Sixth Fleet Commander emphasized "Ensure pilots do not repeat do not fly over land."¹¹⁰

This episode illustrates three points. First, it shows a fleet commander exercising his authority to declare an unknown force attacking a U.S. Navy ship to be hostile. The pilots sent to defend Liberty were not required to make further judgements concerning hostile intent or the identity of the attackers. Second, it shows a commander exercising prudence by imposing limits on the planes--to not fly over land and to avoid Egyptian airspace--in order to avoid incidents that could escalate the confrontation and have political repercussions. Third, it shows a commander upholding the distinction between self-defense and reprisals. The planes could engage any force threatening Liberty, but were not permitted to pursue attackers in retaliation. Thus, in this instance the rules of engagement provided the on-scene commander with sufficient freedom of

¹⁰⁹ Commander Sixth Fleet message, COMSIXTHFLT 081339Z JUN 1967, June 8, 1967 (Declassified 1979. Liberty incident file, Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC).

¹¹⁰ Commander Sixth Fleet message, COMSIXTHFLT 081336Z JUN 1967, June 8, 1967 (Unclassified. Liberty incident file, Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC).



action to exercise initiative in an emergency, but imposed constraints designed to prevent escalation of incidents.

U.S. Navy operational units receive training on standing rules of engagement on a routine basis and intense training in special rules of engagement before commencing operations under those rules of engagement. This training is scenario-based, requiring commanding officers and watch officers to demonstrate their ability to interpret and apply the rules of engagement in various situations. Additionally, the training includes exercises in which rules of engagement situations are simulated, using U.S. Navy units to portray hostile forces, in order to provide a more realistic perspective on how threatening situations develop. The training recognizes that not every possible situation calling for a decision on the use of force can be anticipated, the purpose is to develop the skills of tactical decisionmakers at interpreting the rules of engagement in unfamiliar circumstances. Thus, rules of engagement are not an obscure document that must be hurriedly retrieved from a safe and dusted off when threat of attack becomes imminent. Rather, rules of engagement are an ever-present element in Navy tactical training.

The Decision to Use Force

The on-scene commander or a tactical decision-maker controlling a ship's weapons must make two determinations

when making the decision to use force in self-defense. He must first determine whether or not the use of force is authorized under the specific circumstances he faces. Authorization to use force is a function of three factors: the national identity of the threatening unit, the national identity of the threatened target, and the existence of hostile intent. Having determined that use of force is authorized, he must then determine the type of defensive response authorized under the circumstances. These four factors--identity of threatening unit, identity of target, existence of hostile intent, and appropriate defensive response--are the fundamental elements of rules of engagement.

Identity of threatening force. When a threatening force has committed a hostile act--firing weapons at a U.S. ship or plane--there is no requirement that the identity of the national attacker be established prior to using force in self-defense. However, the situation is more complex when a determination of hostile intent must be made. U.S. rules of engagement do not necessarily treat the forces of all potentially hostile nations as being equally threatening. Special rules of engagement, in particular, can specify additional precautions against the forces of a nation perceived as posing a threat to U.S. forces, while leaving the provisions of standing rules of engagement in place for the forces of other nations, or even requiring additional

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that every entry should be supported by a valid receipt or invoice. The text also mentions the need for regular audits to ensure the integrity of the financial data. Furthermore, it highlights the role of the accounting department in providing timely and accurate information to management for decision-making purposes. The document concludes this section by stating that adherence to these principles is essential for the long-term success of the organization.

The second part of the document outlines the specific procedures for handling cash and credit transactions. It details the steps involved in issuing checks, processing payments, and reconciling bank statements. The text also addresses the handling of customer accounts and the collection of overdue payments. Additionally, it discusses the importance of maintaining proper documentation for all financial activities. The document concludes this section by reiterating the commitment to transparency and accountability in all financial operations.

The final part of the document provides a summary of the key points discussed and offers recommendations for future improvements. It suggests implementing more robust internal controls and investing in advanced accounting software to enhance efficiency and accuracy. The document ends with a statement of confidence in the team's ability to continue to meet the organization's financial goals.

measures to avoid incidents with them. A second, and equally important, consideration is to avoid firing on unarmed civilian vessels and aircraft operating in the vicinity of hostilities. For these two reasons rules of engagement often require identification of potentially threatening ships and aircraft prior to use of force in anticipatory self-defense.¹¹¹

Soviet ships and aircraft, for example, routinely approach close to U.S. Navy vessels at sea with little reaction. The intentions and behavior of Soviet ships and aircraft are well-known, and under normal peacetime conditions they are not an immediate threat to U.S. forces. On the other hand, Iranian planes or warships attempting to approach U.S. Navy ships operating in the Persian Gulf are warned to remain clear, and then fired on if they continue to close.¹¹² This reflects Iranian hostility toward the

¹¹¹Davis, et al., p. 47; Friedman, pp. 39-41.

¹¹²On U.S. rules of engagement in the Persian Gulf, see "U.S. Confirms Naval Incidents in Strait of Hormuz," New York Times, February 29, 1984, p. A7; U.S. Congress, House of Representatives, Committee on Armed Services, "Report on the Staff Investigation into the Iraqi Attack on the USS Stark," June 14, 1987, pp. 4-6; "U.S. Helicopters Fire on Iranian Ship," Los Angeles Times, September 22, 1987, p. 1; "U.S. Navy Scares Off Iran's Boats in Gulf," San Jose Mercury News, October 4, 1987, p. 1A; "Stark's Captain 'Failed Fundamentally'," San Jose Mercury News, October 16, 1987, p. 5A; "U.S. f-14 Fighter Fired at Iranian Aircraft," Washington Post, August 11, 1987, p. A1; "U.S.-Iran Missile Encounter: Pure Aerial Electronics," Los Angeles Times, August 13, 1987, p. 6; "U.S. Helicopters Sink 3 Iranian Gunboats in Persian Gulf," Washington Post, October 9, 1987, p. A1.

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that every entry should be supported by a valid receipt or invoice. This ensures transparency and allows for easy auditing of the accounts. The text also mentions that regular reconciliations should be performed to identify any discrepancies between the books and the bank statements.

In addition, the document highlights the need for proper classification of expenses. Each item should be recorded under the correct account code to facilitate accurate financial reporting. It also notes that any changes to the accounting system or policies should be documented and approved by the appropriate authority. The text further discusses the role of the accounting department in providing timely and reliable information to management for decision-making purposes.

Finally, the document concludes by stating that a strong internal control system is essential for the success of any organization. It includes measures such as segregation of duties, authorization of transactions, and regular reviews. By implementing these controls, the organization can minimize the risk of errors and fraud, ensuring the integrity of its financial data.

United States naval presence in the Gulf and prior threatening actions by Iranian forces against U.S. Navy units there. Thus, rules of engagement can be tailored to avoid undesirable incidents with the forces of one country while allowing early and effective defensive action against more threatening forces of another country.

Rules of engagement often specify the certainty of identification required before a determination of hostile intent may be made. A rough scheme of certainty of identification, from greatest to least certainty, would be as follows: positive visual identification by flag or markings, communications intercept, visual identification by class of ship or type of aircraft, electronic intercept (radar, etc.), and pattern of behavior (direction of approach, flight path, formation, etc.). Often more than one indicator present, which can increase certainty of identification. These indicators can be supplemented with intelligence on military vessels and planes known to be in the area. Geography can also aid identification by allowing elimination of forces from countries far removed from the area. The most important distinction drawn in rules of engagement is whether or not visual identification is required prior to using force in anticipatory self-defense.

As was pointed out above, one purpose of rules of engagement is to avoid inadvertently using force against non-combatant civilian ships and aircraft. However, the



effectiveness of rules of engagement for this purpose can decline significantly once military forces are engaged in combat. On July 3, 1988, the U.S. guided missile cruiser USS Vincennes (CG 48) shot down Iran Air Flight 655 over the Strait of Hormuz. At the time of the incident Vincennes and another U.S. ship had been engaged in a gun battle with Iranian small craft that had attacked a Norwegian ship and fired on a U.S. Navy helicopter. Vincennes sent repeated warnings over international radio channels for the plane to identify itself and state its intentions, all of which were missed or ignored by the Iranian airliner as it flew directly at the U.S. warship. Vincennes misidentified the plane as an Iranian Air Force F-14 jet fighter and the ship shot it down with two surface-to-air missiles. Admiral William J. Crowe, Jr., and other senior naval officers state that the Commanding Officer of Vincennes fully complied with the rules of engagement issued to U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf.¹¹³ The lesson of this incident is that in tense situations--the heat of battle--incidents involving civilian vessels or aircraft can occur even when military commanders

¹¹³"U.S. Downs Iran Airliner Mistaken for F-14," New York Times, July 4, 1988, p. 1; "Statement by Joint Chiefs Head," New York Times, July 4, 1988, p. 4; "U.S. Pushes Inquiry on Downing of Jet," New York Times, July 5, 1988, p. A1; "Senators Assert Warship Captain Reacted Properly," New York Times, July 7, 1988, p. A1; "Navy Won't Alter Engagement Rules," New York Times, July 8, 1988, p. A6; "Errors by a Tense U.S. Crew Led to Downing of Iran Jet, Inquiry is Reported to Find," New York Times, July 11, 1988, p. 1. Also see NWP 9, p. 8-4.

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD
DATE: 10/15/2001
TO: [Name]
FROM: [Name]
SUBJECT: [Subject]

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are acting cautiously under rules of engagement designed to prevent such incidents.

Generally, the higher the level of identification that is required, the more difficult it is for Navy ships to take timely defensive measures when threatened. In a high contact-density environment, when the need for positive identification to avoid unwanted incidents is greatest, the identification problem is exacerbated, increasing the danger to Navy ships and the possibility that neutral military forces or civilian vessels or aircraft might be engaged.

Identity of threatened unit. Rules of engagement vary depending upon the identity of the vessel or aircraft being attacked or threatened with attack. Navy units are always allowed to defend against threats to U.S. military forces and U.S. territory, and under most circumstances can defend U.S. civilian ships. Allied military forces can be defended under circumstances defined by arrangements worked out under defense treaties. Rules of engagement covering other types of threatened units--such as civilian ships belonging to allies or the military forces of non-allied friendly nations--are usually quite restrictive. For example, from 1980 to mid-1988 U.S. Navy warships in the Persian Gulf were only permitted to defend U.S. flag merchant ships.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁴Richard W. Murphy, "International Shipping and the Iran-Iraq War," Current Policy No. 958 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, May 19, 1987); Michael H. Armacost, "U.S. Policy in the Persian Gulf



As before, problems can arise in a high contact-density environment where military and civilian vessels in several of the categories are operating in close proximity.

Problems can also arise in a rapidly changing political-military environment, when a belligerent suddenly changes the scope of targets he is attacking and rules of engagement lag behind the expanded threat.

Existence of hostile intent. As noted before, a distinction is drawn between hostile acts and hostile intent. Rough categories of indicators of hostile intent, from most to least certainty, are (a) weapon employment (missile or torpedo launch, dropping of bombs, firing of guns--all of which could also be a hostile act in some circumstances), (b) targeting (detection of fire control radar, missile guidance radar, or laser target designation), (c) communications (detection of orders to attack, attack coordination signals, or progress reports), (d) failure to respond to warnings or to comply with declared exclusion zones or broadcast avoidance procedures, (e) exhibiting behavior indicative of imminent weapons employment when in a position to be a threat. Rules of engagement specify, in

and Kuwaiti Reflagging," Current Policy No. 978 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, June 16, 1987); "U.S. Denies Scope of Gulf Escort Duty Will Grow," Los Angeles Times, July 9, 1987, p. 8; "Broader Gulf Role is Sought," San Jose Mercury News, October 13, 1987, p. 1A; "Pressure is on U.S. to Act in Gulf," San Jose Mercury News, October 18, 1987, p. 1A.



terms of categories such as these, the level of certainty that hostile intent has been shown that is required before actions can be taken in anticipatory self-defense.

Problems can arise from ambiguous indicators of hostile intent. Hostile forces conducting an actual attack, rather than harassment or a show of force, can be expected to use deception in order to achieve surprise--a highly desirable military tactic that increases the effectiveness of an attack while reducing its costs.¹¹⁵ Deception tactics include simulating the behavior of non-hostile aircraft and ships, such as by staying within air lanes or sea lanes while in transit, and responding to radio challenges with a civilian identity. Such tactics are particularly effective in a high contact-density environment, and create very difficult rules of engagement problems for tactical decision-makers.

An additional, and even greater, problem is that many indicators of hostile intent can be generated by routine peacetime evolutions as well as by actual hostile actions. Spurious indicators of hostile intent can arise during training exercises, weapons testing, and combat systems maintenance. Certain communications and electronic emissions during routine surveillance can also resemble targeting and attack indicators. For example, peacetime

¹¹⁵Friedman, pp. 39-41.

exercises frequently include tracking and targeting of simulated enemy forces, launching simulated attacks against those forces, and firing of training weapons (which normally do not have warheads). All these activities are essential for maintaining a high level of operational readiness, and by definition generate indicators of hostile intent toward the simulated enemy. The problem is that such indicators of hostile intent may also be detected by units of another country, who may or may not know about the exercise.

Complicating the problem of ambiguous indicators of hostile intent is the Soviet penchant for conducting simulated attacks on U.S. naval forces--a highly dangerous practice. U.S. naval forces have frequently been targets for simulated attacks by Soviet forces, and in some of these incidents only the professionalism and forbearance of the commanding officers prevented a clash. The Soviets have reduced the number of such incidents since the Incidents at Sea Agreement was signed in 1972, but occasionally still conduct simulated attacks.¹¹⁶ The worst tactical situation

¹¹⁶ Soviet simulated attacks are discussed in Chapter V. Two examples will illustrate the nature of such incidents. In August 1979 in the Black Sea Soviet aircraft, including Backfire bombers, conducted more than thirty simulated missile attacks against the destroyers USS Caron (DD 970) and USS Farragut (DDG 6). On February 18, 1984, again in the Black Sea, a Soviet jet fighter fired its cannon into the wake of the destroyer USS David R. Ray (DD 971). See "Soviet, in 2 Incidents, Takes U.S. torpedo and Baits Ships," New York Times, August 11, 1979, p. 4; "High Seas Diplomacy continuing," Washington Post, February 18, 1984, p. A1. Such actions can indicate hostile intent.

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that every entry should be supported by a valid receipt or invoice. This ensures transparency and allows for easy verification of the data. The text also mentions that regular audits are necessary to identify any discrepancies or errors in the accounting process.

In addition, the document highlights the role of technology in modern accounting. The use of software can significantly reduce the risk of human error and streamline the workflow. It suggests that businesses should invest in reliable accounting software that can integrate with other systems, such as CRM and ERP, to provide a comprehensive view of the company's financial health.

Furthermore, the document stresses the importance of staying up-to-date with the latest accounting standards and regulations. This is particularly true for businesses operating in international markets, where different countries may have varying requirements. Regular training and professional development for the accounting staff are essential to ensure compliance and accuracy.

Finally, the document concludes by stating that a strong accounting system is the foundation of a successful business. It provides a clear picture of the company's performance, enabling management to make informed decisions. By following the guidelines outlined in this document, businesses can ensure that their financial records are accurate, reliable, and compliant with all relevant laws and regulations.

is when Soviet naval forces are in close proximity to U.S. naval forces that are at the scene of a crisis in which one of the local participants is armed with Soviet weapons. A Soviet simulated attack or other weapons training could be mistaken by the U.S. ships as an impending attack by the third party, or similar actions by the third party could be mistaken for an impending Soviet attack. Such situations can easily arise in such perennial hot spots as the Eastern Mediterranean, Persian Gulf, and Sea of Japan.

Ambiguous indicators of hostile intent raise two types of problems. First, suppression of valid indicators through deception can leave ships vulnerable to attack when they would have been authorized to use force in anticipatory self-defense. Second, detection of valid indicators generated by non-hostile activity can result in force being used when it was not, in fact, needed. Thus, the determination of hostile intent is highly context-dependent: the overall political-military environment must also be considered.

Although problems usually arise with the definition of hostile intent, even the concept of hostile act can be troublesome. Is a hostile act actual weapon impact on a defensible category of target, or does it include any weapon employment, even if the target is not hit? If no vessel was hit, to what degree of certainty must it be ascertained that a defensible category of target was the intended target of a hostile act? In a high contact-density environment it may

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that every entry should be supported by a valid receipt or invoice to ensure transparency and accountability.

Furthermore, it is noted that regular audits are essential to identify any discrepancies or errors in the accounting process. This helps in maintaining the integrity of the financial data and ensures compliance with relevant regulations.

In addition, the document highlights the need for clear communication between all stakeholders involved in the financial operations. Regular meetings and reports should be conducted to keep everyone informed about the current financial status and any upcoming challenges.

It is also stressed that the financial team should always stay updated with the latest market trends and economic indicators. This knowledge is crucial for making informed decisions and adjusting the financial strategy accordingly.

The document concludes by stating that a strong financial foundation is key to the long-term success of any organization. By following these guidelines, the company can ensure its financial health and stability in the future.

For more information on financial management practices, please refer to the attached report or contact the finance department directly.

The finance team is committed to providing accurate and timely financial information to support the company's growth and development.

Thank you for your attention and cooperation. We look forward to continuing our partnership and achieving our shared goals.

not be clear which contact was the intended target. Additionally, inadvertent attacks can occur in the fog of war and the heat of battle: accidentally launched weapons, mistaken identity, misunderstood orders, indiscriminate attacks (launched without an effort to identify the target), and blind impact (unintended target between launch point and intended target). When a Navy unit is defending itself, these problems are not at issue. But when other vessels are to be defended, errors can occur in both directions: failing to protect a defensible target or taking military action for a non-defensible target. Both can have serious consequences.

Appropriate defensive response. The term self-defense can encompass a wide range of defensive actions, some of which may be directed (that is, are mandatory when threatened) and others of which may be prohibited. Rough categories of defensive actions, in ascending order of seriousness, are (a) evasion, such as opening the range to the threat, (b) identification and warning signals to the threatening unit, informing it that a U.S. Navy ship is being approached and warning that force may be used in self-defense, (c) passive measures, such as activating electronic defense systems (radar jamming) and illuminating the threatening unit with fire control radars, done as a warning as well as for their combat value, (d) interposition, such as placing a U.S. Navy ship between a civilian vessel being

defended and a hostile ship attempting to board or seize it, (e) warning shots, (f) employment of weapons to destroy the threatening unit, and (g) pursuit of units that have committed a hostile act to prevent them from conducting further attacks. Measures (b) through (e) are not always required, but may be specified depending on the level of danger to U.S. Navy units and the likelihood of undesirable incidents. Even when specified in the rules of engagement, employment of measures (b) through (e) can be a function of the time available to execute them before the danger of attack is acute. This time constraint is recognized in the rules of engagement, which do not bar the use of force in self-defense when there is insufficient time to send warnings or take other passive measures.

Two categories of military action are not authorized under peacetime rules of engagement: employment of nuclear or chemical weapons, and retaliatory attacks. Authority to order the use of nuclear and chemical weapons rests with the President, and is not pre-delegated in peacetime.¹¹⁷ Department of Defense and JCS policy prohibit rules of engagement from usurping the authority and prerogatives of

¹¹⁷Roach, pp. 47-8. The one special case is that after a valid nuclear release order from the President had authorized employment of nuclear air defense weapons, U.S. Air Force interceptors carrying nuclear air-to-air missiles (the Genie rocket, no longer in service) were governed by special JCS and North American Air Defense Command (NORAD) rules of engagement for the use of those weapons.

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the President in any way. The decision to launch retaliatory attacks for attacks on U.S. Navy units in peacetime is also a matter of national policy, not a tactical decision covered by rules of engagement. If pursuit of attacking units is authorized under the rules of engagement, it is because they represent a further immediate threat to U.S., forces. Pursuit may not be used as a pretext for retaliatory attacks or to justify such attacks afterward.¹¹⁸

The Political-Military Context

An understanding the overall political-military context of an incident is essential for the on-scene commander to be able to make decisions on the use of force that support national policy as well as uphold the right of self-defense. In effect, the on-scene commander must determine whether or not the military action he is contemplating will support the political and military objectives and intentions of the President. This requirement is inherent in the two-stage decision process of the rules of engagement system. The political-military context of an incident includes geographic considerations, the political environment, and the overall military situation. These are the same variables that affected the first stage of the decision

¹¹⁸ Ibid, pp. 50-1. Also see NWP 9, p. 6-3; O'Connell, p. 176; Gallery, p. 25; Schelling, pp. 168-70.



process--the original formulation and approval of the rules of engagement by the President and his military advisors. These variables influence the political-military intent of the rules of engagement, which could vary from strenuous efforts to avoid a military incident at almost any cost, to a hair-trigger readiness to deliver a sharp response to the slightest military provocation. The burden on the on-scene commander is to interpret the intent of the rules of engagement in the specific circumstances at hand.

Geographic considerations include the proximity of Navy units to the scene of a conflict or crisis, the proximity of hostile territory, and the proximity of the conflict or crisis to U.S. or allied territory. Rules of engagement attempt to account for geographic factors by issuing special rules of engagement when it can be anticipated that a ship will be operating in a high-threat or politically sensitive area. But when incidents occur while ships are operating under standing rules of engagement, or when incidents occur that do not quite fit the circumstances of special rules of engagement, the on-scene commander must take geography into account. A demonstration of hostile intent far removed from the scene of any conflicts is likely to have much different motives than one committed in the midst of a crisis. For example, a ship operating near an announced exercise area has reasonable grounds for concluding that an action normally regarded as an indicator of hostile intent, such as



being targeted by a fire control radar, is inadvertent rather than a warning of imminent attack (though it must be on guard against an accidental attack). The same indicator could have much more serious implications in the midst of a military confrontation.

The political environment includes the overall climate of relations between the U.S. and the nation whose forces are the potential threat, the stated objectives of the potentially threatening nation, and U.S. diplomatic objectives in the conflict. When the potentially threatening nation is an ally or client of the Soviet Union, two additional political factors come into play: the overall climate of relations between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, and the level of support the Soviet Union is providing to the potentially threatening nation--overall and in the specific conflict at hand. Other crises or on-going conflicts, whether or not they are related to the incident at hand, are also an important part of the political environment. World opinion toward the crisis and the U.S. role in the crisis can be a factor depending on the apparent responsiveness of the U.S. government to such concerns. Similarly, domestic political opinion--particularly the mood of Congress--can be a factor in on-scene decision-making if emphasized in background briefings. Normally, however, world and domestic opinion are among the least significant political influences in rules of engagement decisions.



The overall military situation includes the defense readiness condition (DEFCON) of U.S. forces, other alerts ordered for specific U.S. forces, movements of U.S. forces outside the scene of the crisis, and military incidents involving U.S. forces in other tension areas. The status of these four factors--overall readiness, specific alerts, movements of forces, and other incidents--in the Soviet Union and other nations involved in the crisis are additional major elements the overall military situation. The tactical situation on-scene is the final element in the overall military situation. The tactical situation on-scene is defined by the local balance of military forces, the apparent combat readiness of potentially hostile forces, and the movement of those forces into position for further attacks. Assessment of the military situation is used to distinguish an isolated hostile act (perhaps inadvertent or unauthorized), best answered by a restrained response to ease tensions, from a deliberate provocation or escalation, requiring a sharp response to deter further attacks.

To illustrate the role of the political-military context in the making of rules of engagement decisions, Soviet reconnaissance planes overflying U.S. Navy ships in the open ocean under normal peacetime conditions are not fired on. On the other hand, a Libyan plane attempting to overfly U.S. Navy ships during the March 1986 Gulf of Sidra incident, or an Iranian plane attempting to do so during the



Persian Gulf clashes in 1987 and 1988, would be shot down.¹¹⁹ Analysis of the political-military context of an incident is a complex task, but U.S. Navy commanders are routinely called upon to do so--without further reference to higher authority--in making rules of engagement decisions.

Because an accurate and comprehensive understanding of the political-military context of an incident is vital to making rules of engagement decisions that support national policy, difficult problems for U.S. forces on-scene can be generated by not informing them of significant military and diplomatic moves. This problem can be particularly acute when rules of engagement are used as a substitute for strategy, that is, when military forces are deployed to the scene of a crisis without a clear mission, only rules of engagement to govern their behavior.¹²⁰

Decisions to change the state of readiness of military forces or to move military forces as a political signal can alter the threat perception and political-military objectives of the target nation, thus altering the tactical situation on-scene. For example, a higher DEFCON can be set

¹¹⁹ On U.S. rules of engagement toward Iran, see the sources in footnote 107. On U.S. rules of engagement toward Libya in 1986, see Parks, "Crossing the Line," pp. 44-52; Lieutenant Commander Robert E. Stumpf, "Air War with Libya," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 112 (August 1986): 42-48.

¹²⁰ On the importance of keeping the on-scene commander informed, see Train, pp. 301-4. On not substituting rules of engagement for strategy, see Roach, p. 46; Friedman, p. 30.

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and troops deployed to forward bases in order to send a threatening signal, or a lower DEFCON can be set and the troops withdrawn to send a conciliatory signal. If the on-scene commander and the tactical decision-makers under him are not aware of such military actions, the threat to on-scene forces may be perceived as either higher or lower than it actually is. Thus, their interpretation of the rules of engagement may not support national policy--inadvertently sending conflicting signals to the target nation.

Similar problems can arise from diplomatic initiatives: by changing the threat perception and objectives of the target nation, diplomatic moves alter the local tactical environment. Secret communications and "back-channel" negotiations are undoubtedly an essential part of diplomacy and statecraft, but they need to be accompanied by appropriate efforts to keep the chain of command informed of the political-military context within which operational decisions are made.

The Problem of Misinterpretation

As has already been pointed out, the on-scene commander must interpret the intent of the rules of engagement in the specific tactical circumstances at hand. He is aided in doing this by statements of U.S. objectives included in the rules of engagement when they are issued, by background briefings on the crisis, and by the tailoring of special

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rules of engagement for his specific operation. However, the rules of engagement can still be misinterpreted, producing decisions on the use of force that do not support national policy. These are not tactical decisions made in deliberate violation of the rules of engagement, which is a separate--and exceedingly rare--category of problem.

Misinterpretation of the rules of engagement occurs when a tactical decision-maker has an understanding of their intent that is different from the intent of the higher authorities who drafted the rules. U.S. Navy training goes to great lengths to prevent this from happening, but the possibility of misinterpretation cannot be completely excluded.

Misinterpretation of the rules of engagement can arise from three sources. First, verbal orders intended only to emphasize particular operational details can be misinterpreted as a modification to the rules of engagement. For example, a warning that an unusually high number of non-hostile air contacts can be expected could be construed as a requiring greater than normal caution before engaging threatening aircraft. Second, the operational environment can induce routinized patterns of behavior (tactical bad habits, of which complacency is the most common example) that impinge on rules of engagement. For example, daily non-hostile contact with the aircraft of a belligerent could create a routine in which defensive measures authorized in the rules of engagement are not taken



because they have never been needed in the past. Third, a psychological environment can develop that affects threat assessments so as to produce rules of engagement decisions different than intended by the chain of command. The results can be too passive as easily as too aggressive. The constant tension of operating near hostilities can put nerves on edge and generate an intense desire to "do something" rather than continue to be a passive observer or the target of harassment. On the other hand, a feeling that the Navy ships are not needed in the situation (wasting their time) or are impotent to act can lead to complacency and passivity. Personalities can also have an impact--an overly aggressive or cautious tactical decision-maker may provide his own interpretation of the rules of engagement. The professionalism of U.S. Navy officers and their high state of training generally are sufficient to prevent misinterpretation of the rules of engagement, but the on-scene commander and the chain of command needs to be alert for indications of these problems.

Allies and Rules of Engagement

Operations with allies raise further rules of engagement problems. Within the NATO alliance, each member has its own national rules of engagement, which are the rules in effect in peacetime. Additionally, the NATO military command has a separate set of rules of engagement

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that govern all member forces after they are transferred to Allied command upon declaration of a NATO Reinforced Alert.¹²¹ This system raises two problems. First, national peacetime rules of engagement may differ among NATO members. This is because threat perceptions, foreign policy objectives, and domestic political constraints can vary considerably among allies. An unambiguous threat from the Soviet Union would undoubtedly be met with a unified response, but a wide range of lesser threats raise political difficulties. Some observers have concluded that diversity in peacetime rules of engagement can interfere with the ability of forces from different NATO members to respond in a consistent and coordinated manner in a crisis. They point out, for example, that while the rules of engagement of most European NATO members require commission of a hostile act prior to use of force, U.S. and British rules of engagement usually permit force to be used upon demonstration of hostile intent.¹²² Such differences could create severe difficulties coordinating NATO forces in a sudden crisis.

The second problem is that intense political consultation would almost inevitably be required prior to declaring a reinforced alert, transferring national forces

¹²¹ Davis, et al., p. 48.

¹²² Drew Middleton, "NATO Issue: When to Let Its Ships Fire," New York Times, April 2, 1984, p. 5; Davis, et al., pp. 48-9.



to Allied command, and bringing NATO rules of engagement into effect.¹²³ This, some observers fear, could leave NATO forces without clear rules of engagement guidance as a crisis escalates towards war, and could leave them fatally vulnerable to a Soviet conventional pre-emptive strike at the start of a war.¹²⁴ Thus, peacetime national rules of engagement formulated for purposes of avoiding war could in fact provide an additional incentive for a pre-emptive attack in a severe crisis.

Summary

In summary, rules of engagement are an important mechanism of indirect control, and are particularly important in crisis management. Rules of engagement are orders issued to define the circumstances in which the U.S. armed forces are authorized to use their weapons for defense against hostile forces in peacetime, and to specify the scope and level of violence of combat operations in wartime. Peacetime rules of engagement prohibit U.S. military commanders from shooting first in peacetime unless absolutely necessary for self-defense. There are two categories of peacetime rules of engagement: standing rules in effect at all times for the forces they cover, and

¹²³Packenham, p. 49.

¹²⁴Davis, et al., pp. 48-9; Friedman, pp. 32-3.



special rules issued for particularly sensitive situations, such operations during an international crisis.

Rules of engagement are necessary for five reasons: first, commanders in the field or at sea often not have the means or sufficient time to contact higher authorities in an emergency; second, the lethality of modern weapons has led to the principle of anticipatory self-defense, so rules are needed to define indicators of hostile intent; third, not all nations that are potentially hostile to the U.S. present the same level of military threat, so rules are needed to distinguish among them; fourth, the rules ensure that U.S. forces adhere to the international legal principles of proportional and minimum force; and fifth, U.S. forces can be tasked to defend civilian U.S. vessels and U.S. citizens ashore overseas, the military forces and civilian vessels of allies and friendly nations, and the territory of allies or friendly nations.

United States Navy ships and aircraft, like all U.S. forces, have an inherent right of self-defense under international law--they may use their weapons to defend themselves if a hostile act of violence is committed against them. Emphasis in U.S. policy on self-defense is on caution and restraint, and rules of engagement warn that decisions on the use of force must be "tempered with judgement and discretion." The rules of engagement allow force to be used in self-defense under three circumstances: first, upon



commission of a hostile act against U.S. forces; second, upon demonstration of hostile intent, defined as clear indication that a hostile act is imminent, which activates the principle of anticipatory self-defense; and third, upon an authorized commander declaring a force hostile due a continuing threat of use of force against his command.

An on-scene commander must make two determinations prior to using force in self-defense. He must first determine whether or not the use of force is authorized, which is a function of three factors: the national identity of the threatening unit, the national identity of the threatened target, and the existence of hostile intent. He must then determine the type of defensive response authorized under the circumstances. Making these determinations can be crucially dependent on the political-military context of the operation, which includes geographic considerations, the political environment, and the overall military situation. The on-scene commander must consider whether or not the military action he is contemplating will support the political and military objectives of the President. This makes it critical that on-scene commanders be kept informed of the overall political military situation.

Rules of engagement can fail in one of two modes: vulnerability failure or escalatory failure. A vulnerability failure is caused by rules of engagement that



are excessively restrictive, ambiguous, or complex and confusing. In a vulnerability failure the on-scene commander is unable to take effective action in self-defense, resulting in a successful attack on his forces--an attack that might otherwise have been defeated. An escalatory failure is caused by rules of engagement that are excessively permissive, ambiguous, or complex and confusing. In an escalatory failure the on-scene commander uses excessive force on grounds of self-defense, causing escalation of the scope or intensity of violence beyond that viewed as desirable by national leaders. Either type of failure can result from an on-scene commander misinterpreting his rules of engagement. Misinterpretation of the rules occurs when a tactical decision-maker has an understanding of their intent that is different from the intent of the higher authorities who drafted the rules.

Conclusion

The first objective of this chapter was to explain how delegation and control are exercised in the United States military command system. The previous three sections examined the principles, methods and mechanisms of command and control. The United States armed forces rely on a flexible combination of direct and delegated control. The methods of control range from positive direct control and direct control by negation at the tight end of the



"tightness of control" spectrum, to monitored delegated control and autonomous delegated control at the loose end. Certain of the methods of control can be used in conjunction, and forces can be rapidly shifted from one method to another as the situation warrants. Commanders can exercise indirect control of subordinates even after having delegated them substantial autonomy. This is done via the mechanisms of indirect control: the alert system, standing orders, mission orders, contingency plans, and rules of engagement.

The second objective of this chapter was to to set the United States military command system in the context of organization and management theories on delegation and control in organizations. The first section of this chapter reviewed those theories. Organization and management studies show that significant delegation of decisionmaking authority is common in large organizations. Delegation of decisionmaking is driven by the limits on decisionmaking, which cause decision-making by top-level officials to deteriorate as the size and complexity of the organization increase. These observations apply particularly well to the military chain of command, which is founded on the principle of delegating control while retaining command. As organization theory predicts, delegation of control in the military command system is primarily due to constraints on the ability of top-level authorities to effectively control tactical operations.



Organization and management studies show that tension between autonomy and control is always present in public and business organizations, particularly those consisting of numerous independent operating units. As before, these findings apply particularly well to the U.S. military. Tension between delegation and control is always present in the military chain of command. Pressures toward centralized control are driven by the complexity of modern warfare, fear of nuclear war, and efforts to exploit the force multiplier effect. Pressures toward decentralized control are driven by severe constraints on the ability of top-level authorities to effectively control tactical operations, and by the advantages gained by granting the on-scene commander flexibility to exercise initiative.

Organization and management studies show that delegation of decisionmaking can range from being highly rule-governed, for standard, repetitive situations, to highly discretionary, for situations that cannot be anticipated. This also applies to military command and control. The methods of exercising control cover a "tightness of control" spectrum ranging from very tight to very loose control. Toward the tight end of the spectrum are positive direct control, and direct control by negation. Toward the loose end of the spectrum are monitored delegated control and autonomous delegated control. The guidance contained in mechanisms of indirect control can also range from being



detailed and specific (tight indirect control) to general and flexible (loose indirect control). In military command and control, as in public administration and business management, tighter forms of control are more appropriate for standard situations that are easily anticipated, while looser forms of control are more appropriate for an environment marked by uncertainty and ambiguity, in which specific decisionmaking situations are difficult to anticipate.

Organization and management studies show that three types of control mechanisms are used in various combinations: hierarchical (rules and procedures), collegial (professionalism), and nonhierarchical (organizational and societal norms and culture). All three methods are used in the military organizations. The mechanisms of indirect control--the alert system, standing orders, mission orders, contingency plans, and rules of engagement--are all hierarchical controls. They relieve higher authorities of the burden of having to closely monitor the details of military operations--a burden that can quickly exceed their information processing and decisionmaking capabilities when large-scale operations are being conducted in a fast-paced political-military environment. Relieved of this burden, top-level authorities are better able to concentrate on monitoring the overall political-strategic situation, formulating and revising their strategy for dealing with the

confrontation, and coordinating the overall execution of military operations so that they support that strategy. Hierarchical controls serve similar functions in public and business organizations.

Collegial and nonhierarchical controls have not been discussed, but are more prominent in military organizations than in any other type of organization. Collegial control is provided by the professionalism of the officer corps, which is highly developed and stressed in the training of officers.¹²⁵ Non-hierarchical controls--organizational norms and values--are also widely used in the military. They are most visible in elite military units, such as Army Special Forces and the Marine Corps. Members of these units are indoctrinated that their elite status requires that they meet superior standards of performance--typically discipline, endurance, aggressive-ness, and fighting skill--unique to their organizations. Similar nonhierarchical controls are used throughout the armed forces to complement and reinforce military professionalism.

Collegial and nonhierarchical controls have a major impact on the effectiveness of delegated command and the

¹²⁵ See Samuel P. Huntington, The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1957), pp. 7-18; Morris Janowitz, The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait (New York: Free Press, 1960), pp. 3-75; Sam C. Sarkesian, Beyond the Battlefield: The New Military Professionalism (New York: Pergamon Press, 1981), pp. 5-54.



mechanisms of indirect control. On the one hand, controls such as discipline, loyalty, and respect for the chain of command are essential for delegated command and the mechanisms of indirect control to function at all. Similarly, professional experience and judgement can be crucial for correctly interpreting ambiguous orders and carrying out general guidance under rapidly changing circumstances. The ultimate test of professional experience and judgement is knowing when to disregard inappropriate orders in order to take action that better supports the national interest. On the other hand, collegial and nonhierarchical controls can generate commitment to particular operational doctrines or procedures, and resistance to operations custom-designed for crisis management purposes. This is the phenomenon emphasized in the organizational process and bureaucratic politics models. A further weakness of those models, then, is that they do not address the full impact--positive as well as negative--of collegial and nonheirarchical controls.

Studies of public administration and business management repeatedly show that in large organizations comprised of numerous independent operating units, optimum performance is achieved with decentralized decisionmaking combined with appropriate--primarily collegial and nonheirarchical--controls. The issue as to what degree of centralization or decentralization is optimum for military



operations was not directly addressed in this review of the military command system. The strength and weaknesses of the methods of control and mechanisms of indirect control, and the arguments for and against centralization of decisionmaking authority, were discussed, but the focus was on how military command and control function in principle. Many things can go wrong in the stress and confusion of crisis military operations, and there are inherent limits on the ability of any methods or mechanisms of control to ensure that decisions made at one level are those that are most appropriate for the situation at another level. The optimum degree of centralization or decentralization can vary widely depending on the nature of the military operation being conducted and the political-military context of the operation. This can be seen in the flexibility of the U.S. military command system and the broad range of control methods--covering the entire tightness of control spectrum--available in it.

One of the central requirements of crisis management is for national leaders to maintain close control over military operations.¹²⁶ This requirement can now be addressed in more specific operational terms. National leaders can exercise close control of military operations in a variety of ways. One approach is to shift from methods at the loose

¹²⁶George, "Development of Doctrine and Strategy," p. 8; George, "Crisis Management," p. 227.



end of the tightness of control spectrum--autonomous delegated control monitored delegated control--to methods at the tight end of the spectrum--direct control by negation and positive direct control. This is the approach commonly referred to in the crisis management literature. The image of Secretary of Defense McNamara giving rudder orders over the radio directly to Navy ships on the quarantine line during the Cuban Missile Crisis is often viewed as the model of close control that should be followed.

This style of direct control has its costs, and can even impede effective crisis management. Unless the scope of military operations is very small and simple, direct control can quickly overload information processing and decisionmaking. National leaders typically focus on selected aspects of the operations, which may not be the most important or dangerous evolutions taking place. The need for close control thus needs be weighed against the severe constraints on the ability of national leaders to exercise effective direct control of military operations.

A second approach to maintaining close control of crisis military operations is through the mechanisms of indirect control. This entails shifting the guidance contained in mechanisms of indirect control from being general and flexible (loose indirect control), to being detailed and specific (tight indirect control). Close attention to the rules of engagement is particularly

important in this regard. As was also true with methods of control, excessive tightness in the mechanisms of indirect control can be counterproductive--denying the on-scene commander the flexibility he needs to adapt to rapidly changing circumstances. The optimum tightness of control lies somewhere between absolute control and absolute autonomy. Establishing precisely where the optimum balance between control and delegation lies is one of the inherent tensions in crisis management.

U.S. military command and control procedures allow ample opportunity for stratified interaction to occur in crises. The U.S. armed forces rely on a flexible combination of direct and delegated control that emphasizes delegation of authority and providing on-scene commanders with freedom of action. Monitored delegated control is the method of control preferred by military commanders, and when direct control is necessary, control by negation is preferred over positive control. Primary emphasis is placed on use of mechanisms of indirect control rather than on the exercise of direct control. These preferences are strongest in the Navy, which has a long tradition of operational autonomy and which accords "absolute" authority to commanding officers. Even in crises, when there is a tendency for high-level military commanders as well civilian authorities to centralize control over operations, on-scene commanders are delegated substantial decisionmaking authority.



Given that national leaders usually must delegate a certain amount of discretionary decisionmaking authority to military commanders, including the on-scene commander, then it must be expected that military incidents not ordered by national leaders (or even anticipated by them) will occur. The next chapter will explore the range of such incidents that have occurred in the past, and could well occur during a future crisis. Military incidents can generate tactical level military interactions with the forces of the other side in a crisis--interactions decoupled from efforts by national leaders to manage the crisis.



CHAPTER V

TACTICAL-LEVEL MILITARY INTERACTION

The theory of stratified interaction posits that crisis interaction takes place in three semi-independent interaction sequences: political, strategic, and tactical. Thus far, however, little has been said about exactly what types of interactions can occur at the tactical level. It will be useful to explore the nature of tactical-level interactions prior to commencing the case studies so as to identify the types of military actions that are of interest.

The purposes of this chapter are to define the scope of tactical-level interactions that can occur in a crisis and to define analytical categories of crisis military actions. In the remainder of this introduction to the chapter the military actions that can produce tactical-level interactions will be classified, based on the perspective of political-level decisionmakers, as deliberate military actions or inadvertent military incidents. The next three sections will define and present examples of the three categories of inadvertent military incidents: unanticipated authorized actions, military accidents, and unauthorized actions. The fourth section will examine incidents at sea and the impact of the Soviet-American 1972 Incidents at Sea



Agreement. The concluding section will explain why inadvertent military incidents are relatively rare in crises.

Tactical-level interactions will be categorized from the perspective of political-level decisionmakers. Studies of international crises have observed that national leaders generally seek to maintain close control of crisis military operations. The ideal condition that national leaders want to achieve is for no military actions to occur other than the ones they direct. National leaders thus make an implicit distinction between military actions they initiated deliberately and those they did not order but which occurred anyway. This distinction is the basis for the two major categories of tactical-level interactions: deliberate military actions and inadvertent military incidents.

Deliberate military actions are ordered by political-level decisionmakers. National leaders either issue a direct command for a specific action to be executed, or anticipate the action would occur as a result of an order given previously. Deliberate military actions can thus occur under delegated as well as direct control, and can be ordered in mechanisms of indirect control as well as directly over real-time communications links.

Inadvertent military incidents are military actions that affect the development of a crisis, but which are not specifically ordered or anticipated by national leaders. Avoiding such incidents has been a central concern in the

study of crisis management. As Phil Williams points out, an "inadvertent outbreak of violence" could cause national leaders to lose control of events in a crisis:

The problem is likely to be particularly acute if military forces are in close proximity to those of the opponent. Trained specifically for warfare, military forces are not an ideal instrument in situations demanding an enormous degree of caution and restraint. Although it is highly improbable that hostilities would be initiated without explicit orders, a clash between opposing forces resulting from the actions of an over-zealous military commander cannot be discounted entirely. Thus, policy-makers could find themselves losing control over a crisis because of the actions of subordinates. This may be even more of a problem when geographical distance is added to the organizational distance between those who formulate and those who execute policy.¹

Although the importance that national leaders typically place on maintaining close control over military operations has been recognized, the questions of how and why inadvertent military incidents occur and what effect they have on crisis management efforts have not been adequately addressed in the literature on crisis management.

Most professional military officers expect that at least some things, hopefully minor, invariably will go wrong

¹Phil Williams, Crisis Management (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1976), p. 100. Two factors mentioned by Williams--military forces operating in close proximity to those of the opponent and at great geographical distance from policymakers--are a good description of typical naval operations in crises. The one qualification that must be put on his analysis is that the on-scene military commander need not be over-zealous for an armed clash to erupt; even a cautious commander attempting to act with restraint could become involved in an outbreak of violence that national leaders did not desire or anticipate.

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during military operations. In planning military operations commanders attempt to allow for mistakes, accidents, and other unforeseen circumstances. Such problems constitute what Clausewitz described as "friction" in war--the myriad things that tend to interfere with the smooth accomplishment of military operations.² One of the principles of war--simplicity--is followed by military planners because friction tends to increase with the size and complexity of an operation. Friction begins to arise as soon as military operations are launched--well before the enemy is engaged. It is reasonable to expect, therefore, that friction--things going wrong--will occur in crisis military operations as well as in wartime military operations.

Recent studies of crisis management have shown a growing awareness that inadvertent military incidents are inherent in the use of military forces as a political instrument in crises. Eliot Cohen rebuts crisis management theory, which emphasizes national leaders maintaining close control of military forces, with the argument that "even if one were to accept the crisis management theorist's premises, the statesman must inevitably fall victim to what Clausewitz called friction, or what we sometimes call Murphy's Law--the tendency of things to go wrong, of people not to get messages or to misunderstand or deliberately

²See Martin Van Creveld, Command in War (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985), pp. 12-13.



ignore them, of large organizations to fail in their missions for a host of unforeseeable reasons."³ Cohen goes on to argue that despite this, accidents, misperceptions, and the like are not likely to cause crises to escalate to wars. Robert McNamara, Secretary of Defense during the Cuban Missile Crisis, has proposed a variant of Murphy's Law applying specifically to use of military force in crises:

I don't think the Cuban Missile Crisis was unique. The Bay of Pigs, Berlin in '61, Cuba, later events in the Middle East, in Libya, and so on--all exhibit the truth of what I'll call "McNamara's Law," which states: "It is impossible to predict with a high degree of confidence what the effects of the use of military force will be because of the risks of accident, miscalculation, misperception, and inadvertence." In my opinion, this law ought to be inscribed above all the doorways in the White House and the Pentagon, and it is the overwhelming lesson of the Cuban missile crisis.⁴

Cohen and McNamara point out the limitations and dangers of crisis management, but do not provide an understanding of the role of inadvertent military incidents in international crises. There is thus a need to take a closer look at such incidents and the impact they can have on crisis management.

³Eliot A. Cohen, "Why We Should Stop Studying the Cuban Missile Crisis," The National Interest No. 2 (Winter 1985/6): 8. Interestingly, "Murphy's Law"--which states that if something can go wrong, it will--was originated by a military officer (U.S. Air Force Captain Edward Murphy) in 1949. The law has been widely used in the services for almost forty years to teach maintenance personnel to beware of mistakes.

⁴James G. Blight, Joseph S. Nye, Jr., and David A. Welch, "The Cuban Missile Crisis Revisited," Foreign Affairs 66 (Fall 1987): 186.



There are three categories of inadvertent military incidents: unanticipated authorized actions, military accidents, and unauthorized deliberate actions. The next three sections of this chapter will discuss these three types of incidents. Although attention will be focused on incidents involving U.S. forces, examples of accidents involving the forces of other countries will also be presented. This will be done to illustrate that both sides in a crisis can experience inadvertent incidents involving their military forces.

An additional type of incident--incidents at sea--will be discussed in a separate section because they can be either deliberate or inadvertent. Incidents at sea include various forms of harassment and other dangerous interactions between Soviet and American naval forces. They may be initiated deliberately on direct or standing orders from national leaders (for military reasons or as a political signal), or may occur inadvertently--that is, without having been ordered by national leaders. Inadvertent incidents at sea can fall into any of the three categories of inadvertent military incidents: unanticipated authorized actions, military accidents, and unauthorized deliberate actions.

Unanticipated Authorized Actions

Unanticipated authorized actions are military actions taken by military commanders in compliance with guidance



contained in mechanisms of indirect control, but not directly ordered or specifically approved by national leaders. Such actions are taken by on-scene commanders in response to events or tactical conditions that national leaders did not anticipate, are not aware of, or do not understand. Such actions are authorized, in that they are taken in compliance with guidance contained in one of the mechanisms of indirect control--the alert system, standing orders, mission orders, contingency plans, or rules of engagement. But they are unanticipated, in the sense that national leaders did not directly order the specific action or anticipate that the specific action would result from guidance contained in mechanisms of delegated control. National leaders can only react to an unanticipated authorized action and try to manage its impact on the crisis.

The most common phenomenon appears to be that national leaders order a military operation without understanding the full range of specific military actions that military commanders have authority to take in order to carry out that operation. Ambiguous orders, operations initiated without specific military objectives to guide decisionmaking by on-scene commanders, and open-ended military operations (those that drag on without a definitive conclusion) are particularly prone to cause unanticipated authorized actions. Reliance on methods or delegated command and mechanisms of indirect control, although unavoidable for effective control

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of a military organization as large as the U.S. armed forces, is the most important condition giving rise to the possibility of unanticipated authorized actions. But such actions can also occur when tighter methods of control are being exercised. National leaders exercising control by negation could approve a military action (by not vetoing it) without understanding what that action entails. This could also occur when positive direct control is being exercised, though in this case it is more accurate to describe the consequences of the action, rather than the action itself, as being unanticipated.

Misperceptions on the part of on-scene military commanders are another possible cause of unanticipated authorized actions. This could occur when a military commander misperceives the political-military context of his local tactical situation. For example, he might misperceive aggressive enemy military moves as indicating that friendly forces are in imminent danger of attack or even that war had started. Believing that attack is imminent or that war has started, the commander takes military actions that would be authorized if one of these situations did, in fact, exist. The possibility of such misperceptions underscores the danger inherent in simulating attacks on an adversary's forces during a crisis--such as the Soviet Navy conducted against the U.S. Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean while U.S. forces were at DEFCON 3 in the 1973 Middle East War. In



this instance U.S. Navy commanders in the Mediterranean presumed that Soviet maneuvering to attack was just an exercise and did not attack any Soviet ships.⁵ Under other circumstances, however, such forbearance could be much more difficult for on-scene commanders.

Contingency plans can be a source of unanticipated authorized actions if national leaders do not fully understand the operational implications of the plans or do not have the time or inclination to carefully review the content of a plan before ordering it executed. Although United States military contingency plans contain a broad range of options for the employment of military forces, civilian policy-makers tend to view most predefined military options as inappropriate because the options were designed for a crisis scenario different than the one at hand, or were defined to meet purely military objectives rather than the requirements for employment of military forces in a crisis.⁶ As was discussed in detail in Chapter IV, there are inherent limits on the ability of contingency planning.

⁵ See the case study of the 1973 Middle East War in Chapter VII of this study.

⁶ See Graham T. Allison, Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1971), pp. 83-89; Leo Hazelwood, John J. Hayes, and James R. Brownell, Jr., "Planning for Problems in Crisis Management," International Studies Quarterly 21 (March 1977): 93; Blue Ribbon Defense Panel, Report to the President and the Secretary of Defense on the Department of Defense (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1970), p. 53.



In practice, top-level military and civilian officials jointly review and revise contingency plans to meet the needs of the specific crisis at hand prior to executing them. However, the possibility of a contingency plan setting in motion military operations that top-level political leaders had not anticipated cannot be excluded entirely.

The alert system can also be a source of unanticipated authorized actions. The President and his advisors--even the Secretary of Defense--may not be aware of the full range of actions that result from setting a higher level of Defense Condition of Readiness (DEFCON).⁷ Further, they may not be informed that a particular action has been initiated until it is too late to halt it or until it has already had an unanticipated effect on the crisis. The best example of this was the May 1960 "unintended" DEFCON 3 alert, which was initiated by an ambiguous message from Secretary of Defense Thomas Gates, then in France with President Eisenhower. The message directed the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to "quietly order a high state of command readiness," but did not specify a DEFCON level or give sufficient detail for military commanders to determine exactly what the Secretary

⁷John Steinbruner, "An Assessment of Nuclear Crises," in Franklyn Griffiths and John C. Polanyi, eds., The Dangers of Nuclear War (Toronto: University Of Toronto Press, 1979), p. 228. Also see Garry³D. Brewer and Paul Bracken, "Some Missing Pieces of the C³I Puzzle," Journal of Conflict Resolution 28 (September 1984): 454.



of Defense desired. The result was a much greater level of highly visible military activity than had been desired.⁸ Such an incident is probably less likely to occur today, but a wide range of unanticipated authorized actions could still result from a presidential decision to set a higher level of DEFCON.

The most important potential source of unanticipated authorized actions is operational decisions made by tactical level military commanders on the basis of guidance contained in standing orders, mission orders, or the rules of engagement. Even when under direct control by top-level political authorities, operational commanders usually have sufficient authority to take actions that could significantly affect the development of a crisis. Ambiguous or ambivalent orders greatly increase the likelihood of unanticipated authorized actions by leaving the on-scene commander uncertain as to the objectives of his mission, the intentions of national leaders, and the actions he is authorized to take. Movement of forces outside the scene of a crisis into battle positions, employment of weapons in self-defense in accordance with the rules of engagement, and stepped up surveillance of sensitive targets are all actions the President might not anticipate as resulting from his decisions, but which could raise tensions in a crisis.

⁸ Scott D. Sagan, "Nuclear Alerts and Crisis Management," International Security 9 (Spring 1985): 102-6.



Four examples will illustrate the types of unanticipated authorized actions that can occur. The first example concerns two instances of clashes between United States and Soviet forces during the Korean War. Despite the stringent measures that had been imposed on air operations to prevent incidents with the Soviet Union, two serious engagements between United States Navy aircraft and Soviet aircraft took place during the war. The first was on September 4, 1950, over the Yellow Sea. U.S. Navy jet fighters intercepted two Soviet twin-engined bombers approaching a U.S. carrier task force, and when one of the bombers fired on the fighters it was shot down. The body of one of the bomber's crewmen was recovered, confirming that the plane had been Soviet. The second was on November 18, 1952, over the Sea of Japan. U.S. Navy jet fighters intercepted seven Soviet jet fighters approaching a U.S. carrier task force, shooting down at least two of them.⁹ In both cases the carrier task force commanders were authorized to order an intercept to defend their ships under the governing "measures for self-preservation" (the old Navy term for rules of engagement). Neither incident caused a political confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union, but both had the

⁹ Malcolm W. Cagle and Frank A. Manson, The Sea War in Korea (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1957), pp. 469-475; James A. Field, Jr., History of United States Naval Operations: Korea (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1962), pp. 167-9, 440-1.



potential to seriously complicate efforts to keep the Korean War limited.

The second example occurred in July 1953, when six ships under the command of Vice Admiral Walter G. Schindler were dispatched to search for survivors from a U.S. Air Force RB-50 reconnaissance plane shot down by Soviet fighters over the Sea of Japan about thirty miles off the coast of the Soviet Union. Vice Admiral Schindler's orders did not specify how close to the Soviet coast he was allowed to search, so he sent the following message to his superiors stating "I intend to take my ships as close to Russian territory as is necessary to recover the airmen from the crashed aircraft" and that he would "brook no interference" from the Soviets.¹⁰ By the time Vice Admiral Schindler received a response directing him to remain clear of Soviet territorial waters, he had already recovered the only survivor that could be located. As it turned out, the survivor was found in international waters, none of Vice Admiral Schindler's ships entered Soviet territorial waters, and there was no harassment of his force by Soviet ships or planes.¹¹ However, an action like this could produce a

¹⁰Field, pp. 457-9; Rear Admiral Daniel V. Gallery, The Pueblo Incident (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Co., 1970), p. 57; Vice Admiral Walter G. Schindler, letter to author, March 19, 1988. Vice Admiral Schindler confirmed that he sent the message described by Rear Admiral Gallery.

¹¹Field, p. 459; Gallery, p. 58; Schindler letter.



serious Soviet-American confrontation if handled less with less skill or undertaken in more tense circumstances.

The third example occurred on July 26, 1954 over the South China Sea. Two days earlier Chinese fighters had shot down a British air liner en route from Singapore to Hong Kong. China apologized for the incident, but harassed U.S. ships and planes engaged in the search for survivors. In response, the United States moved a task group built around carriers USS Hornet (CVA 16) and USS Philippine Sea (CVS 47) into the Tonkin Gulf in a show of force. On July 26, two Chinese fighters attempting to attack search planes were shot down by Navy fighters flying combat air patrol for the search effort.¹² As in the Korean War incidents described above, the planes acted in compliance with authorized "measures for self-preservation."

The fourth example occurred during the 1967 Arab-Israeli War. Sixth Fleet movements on the first day of the war--a significant signal to the Soviets of American intentions--resulted from a decision made on-scene not related to

¹²"2 MIG's Downed British Airliner Off Red China Coast, Pilot Says," New York Times, July 24, 1954, p. 1; "Plane Loss Laid to Peiping; U.S. Carriers Rush to Scene," New York Times, July 25, 1954, p. 1; "Peiping, Apologizing, Calls Downing of Plane Accident," New York Times, July 26, 1954, p. 1; "U.S. Rescue Planes Fired Upon, Down 2 Red China Craft," New York Times, July 27, 1954, p. 1. For details on the downing of the Chinese planes, see Admiral Harry D. Felt, "The Reminiscences of Admiral Harry Donald Felt, U.S. Navy (Retired)," Volume I (Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, Oral History Program, 1974), pp. 268-9.

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crisis management efforts taking place in the White House.¹³ In this instance, the decision of the Sixth Fleet Commander to move the carrier strike force did not create any problems in managing the crisis. In other circumstances, however, fleet movements unanticipated by national leaders could complicate crisis management efforts by sending unintended political signals to the adversary.

Although none of these examples of unanticipated authorized actions created crisis management problems for American leaders, similar low-level decisions could be more troublesome under other circumstances.

Military Accidents

Military accidents are actions not ordered or deliberately initiated at any level in the chain of command. Military accidents are troublesome because decision-makers may fail to realize they are unauthorized and perceive them as a deliberate provocation, signal of hostile intent, or escalation. This problem is compounded by modern communications systems, which in theory give national leaders in many countries the capability for detailed control of military operations and the ordering specific tactical actions.¹⁴ Richard N. Lebow has warned

¹³Jonathan T. Howe, Multicrises (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1971), p. 148.

¹⁴Williams, p. 202.



that since any military action could conceivably be the result of orders from national leaders, an adversary may assume that those leaders in fact ordered a given action, whether or not the conclusion is warranted.¹⁵ Thus, virtually any military actions can assume strategic importance if believed to have been conceived and personally supervised by national leaders.

In practice, national leaders and even military commanders attempt to distinguish accidents from deliberate provocations or attacks: U.S. naval commanders did so in the 1967 Israeli attack on the Liberty, and Khrushchev did so during the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, when a U.S. U-2 strayed over the Soviet Union.¹⁶ Among the factors that are considered when evaluating whether a particular incident was a provocation or an accident are (a) the international political climate (Did the adversary have political and military motives to make a deliberate provocation or attack?), (b) the overall pattern of military operations at the time of the incident (Was the incident isolated or one of several attacks?), and (c) whether the circumstances of

¹⁵Richard N. Lebow, Between Peace and War: The Nature of International Crises (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981), p. 287. Also see Captain W.T.T. Pakenham, "The Command and Control of Naval Operations: Principles and Organization," Naval Forces 7 (1/1986): 50.

¹⁶On the Liberty incident, see the case study in Chapter VIII of this study. On the U-2 incident, see Roger Hilsman, To Move A Nation (New York: Doubleday, 1967), p. 221.



of the incident indicate that it was a deliberate action (Were appropriate combat tactics used?). However, when assessment of a military accident must be made in the fog of a crisis, with possibly incomplete and erroneous information coming in from the scene and decision makers attempting to sort out adversary intentions under great stress, the possibility of an accident being misperceived as a deliberate provocation or attack is heightened.

U.S. and Soviet leaders have used communications with each other to clarify whether incidents were accidents or provocations. One tactic is to assume (at least for diplomatic purposes) that an isolated incident was an accident, but warn that further such incidents would be viewed as deliberate provocations or attacks. Khrushchev may have used this approach when a U.S. U-2 strayed over the Soviet Union during the Cuban Missile Crisis, warning President Kennedy that the incident could have had serious consequences. Both of the superpowers have used the "hot line" to prevent incidents from becoming confrontations: In the 1967 Middle East War the United States informed the Soviet Union of its military response to the attack on the Liberty, and in the 1973 Middle East War the Soviet Union protested the sinking of a Soviet merchant ship during an Israeli raid on a Syrian harbor.¹⁷ Communications between the United

¹⁷On the 1973 Middle East War incident, see the case study in Chapter VII of this study.



States and the Soviet Union, particularly over the hot line, have thus proven valuable for sorting out accidents from provocations (and for preventing provocations from recurring by warning against similar "accidents" in the future).

Situations could arise, however, in which national leaders or on-scene military commanders on the side that was the victim of a military accident perceive that they do not have time for communications with the other side before taking a military response to an apparent deliberate attack.

An almost infinite variety of military accidents conceivably could occur during international crises. For descriptive purposes, the various types of military accidents will be grouped into the following categories: aircraft incidents, ship and submarine incidents, peacetime weapons incidents, wartime weapons incidents, and miscellaneous incidents. As will be seen in Chapter VII, military accidents rarely occur in crises. Accidents that occurred under noncrisis peacetime conditions and in limited war situations will therefore be used to illustrate the range of military accidents that could possibly occur during a crisis. The reasons why military accidents are rare in crises will be addressed in the final section of this chapter.

Aircraft incidents are the most common type of military accident and can be subdivided into three categories: airspace violations, midair collisions, and



crashes.¹⁸ U.S. military aircraft occasionally have strayed into unfriendly airspace, provoking reactions ranging from diplomatic protests to use of force to down the planes. The following paragraphs will briefly describe all known incidents of this type.¹⁹ The first such incident after World War II occurred on August 9, 1946, when a U.S. C-47 transport that had strayed over Yugoslavia was forced to land. The crew and passengers of the plane were released two weeks later.

The greatest number of incidents occurred during the 1950s. On June 8, 1951, two U.S. Air Force F-80 jet fighters got lost over Germany and landed in Czechoslovakia. The Czechs returned the planes and their pilots a month later.

¹⁸The examples of airspace violations and midair collisions that will be presented all appear to have been inadvertent. It is recognized, however, that both superpowers have motives for taking these actions deliberately: an airspace violation might be viewed as necessary for an especially high priority reconnaissance mission, and a minor midair collision could be used to send a particularly strong political signal. The crashes that will be discussed also all appear to have been accidents, rather than caused by hostile action. It is conceivable, however, that a deliberate downing of an aircraft could be portrayed as an accident, at least by the Soviet Union.

¹⁹This list is based on published and unclassified sources, and therefore probably is not comprehensive. Not all airspace violations are reported in the press or protested by the country whose airspace was violated. However, any additional incidents were probably very minor and would not affect the findings of this chapter. Excluded from the list are deliberate U.S. airspace violations, such as the U-2 overflights of the Soviet Union conducted from 1956 to 1960, and inadvertent violations of Chinese airspace during the Vietnam War (which will be discussed under wartime incidents).

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A U.S. C-47 was forced to land in Hungary on November 19, 1951. The four-man crew was returned several months later. Two U.S. Navy attack planes were attacked by Czech jet fighters on March 12, 1954, close to or inside Czech airspace. The Navy planes escaped with minor damage. There were three incidents in 1958. On June 8 an unarmed U.S. Army helicopter strayed over East Germany and was forced to make an emergency landing. East Germany seized the nine crewmen and passengers, but released them a month later. On June 27 a U.S. Air Force C-118 cargo plane that strayed over Soviet Armenia was fired on but managed to crash land. The nine crewmen and passengers were released by the Soviets twelve days later. On September 2 a U.S. Air Force C-130 transport with seventeen men aboard strayed over the Soviet Union and was shot down. This incident increased Soviet-American tensions because the United States believed that the Soviets had lured the plane over their territory with false radio navigation beacons, because the Soviets refused to admit that they had shot down the plane (the U.S. recorded conversations of the the Soviet fighter pilots during the attack), and because the Soviets refused to return eleven of the bodies to the United States (raising suspicions that the men were being held prisoner).²⁰

²⁰ See U.S. Department of State, Historical Office, Bureau of Public Affairs, American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1959 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, June 1963), pp. 994-1000; Office of the Chief of



Incidents involving U.S. planes continued to occur in the 1960s. U.S. U-2 reconnaissance planes inadvertently flew over the Soviet Union twice in 1962: on August 30 and October 27 (at the height of the Cuban Missile Crisis). On May 17, 1963, a U.S. Army helo patrolling the demilitarized zone (DMZ) between North and South Korea strayed into North Korean airspace and was shot down, but managed to make a crash landing. The two-man crew was held prisoner for a year before being released. On January 28, 1964, a U.S. Air Force T-39 jet trainer (similar to a civilian Lear Jet) was shot down by Soviet fighters after straying into East German airspace, killing all three pilots aboard the plane. On February 18, 1968, two U.S. Navy jets got lost in bad weather and flew over North Korean territory, prompting a diplomatic protest.²¹

Although the number of incidents involving U.S. aircraft declined significantly in the 1970s and 1980s, they

Naval Operations (OP-09B91R4), "Soviet Attacks on Western Planes," Memorandum, July 15, 1960 (Unclassified. Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC); Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, "List of U.S. Planes Involved in International Incidents," Memorandum, n.d. (Unclassified, ca. 1965. Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC. Cited hereafter as OPNAV, "List of U.S. Planes.").

²¹U.S. Department of State, Historical Office, Bureau of Public Affairs, American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1962 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, April 1966), pp. 744-45; "U.S. Concedes Air Violation," New York Times, February 19, 1968, p. 9; OPNAV, "List of U.S. Planes."

continued to occur. On July 14, 1977, an unarmed U.S. Army CH-47 transport helicopter strayed north over the DMZ into North Korean airspace and was shot down. Navy jets were again the culprits on April 4, 1983, when six of them accidentally overflew Soviet-occupied Zeleny Island in the Kurile chain north of Japan. The Soviets responded by placing their air defense forces in the Far East on alert, filing a diplomatic protest, and overflying the Aleutians with long-range reconnaissance bombers. On April 20, 1984, a U.S. Army AH-1S helicopter on a routine patrol of the West German border strayed over Czechoslovakia and was fired on by Czech jets, but was able to return safely to West Germany.²²

In summary, U.S. planes or helos were shot down in three of the fifteen incidents (with a loss of twenty-three lives); planes or helos were either forced to land or crash-landed after being shot down, and their crews seized in six

²²Seymour M. Hersh, The Target Is Destroyed (New York: Random House, 1986), pp. 17-19; "Germans Say U.S. Copter Was Over Czechoslovakia," Washington Post, April 22, 1984, p. A17; "Army Concedes Copter Crossed Czech Frontier," New York Times, April 27, 1984, p. 8; "Pentagon Says Its Copter Violated Czech Airspace," Washington Post, April 27, 1984, p. A32. One other incident illustrates the many ways in which such incidents can occur. On July 28, 1966, the pilot of a U.S. U-2 apparently passed out while flying south over the Caribbean from Shreveport, Louisiana. The U-2 continued southward on autopilot until it ran out of fuel and crashed in Bolivia, after flying over Panama, Columbia, Peru and Brazil. See "U-2 Misses Florida Turn, flies to Panama, Vanishes," New York Times, July 29, 1966, p. 1; "Wreckage in Bolivia is Identified as U-2," New York Times, July 31, 1966, p. 4.



of the incidents; and planes or helos were able to escape unharmed or with minor damage in the remaining six incidents. Twelve of the incidents occurred between 1946 and 1968--the period of Soviet-American cold war tensions. Only three incidents occurred after the advent of detente in the early 1970s. As for geographic distribution, seven of the incidents occurred in the airspace of Eastern European countries, five occurred in Soviet airspace, and three occurred in North Korean airspace. U.S. Air Force planes were involved in eight of the incidents (this includes the two U-2 incidents), U.S. Army helos were involved in four incidents, and U.S. Navy planes were involved in three incidents. Two of the incidents (September 2, 1958, and April 4, 1983) significantly increased Soviet-American tensions, though without provoking crises.

Only one of the incidents occurred during a Soviet-American crisis: the U-2 that strayed over the Soviet Union on October 27, 1962, during the Cuban Missile Crisis. Soviet Premier Khrushchev warned that the incident could have been viewed as prelude to an American attack. These findings suggest that inadvertent violations of hostile airspace by U.S. aircraft are not a particularly great threat to crisis management, although they can exacerbate tensions. As a hypothetical example, if the U.S. Army helicopter that strayed over Czechoslovakia on April 20, 1984, had done so during the 1968 during the Soviet



invasion, tensions on the Czech-West German border could have risen considerably.

Soviet and Warsaw Pact military aircraft have frequently violated NATO airspace in Western Europe since the 1950s. In a sensational case, a Bulgarian Mig-17 photographic reconnaissance jet crashed in northern Italy on January 20, 1962. The pilot requested political asylum, claiming that he had flown to Italy in order to defect; the Bulgarian Government claimed the pilot had gotten lost and attempted to land in Italy; the Italian Defense Ministry suspected the plane was attempting to photograph a nearby NATO medium-range ballistic missile (MRBM) base. On July 14, 1966, an armed Soviet helo entered West German airspace and forced an unarmed U.S. Army helo to land. The Soviet helo was driven off when a West German border patrol fired flares at it. The Commander in Chief of U.S. Forces Europe (USCINCEUR) protested the incident to the Commander of the Group of Soviet Forces Germany. Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs Michael Burch stated in an April 26, 1984, Pentagon press conference that Warsaw Pact planes often violate the airspace of NATO nations, but that the normal Western response was simply to file diplomatic protests.²³

²³ "Photo MIG Down Near NATO Base," New York Times, January 21, 1962, p. 1; "Military in Italy Are Sure MIG Pilot Was Spy," New York Times, January 23, 1962, p. 7; "Soviet Accused in Copter Crash," New York Times, July 16,



In contrast to Soviet violations of Western European airspace, Soviet aircraft have only occasionally violated U.S. airspace. On March 15, 1963, two Soviet Tu-95 Bear reconnaissance bombers violated U.S. airspace over Alaska. U.S. Air Force fighters were scrambled but did not fire on the planes, and the U.S. Government filed a diplomatic protest of the incident. However, Soviet violations of U.S. airspace have been rare since the 1960s. On April 5, 1983, two Soviet Tu-95 reconnaissance bombers entered U.S. airspace over the Aleutian Islands, but Soviet planes normally avoid U.S. airspace.²⁴

On the other hand, U.S. fighters also frequently intercept and escort Soviet reconnaissance aircraft entering the U.S. air defense identification zone (ADIZ), which extends hundreds of miles beyond U.S. airspace. Although Soviet aircraft that only enter the U.S. ADIZ are not committing an airspace violation per se, the United States

1966; "Army Concedes Copter Crossed Czech Frontier," New York Times, April 27, 1984, p. 8. Soviet reconnaissance planes also frequently violate Japanese airspace. On December 9, 1987, for the first time since the end of World War II, Japanese interceptors fired warning shots at a Soviet plane that had entered Japanese airspace. The Soviet Union apologized for the incident. See "Japanese Jet Warns Soviet Plane," New York Times, December 10, 1987, p. 6; "Japan Given Apology by Soviet," New York Times, December 11, 1987, p. A18.

²⁴U.S. Department of State, Historical Office, Bureau of Public Affairs, American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1963 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1967), pp. 563-64; Hersh, p. 18.



(like many nations, including the Soviet Union) requires prior notification of aircraft entering its ADIZ--a simple, routine procedure normally accomplished by filing a standard flight plan (commercial aircraft) or ADIZ request (military aircraft). U.S. Air Force officials stated in 1983, for example, that fighters scrambled about 1,750 times a year to identify commercial and private planes that inadvertently entered the U.S. ADIZ without prior notification. Soviet military aircraft, not unexpectedly, do not comply with U.S. ADIZ procedures, hence are routinely intercepted when they enter the U.S. ADIZ.²⁵ There are no reported instances of Soviet aircraft violating the U.S. ADIZ or airspace during a crisis and exacerbating Soviet-American tensions, but the possibility of this happening cannot be discounted entirely.

Midair collisions are infrequent, but happen often enough to warrant attention. At least three such incidents have occurred between Soviet and U.S. or NATO planes since 1970. On March 31, 1970, a U.S. Navy F-4 jet fighter from USS Franklin D. Roosevelt (CVA 42) "brushed" a Soviet Tu-16 Badger reconnaissance bomber over the Mediterranean Sea, causing minor damage to both. In an almost identical

²⁵ See "U.S. Routinely Turns Back Soviet Planes Testing Defense Zone," Washington Post, September 3, 1983, p. A28; "U.S. Fighters Track Soviet Bombers," Washington Post, September 23, 1985, p. A16; "Soviet Planes Intercepted," Washington Post, September 12, 1986, p. A4; "U.S. Fighter Jets Turn Back Soviet Spy Plane Off Alaska," Washington Post, September 22, 1987, p. A4.

incident in October 1973, a U.S. Navy F-4 jet fighter from USS John F. Kennedy (CVA 67) collided with a Soviet Tu-16 Badger reconnaissance bomber over the Norwegian Sea. On September 13, 1987, a Soviet Su-27 jet fighter struck a Norwegian P-3 patrol plane over the Barents Sea, causing the Norwegian plane to lose an engine. In all three incidents both planes involved in the collision landed safely.²⁶

Ample opportunities for midair collisions arise because U.S. and Soviet reconnaissance planes and interceptors frequently meet in international airspace. In a crisis, a midair collision could well be viewed as a signal of hostile intent, a coercive threat, or an attempt to intimidate. Even worse, if one of the aircraft involved in a midair collision crashed, the side that lost it might think that its plane had been shot down by the other side.

The United States and the Soviet Union have observed each other's aircraft crash in accidents on several occasions over the past forty years. For example, on May 25, 1968, a Soviet Tu-16 Badger reconnaissance bomber crashed in the Norwegian Sea while conducting low altitude surveillance of the USS Essex (CVS 9) ASW carrier group. U.S. Navy helicopters searched for survivors (there were

²⁶"Naval and Maritime Events January 1970-June 1970," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 97 (May 1971): 66; Vice Admiral Joe P. Moorer, Commander of the Kennedy carrier task group in October 1973, letter to author, April 18, 1988; "Soviet Jet Fighter Brushes Norwegian Patrol Plane," New York Times, September 14, 1987, p. 15.



none) and a U.S. destroyer notified a Soviet destroyer of the crash. A Department of Defense spokesman was quick to state that U.S. ships and planes "in no way interfered with, hampered, or threatened the Soviet aircraft at any time or in any way prior to the crash."²⁷ It appears that in this case and the other cases both sides recognized that the crashes were accidents--at least no public accusations were made that the other side had caused the crash. In a crisis, however, the side that lost a plane in a crash at sea might think that its plane had been shot down by the other side, exacerbating tensions.

Although this study does not address civil aircraft incidents per se, they could exacerbate tensions in a crisis. Civil aircraft have also strayed over hostile airspace and been forced to land or shot down. A partial list of some of the more sensational civilian aircraft incidents shows that they occur often enough to warrant concern: On April 5, 1948 (before the Berlin Crisis erupted in June), a British airliner crashed in Berlin after a midair collision with a Soviet fighter. On April 29, 1952, Soviet fighters fired on an Air France airliner over East Germany. On July 23, 1954, Chinese fighters shot down a British Cathay Pacific airliner over the Pacific. On July 27, 1955, Bulgarian fighters shot down an Israeli El Al

²⁷ "Soviet Bomber Falls After Pass Near U.S. Carrier," New York Times, May 26, 1968, p. 4.



airliner over Bulgaria. On February 21, 1973, Israeli fighters shot down a Libyan airliner over the Israeli-occupied Sinai Peninsula. On April 20, 1978, Soviet fighters fired on a Korean Air Lines airliner over the Kola Peninsula, forcing it to crash land. Incidents involving civilian airliners are not considered to be tactical-level military interaction for the purposes of this study, but they can have political effects similar to those of inadvertent military incidents.

Two sensational civil aircraft incidents--each involving one of the superpowers--have occurred in recent years. The first incident occurred on September 1, 1983, when the Soviet Union shot down Korean Airlines Flight 007 after it strayed over the Kamchatka Peninsula and Sakhalin Island. The Soviets tried to justify shooting down the South Korean plane by claiming that it had been on an intelligence mission for the United States, and by claiming that they had identified it as a U.S. intelligence plane.²⁸

The second incident occurred on July 3, 1988, when the U.S. guided missile cruiser USS Vincennes (CG 49) shot down Iran Air Flight 655 over the Strait of Hormuz. At the time of the incident Vincennes and another U.S. ship were engaged in a gun battle with Iranian small craft that had attacked a

²⁸See Alexander Dallin, Black Box: KAL 007 and the Superpowers (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), pp. 7-15; Hersh, pp. 131-132, 158, 163-165, 171.



Norwegian ship and fired on a U.S. Navy helo. Vincennes sent repeated warnings over international radio channels for the plane to identify itself and state its intentions, all of which were missed or ignored by the Iranian airliner as it flew toward the U.S. warship. Vincennes misidentified the plane as an Iranian Air Force F-14 jet fighter and shot it down. It is clear from statements made by Admiral William J. Crowe, Jr., and other senior naval officers that the Commanding Officer of the Vincennes had complied with the rules of engagement issued to U.S. forces operating in the Persian Gulf. A Navy inquiry blamed the incident on an identification error on the part of radar operators.²⁹

The Korean Air Lines Flight 007 and Iran Air Flight 655 incidents occurred under much different tactical circumstances--the Korean plane was shot down in peacetime; the Iranian plane was shot down in the midst of a battle. But for this very reason the two incidents illustrate how civilian aircraft, by being misidentified as military aircraft or viewed as on a military mission despite civilian markings, could inadvertently become the target of military action and exacerbate a crisis.

²⁹"U.S. Downs Iran Airliner Mistaken for F-14," New York Times, July 4, 1988, p. 1; "Statement by Joint Chiefs Head," New York Times, July 4, 1988, p. 4; "U.S. Pushes Inquiry on Downing of Jet," New York Times, July 5, 1988, p. A1; "Senators Assert Warship Captain Reacted Properly," New York Times, July 7, 1988, p. A1; "Errors by a Tense U.S. Crew Led to Downing of Iran Jet, Inquiry is Reported to Find," New York Times, July 11, 1988, p. 1.



A wide variety of incidents involving naval ships and submarines can occur on the high seas. Many, perhaps most, incidents are accidents, but others, particularly incidents between Soviet and American naval vessels, are deliberate. This discussion will be limited to accidents, primarily collisions, involving naval ships and submarines. Deliberate incidents will be discussed later, in the section on incidents at sea.³⁰ There will be some overlap in the two discussions because collisions can be deliberate and in some instances it is not clear if the collisions were deliberate or accidental. Furthermore, accidental collisions can occur during deliberate harassment. The focus of this discussion will be on apparent accidental collisions.

Soviet violations of the nautical rules of the road and near collisions with U.S. naval vessels became a serious problem in 1960. Prior to then the Soviet Navy had been very small and limited its operations to coastal waters and adjacent seas. One of first near collisions occurred on April 26, 1960, when the Soviet intelligence collection ship

³⁰The term "incidents at sea" is used by the U.S. Navy to cover all incidents, whether accidental or deliberate, involving U.S. and Soviet naval vessels and aircraft. The Navy term is used in this study in order to provide an indication of the types of Soviet behavior to which U.S. Navy commanders object. This is important because, as will be seen in Chapter VII, in past crises U.S. civilian authorities have not shown an awareness of what exactly is going on at sea when they order naval forces to the scene of a crisis, and have not understood the dangers that can arise from deliberate Soviet harassment.

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(AGI) Vega nearly collided with the U.S. Navy tug USS Nipmuc (ATF 157) while monitoring submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM) test launches off the coast of Long Island. This is a good example of an accidental collision nearly resulting from deliberate behavior--in this case an extremely aggressive intelligence collection effort. The United States responded to this and several similar incidents over the next twelve years with numerous diplomatic protests, all of which were rejected by the Soviet Union.³¹

The first actual collision between Soviet and American naval vessels occurred on June 24, 1966, when the Soviet AGI Anemometer collided with the intelligence collection ship USS Banner (AGER 1) in the Sea of Japan. Almost a year later the second and third collisions occurred, also in the Sea of Japan. On May 10, 1967, the destroyer USS Walker (DD 517), which was participating in an anti-submarine warfare exercise, was struck by a Soviet destroyer that had been

³¹U.S. Department of State, Historical Office, Bureau of Public Affairs, American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1964 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1967), pp. 669-74; "U.S. Tells Soviet It Imperils Ships," New York Times, April 4, 1965, p. 1; "U.S. Protests Harassment of Ships by Soviets; Rejects Soviet Charges," Department of State Bulletin 52 (May 3, 1965): 655-58; Naval Historical Center, "Post-1 JAN 1960 Incidents," Memorandum, n.d. (Unclassified, ca. April 1965. Post-World War II Special Lists File, Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC. Cited hereafter as "Post-1 JAN 1960 Incidents."). Incidents not otherwise footnoted were found in Jack Sweetman, American Naval History: An Illustrated Chronology (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1984).



harassing the U.S. ships. The collision caused only minor damage to the two destroyers. The next day, May 11, a second Soviet destroyer collided with the Walker, again with only minor damage to both ships. The United States promptly delivered strongly-worded diplomatic protests after each incident. The Soviet Union, however, blamed the collisions on U.S. "provocative maneuvers" in the Sea of Japan. Although some U.S. officials speculated that the two collisions had been deliberate, perhaps as a political signal of Soviet displeasure with U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War, the Captain of the Walker stated that the collisions appeared to have been accidental.³²

The third and final collision that occurred prior to signing of the Incidents at Sea Agreement in 1972 was between the U.S. destroyer USS Hanson (DD 832) and the Soviet tug Diomede in the Korean Strait on May 5, 1971. This minor collision, which was caused by the Soviet tug violating the nautical rules of the road, did not have serious repercussions for Soviet-American relations.

³²"A U.S. Destroyer In Far East Bumped By Soviet Warship," New York Times, May 11, 1967, p. 1; "A Soviet Warship Bumps U.S. Vessel 2d Time in 2 Days," New York Times, May 12, 1967, p. 1; "U.S. Plays Down Sea Harassment by Russians," New York Times, May 13, 1967, p. 11; "U.S. Says Incident With Soviet Ships Is a 'Closed' Issue," New York Times, May 14, 1967, p. 1; "U.S. Skipper Views Bumpings as Error, But Criticizes Soviet," New York Times, May 18, 1967, p. 1; U.S. Department of State, Historical Office, Bureau of Public Affairs, American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1967 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1969), pp. 456-59.



All three of the collisions that occurred from 1966 to 1971 appear to have been accidents. The cause in each case was Soviet violations of the nautical rules of the road and dangerous maneuvers close to U.S. naval vessels. The Banner and Walker incidents were probably cases of accidental collisions during deliberate harassment. The fact that some U.S. officials perceived the Walker incident as deliberate harassment for purposes of political signalling illustrates the potential political impact of accidents at sea.

Although the number of incidents between U.S. and Soviet naval vessels declined significantly after the Incidents at Sea Agreement was signed in 1972, collisions have not been entirely eliminated. In fact, there have been as many accidental collisions since the agreement was signed as there had been before the agreement. On August 28, 1976, a Soviet Echo II nuclear-powered guided missile submarine (SSGN) collided with the frigate USS Voge (FF 1047) in the Mediterranean Sea. The collision was caused by the Soviet submarine, which had been surfaced and on a parallel course with Voge, suddenly turning into the U.S. ship's port side. Voge suffered serious damage to her propeller and had to be towed into port for repairs; the Soviet submarine was damaged but left the scene under its own power. On November 17, 1983, the Soviet Krivak I-class frigate Razyashchey, which had been shadowing the USS Ranger (CV 61) carrier group, collided with the destroyer USS Fife (DD 991) in the



Arabian Sea. Although the Soviet ship caused the collision by violating the rules of the road, Fife had been maneuvering to prevent Razyashchey from approaching too close to Ranger--a tactic aptly described by the Navy as "shouldering." The collision caused only very minor damage to the two ships. The United States filed an Incidents at Sea Agreement protest over the incident. On March 21, 1984, the carrier USS Kittyhawk (CV 63) collided with a Soviet Victor-class nuclear-powered attack submarine (SSN) in the Sea of Japan. The collision, which occurred at night, apparently was caused by the Soviet submarine surfacing directly ahead of the carrier at short range. Kittyhawk suffered minor damage, but the Soviet submarine was forced to remain surfaced and was escorted back to port on the surface--an indication of serious damage.³³

³³"Soviet Sub and U.S. Frigate Damaged in Crash," New York Times, August 31, 1976, p. 3; "Soviet Frigate Collides With U.S. Destroyer," Washington Post, November 18, 1983, p. A1; "U.S. and Soviet Ships Collide; Navy Says Accident Is Minor," New York Times, November 18, 1983, p. 4; "Soviet Sub Bumps Into U.S. Carrier," Washington Post, March 22, 1984, p. A1; "Soviet Sub and U.S. Ship Collide," New York Times, March 22, 1984, p. 3. In addition to these three accidental collisions, there have two two instances of deliberate Soviet collisions with U.S. ships since 1972 (described in the section of this chapter on incidents at sea). Soviet naval vessels have also collided with the ships of other Western navies. On November 9, 1970, a Soviet Kotlin-class destroyer that had been harassing the British aircraft carrier Ark Royal and her escorts in the eastern Mediterranean struck the side of the carrier after a dangerous maneuver across the carrier's bow. The Soviet destroyer suffered serious damage and lost two men overboard (they apparently died). See "Soviet and British Warships Collide," New York Times, November 11, 1970, p. 2.



There are two differences between the pattern of accidental collisions prior to the Incidents at Sea Agreement and the pattern since the agreement was signed. First, whereas before the agreement two of three collisions occurred during deliberate Soviet harassment of U.S. naval vessels, after the agreement only one of three collisions (the Fife incident) occurred during Soviet harassment. Second, whereas there were no collisions between ships and submarines before the agreement, there were two such collisions after the agreement. Both of the ship-submarine collisions apparently were caused by poor seamanship on the part of Soviet submarine captains. The overall trend--based on a very small number of cases--appears to be greater Soviet Navy caution in surveillance of U.S. Navy ships (less dangerous maneuvering at close quarters), but more aggressive Soviet use of submarines for close surveillance (resulting in more ship-submarine incidents). Additionally, there is an important continuity: the Incidents at Sea Agreement has not significantly reduced the frequency of accidental collisions.³⁴ Despite the agreement's merits, it has not been sufficient to prevent accidental collisions.

³⁴ A statistical analysis tells us little because of the small number of cases. Using the overall period in which serious threat of collisions existed (1960-1987) yields the following frequency of collisions: one every four years prior to the Incidents at Sea Agreement (1960-1972), and one every five years since the agreement (1972-1987). A single accidental collision in 1988 would lower the post-agreement rate to equal the pre-agreement rate.



There have been several unconfirmed reports of undersea collisions between U.S. and Soviet submarines: in late 1969 involving USS Gato (SSN 615), on March 31, 1971 involving an unidentified U.S. SSN, in May 1974 involving USS Pintado (SSN 672), in November 1974 involving USS James Madison (SSBN 627), and in 1986 USS Augusta (SSN 710).

Allegations of additional undersea submarine collisions have also been made.³⁵ Although none of these incidents can be confirmed, they suggest an additional type of naval incident that could complicate crisis management efforts. Neither the international nautical rules of the road nor the Soviet-American Incidents at Sea Agreement govern the behavior of submarines while submerged (surfaced submarines are clearly governed by the rules of the road and must remain clear of other vessels). Interactions between U.S. and Soviet submarines while submerged are thus regulated only by policies established by their respective navies, and by the caution and prudence of their commanding officers.

Accidental collisions, although infrequent, remain a concern from a crisis management perspective because they can increase tensions and be misperceived as deliberate

³⁵"U.S. and Soviet Submarines Are Said to Have Collided," New York Times, January 2, 1975, p. 16; "Submarines of U.S. Stage Spy Missions Inside Soviet Waters," New York Times, May 25, 1975, p. 42; "Collision of U.S. and Soviet Subs Off Siberia in 1974 Is Recounted," New York Times, July 4, 1975, p. 21; "A False Navy Report Alleged in Sub Crash," New York Times, July 6, 1975, p. 1; "U.S., Soviet Subs Apparently Collided," Washington Post, March 2, 1987, p. A12.



provocations. The very fact that accidental collisions are relatively rare would make one occurring during a future crisis automatically suspect, particularly if the ship that is the victim of the collision suffered much greater damage than the ship that caused the collision. If a U.S. destroyer had collided with a Soviet submarine at the height of the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis (Say, on October 27), severely damaging or sinking the submarine, President Kennedy probably would have had difficulty convincing Khrushchev that the incident was an accident. Khrushchev might well have viewed the collision as deliberate U.S. retaliation for the shooting down of an American U-2 that same day. Such a hypothetical incident might not have prevented resolution of the crisis short of war the next day (October 28), but certainly would not have made that resolution any easier.

Collisions also occur between naval ships or submarines and civilian vessels. On February 1, 1968, the U.S. destroyer USS Rowan (DD 782) collided with the soviet merchant ship Kapitan Vislobokov in the Sea of Japan. At the time, the U.S. Navy was conducting high-tempo operations in the Sea of Japan in the wake of the North Korean seizure of the USS Pueblo (AGER 2). On April 9, 1981, the U.S. submarine USS George Washington (SSBN 598) collided with the Japanese merchant ship Nissho Maru in the East China Sea, sinking the ship and killing two of its crewmen. This was one of at least eight collisions between U.S. submarines and



civilian merchant ships from 1965 to 1982, but the only one in which the merchant ship was sunk. Of the eight collisions, four involved SSBNs, two involved SSNs, and two involved conventional attack submarines (SS). None of the U.S. submarines was seriously damaged. No Soviet merchant ships were involved in any of the collisions with U.S. submarines (the ships were of Norwegian, Lebanese, West German, Philippine, Japanese, Turkish, and U.S. registry).³⁶

Submarines belonging to the Soviet Union and other countries have also collided with civilian vessels. On September 21, 1984, a Soviet Victor-class SSN collided with a Soviet merchant ship in the Strait of Gibraltar, seriously damaging the submarine and apparently sinking the merchant ship. On at least two occasions Western submarines have collided with Soviet Bloc merchant ships: on September 1, 1976, a Turkish submarine collided with a Soviet freighter, and on January 21, 1983, a West German submarine collided

³⁶On the Rowan incident, see "Soviet and U.S. Ships Collide," New York Times, February 3, 1964, p. 4. On the submarine-ship collisions, see "A-Powered Sub Damaged, Hit By Turkish Ship," Washington Post, March 24, 1982, p. A12; "Naval and Maritime Events 1981," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 108 (May 1982): 62; "Naval and Maritime Events, 1 July 1968-31 December 1969," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 96 (May 1970): 52; "Sub in Collision Off Spain," New York Times, August 10, 1968, p. 27; "U.S. Nuclear Submarine and Freighter Collide," New York Times, January 11, 1965, p. 41; "U.S. Submarine Collides With Freighter Off China," New York Times, August 12, 1965, p. 54. The author was told by a retired senior naval officer that there was a collision between a U.S. submarine and a Soviet merchant ship in 1965, but was unable to confirm the incident.



with an East German passenger liner.³⁷ Thus, consideration of maritime accidents that could affect international crises must include the possibility of collisions between submarines and merchant ships.

During a crisis, an accident involving a naval vessel of one side and a civilian merchant ship of the other side could be viewed as a deliberate provocation in two situations: First, if the naval vessel sank and the cause was not immediately known, the side that lost the ship could well suspect hostile action by the adversary. Second, if the merchant ship was sunk or seriously damaged, and had been carrying military supplies or other critical materials to an ally directly involved in fighting, the side that owned the ship could well suspect that the collision was a deliberate attempt to prevent delivery of its cargo.

³⁷ "Soviet Sub, Merchant Ship Collide, Damaging Both in Gibraltar Strait," Washington Post, September 22, 1984, p. A16; Jane's Defense Weekly, October 20, 1984, p. 667; "Soviet Ship in Collision," New York Times, September 2, 1976, p. 16; "Ship that Hit Andrea Doria is Hit," New York Times, January 22, 1983, p. 2. There have also been two reported instances of Soviet submarines colliding with Soviet surface combatants on the high seas. See "Damaged Submarine Is Sighted in the Caribbean," New York Times, September 6, 1973, p. 74; "Soviet Sub Damaged in the Mediterranean," New York Times, February 4, 1970, p. 8.

³⁷ Destroyers and frigates are relatively small vessels that can be seriously damaged by large merchant vessels. For example, on June 6, 1971, the Soviet tanker Busharov collided with the French frigate Surcouf in the Mediterranean. The frigate's bow was sheared off and sank, nine of her crewmen were killed, and what was left of the ship had to be towed into port. See "9 Lost as Soviet Tanker Hits a French Warship," New York Times, June 7, 1971, p. 6.



Peacetime weapons accidents occur primarily during training exercises and maintenance or testing of weapons systems. Weapons accidents can also be a collateral result of other emergencies, such as an aircraft jettisoning ordnance to lower its weight after losing power or a ship jettisoning ordnance threatened by a fire. Jettisoned weapons normally do not cause as much damage as deliberately launched weapons, but can still cause substantial damage to ships or aircraft. Three types of peacetime weapons incidents will be discussed: tactical missile accidents, naval gunfire accidents, and torpedo accidents.

Tactical missiles are particularly accident-prone, and on several occasions have been accidentally launched or have gone astray after being deliberately launched. Air-to-air missiles, probably the least dangerous due to their relatively short range, have been involved in several accidents: On May 27, 1974, a U.S. Navy A-7 shot down a Navy A-4 off the coast of Florida; on July 22, 1974, a Navy F-4 shot down a Navy helicopter off the Philippines; and on September 22, 1987, a Navy F-14 accidentally shot down an Air Force F-4 during an exercise in the Mediterranean.³⁸ On at

³⁸"Naval and Maritime Events, January 1974-June 1974," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 101 (May 1975): 61; "Naval and Maritime Events, July 1974-December 1974," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 101 (May 1975): 141; "Navy F14 Downs Air Force Jet During Exercise," Washington Post, September 23, 1987, p. A4. The September 22, 1987, incident was caused by an inexperienced pilot mistaking an order to conduct a simulated attack as an order to conduct a real



least two occasions stray air-to-air missiles have struck ships: On August 12, 1968, a Navy missile hit a civilian oil survey vessel off the coast of California, setting it afire and injuring three crewmen; and on July 29, 1986, a civilian tanker was hit by a Navy missile off the coast of Virginia, causing a small fire but no injuries. On another occasion a Navy Bulpup air-to-surface missile accidentally hit a Navy rescue craft off the coast of California, sinking the vessel but miraculously not injuring any of the crew.³⁹

Anti-ship cruise missiles have also been involved in accidents. On July 14, 1981, the U.S. Navy guided missile destroyer USS Coontz (DDG 40) accidentally launched a Harpoon missile in the Caribbean Sea during routine system testing. The missile crashed into the sea at the end of its flight without striking anything. On December 28, 1984, an unarmed Soviet SS-N-3 missile launched during an exercise in the Barents Sea went astray, flew over northern Norway, and

attack. See "A War Game That Turned Real," San Jose Mercury News, April 11, 1988, p. 1A. This is significant because the Soviet Navy frequently conducts simulated attacks on U.S. Navy ships, and did so even at the height of Soviet-American tensions during the 1973 Middle East War (See Chapter VII). During an acute crisis, an anti-ship missile mistakenly launched at a U.S. Navy ship by an inexperienced Soviet pilot could easily be misperceived as a deliberate attack and provoke a sea battle, particularly if other Soviet units were simulating attacks at the same time.

³⁹ "Naval and Maritime Events, 1 July 1968-31 December 1969," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 96 (May 1970): 28; "Navy Missile Damages Tanker Off Norfolk," Washington Post, July 30, 1986, p. A10; "Navy Ship Sunk by Errant Missile," New York Times, February 7, 1968, p. 34.

crashed in Finland. The Soviet Government apologized for the incident.⁴⁰ Accidents with tactical missiles have the potential to cause an incident because both the United States and the Soviet Union (and their allies) routinely monitor the other side's naval exercises with ships and aircraft. Although greater caution is shown during crises, the possibility of an incident with a tactical missile cannot be eliminated.

Strategic nuclear missiles--intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), submarine launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), and long-range land-attack cruise missiles--are the safest of all missiles because of their greater safeguards against accidental launch, but are not immune to accidents. On May 9, 1973, a U.S. Navy Poseidon SLBM went out of control during a test flight and crashed in the Atlantic

⁴⁰ "Naval and Maritime Events, 1982," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 108 (May 1982): 87; "Soviet Cruise Missile Said to Stray Across Norway and Into Finland," New York Times, January 3, 1985, p. 1; "Norway and Finland Report Moscow Apology on Missile," New York Times, January 5, 1985, p. 4. The U.S. Harpoon missile carries only a conventional warhead; the Soviet SS-N-3 missile can carry either a nuclear or a conventional warhead. Lest it appear that such accidents are exclusively a Navy domain, two other incidents should be mentioned: On January 4, 1967, an unarmed U.S. Air Force Mace land attack cruise missile being used as a target drone went astray, flew over Cuba, and crashed in the Caribbean; and on September 12, 1967, an unarmed U.S. Army Pershing tactical ballistic missile went off course during a test flight and crashed in Mexico. See "U.S. Target Missile Strays Over the Tip of Cuba," New York Times, January 5, 1967, p. 19; "Unarmed Pershing Missile Strays Into Mexico," New York Times, September 13, 1967, p. 24. Operational versions of the Mace and Pershing missiles were armed with nuclear warheads.

near the Soviet AGI Zakarpatye. One of the more spectacular strategic missile incidents occurred on September 11, 1986, when a Soviet SS-N-8 SLBM on a routine test flight crashed in a remote area of northeastern China.⁴¹ Although an accident involving an operational strategic nuclear missile could have catastrophic consequences during an international crisis, the probability of such an incident appears to be extremely low due to the safeguards against accidental or unauthorized launch of strategic missiles. Additionally, an accident during a strategic missile test flight probably would not be misperceived as a deliberate attack because the superpowers carefully monitor each other's test flights.

The remaining types of peacetime weapons accidents--naval gunfire accidents and torpedo accidents--rarely have consequences as serious as tactical missile accidents, but could still exacerbate tensions in a crisis. On March 8, 1963, and February 5, 1979, shells fired by U.S. Navy ships during training exercises fell in the vicinity of Soviet vessels that were near or inside publicly announced training areas.⁴² A Soviet Navy Foxtrot-class submarine being towed

⁴¹"Naval and Maritime Events, January 1973-June 1973," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 100 (May 1974): 58; "A Soviet Missile Is Said to Misfire and Hit China," New York Times, September 16, 1986, p. 1.

⁴²U.S. Department of State, Historical Office, Bureau of Public Affairs, American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1963 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1967), pp. 563-63; "Naval and Maritime Events, 1979," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 100 (May 1980): 50.

to Cuba was involved in the second incident. Torpedo accidents normally occur during exercises and testing: On April 23, 1958, the destroyer USS Yarnall (DD 541) was struck by a torpedo fired during an exercise, and on December 19, 1983, the frigate USS Jack Williams (FFG 24) accidentally launched a torpedo that landed on the pier next to the ship but did not explode. A more dangerous incident occurred on October 7, 1973, when a Soviet Kanin-class destroyer that had been shadowing a British aircraft carrier launched a torpedo in the midst of a NATO naval exercise. The Soviet destroyer had experienced an explosion and apparently jettisoned the torpedo to prevent it from being engulfed in the ensuing fire.⁴³ Although it was clear in this case that the torpedo launch was not a deliberate hostile act, a naval gunfire or torpedo incident at the height of a crisis could well be misperceived as an act of war--particularly if the shells or torpedo struck a warship belonging to the other side.

Once shooting starts, the probability of serious accidents greatly increases. Aircraft can easily stray over national borders into hostile airspace from which they had

⁴³"Destroyer Docks for Repairs," New York Times, April 24, 1958, p. 27; "U.S. Navy Ship sights Pier, Torpedoes Same," Washington Post, December 20, 1983, p. A3; "Naval and Maritime Events, July 1973-December 1973," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 100 (May 1974): 295; "Soviet Ship Fires Torpedo During NATO Exercise," The Times (London), October 8, 1973, p. 1.

been excluded. During the Korean War U.S. planes were forbidden from flying over Chinese or Soviet territory, but occasionally strayed over both countries. On at least two occasions U.S. planes accidentally attacked targets in China. The most serious incident occurred on October 8, 1950, when two U.S. Air Force F-80 jet fighters strayed over the border and strafed a Soviet airfield.⁴⁴ U.S. planes inadvertently entered Chinese airspace on several occasions during the Vietnam War and China publicly protested hundreds of alleged violations. There were no reported instances of U.S. planes attacking ground targets in China, but at least eight U.S. planes were shot down and one U.S. pilot captured by the Chinese.⁴⁵ Incidents similar to those that occurred in the Korean War and Vietnam War are to be expected when-ever sustained air combat operations are conducted close to international boundaries.

Inadvertent or indiscriminate attacks on naval vessels and civilian merchant ships also occur occasionally in

⁴⁴Robert F. Futrell, The United States Air Force In Korea, 1950-1953 (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1961), pp. 142, 208-11, 453, 567.

⁴⁵"Chinese Reds Say Fighters Downed U.S. Attack Plane," New York Times, April 13, 1966, p. 1; "China Charges Intrusion By U.S. Ship and Planes," New York Times, September 26, 1966, p. 2; "U.S. Says Plane Flew Over Hainan Accidentally," New York Times, February 10, 1967, p. 2; "2 U.S. Navy Jets Downed in China; One Pilot Seized," New York Times, August 22, 1967, p. 1; "Unarmed Navy Plane Downed by a Chinese Communist MIG," New York Times, February 15, 1968, p. 2; "467th Warning by Peking," New York Times, March 28, 1969, p. 40.

limited war situations. Two serious cases of U.S. planes attacking U.S. and allied naval vessels occurred during the Vietnam War. On the nights of June 16-17, 1968, U.S. Air Force fighters attacked radar targets that they believed were low-flying North Vietnamese aircraft or helicopters over South Vietnam. The Air Force planes actually fired on U.S. and Australian Navy ships off the coast of South Vietnam, sinking a U.S. Navy gunboat (PCF 19), and damaging the cruiser USS Boston (CAG 1), the destroyer USS Edson (DD 946), and the Australian destroyer HMAS Hobart (D 39). Seven American and two Australian sailors died in the Air Force attacks.⁴⁶ The second incident occurred on April 16, 1972, when a U.S. plane inadvertently fired a Shrike anti-radar missile at the USS Worden (DLG 18), seriously damaging the ship's antennas and superstructure and killing or wounding thirty crew-men.⁴⁷ Inadvertent attacks by U.S. forces against other U.S. forces dramatically illustrate the dangers inherent in limited war situations.

⁴⁶ "Naval and Maritime Events, 1 July 1968-31 December 1969," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 96 (May 1970): 24; Australian Department of Defence, Navy in Vietnam (Canberra: Australian Government Printing Service, 1980), pp. 59-60; George Odgers, The Royal Australian Navy: An Illustrated History (Hornsby, New South Wales: Child and Henry, 1982), p. 181; Eugene G. Windchy, Tonkin Gulf (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Co., 1971), p. 262.

⁴⁷ "Naval and Maritime Events, January 1972-June 1972," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 99 (May 1973): 56; "'72 Crippling of U.S. Ship Cited," Baltimore Sun, June 5, 1980, p. A4.



Soviet ships have been attacked on at least three occasions during limited war and crisis situations. On June 2, 1967, two U.S. Air Force F-105 fighter-bombers on a raid over North Vietnam accidentally attacked the Soviet freighter Turkestan in a North Vietnamese port. Knowing that they had violated strict regulations against attacks on foreign merchant ships in North Vietnamese ports, the pilots responsible for the attack initially attempted to hide their mistake. Consequently, the U.S. Government denied that American planes were to blame after the Soviet Union protested the incident.⁴⁸ On October 17, 1969 South Vietnamese Navy gunboats fired on a Soviet intelligence collection ship (AGI) allegedly in South Vietnamese waters near Danang. The Soviet vessel fled the scene trailing smoke.⁴⁹ This was a deliberate attack, rather than an accident, but illustrates the type of unanticipated incidents that can occur when superpower naval vessels

⁴⁸"Moscow Says U.S. Hit A Soviet Ship in Vietnam Port," New York Times, June 3, 1967, p. 1; "U.S. Denies Attack on Soviet Vessel in North Vietnam," New York Times, June 4, 1967, p. 1; "Moscow Rejects Denial of Attack," New York Times, June 6, 1967, p. 3; "Colonel Destroyed Proof U.S. Strafed Soviet Ship," New York Times, April 11, 1969, p. 11; Phil G. Goulding, Confirm or Deny: Informing the People on National Security (New York: Harper and Row, 1970), pp. 139-52.

⁴⁹"Saigon reports Its Patrol Boats Fired At and Hit Soviet Spy Ship," New York Times, October 18, 1969, p. 1; "Thieu Confirms Attack on Soviet Ship," New York Times, October 19, 1969, p. 3; "Naval and Maritime Events, 1 July 1968-31 December 1969," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 96 (May 1970): 545.



operate near a war zone. A third incident occurred during the 1973 Middle East War. Israeli missile boats raided the Syrian port of Tartus the night of October 11-12, sinking two Syrian missile boats and the Soviet freighter Ilya Mechnikov with anti-ship missiles. Israel expressed regret for sinking the Soviet ship and claimed that its forces had orders not to attack civilian vessels. In a message delivered to the U.S. on October 12, the Soviet Union protested the Israeli attack and warned the "The Soviet Union will of course take measures which it will deem necessary to defend its ships and other means of transportation."⁵⁰

Inadvertent or indiscriminate attacks on merchant ships or naval vessels could easily exacerbate tensions in a crisis.

The final category of military accidents is miscellaneous accidents. Three types of accidents in this category will be discussed: sinkings of naval vessels other than those caused by collisions or the adversary's weapons, explosions at shore bases, and electromagnetic interference incidents.

⁵⁰"Israel Is Accused in U.N. of Sinking a Soviet Ship," New York Times, October 13, 1973, p. 1; "3 Freighters Sunk," New York Times, October 13, 1973, p. 1; Henry Kissinger, Years of Upheaval (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1982), p. 510.

Sinkings of naval vessels can result from causes other than collisions or an adversary's weapons. The most common examples are sinkings of Soviet submarines, which are notoriously accident-prone. For example, on October 7, 1986 a Soviet Yankee-class SSBN on patrol in the Atlantic suffered an explosion and fire in its missile compartment. The submarine was able to surface, but sank three days later while under tow.⁵¹ Soviet surface ships have also been sunk in accidents. On August 19, 1970, a Soviet AGI that had been monitoring a NATO naval exercise in the North Sea capsized. A Soviet tug in the area rescued the crew. In September 1974, the Soviet Kashin-class guided missile destroyer Otvazhny exploded, burned, and sank in the Black Sea, with the loss of almost the entire crew.⁵² Incidents like these could cause serious tensions during a crisis if the Soviet ship or submarine sank without survivors and U.S. Navy units in the area were suspected by the Soviets of complicity in the unexplained loss of the vessel.

Major explosions at shore bases could also cause crisis management problems. On May 13, 1984, explosions and

⁵¹Norman Friedman, "World Naval Developments," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 112 (December 1986): 122; Jim Bussert, "The Safety of Soviet Nuclear Submarines," Jane's Defence Weekly, April 18 1987, pp. 715-720.

⁵²"Naval and Maritime Events, July 1970-December 1970," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 97 (May 1971): 337; "Soviet Ship Capsizes Near Nato exercise," New York Times, August 20, 1970, p. 14; "Soviet Destroyer Is Reported Sunk," New York Times, September 27, 1974, p. 7.

fires destroyed a Soviet naval tactical missile storage site in the Severmorsk base complex on the Kola Peninsula.⁵³ Had this disaster occurred at the height of the Cuban Missile Crisis, possibly at the same time an American U-2 was being pursued over Siberia, it might have triggered a Soviet perception of an American attack on the Soviet Union. Rational analysis of such an explosion would quickly lead to the conclusion that had not been of U.S. doing: U.S. forces would attack air defense sites and operational forces before ordnance storage sites, and a single, isolated attack would be highly unlikely. But in an acute crisis, with the two sides on the brink of war and military commanders on both sides focusing on worst-case scenarios, rational analysis could succumb to the effects of tension and stress. Furthermore, if it is safe to assume that the probability of an accident at an ordnance storage site is directly proportional to their level of activity, and that preparations for war during an acute crisis include delivery of ammunition to operational forces as their readiness is increased, then the contention can be made that an accident like this is more likely to occur during a crisis than at any other time.

Electromagnetic interference incidents are not uncommon, but normally do not cause serious problems and

⁵³"Soviets' Northern Fleet Disabled, 'Not Viable' for Six Months," Jane's Defense Weekly, July 14, 1984, pp. 3-4; Donald C. Daniel and Gael D. Tarleton, "The Soviet Navy in 1984," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 111 (May 1985): 362.

therefore are rarely reported in the press. Electronic warfare measures, such as jamming of radars or communications, commonly conducted for training or maintenance, have in the past inadvertently degraded other countries' weapons systems. Chaff, a cloud of metal particles used to confuse radars, has on occasion drifted astray, interfering with civilian air traffic control radars and even causing power outages. On at least one occasion Soviet Tu-95 Bear reconnaissance bombers operating off the east coast of the United States used chaff to interfere with U.S. air defense radars.⁵⁴ Other common electromagnetic emissions, such as high-powered radio and fire control radar transmissions, can interfere with other radios and radars. Such electromagnetic interference incidents could easily appear to be deliberate hostile acts in an acute crisis.

In summary, military accidents are actions not ordered or deliberately initiated at any level in the chain of command. They are troublesome from a crisis management perspective because decision-makers may fail to realize that the accidents were unauthorized and perceive them as deliberate provocations or signals of hostile intent. In practice, however, national leaders and military commanders attempt to distinguish accidents from deliberate provocations or attacks. Military accidents include aircraft

⁵⁴ "Pentagon Aides Say Soviet Planes Tried to Foil U.S. Radar," New York Times, October 15, 1977, p. 2.



incidents, ship and submarine incidents, peacetime weapons incidents, wartime incidents, and other incidents. These types of military accidents do not often occur during crises, but happen often enough under other conditions that they merit being a concern in crises.

Unauthorized Deliberate Actions

Unauthorized deliberate actions are ordered or executed by tactical-level military commanders in violation of orders issued directly by national leaders, or in violation of operational guidance contained in mechanisms of indirect control. One way in which an unauthorized deliberate action can occur is for a military commander to stretch the limits on the actions he is authorized to take-- complying with a broad interpretation of the letter of his orders rather than with what he knows to be the spirit of those orders. This type of unauthorized action is especially likely when the orders given to military forces are vague or ambiguous, leaving ample room for an on-scene commander to rationalize his actions. Unauthorized deliberate actions incidents are exceedingly rare. Only a few such incidents involving U.S. forces have occurred since World War II, in every case during limited wars.

Not all unauthorized deliberate actions are harmful to crisis management efforts. An on-scene military commander with an appreciation of the political objectives being



pursued by national leaders could well decide to ignore orders that are inappropriate for the local situation and pursue a course of action that better supports crisis management efforts. Two types of unauthorized deliberate actions can be distinguished on the basis of the military commander's intentions: constructive and malicious.⁵⁵

A constructive unauthorized action is taken in the belief that actions called for in existing orders are inappropriate under the circumstances, and that the unauthorized action would better support the national objectives in the crisis. Whether or not the outcome is constructive is a different matter, and a well-intentioned action could seriously complicate crisis management efforts. The decision made by Commander Middle East Force in January 1964 to disregard orders from Washington and have USS Manley (DD 940) evacuate American citizens from Zanzibar is an example of a constructive unauthorized action.⁵⁶ The mark of a constructive unauthorized action is an effort to inform the chain of command as soon as possible of the action taken and the reasons for taking it.

⁵⁵Unauthorized deliberate actions caused by insanity on the part of a military commander will not be addressed in this study because there is extremely little empirical evidence on which to assess such incidents. The author knows of no cases, other than certain wartime battlefield atrocities, in which insanity caused an unauthorized deliberate action.

⁵⁶See Chapter IV for a complete description of this incident.



A malicious unauthorized deliberate action is taken out of opposition to the objectives underlying specific orders, disrespect for the chain of command or the method of control being used, or frustration with particular orders felt to be unnecessarily endangering the men performing the mission. The mark of a malicious unauthorized action is an effort to conceal the action from higher authority.

The most common type of malicious unauthorized action in United States military history since World War II has been deliberate killings of non-combatant civilians by troops in the field, in violation of orders to avoid civilian casualties. The most notorious example was the March 1968 My Lai massacre. Such battlefield incidents are a product of the stress and emotion of ground combat (which were particularly intense in the guerrilla war fought in Vietnam), thus telling us little about how military commanders behave in crises.

Three examples of malicious unauthorized actions will serve to illustrate the nature of most such incidents. The first example arose from dissatisfaction with political constraints on the conduct of wartime air operations over hostile territory. During the Korean War, the United States placed strict limits on air operations near the Chinese and Soviet borders with North Korea in order to avoid incidents with China and the Soviet Union. U.S. aircraft were not permitted to enter Chinese or Soviet airspace, bombing



missions near their borders were tightly controlled from Washington, and special precautions were taken to ensure that bombs were not accidentally dropped on China or the Soviet Union while attacking North Korean targets near the borders.⁵⁷ In his history of the Korean War, Joseph C. Goulden reports that a requirement for bombers to fly parallel to the border while bombing the Yalu bridges was deliberately violated by an Air Force flight commander. After concluding that the parallel approach was ineffective and unnecessarily endangered the pilots, the flight commander ordered his planes to approach perpendicular to the border. This resulted in them penetrating several miles into Chinese airspace after dropping their bombs. These violations of the bombing restrictions were successfully kept secret until long after the war.⁵⁸

The second example of a malicious unauthorized action arose from ill-considered thrill-seeking, but essentially involved disrespect for the chain of command. On June 13, 1957, USS Hornet (CVA 16) was conducting routine flight training in the South China Sea after a port visit to Hong Kong. During this flight training, approximately eight of Hornet's pilots decided to "buzz" (make low-level passes

⁵⁷ Futrell, pp. 142, 208-11, 453; Field, pp. 395-6; Cagle and Manson, pp. 224-5, 243-7.

⁵⁸ Joseph C. Goulden, Korea: The Untold Story of the War (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1982), pp. 302-3.



over) the Chinese mainland near Swatow. Their motive was simple thrill-seeking (often referred to as "flat-hatting" or "skylarking"), but their actions were a clear and deliberate violation of restrictions against entering Chinese airspace. Chinese anti-aircraft guns fired on the planes, causing minor damage to a few of them, and China protested the incident. The responsible pilots initially tried to keep their action secret, but the bullet holes in some of their planes exposed their guilt. The pilots were reprimanded and the Vice Admiral responsible for the Hornet task group was relieved of command of the Seventh Fleet's carrier task force.⁵⁹

The third example of a possibly malicious unauthorized action also arose from dissatisfaction with political constraints on the conduct of wartime air operations over hostile territory. The secret bombing of unauthorized targets in North Vietnam directed by Air Force General John D. Lavelle between November 1971 and March 1972 was out of dissatisfaction with rules of engagement strictly limiting the anti-aircraft sites that could be attacked. General Lavelle and his pilots believed--and could demonstrate with losses they suffered--that the restrictions endangered the

⁵⁹"U.S. Carrier Plane Struck by Red Chinese Gunfire," New York Times, June 13, 1957, p. 1; Vice Admiral Herbert D. Riley, "The Reminiscences of Vice Admiral Herbert D. Riley, U.S. Navy (Retired)," Volume II (Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, Oral History Program, 1972), pp. 491-4.



lives of U.S. pilots by protecting surface-to-air missiles that were firing on aircraft flying missions over North Vietnam. General Lavelle directed attacks on anti-aircraft sites not authorized under the rules of engagement and submitted false reports listing authorized targets. When the unauthorized bombings were discovered, General Lavelle was relieved of his command by General John D. Ryan, Air Force Chief of Staff.⁶⁰ That General Lavelle attempted to

⁶⁰U.S. House, Armed Services Committee, Investigating Subcommittee, Unauthorized Bombing of Military Targets in North Vietnam, Hearings, 92nd Congress, 2nd Session (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1972), pp. 7-10; Richard K. Betts, Soldiers, Statesmen, and Cold War Crises (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1977), pp. 49, 238-9. The evidence in this case is ambiguous. In an interview with the author, Admiral Thomas H. Moorer, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff at the time of the incident, insisted that the chain of command had not--tacitly or otherwise--authorized the bombings. Admiral Moorer emphasized that General Lavelle was relieved of command for lying to his superiors about the targets he was attacking. On the other hand, the House Armed Services Committee subcommittee that investigated the incident expressed doubt that General Lavelle would have conducted the secret bombings on his own, and suggested that he may have been given tacit authorization by the military chain of command or even top-level civilian authorities to exceed the letter of his written orders (the rationale being that secret bombings would be less likely to arouse political opposition than formal expansion of the bombing). As an aside, the dual reporting of targets used by General Lavelle to keep the unauthorized bombings secret strongly resembles the dual reporting used to hide the bombing of Cambodia from March 1969 to June 1970--which had been conducted by planes not under General Lavelle's command. The bombing of Cambodia was ordered by President Nixon and kept secret for reasons of international and domestic politics. Given the Nixon Administration's well-known obsession with secrecy and penchant for covert action, which led to its downfall, the Lavelle case is an exceedingly poor example to cite as evidence of military evasion of civilian control.



conceal his actions from his superiors marks this case as a malicious unauthorized action even though he was motivated by legitimate concern over the safety of his pilots.

The pattern suggested by the malicious unauthorized actions that occurred in the Korean War and Vietnam War is that political restrictions on air operations over hostile territory tend to provoke unauthorized actions. Unauthorized actions occur because the restrictions are perceived as unnecessarily endangering the lives of pilots flying missions over hostile territory, and are motivated primarily by a desire to accomplish the mission with as few pilots shot down as possible. That is an understandable desire, but actions taken in violation of political restrictions are still unauthorized. This is an example of acute tension between political and military considerations. If political leaders and military commanders are not sensitive to each other's needs, unauthorized actions are likely to occur. Such unauthorized actions do not represent military evasion of civilian control so much as a breakdown in communications between civilian and military leaders, and a resulting inability to find an acceptable compromise for managing the tensions between political and military considerations.

Incidents at Sea

The term incidents at sea is used by the U.S. Navy to designate potentially dangerous interactions between U.S.



and Soviet naval forces on and over the high seas. For this discussion, incidents at sea will be grouped into five categories: accidental and deliberate collisions, dangerous maneuvering, threatening actions and simulated attacks, and incidents between aircraft and ships.

The most dangerous incidents at sea are accidental and deliberate collisions. Accidental collisions were discussed earlier in this chapter. There were three apparently accidental collisions prior to the signing of the Incidents at Sea Agreement in 1972: On June 24, 1966, the Soviet AGI Anemometer collided with the intelligence collection ship USS Banner (AGER 1) in the Sea of Japan; on May 10 and 11, 1967, the destroyer USS Walker (DD 517), was struck by two different Soviet destroyers that had been harassing a U.S. task group in the Sea of Japan; and on May 5, 1971, the destroyer USS Hanson (DD 832) and the Soviet tug Diomede collided in the Korean Strait. The first collision resulted from aggressive intelligence collection by the Soviet AGI, the second incident occurred inadvertently during deliberate harassment, and the third was caused by carelessness on the part of the Soviet tug. In all three incidents the Soviet vessels violated the nautical rules of the road.

Dangerous maneuvering by Soviet naval vessels and naval-associated auxiliary vessels (AGIs, supply ships, tankers, etc.) was the most common type of incident at sea prior to the Incidents at Sea Agreement. Dangerous



maneuvers at close quarters, usually in violation of the nautical rules of the road, have been used by the Soviets for several purposes. The most common incidents were dangerous maneuvers by Soviet AGIs and warships conducting aggressive surveillance and intelligence collection against U.S. Navy operations. Although some of the dangerous maneuvers may have been inadvertent, most of them fit a pattern of using such maneuvers for deliberate harassment of U.S. Navy ships. In some cases such harassment appears to have had no objective other than to demonstrate Soviet contempt for the U.S. Navy--a pattern of behavior analogous to Khrushchev's attempts to intimidate the West with Soviet strategic weapons. In most cases, however, Soviet harassment was specifically intended to disrupt U.S. naval operations, such as exercises and missile tests, launch and recovery of carrier aircraft, refueling and replenishment at sea, trailing of Soviet submarines, and oceanographic survey operations. The U.S. Navy sought, within the bounds of safety, to resist Soviet intimidation at sea, resulting in frequent instances of a maritime version of the game of "chicken." To protect its aircraft carriers from dangerous maneuvers by Soviet vessels, the U.S. Navy adopted the tactic of "shouldering"--using destroyers to force Soviet vessels clear of U.S. naval formations (the Soviets used the same tactic against U.S. ships to prevent them from trailing Soviet submarines). That dangerous maneuvering by Soviet



vessels only resulted in three collisions between 1960 and 1972 is testimony to the shiphandling skills and forbearance of the U.S. Navy ship captains that had to put up with the Soviet harassment.

In 1960 Soviet naval and merchant vessels began harassing and maneuvering dangerously close to U.S. naval vessels on a regular basis. From 1960 to 1972 there were scores of serious incidents and hundreds of instances of minor harassment. The first reported serious incident occurred on April 11, 1960, when a Soviet trawler made radical maneuvers extremely close to the oceanographic survey ship USS Michelson (AGS 23) in the Norwegian Sea, fouling the U.S. ship's towed survey gear. A brief review of six of the serious incidents that occurred over the next twelve years will illustrate the nature of incidents at sea. On April 9, 1964, the Soviet merchant ship Polostsk harassed the seaplane tender USS Duxbury Bay (AVP 38) in the Red Sea, cutting across the bow of the U.S. ship at barely ten yards. On September 25-27, 1964, the Soviet ships Dzerzhinskiy and Magmomet Glazkeyv deliberately interfered with flight operations being conducted by USS Franklin D. Roosevelt (CVA 42) in the Mediterranean. On January 10, 1965, the Soviet ship Kotelnikov interfered with underway refueling operations between the carrier USS Saratoga (CVA 60) and the oiler USS Neosho (AO 143) in the Mediterranean. On May 10-11, 1967, Soviet destroyers severely harassed the

USS Hornet (CVS 16) task group while it was conducting exercises in the Sea of Japan, twice colliding with the destroyer USS Walker (DD 517). On June 7-8, 1967, during the Middle East War, a Soviet Kashin-class destroyer and Mirka-class corvette harassed the USS America (CVA 66) task group in the Mediterranean, almost colliding with the destroyer USS Lawe (DD 763) and the America. On March 31, 1972, a Soviet Kotlin-class destroyer harassed USS Sims (DE 1059) and USS Pratt (DLG 13) while they were trailing a Soviet submarine in the Mediterranean.⁶¹ The pattern in these incidents was deliberate Soviet harassment intended to disrupt U.S. naval operations, deliberate Soviet violations of the nautical rules of the road, and dangerous maneuvering at close quarters frequently resulting in near collisions.

The Soviets occasionally protested alleged incidents by U.S. Navy ships, but were particularly sensitive about U.S. patrol planes making low passes over Soviet ships.

⁶¹"Post-1 JAN 1960 Incidents," pp. 1-3; Sweetman, *passim*; U.S. Department of State, Historical Office, Bureau of Public Affairs, American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1964 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1967), pp. 669-74; "U.S. Tells Soviet It Imperils Ships," New York Times, April 4, 1965, p. 1; "U.S. Protests Harassment of Ships by Soviets; Rejects Soviet Charges," Department of State Bulletin 52 (May 3, 1965): 655-58; "A U.S. Destroyer In Far East Bumped By Soviet Warship," New York Times, May 11, 1967, p. 1; "A Soviet Warship Bumps U.S. Vessel 2d Time in 2 Days," New York Times, May 12, 1967, p. 1; "Russians Continue to Harass 6th Fleet," New York Times, June 9, 1967, p. 1; "U.S. to Protect Espionage Ships," New York Times, June 12, 1968, p. 6. These references also describe twelve other serious incidents similar to those summarized above.

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Soviet protests against U.S. naval vessels generally alleged dangerous maneuvers close to Soviet merchant ships. The U.S. responded to these protests by stating that the U.S. Navy ships fully complied with the rules of the road while maneuvering to identify the Soviet vessels.⁶² Although there undoubtedly were instances of U.S. ships and planes being overly enthusiastic in carrying out their surveillance missions, it is clear that the U.S. did not conduct a sustained program of harassment against Soviet naval vessels and merchant ships.

The Incidents at Sea Agreement was signed May 25, 1972, during the first Nixon-Brezhnev summit. The agreement committed both sides to respect the international rules of the road for preventing collisions at sea and provided guidance for situations unique to naval forces (such as formations of ships) that were not adequately covered by the international rules. In addition to specifying behavior for naval vessels at sea, the agreement set up a standard

⁶²"Soviet Charges NATO Buzzing," New York Times, March 5, 1964, p. 3; "Soviet Says U.S. Buzzed Ship," New York Times, July 9, 1964, p. 3; "Soviet Charges U.S. Buzzings," New York Times, April 14, 1962, p. 5; "Moscow Assails U.S. on 'Buzzing'," New York Times, August 8, 1964, p. 6; "1,000 U.S. Ship Buzzings Charged by Soviet Paper," New York Times, August 9, 1964, p. 5; U.S. Department of State, Historical Office, Bureau of Public Affairs, American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1964 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1967), pp. 671-4; "U.S. Protests Harassment of Ships by Soviets; Rejects Soviet Charges," Department of State Bulletin 52 (May 3, 1965): 656-7; "Soviet Accuses 7th Fleet," New York Times, March 30, 1965, p. 19.

channel for reporting violations to the other side and called for annual review of the agreement. At the first annual review, held in May 1973, a protocol to the agreement was signed that expanded its provisions.⁶³ The provisions of the agreement were strengthened by a 1972 revision to the international rules of the road that explicitly recognized vessels launching or recovering aircraft and vessels engaged in underway replenishment as "restricted in their ability to maneuver"--a privileged status requiring other vessels to maneuver to remain clear of them. The United States and almost all other nations had long recognized this provision (the old rules did not specify which vessels could claim this status); the Soviets had refused to do so, contributing to the large number of incidents prior to 1972.

⁶³"Agreement Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Prevention of Incidents On and Over the High Seas," Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, World Armaments and Disarmament: SIPRI Yearbook, 1973 (New York: Humanities Press, 1972), pp. 36-39. "Protocol to the Agreement Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Prevention of Incidents On and Over the High Seas," signed May 25, 1973, U.S. Department of State, United States Treaties and Other International Agreements, Vol. 24, Part 1, 1973 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1974), pp. 1063-64. Also see Anthony F. Wolf, "Agreement at Sea: The United States-USSR Agreement on Incidents at Sea," Korean Journal of International Studies 9 (3/1978): 57-80; Rear Admiral Robert P. Hilton, "The U.S.-Soviet Incidents at Sea treaty," Naval Forces 6 (1/1985): 30-37; Sean M. Lynn-Jones, "The Incidents at Sea Agreement," in Alexander L. George, Philip J. Farley, and Alexander Dallin, eds., U.S.-Soviet Security Cooperation: Achievements, Failures, Lessons (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), pp. 482-509.

Although incidents between U.S. and Soviet naval vessels declined significantly after the Incidents at Sea Agreement was signed in 1972, they were not eliminated entirely. Secretary of the Navy John F. Lehman, Jr., stated in 1984 that the number of incidents in which there was a "potential for danger" declined from over one hundred per year in the 1960s to about forty per year in 1982-1983.⁶⁴ This 60 percent reduction in the number of serious incidents each year indicates that the Incidents at Sea Agreement has been at least a partial success. On the other hand, serious incidents continue to occur at a rate sufficient to warrant concern.

There have been three apparently accidental collisions since 1972: On August 1976, a Soviet Echo II-class nuclear-powered guided missile submarine (SSGN) collided with the frigate USS Voge (FF 1047) in the Mediterranean; on November 1983, a Soviet Krivak I-class frigate collided with the destroyer USS Fife (DD 991) in the Arabian Sea; and on March 1984, the carrier USS Kittyhawk (CV 63) collided with a Soviet Victor-class nuclear attack submarine (SSN) in the Sea of Japan.⁶⁵

Additionally, there have been two apparently deliberate collisions: On September 4, 1973, the U.S. naval

⁶⁴"U.S. Officials Weigh Protest of Sea Incident," Washington Post, April 4, 1984, p. 1.

⁶⁵On the accidental collisions, see footnote 33.

oceanographic survey ship USNS Artemis was deliberately rammed three times by the Soviet survey ship Nakhodka in the Atlantic. On February 12, 1988, a Soviet Mirka-class corvette deliberately collided with the destroyer USS Caron (DD 970) and, simultaneously, a Krivak-class frigate collided with USS Yorktown (CG 48). The Soviet ships carefully maneuvered to scrape the sides of the U.S. ships, causing only minor damage to themselves and the U.S. ships. The two U.S. ships were exercising the right of innocent passage (recognized under international law) through Soviet territorial waters off the Crimean Peninsula in the Black Sea. There is also no doubt that the incident was deliberate. One of the Soviet ships radioed a warning to the U.S. ships: "Soviet ships have orders to prevent violation of territorial waters. I am authorized to strike your ship with one of ours."⁶⁶ There were a total of five accidental and deliberate collisions between 1972 and 1987-- compared with only three between 1960 and 1972. The total number of collisions and the rate at which they occur have thus been greater since the Incidents at Sea Agreement than they were before the agreement.⁶⁷

⁶⁶"Soviets Bump U.S. Ships in Black Sea," Washington Post, February 13, 1988, p. A23.

⁶⁷The rate of collisions (deliberate and accidental) was an average of one collision every four years during the 1960-1972 period, but an average of one collision every 3.2 years during the 1972-1988 period.

Soviet naval vessels have continued the practice of maneuvering dangerously in close proximity to U.S. ships. Soviet ships attempted to interfere with the U.S. and Japanese search for the flight data and cockpit voice recorders from Korean Air Lines flight 007 in the Sea of Japan from September 2 to October 28, 1983.⁶⁸ The November 17, 1983, collision between a Soviet frigate and the USS Fife (DD 991), described above, occurred while the Soviet ship was harassing the USS Ranger (CV 61) battle group. Thus, while Soviet behavior at sea improved after the Incidents at Sea Agreement was signed, the Soviets were still willing to engage in deliberate harassment of U.S. naval operations.

Threatening actions and simulated attacks have not been eliminated by the Incidents at Sea Agreement. In fact, the most serious incident of this type occurred during the 1973 Middle East war, after the agreement was signed. On October 26, the day after the United States set DEFCON 3 worldwide, the Soviet Navy commenced intensive anti-carrier

⁶⁸"Race to Recover 007's 'Black Box' Shapes Up at Sea and in Law Offices," Washington Post, September 17, 1983, p. A1; "On the Sea of Japan, 20 Ships Comb for the Wreckage," New York Times, September 20, 1983, p. A10; "U.S. Says Soviet Ships Harass Plane-Data Searchers," Washington Post, September 21, 1983, p. A1; "U.S. Ships Hear Flight Recorder; Soviet Is Said to Hamper Search," New York Times, September 21, 1983, p. A10; "Search Goes On for Jet's 'Black Box'," New York Times, September 23, 1983, p. A3; "U.S. Says Soviet Ship Menaced Search Boat," New York Times, October 13, 1983, p. 3.

exercises against the three U.S. carrier task groups and the U.S. amphibious task group in the eastern Mediterranean. The anti-carrier exercise consisted of simulated coordinated anti-ship missile and naval gunfire attacks against the U.S. task groups. U.S. Navy commanders were unable to distinguish the simulated attacks from real attacks until the Soviet ships pulled away without having launched missiles or fired guns. Soviet ships and sub-marines armed with anti-ship cruise missiles were constantly within range of the U.S. carriers while they were in the eastern Mediterranean, making the carriers extremely vulnerable to an actual Soviet preemptive strike.⁶⁹ The Soviet exercise, which lasted through November 3, was probably intended as a signal that the Soviet Navy was prepared to counter the Sixth Fleet in the eastern Mediterranean. Vice Admiral Murphy, Commander of the Sixth Fleet, has described the tactical situation in the Mediterranean during the Soviet

⁶⁹ Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr., On Watch: A Memoir (New York: Quadrangle/New York Times Book Co., 1976), pp. 436, 447; Robert G. Weinland, "Superpower Naval Diplomacy in the October 1973 Arab-Israeli War: A Case Study," The Washington Papers, Vol. VI (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1979), p. 74; Stephen S. Roberts, "The October 1973 Arab-Israeli War," in Bradford Dismukes and James McConnell, eds., Soviet Naval Diplomacy (New York: Pergamon Press, 1979), pp. 195, 204, 206; Jon D. Glassman, Arms for the Arabs: The Soviet Union and War in the Middle East (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975), p. 162; Rear Admiral James B. Morin, Commanding Officer of USS Franklin D. Roosevelt (CVA 42) during the crisis, letter to author, April 14, 1988; Rear Admiral John C. Dixon, Commanding Officer of USS John F. Kennedy (CVA 67) during the crisis, letter to author, April 18, 1988.

anti-carrier exercise: "The U.S. Sixth Fleet and the Soviet Mediterranean Fleet were, in effect, sitting in a pond in close proximity and the stage for the hitherto unlikely 'war at sea' scenario was set. This situation prevailed for several days. Both fleets were obviously in a high readiness posture for whatever might come next, although it appeared that neither fleet knew exactly what to expect."⁷⁰ Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr., Chief of Naval Operations during the crisis, has described the period of the Soviet anti-carrier exercise in strong terms: "I doubt that major units of the U.S. Navy were ever in a tenser situation since World War II ended than the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean was for the week after the alert was declared."⁷¹ If a Soviet ship or submarine had inadvertently launched an anti-ship cruise missile during the exercise, it could well have sparked an intense sea battle in the Mediterranean.⁷² This tense situation at sea lasted for over a week after the Arab-Israeli cease-fire took hold and tensions in the Middle East had eased.

⁷⁰Quoted in Zumwalt, On Watch, p. 447.

⁷¹Ibid, p. 446.

⁷²The Sixth Fleet may have had intelligence indicating that the Soviets were conducting an exercise, and the Soviets may have deliberately ensured that the U.S. received that intelligence in order to avoid misunderstandings. However, an exercise can be used as cover for a preemptive attack and an inadvertent launching of an anti-ship missile could well have been misperceived as an indicator that the Soviet exercise had been operational deception.

There have been additional incidents since 1973: On September 12, 1975, a Soviet Kresta II-class cruiser trained its missile launchers and fire control radars on the carrier USS John F. Kennedy (CVA 67) in the Mediterranean. In August 1979 Soviet aircraft, including new Backfire bombers, conducted more than thirty simulated anti-ship missile attacks against the destroyers USS Caron (DD 970) and USS Farragut (DDG 6) in the Black Sea. On September 30 and October 1, 1982, Soviet Backfire bombers simulated anti-ship missile strikes against the carriers USS Enterprise (CVN 65) and USS Midway (CV 41) in the northern Pacific near the Aluetians. On February 18, 1984, a Soviet jet fighter fired its cannon into the wake of USS David R. Ray (DD 971) during a simulated attack and a Soviet helicopter passed within thirty feet of the destroyer while photographing it. This incident also occurred in the Black Sea. The danger in Soviet simulated attacks is that the actions taken by the Soviet ships and planes are valid indicators of hostile intent and grounds for firing first in anticipatory self-defense under U.S. Navy rules of engagement (See Chapter IV). U.S. navy commanders must show exemplary forbearance

⁷³Sweetman, passim; "Soviet, in 2 Incidents, Takes U.S. Torpedo and Bait Ships," New York Times, August 11, 1979, p. 4; "New Soviet Bombers Fake Strikes Against U.S. Navy." Washington Post, November 9, 1982, p. A16; "Soviet Backfire Bombers Stalk U.S. Carrier Fleet," Washington Times, November 9, 1982, p. 1; "High Seas Diplomacy Continuing," Washington Post, June 8, 1984, p. A1.



and take what could well be grave risks in not firing while appearing to be under attack.

A much different incident occurred in 1984 in the South China Sea. On April 2 the Soviet aircraft carrier Minsk fired eight flares at the frigate USS Harold E. Holt (FF 1074), striking the frigate with three of the flares. The Soviet action was extremely dangerous and prohibited under the Incidents at Sea Agreement, but the U.S. frigate was not without blame in the incident. Minsk had hoisted proper signals requesting the U.S. ship to stay clear, but Holt had continued to make two passes by Minsk at close range (about 300 yards).⁷⁴ This Soviet behavior is ironic, given the frequent and severe Soviet endangering of U.S. carriers in the past. Additionally, when contrasted with the large number of Soviet violations of the Incidents at Sea Agreement, this incident illustrates that the Soviets are capable of taking a distinctly one-sided view of the agreement: complying when it benefits them and violating the agreement when it does not. On balance, however, the Soviet Union has elected to comply with the agreement.

Incidents between aircraft and ships have also continued to occur despite the Incidents at Sea Agreement. It is routine for Soviet reconnaissance aircraft to make low

⁷⁴"U.S. Ship Hit by Soviet Flares," New York Times, April 3, 1984, p. 3; "U.S. Officials Weigh Protest of Sea Incident," Washington Post, April 4, 1984, p. A1; "Moscow's Muscle Flexing," Time, April 16, 1984, p. 30.



passes over U.S. ships while on surveillance flights, and routine for armed U.S. carrier-based jet fighters to intercept and escort the Soviet planes as they approach in order to ensure that they have peaceful intentions. Similarly, Soviet carrier-based jet fighters (armed since 1982) routinely intercept and escort U.S. planes approaching the Soviet carriers.⁷⁵ Such interactions occur somewhere in the world on almost a daily basis. Normally ship surveillance and intercept operations take place without incident, but the Soviets occasionally violate the Incidents at Sea Agreement. On May 15, 1979, two soviet Il-38 May ASW patrol planes flew close by USS Midway (CV 41) at 500 feet in altitude, forcing U.S. planes in the carrier's landing pattern to take emergency evasive action. The U.S. filed an Incidents at Sea Agreement protest over the incident. On September 29 and 30, 1987, the Soviet missile range instrumentation ship Chukotka illuminated U.S. Navy and Air Force patrol planes with a laser, causing temporary blindness in an Air Force pilot's eyes for about ten minutes. Department of Defense spokesmen stated that Soviet ships

⁷⁵"Pentagon Aides Say Soviet Planes Tried to Foil U.S. Radar," New York Times, October 15, 1977, p. 2; "New Soviet Bombers Fake Strikes Against U.S. Navy." Washington Post, November 9, 1982, p. A16; "Navy: Armed Soviet Jets Intercepted Ours," New York News, December 16, 1982, p. 3; "Fleet Reports Soviet Air Surveillance," Washington Post, December 20, 1984, p. A26; "Navy F14 Fighters Chase Off Soviet Planes in Bering Sea," Washington Post, August 30, 1986, p. A15.



had illuminated U.S. planes with lasers before, but this was the first instance of a pilot being affected.⁷⁶ The Incidents at Sea Agreement thus has not been totally effective in stopping dangerous Soviet actions at sea.

This review of Soviet-American incidents at sea leads to two conclusions: First, a wide range of dangerous interactions can occur when U.S. and Soviet naval forces are operating in close proximity. Incidents at sea have the potential to exacerbate superpower tensions during an acute crisis and certain incidents could provoke an outbreak of fighting if misperceived as indications of an imminent preemptive attack. Second, although the Incidents at Sea Agreement has reduced the number of the most serious incidents, it has not totally eliminated incidents at sea. The primary reason for this has been lax Soviet compliance with the agreement. There are thus ample grounds for concern that incidents between Soviet and American naval forces could seriously complicate crisis management efforts.

Conclusion

Tactical-level interactions are divided, based on the perspective of political-level decisionmakers, into two

⁷⁶"Naval and Maritime Events, 1979" U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 106 (May 1980): 58; "Light From Soviet Ship 'Disturbs' U.S. Pilot's Vision," Washington Post, October 3, 1987, p. A11; "Soviets Flashed Laser, U.S. Alleges," San Jose Mercury News, October 3, 1987, p. 1A.

major categories: deliberate military actions and inadvertent military incidents. Deliberate military actions are ordered by political-level decisionmakers. They can occur under delegated as well as direct control, and can be ordered in mechanisms of indirect control as well as directly over real-time communications links. Inadvertent military incidents are military actions that may affect the development of a crisis, but which are not specifically ordered or anticipated by national leaders. There are three categories of inadvertent military incidents: unanticipated authorized actions, military accidents, and unauthorized deliberate actions. Inadvertent military incidents are troublesome because decisionmakers may fail to realize they are unauthorized and perceive them as a deliberate provocation, signal of hostile intent, or escalation of a crisis.

This chapter used examples of inadvertent military incidents that occurred under conditions ranging from peacetime to wartime in order to define the range of incidents that could occur in a crisis. As will be seen in Chapter VII, however, military accidents occur infrequently in international crises. There are three reasons for this. First, the military chain of command normally cancels most military exercises affecting forces committed to or on standby for the crisis, greatly reducing the possibility of international incidents arising from exercise-related accidents. The primary reason why exercises are cancelled

is that the forces are needed for crisis operations, but exercises have also been cancelled to avoid potential political complications. The second reason for the rarity of crisis incidents is that the military chain of command usually advises its on-scene commanders to act with caution and to avoid provocative actions. This will be seen in all four of the crises examined in Chapter VII. The third reason for the lack of incidents in crises is best described as military prudence: on-scene commanders, motivated by self-preservation, generally avoid deliberately placing their forces in situations where they are extremely vulnerable to deliberate or inadvertent attacks. Military prudence is occasionally violated by top-level political officials ordering naval forces into dangerous waters, but on other occasions U.S. leaders have been careful to keep U.S. forces well clear of fighting in a local conflict. These three factors counteract other factors--increased tempo of operations and adversary forces in close proximity--that contribute to the occurrence of inadvertent military incidents.

The final task to be accomplished before commencing the case studies is to examine the unique features of naval operations and the perspectives that the U.S. Navy holds on crisis naval operations. This is necessary to understand the role of naval forces in crises and to assess the generality of the findings. The next chapter will examine these topics.

CHAPTER VI

NAVAL FORCE AS A POLITICAL INSTRUMENT

As was discussed in the introduction, naval forces have characteristics that make them the type of force most commonly favored by United States leaders for use as a political instrument in crises. But those same characteristics can exacerbate the problems of crisis management. The misperception dilemma can be particularly difficult to cope with when naval forces are used as a political instrument. Tensions between political and military considerations can be exacerbated due to the nature of crisis naval operations. The crisis security dilemma is especially acute in the naval warfare environment due to weapons technology, tactical doctrines, and the tactical situation created by crisis naval operations. Because naval forces have unique operational characteristics, the first step in researching the theory of stratified interaction will be to explore how the theory and related concepts presented in the previous two chapters apply to the use of naval force as a political instrument in crises.

This chapter will first review the U.S. Navy's view of its role as a political instrument, in order to identify the

Navy perspectives influencing employment of naval forces in crises. Second, the impact of naval forces on crisis stability will be explored, focusing on their impact on the security dilemma and the misperception dilemma. Third, the tensions between political and military considerations that arise in crises will be examined in the context of crisis naval operations.

Navy Views on Crisis Response

U.S. Navy leaders have had much to say about the peacetime role of the Navy since the end of World War II, particularly since the early 1970s. Understanding the Navy's view of its peacetime missions is important for understanding the doctrinal context within which peacetime naval missions are carried out. This doctrinal context can be described as a particular bureaucratic perspective on the use of force, but it reflects the lessons the Navy has learned over the years on the efficient and effective operation of naval forces in peacetime, and the Navy's perception of the principles and dynamics of naval warfare that would be operative in the event that fighting erupts.

The Navy, like every large organization, has an organizational philosophy or ideology which shapes and organizes the attitudes, perceptions, and thought processes of its members. Because success in combat is crucially dependent on maintaining effective command and control,

military organizations place great emphasis on formalizing their organizational philosophy.¹ This produces a wide range of formal guidance covering all aspects of military operations, from strategy to the smallest details of tactics. Doctrinal and operational guidance is incorporated into Navy standing orders, which define a broad range of operational procedures and the decision criteria used to select specific tactics or operational options in various circumstances.²

Given that the Navy has significant missions to perform in peacetime, the formulation of standing orders for peacetime operations is to be expected. Naval forces employed as a political instrument are guided in their actions by much more than the specific orders sending them on their mission, they are also, in most cases primarily, operating in accordance with doctrinal and operational guidance promulgated in various types of standing orders.

¹See Alexander L. George, "The 'Operational Code': A Neglected Approach to the Study of Political Leaders and Decision-Making," International Studies Quarterly 13 (June 1969): 190-222; John Steinbruner, The Cybernetic Theory of Decision (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1974), pp. 88-139; Morton Halperin, Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1974), p. 28; Robert Jervis, Perception and Misperception in International Politics (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), pp. 117-202. On organizational ideologies in military organizations, see Jack Snyder, The Ideology of the Offensive (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984), pp. 26-30.

²See Chapter IV for a detailed description of standing orders.

The guidance in those standing orders is founded on the basic concepts used by the Navy to describe its peacetime roles. Thus, an understanding of the Navy's views of its missions will provide insight on how forces performing those missions are employed.

Prior to the early 1970s the U.S. Navy did not conceive of peacetime missions as a category separate and distinct from wartime missions. That the Navy had peacetime roles to perform was recognized, but, with the exception of naval diplomacy, those roles were viewed as being derived from wartime missions or as preparatory to execution of wartime missions. Rear Admiral John D. Chase in 1969 listed the functions of the Navy, in order of their historical development, as being coastal defense, commerce raiding, enforcing respect for U.S. interests (especially trade and shipping), being an instrument of foreign policy, commanding the sea, direct support of land operations, projecting force inland from the sea, and strategic deterrence.³ These functions reflect the Navy's conception of its missions during the postwar period, with the exceptions that since the writings of Mahan coastal defense had been viewed as best achieved by commanding the sea, and that commerce raiding had been superseded by broader concepts of blockade

³Rear Admiral John D. Chase, "The Functions of the Navy," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 95 (October 1969): 27-33. Also see Captain Daniel J. Carrison, The United States Navy (New York: Praeger, 1968), pp. 36-55.



and control of sea lines of communication, both elements of commanding the sea.

Of the eight functions listed by Admiral Chase, three are applicable in peacetime: enforcing respect for U.S. interests, being an instrument of foreign policy, and strategic deterrence. Enforcing respect for U.S. interests entails use of force to defend against attacks on merchant shipping, diplomatic outposts, and citizens abroad. Being an instrument of foreign policy includes "showing the flag" in port visits to other countries and voyages abroad. Strategic deterrence is provided primarily by submarine launched ballistic missiles and nuclear-armed sea launched cruise missiles, although carrier aircraft can also contribute to the mission. The remaining five functions are wartime missions, their peacetime impact is that the Navy strives to maintain readiness to perform these missions in wartime. This is important, because serious conflicts can arise between performance of the peacetime functions and maintaining readiness for wartime functions. As will be seen later, this tension between peacetime missions and readiness for wartime missions is one of the most significant interactions between political and military factors affecting the use of naval forces as a political instrument.

During the tour of Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr., as Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), serious efforts were made



to refine and clarify the Navy's conceptions of its missions. The result, as described in a 1974 article by Vice Admiral Stansfield Turner, then President of the Naval War College, was a scheme of four missions: strategic deterrence, sea control, projection of power, and naval presence.⁴ Sea control and projection of power are wartime missions. The objectives of sea control are "denying the enemy the right to use some seas at some times, and asserting our own right to use some seas at some times."⁵ The concept of sea control differs from the earlier concept of command of the sea in recognizing that submarines and land-based aircraft had made it virtually impossible to fully control all seas at all times. Projection of power is the use of naval force against land forces, and can take three forms, naval gunfire bombardment, strikes by carrier-based tactical aircraft or sea launched cruise missiles, and amphibious assault. Objectives include interdiction, support of troops ashore, destruction of war-making potential, and seizure of territory.⁶ These two missions encompass the five wartime missions listed by Admiral Chase: sea control includes coastal defense, commerce raiding, and commanding

⁴Vice Admiral Stansfield Turner, "Missions of the U.S. Navy," Naval War College Review 26 (March-April 1974): 2-17.

⁵Ibid, pp. 6-10.

⁶Ibid, pp. 10-13.



the sea; while projection of power includes direct support of land operations and projecting force inland.

Strategic deterrence is both a peacetime and a wartime naval mission. Peacetime objectives of strategic deterrence are to deter all-out attack on the U.S. and its allies, to deter lesser attacks with threat of unacceptable risks, and to maintain a stable political environment in which the threat of aggression or coercion against the U.S. or its allies is minimized. The wartime objective is to deter the enemy from escalating the conflict, particularly from conventional to nuclear warfare.⁷

Naval presence is "the use of naval forces, short of war, to achieve political objectives," and has two objectives: "to deter actions inimical to the interests of the United States or its allies," and "to encourage actions that are in the interest of the United States or its allies."⁸ Naval presence takes two general forms: preventive deployments, a show of force in peacetime, and reactive deployments, a show of force in response to a crisis. The primary difference between preventive and reactive deployments is that preventive deployments can rely on the implied threat of reinforcement as well as the combat capabilities on-scene to influence the situation, while

⁷ Ibid, pp. 5-6.

⁸ Ibid, pp. 14-15.



reactive deployments must rely exclusively on the combat capabilities on-scene to convey a credible threat.⁹ Naval presence as defined by Admiral Turner encompasses the "instrument of foreign policy" function described by Admiral Chase. The naval presence concept was the first effort by the Navy to clarify its peacetime role as a political instrument, and continues to be important in Navy thinking today.

Commander James F. McNulty, then an instructor at the Naval War College, in 1974 provided a detailed analysis of the various political-military purposes served by naval presence. The fundamental purpose of naval presence is to "contribute to the national aim of deterring conflict." Commander McNulty identified seven specific roles for naval forces in the presence mission: (a) supporting U.S. international military commitments, such as the NATO alliance, with forward deployed forces, (b) confirming on a routine basis U.S. political commitments to other nations, by showing the flag in port visits and holding joint exercises with other navies, (c) demonstrating the capability of U.S. naval forces to act in support of national interests, (d) asserting continuing U.S. interest in important areas of the world, such as the Persian Gulf, (e) demonstrating warfighting capabilities in a tension area

⁹ Ibid.

to deter potential opponents, and serving as an instrument of crisis management, such as by signaling U.S. intentions, (f) providing humanitarian aid, and (g) coercing an opponent to comply with a preferred course of action.¹⁰ As this list shows, the presence mission was defined as covering the full range of naval missions short of wartime missions.

A second study of naval presence from the same period by Lieutenant Commander Kenneth R. McGruther, then a Naval War College student, identified six requirements for the naval forces employed for the presence mission: (a) the ships should be "dear," valuable assets must be committed to demonstrate will, (b) the warfighting capability of the force must be impressive and proven for the political signal to be credible, (c) the force should be multi-mission capable for flexibility of signaling and response, (d) the potential stay-time of the forces should be substantial from the start to signal an intent to stay until the job is done, (e) the fleet should be forward deployed so that forces are readily available close to potential trouble spots, and (f) superior command, control and communications capabilities are essential for an effective presence role.¹¹ This list

¹⁰ Commander James F. McNulty, "Naval Presence--The Misunderstood Mission," Naval War College Review 27 (September-October 1974): 26-27.

¹¹ Lieutenant Commander Kenneth R. McGruther, "The Role of Perception in Naval Diplomacy," Naval War College Review 27 (September-October 1974): 12-14.

of requirements reflects Navy thinking on the presence mission from the early 1970s onward. Of particular interest is that the requirements emphasize employment of highly capable forces--high value, powerful, multi-mission, high endurance, high connectivity assets. This approach to naval presence raises a host of potential tensions between performance of peacetime missions and readiness to perform warfighting missions.

From 1972 to 1978 the Navy made only minor revisions to its mission descriptions. In 1976 the CNO, Admiral James L. Holloway III, reduced the number of Navy missions from four to two (called "principle functions") by making strategic deterrence a sub-category of power projection, and defining naval presence to be the peacetime political impact of capabilities for sea control and power projection in wartime (projection of political influence through the presence of naval power).¹² This approach did not introduce new concepts or revise the old concepts, it merely squeezed them into two categories--sea control and power projection--

¹²Admiral James L. Holloway III, "Chief of Naval Operations Posture Statement," in U.S. Congress, Senate Armed Services Committee, Fiscal Year 1977 Authorization for Military Procurement, Research and Development, and Active Duty, Selected Reserve and Civilian Personnel Strengths, Part 2, 94th Congress, 2nd Session, 1976, pp. 1056-7. Also see Admiral Holloway's 1977 posture statement, in U.S. Congress, Senate Armed Services Committee, Fiscal Year 1978 Authorization for Military Procurement, Research and Development, and Active Duty, Selected Reserve and Civilian Personnel Strengths, Part 2, 95th Congress, 1st Session, 1977, pp. 935-938.

in order to emphasize the importance of wartime capabilities as the foundation for all naval missions.

The primary significance of the "two-mission" approach for this discussion is that it reveals an element in Navy thinking that contributes to the inherent tension between performance of peacetime missions and readiness for wartime missions. The essential, fundamental purposes of a navy are to successfully carry out its combat missions in wartime and, by extension, to maintain readiness for wartime missions during peacetime.¹³ Historically, navies which have lost sight of this principle have turned out to be ineffective in wartime. Treating peacetime missions as derivative of wartime missions is thus an attempt to resolve the tension between the two categories of missions in favor of readiness to perform wartime missions.

In 1979, at the initiative of CNO Admiral Thomas B. Hayward, the U.S. Navy ceased talking in terms of missions and began emphasizing principles of naval strategy when describing its contribution to the nation's defense.¹⁴ Gone

¹³See James A. Nathan and James K. Oliver, The Future of United States Naval Power (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1970), pp. 70-72, 81.

¹⁴Admiral Thomas B. Hayward, "The Future of U.S. Sea Power," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 105 (May 1979): 66-71. Admiral Hayward's shift toward strategic principles was preceded by (and undoubtedly influenced by) the Navy's Sea Plan 2000 study, completed in March 1978. This study emphasized maritime superiority, maintenance of stability with forward deployments, containment of crises with

was discussion of sea control and power projection, in its place was discussion of maritime superiority, offensive warfighting posture, and forward operations. Admiral Hayward initiated a renaissance in U.S. Navy strategic thinking. The principles he first outlined in his 1979 posture statement to Congress became the basis for the Maritime Strategy, which was formally issued in 1982.

The Maritime Strategy is the overall strategic framework guiding U.S. Navy strategic and operational planning. In the event of war with the Soviet Union, the strategy calls for offensive forward operations, seizing the initiative in the war at sea to destroy the Soviet navy and carry the war to the Soviet homeland.¹⁵ The first phase of wartime naval operations commences as a Soviet-American crisis begins escalating toward war. Aggressive forward deployment of U.S. naval forces would commence on a global basis in order to be ready for wartime operations in strategic waters, to put the Soviet Navy on the defensive,

selective use of force and superior naval forces on-scene, and deterrence of global war with forces capable of defending sea-lanes, reinforcing allies, and putting pressure on the Soviets. On Sea Plan 2000 see Paul B. Ryan, First Line of Defense (Stanford, Ca.: Hoover Institution Press, 1981), pp. 128-134.

¹⁵ Admiral James D. Watkins, "The Maritime Strategy," in The Maritime Strategy, a supplement to the U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 112 (January 1986), pp. 4-14; Captain Linton F. Brooks, "Naval Power and National Security: The Case for the Maritime Strategy," International Security 11 (Fall 1986): 58-59, 65-69.

and to deter the Soviets from escalation.¹⁶ Navy leaders assert that this concept of operations is founded on battle-proven principles of naval strategy and represents the optimum operational scenario for successfully prosecuting a war at sea with the Soviet Union.

The Maritime Strategy addresses the employment of naval forces as a political instrument with greater sophistication than any previous formulation of U.S. Navy missions. The three non-wartime naval functions encompassed by the strategy are deterrence, forward presence, and crisis response.

In support of overall U.S. defense strategy, the Maritime Strategy is primarily a deterrent strategy, designed to deter aggression across the entire spectrum of conflict, from terrorism to nuclear war.¹⁷ Deterrence is achieved through strategic nuclear deterrence patrols by ballistic missile submarines, by maintaining a visible forward presence demonstrating the capability and intent to execute offensive forward operations in wartime, and by responding to crises with credible combat capabilities to

¹⁶Watkins, "Maritime Strategy," pp. 8-10.

¹⁷Admiral James D. Watkins, "Posture Statement by the Chief of Naval Operations," U.S. Congress, Senate Armed Services Committee, Department of Defense Authorization for Appropriation for Fiscal Year 1987, Part 3. Hearings, 99th Congress, 2nd Session (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1986), pp. 1087-8 (Hereafter cited as Watkins, "Posture Statement FY-87").

deter Soviet intervention and control escalation of the conflict.¹⁸

As this description suggests, the Maritime Strategy emphasizes deterring the Soviets by denying them military options--threatening to defeat Soviet forces rather than threatening retaliation. Using Snyder's analytical scheme, emphasis in the Maritime Strategy is on deterrence by denial--altering the aggressor's estimate of the probability of gaining his objectives--though with naval strategic forces providing a threat of deterrence by punishment.¹⁹ A strong case can be made that in many circumstances, particularly in crises located outside the immediate Soviet periphery, denial is the more effective deterrent threat. However, as will be seen later, naval forces deployed to convey denial-type deterrent threats can have an impact on perceptions much stronger than had been anticipated, and can be confronted with conflicts between immediate tasking and the demands of the warfighting operations they would have to conduct in order to deny the Soviets their objectives should deterrence fail.

The second peacetime element of the Maritime Strategy is the routine forward deployment of U.S. naval forces in

¹⁸Watkins, "Posture Statement FY-87," pp. 1095-1100, and "Maritime Strategy," p. 8.

¹⁹Glenn H. Snyder, Deterrence and Defense (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1961), pp. 14-16.

peacetime. Forward presence contributes to the credibility of the U.S. deterrent posture by demonstrating denial capabilities. Forward presence is also intended to further international stability by demonstrating support for U.S. allies and other friendly countries, thus maintaining regional balances of power. In practice, forward presence is oriented toward likely trouble spots in order to have forces readily available should fighting flare up, as well as to deter hostilities. An additional benefit is that naval forces contribute to U.S. diplomatic objectives by showing the flag in port visits.²⁰ Forward presence, as used in the Maritime Strategy, encompasses earlier Navy concepts of naval forces as an instrument of foreign policy (Chase) and preventive naval presence (Turner).

The third peacetime element of the Maritime Strategy is crisis response, defined as employment of naval forces to achieve specific objectives while limiting the scope of the conflict and terminating military action as soon as possible. Crisis response serves primarily to control escalation of a conflict by deterring Soviet intervention and escalatory actions by other participants. Should control of escalation not be possible, the objective of crisis response is to dominate escalation--to prevail over any threats that may arise with precise use of force, so as

²⁰Watkins, "Posture Statement FY-87," p. 1095-1100.

to avoid increased hostilities. Naval forces have escalation control characteristics that make them well-suited for this role: mobility, readiness, flexibility, endurance, and a wide range of capabilities for precision political signaling and selective military options.²¹

Emphasis in crisis response is on deterrence by denial and escalation dominance should deterrence fail. National objectives are achieved through the political impact, and, if necessary, the direct military impact, of warfighting capabilities brought to bear at the scene of a crisis.

Although the Navy's description of its peacetime roles and missions changed significantly in the early 1970s and again in the early 1980s, there are strong continuities in the perspectives underlying these changing mission formulations. Five views consistently expressed by Navy leaders are particularly important for this study. First, warfighting capabilities are the foundation for performance of peacetime missions. The ability of naval forces to deter, persuade, or impress is derived from their ability to fight. Thus, peacetime missions are non-belligerent extensions of wartime missions, or, since there is always a threat that deterrence could fail, they are pre-war precursors of wartime missions.

²¹ Ibid, pp. 1100-1102.

Second, and closely related, peacetime missions always entail maintaining readiness to perform warfighting missions, particularly in crises. Readiness to perform warfighting missions operates on two levels: readiness of on-scene forces to engage in combat at the scene of a crisis should fighting erupt, and readiness of all operational forces, particularly forward deployed forces, to perform wartime missions should the crisis escalate to war.

The third view is that deterrence, at least below the strategic nuclear level, is achieved by denial: maintaining the capability to defeat enemy forces in battle, thus denying the enemy the ability to achieve his military objectives. Deterrence by denial applies to deterring Soviet military intervention in crises as well as to deterring adversaries in crises from aggression or escalation.

Fourth, the purposes of forward presence (presence for specific or routine political signaling) are to demonstrate denial capabilities for deterrence, and to place forces where they are available to conduct warfighting missions for denial should deterrence fail.

Fifth, the two objectives of crisis response--crisis management and escalation control--are both achieved by employing forces capable of demonstrating deterrence by denial, and, should it become necessary, capable of defeating the enemy in battle to achieve denial.

The theme underlying these five views is that combat or warfighting capabilities are the basis for conducting peacetime political missions. That Navy leaders should espouse this view is no surprise, the raison d'etre of navies being to win battles at sea. This perspective is not unique to the Navy, similar views are held by all armed forces. Beyond this, however, there is merit in military leaders focusing on readiness to perform warfighting missions, for coercive threats are by definition threats that force will be used. The key point is that military leaders and political leaders may be using the same terms with much different meanings, and viewing the same military actions as having much different purposes, in deliberations on the use of force as a political instrument. Furthermore, this is not just a problem of civil-military relations: such differences in views can arise within the military chain of command, and among political leaders.

Crisis Stability

An irony of naval crisis response is that the characteristics of naval forces that make them the preferred type of force for use as a political instrument in crises also tend to make them relatively more susceptible to crisis stability problems than other types of forces. There are three naval crisis stability problems. First, political signals sent by naval forces are especially vulnerable to

misperception, making the misperception dilemma particularly acute in naval crisis response. Second, the nature of modern naval warfare places a premium on firing first in tactical engagements, making the crisis security dilemma particularly acute in naval crisis response. Third, naval warfare may be more escalation-prone than other forms of warfare.

The first naval crisis stability problem is that the political signals sent by naval forces are especially vulnerable to misperception, making the misperception dilemma particularly acute. Virtually every study of naval diplomacy has noted the danger of the signals sent by naval forces being misperceived by the target nation or third parties. Naval officers are also aware of the problem of misperception: Admiral Turner in his article explaining the Navy's view of its presence mission pointed out that the perceptions of the country to be influenced are a factor in selecting forces for naval presence.²²

Three primary reasons have been given for the vulnerability of signals sent by naval forces to being misperceived. First, warships, being implements of war, are inherently coercive, even when used for positive, supportive, influence-building purposes.²³ They cannot

²²Turner, p. 14.

²³Ken Booth, Navies and Foreign Policy (New York: Crane Russak, 1977), p. 27; Nathan and Oliver, p. 77.

escape their aura of menace. Thus, the signals naval forces send have coercive connotations that can serve as "noise" complicating reception of the intended signal. Second, the flexibility of naval forces, which makes them so valued by national leaders for political signaling, also makes the signals they convey inherently ambiguous. As Nathan and Oliver observe, because naval forces can be withdrawn as easily as deployed, they can signal uncertainty and lack of resolve, rather than firmness and commitment.²⁴ Third, naval forces send highly visible signals which can be received by a large number of countries in addition to the intended recipient. Thus, third parties can perceive signals not intentionally sent to them.²⁵

The second naval crisis stability problem is that the nature of modern naval warfare places a premium on firing first in tactical engagements, making the crisis security dilemma particularly acute in naval crisis response. The nature of naval warfare is that the platforms--ships, submarines and aircraft--are fragile relative to the destructiveness of the weapons used against them. This began during the era in which guns were the main armament of ships. An individual shell hit usually could not do serious

²⁴Nathan and Oliver, pp. 78-79. Also see Edward N. Luttwak, The Political Uses of Sea Power (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), pp. 12-13.

²⁵Booth, pp. 27, 32, 42; Luttwak, p. 6.

damage, but massed gunfire could destroy a ship in short order. This led to emphasis on unilateral attrition--being able to fire on the enemy without suffering his return fire--achieved through longer-range guns and such tactical measures as surprise and maneuver.²⁶

Advent of the anti-ship cruise missile greatly exacerbated the vulnerability of platforms to weapons, allowing a single weapon to destroy a ship. Even if the missile does not sink the ship, it can knock the ship out of the battle--achieving what the Navy refers to as a "mission kill." Anti-ship missiles can be difficult to defend against, making destruction of the launch platform the most effective defense against them. U.S. Navy tactical doctrine for the defense of surface ship battle groups thus emphasizes destruction of launch platforms before they launch their missiles.²⁷ Soviet Navy doctrine places even

²⁶ Captain Wayne P. Hughes, Jr., Fleet Tactics: Theory and Practice (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1986), pp. 34-39. For an illustration of the effect of unilateral attrition, see Captain Wayne P. Hughes, Jr., "Naval Tactics and Their Influence on Strategy," Naval War College Review 39 (January-February 1986): 10-11. Also see Admiral Isaac C. Kidd, Jr., "View From the Bridge of the Sixth Fleet Flagship," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 98 (February 1972): 18-29; Admiral Stansfield Turner and Commander George Thibault, "Countering the Soviet Threat in the Mediterranean," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 103 (July 1977): 25-32.

²⁷ Lieutenant Commander T. Wood Parker, "Thinking Offensively," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 107 (April 1981): 26-31; Captain William J. Ruhe, "Antiship Missiles Launch New Tactics," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 108 (December 1982): 60-65; Watkins, "Maritime Strategy," p. 9.

greater emphasis on the first strike, making it a central objective of strategy as well as tactics. Soviet naval writings emphasize the importance of "the battle of the first salvo."²⁸ The tactical doctrines of the superpower navies interact, producing a war initiation scenario described in the U.S. Navy as the "D-day shootout."²⁹ The side that gets off the first salvo in the D-day shootout is likely to accrue a significant tactical advantage that could determine the outcome of the war at sea.

The technology and tactical doctrines of modern naval warfare provide conditions for crisis stability problems to arise in a crisis. Crisis stability exists when neither side has an incentive to strike the first blow, but in modern naval warfare both sides have strong tactical incentives to strike the first blow. The crisis security dilemma is that, in a crisis, many of the actions a state takes to increase its security and improve its bargaining

²⁸ Admiral of the Fleet of the Soviet Union Sergei G. Gorshkov, Red Star Rising at Sea (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1974), pp. 131-132; Charles D. Petersen, "About-Face in Soviet Tactics," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 109 (August 1983): 57-63; Lieutenant Commander Alan D. Zimm, "The First Salvo," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 111 (February 1985): 55-60; T.A. Fitzgerald, "Blitzkrieg at Sea," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 112 (January 1986): 33-38.

²⁹ Admiral Harry D. Train, "Decision Making and Managing Ambiguity in Politico-Military Crisis," in James G. March and Roger Weissinger-Baylon, eds., Ambiguity and Command: Organizational Perspectives on Military Decision Making (Marshfield, MA: Pitman Publishing, 1986), p. 306.

position decrease the security of the adversary. When both sides employ naval forces as a political instrument in crises, creating tactical-level interaction at the scene of the crisis, the technology and tactical doctrines of modern naval warfare almost unavoidably give rise to the crisis security dilemma. United States and Soviet naval tactical doctrines in particular emphasize the offensive and striking first in naval combat. The stratified crisis security dilemma is that, in a crisis, the security dilemma is stratified, arising from the interaction processes occurring separately at each of the three levels, and affecting the likelihood of war separately at each level. When Soviet and American naval forces are deployed to the scene of an acute crisis, the security dilemma is likely to arise at the tactical level of interaction regardless of the threat perceptions held by national leaders.

The third naval crisis stability problem is that escalation control may be more difficult in naval warfare than in other types of warfare. Several observers have expressed concern over the escalatory dangers associated with the employment of naval forces. Of particular concern to some observers is the escalatory pressure that can arise when a U.S. Navy ship is attacked. White House aide Chester Cooper, commenting on the strong Senate reaction to the 1964 Tonkin Gulf Incident, described the emotions aroused by attacks on United States ships:

There is something very magical about an attack on an American ship on the high seas. An attack on a military base or an Army convoy doesn't stir up that kind of emotion. An attack on an American ship on the high seas is bound to set off skyrockets and the 'Star Spangled Banner',³⁰ and 'Hail to the chief' and everything else.

George H. Quester and Sean M. Lynn-Jones have expanded upon Cooper's remarks. Noting that "It is dreadfully dangerous to sink a major power's warship today," Quester warns that "the warships of the world have become highly prized investments, such that their loss would be likely to enrage the publics and governments that matter back home--enrage them enough to trigger off escalations that neither side might have wanted, thus setting up the deterrence and bluff mechanisms that are at the heart of 'chicken'."³¹ Along the same lines, Lynn-Jones observed that "Under conditions of international tension and superpower rivalry, public opinion in a liberal democracy is likely to demand retaliation after a provocation by a major rival. Naval incidents seem to elicit particularly emotional responses in the United States." He goes on to add that "It is, of course, relatively unlikely that a naval incident could provoke a nuclear exchange between the United States and the Soviet Union. ...An incident could, however, increase tensions and

³⁰ "The 'Phantom Battle' that Led to War," U.S. News and World Report, July 23, 1984, p. 66.

³¹ George H. Quester, "Naval Armaments: The Past as Prologue," in George H. Quester, ed., Navies and Arms Control (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1980), pp. 6-7.

needlessly disrupt negotiations or other political discourse, much as the U-2 incident of 1960 forced the cancellation of the Khrushchev-Eisenhower summit."³²

Other observers contend that there is a greater risk of nuclear war erupting at sea than ashore. This argument has been made forcefully by Desmond Ball:

The possibility of nuclear war at sea must be regarded as at least as likely as the occurrence of nuclear war in other theaters. Indeed, there is probably a greater likelihood of accidental or unauthorized launch of sea-based nuclear weapons, and the constraints on the authorized release of nuclear weapons are possibly more relaxed than those that pertain to land-based systems. Further, there are several important factors that make it likely that any major conflict at sea would escalate to a strategic nuclear exchange relatively quickly.³³

Incidents at sea between American and Soviet forces have been identified as a potential catalyst for the nuclear

³² Sean M. Lynn-Jones, "A Quiet Success for Arms Control: Preventing Incidents at Sea," International Security 9 (Spring 1985): 164.

³³ Desmond Ball, "Nuclear War at Sea," International Security 10 (Fall 1985): 28-29. The factors Ball identifies are the occurrence of accidents at sea, the attractiveness of ships as nuclear targets, the nuclear weapons launch autonomy of naval commanders, dual-capable weapons systems and platforms, offensive Navy anti-submarine warfare (ASW) strategy (including attacks on Soviet strategic ballistic missile submarines), incentives for Soviet preemption arising from the vulnerability of Navy ASW and command and control systems, the Navy doctrine of offensive operations in forward areas, Navy tactical nuclear weapons doctrine, Soviet doctrine for war at sea, and lack of Navy contingency planning for limiting escalation in a war at sea. Also see Barry R. Posen, "Inadvertent Nuclear War? Escalation and NATO's Northern Flank," International Security 7 (Fall 1982): 28-54; Eric J. Grove, "The Maritime Strategy and Crisis Stability," Naval Forces 8 (6/1987): 34-44.

escalation dangers described by Ball. As John Borawski notes: "The 1967 Israeli sinking [sic] of the USS Liberty, and the subsequent US uncertainty as to whether a Soviet ship had attacked the Liberty, is often cited as an example of the type of nuclear Sarajevo that could inadvertently lead to war."³⁴ Thus, there are at least prima facie reasons for concern that the use of naval forces as a political instrument in crises has an escalatory potential that has not been adequately addressed in studies of naval diplomacy and crisis management.

Political-Military Tensions

There are three political-military tensions: tension between political considerations and the needs of diplomatic bargaining, on the one hand, and military considerations and the needs of military operations, on the other; tension between the need for top-level control of military options in a crisis, and the need for tactical flexibility and instantaneous decision-making at the scene of the crisis; and tension between performance of crisis political missions and readiness to perform wartime combat missions. All three of these tensions are likely to arise when naval forces are used as a political instrument in a crisis.

³⁴ John Borawski, "Risk Reduction at Sea: Naval Confidence-Building Measures," Naval Forces 3 (1/1987): 18. It must be noted that Liberty was not sunk in the attack.

The first tension is between political considerations and the needs of diplomatic bargaining, on the one hand, and military considerations and the needs of military operations, on the other. In his study of the political uses of sea power, Edward N. Luttwak noted that what he termed "suasion" (the influence effects of political signals) operates at both a tactical level (on-scene forces) and a political level (national-level, between states). The implication of this, according to Luttwak, is that: "Since men at the tactical and political levels have quite different responsibilities, contradictions between the two levels of suasion can be a source of acute internal controversy, just as the conflict between tactical and political priorities has been a chronic source of tension between soldiers and politicians in times of war."³⁵ As Luttwak suggests, the tension between political and military objectives which can arise in a crisis is a particular manifestation of an issue in civil-military relations inherent in war as well as peace.

In a study of the naval presence mission of the carrier task group led by USS Enterprise (CVN-65) during the 1971 Indo-Pakistani War, McGruther provided a good example of this problem:

It is presumed that the Navy will continue to play a primary role in reinforcing the intended perceptions

³⁵Luttwak, p. 10.

of American intent and capability, but if the crisis managers themselves are playing for much higher stakes, it follows that they are not particularly concerned with the alternatives which are left to the opponent when a force is sent into a crisis theater. For instance, Enterprise while in the Bay of Bengal was under the guns and missiles of two Soviet anticarrier warfare groups capable of destroying her by a barrage of surface-to-surface missiles before a plane could have been launched. To the national decision-makers that was not an element of the political problem and, therefore, was not the point.³⁶

McGruther goes on to add, "To us in the Navy, however, it is very much the point." In this case the tension was between the self-defense needs of the naval forces on-scene, and the political objective of having those forces in a highly visible position for political signaling. The trade-off made was to pursue signaling at the cost of extreme vulnerability of the ships on-scene.

Another manifestation of the tension between political and military considerations is that military contingency plans are often inappropriate for the particular crisis at hand, requiring last-minute revision prior to being executed. In assessing the reactive mode of naval presence--deployments made after a crisis erupts--McNulty observed that "reactive situations are usually characterized by gross

³⁶ McGruther, pp. 9-10. Rear Admiral J.R. Hill has made the same point. After explaining that political considerations may make it necessary to risk an initial casualty before the rules of engagement can be relaxed to allow prudent defensive measures, he wryly observes that "Nevertheless the command and crew of HMS Initial Casualty are not likely to welcome their predicament." Hill, Maritime Strategy for Medium Powers (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1986), p. 128.

uncertainties which require ad hoc revisions to plans on a near real-time basis. Such improvisation is a chancy business when the issue of war or peace hangs in the balance."³⁷ Operational plans are, of necessity, developed for specified scenarios, which may resemble the crisis at hand closely or remotely, but never anticipate it precisely. Contingency plans may be inappropriate for military as well as political reasons, but even in this case their military weaknesses are likely to be the result of the manner in which the crisis developed politically.

Operational crisis management requirements that can be imposed on the use of force include limiting the size and composition of the naval force employed, placing naval forces close to or in the midst of fighting as a visible signal, limiting the actions that naval forces can take in self-defense, informing the adversary of military operations in progress against his forces (such as tracking his submarines), deliberately slowing the tempo of military operations and creating pauses in the action, and using force in gradually increasing increments. On the other hand, battle-proven principles for the successful conduct of military operations include security (keeping one's intentions secret), seizing the initiative with offensive action, surprise, concentration of superior force on the

³⁷ McNulty. p. 25.

objective, and speed in the execution of an operation and exploitation of further opportunities. The potential conflicts are obvious.³⁸ Because naval forces must always be prepared for the possibility of combat even while on political signaling missions, this tension between political and military considerations arises well before force is actually used.

The second tension is between the need for top-level control of military options in a crisis, and the need for tactical flexibility and instantaneous decisionmaking at the scene of the crisis. Studies of naval diplomacy and naval command and control have recognized that maintaining control of naval operations, particularly when naval forces are used as a political instrument in a crisis. As Luttwak observed: "continuous political guidance of the highest possible quality is a crucial requirement of overseas deployments: a modern oceanic fleet needs a political 'radar' as much as it needs the electronic variety."³⁹ The simplest, and therefore most attractive, means of ensuring such continuous political guidance is for top-level decision-makers to have direct communications with and control of on-scene forces. Supporting this view, McGruther argues for "direct and specific dialog between the crisis manager and the on-scene

³⁸Such conflicts are discussed in Chapter III.

³⁹Luttwak, p. 14.

commander," warning: "To go through a chain of command requires too much time and increases the risk of either question or answer being incorrectly understood due to oversimplification or normal relay distortion."⁴⁰ Thus, a strong case can be made for direct top-level political control of on-scene naval forces in a crisis.

Although virtually all senior military commanders recognize the need for a certain degree of direct control by top-level political authorities, there is a strong belief--particularly among naval officers--that the on-scene commander must be delegated as much authority and freedom of action as possible. Top-level decisionmakers can be overwhelmed by information overload, have insufficient time to effectively control multiple operations, and have their attention diverted by one aspect of the operations to the neglect of others. They generally do not understand the complexities of modern warfare, which can make even a small-scale operation impossible to effectively control from the White House. Communications channels often become overloaded, causing excessive delays in decisionmaking and transmission of orders to operating forces.⁴¹

⁴⁰ McGruther, pp. 14-15. Also see Rear Admiral Donald T. Poe, "Command and Control: Changeless--Yet Changing," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 100 (October 1974): 24-25.

⁴¹ Captain W.T.T. Pakenham, "The Command and Control of Naval Operations: Principles and Organisation," Naval Forces 7 (1/1986): 50; Beaumont, "Command Method," pp. 65-67; Creveld, p. 247-51; Poe, pp. 28-29.



Naval officers invariably believe that the on-scene commander has a superior ability to control the employment of his forces. His information about the current tactical situation is inherently superior that of his superiors. The on-scene commander requires initiative and flexibility to effectively cope with a rapidly changing tactical situation. Only the on-scene commander can effectively adapt to the inevitable "friction" in military operations--the multitude of problems that shape the execution of military plans. Centralized control of military operations can stifle initiative, weaken morale, erode authority, and cause diffusion of responsibility.⁴² These are the reasons why senior naval commanders generally favor granting the on-scene commander as much freedom of action as possible.

McGruther has well described the tension arising from level of control issue:

It is important for the task force commander to know exactly what lines the opponent cannot cross and what the appropriate responses should be if the lines are crossed. Knowing in advance what the response should

⁴² Colonel H.A. Hadd, "Orders Firm But Flexible," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 88 (October 1962): 87-8; Admiral Thomas B. Hayward, "An Ex-CNO's Reflection on the Garbage Can Theory of Naval Decision Making," in James G. March and Roger Weissinger-Baylon, eds., Ambiguity and Command: Organizational Perspectives on Military Decision Making (Marshfield, MA: Pitman Publishing, 1986), p. 267; Admiral Roy L. Johnson, "The Reminiscences of Admiral Roy L. Johnson, U.S. Navy (Retired)," (Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, Oral History Program, April 1982), pp. 182-3; Commander Linton Wells II, "Plus ca Change," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 111 (June 1985): 30-37; Poe, p. 28-9; Train, p. 302-3, 307.

be is a joint responsibility of the on-scene commander and the crisis manager. Left to themselves in a particular situation, the former might be likely to respond too strongly and at an earlier point in developing events; the latter is likely to prefer more restraint than a rapidly heating crisis environment may tolerate.⁴³

The tactical situation can appear much different to the on-scene commander, operating under the guns of the adversary, than it does to top-level political leaders, negotiating a way out of the crisis with that same adversary. The political-military dynamics of the two levels of interaction can also be quite different, with a non-violent test of capabilities being played out on-scene as an element in a political strategy of coercive diplomacy.

The third tension is between performance of peacetime missions and readiness to perform wartime missions. Martin observed that when naval presence is exercised in an area of acute military tension, political demonstration purposes blend into preparations for warfare. That is, despite the ostensibly non-belligerent purpose of the presence mission, the naval forces must in fact have "a posture capable of accepting combat."⁴⁴ Naval forces deployed to the scene of a crisis to lend credibility to a deterrent threat are also

⁴³ McGruther, p. 10. Also see Captain Frank Andrews, "The Prevention of Surprise Attack," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 106 (May 1980): 134.

⁴⁴ Laurence W. Martin, The Sea in Modern Strategy (New York: Praeger, 1967), p. 143. Luttwak, p. 23, refers to this phenomenon as a "duality of mission requirements."

on-scene to take military action should deterrence fail. They thus have two missions: to carry out their assigned peacetime tasks, and to maintain readiness to conduct wartime combat operations.

Although tension between performance of peacetime missions and readiness to perform wartime missions is inherent in crises, its impact on decision-making is a function of the specific organizational perspectives of the armed forces involved in the crisis. McNulty has described the perspective commonly held by Naval Officers of presence as opposed to the other Navy missions (deterrence, sea control, and projection of power):

In all instances, our naval forces are organized and optimized toward one or more of the other three roles, and their commitment to the presence mission in any given case must frequently conflict with their readiness to perform tasks in support of what is almost inevitably perceived as their primary mission. This tendency to see the presence mission as competitive and mutually exclusive with the remaining mission areas seems to pose the gravest hazard to the success of our Navy in support of the basic goal of conflict avoidance."⁴⁵

This perspective, that wartime missions have priority over and are the foundation for peacetime missions, was also clearly evident in the Navy's own descriptions of its missions, reviewed in the previous section. This view has been consistent and strongly held for over forty years, and remains central to Navy thinking today.

⁴⁵ McNulty, p. 28.

The Maritime Strategy attempts to set crisis naval operations and wartime naval operations into an overall strategic framework. Should crisis response fail and a Soviet-American crisis begin escalating toward war, the first phase of what the Maritime Strategy refers to as wartime naval operations would commence. This phase of operations is intended to be executed (and, if possible, completed) before war erupts. Aggressive forward deployment of U.S. naval forces would take place on a global basis in order to deter the Soviets from launching a conventional war.⁴⁶ Again, the emphasis is on deterrence by denial, deterring the Soviets by making it clear to them that they cannot achieve their wartime aims. When this prewar deployment phase of operations commences, the tension between peacetime operations and readiness for wartime operations is resolved in favor of readiness for wartime operations.

As one would expect, given the wide range of crisis scenarios that can be envisioned, the Maritime Strategy is deliberately imprecise on when or under what circumstances the transition from peacetime crisis response to the prewar deployment phase of operations would occur. In all likelihood, though this is not stated explicitly, the two phases of the strategy would proceed simultaneously. Early transition to the prewar deployment phase of operations in a

⁴⁶Watkins, "Maritime Strategy," pp. 9-11.

crisis could create serious political and crisis management problems.

Crisis management and escalation control entail much more than deterrence by denial and escalation dominance, the central strategic concepts of the Maritime Strategy. The President could well decide upon a crisis management strategy in which he is willing to accept much greater risks to U.S. naval forces than are envisioned in the Maritime Strategy. This could preclude execution of the strategy in the manner preferred by the Navy. Conversely, naval forces organized, trained, and positioned for execution of the Maritime Strategy might not be immediately responsive to unanticipated ad hoc operational requirements created by the President's crisis management strategy.

The decision to shift from crisis response to the first phase of wartime operations (prewar deployment) would undoubtedly be a momentous and difficult one for the President. He can be expected to put off making this decision for as long as possible while seeking a negotiated solution to the crisis. Equally likely is the probability that the President would order the first phase of wartime operations incrementally, to use the forward deployments as further signals of resolve and to convey increasingly strong coercive threats. This raises the question of whether or not the Navy's wartime operations plans have sufficient flexibility to allow successful conduct of wartime operations

under conditions of delayed and incremental execution of the Maritime Strategy.

According to navy leaders, delayed or incremental execution of wartime operations could seriously threaten the ability of the Navy to achieve its wartime objectives.

Admiral James D. Watkins pointed this out in his 1986 description of the Maritime Strategy:

Keys to the success of both the initial phase and the strategy as a whole are speed and decisiveness in national decisionmaking. The United States must be in position to deter the Soviets' "battle of the first salvo" or deal with that if it comes. Even though a substantial fraction of the fleet is forward deployed in peacetime, prompt decisions are needed to permit rapid forward deployment of additional forces in crisis.⁴⁷

Admiral Watkins was arguing, in effect, for the decision to commence the first phase of wartime operations to be made earlier in a crisis rather than later, and decisively (all at once) rather than incrementally. This clearly illustrates the nature of the tension between performance of crisis missions and readiness to perform wartime missions. Early and decisive execution of prewar naval deployments are viewed by Navy leaders as crucial to the success of the Maritime Strategy, but could well be viewed by the President as a serious threat to crisis management. This tension is not unique to the Maritime Strategy--it is inherent in the use of military forces in crises.

⁴⁷ Ibid, p. 9.

The tension between performance of crisis political missions and readiness to perform warfighting missions also raises concerns among naval officers over political restrictions imposed in mechanisms of indirect control, particularly the rules of engagement.⁴⁸ Lieutenant Commander T. Wood Parker has expressed concern that overly restrictive rules of engagement could leave the Navy vulnerable to a pre-emptive surprise attack:

Our specific rules of engagement, although classified and dependent on the given situation, generally require us to assume a "defensive position" and to react to a hostile act. This, of course, is not all bad, for a different type of rules might result in a miscalculation which could have catastrophic consequences. Even so, our rules of engagement put us at a disadvantage because our unit commanders and individual commanding officers are forced to think defensively prior to taking offensive action. Moreover, our present rules put us in a very unpalatable situation in that the enemy can start the war at the time and place of his choosing. Within the context of the "battle of the first salvo," so important in Soviet military thinking, our rules of engagement give the Soviet Navy a tremendous advantage. The U.S. Navy can ill-afford to absorb a massive, coordinated attack prior to being able to take offensive action.⁴⁹

This concern arises fundamentally from the nature of modern naval warfare, in which a premium is placed on striking

⁴⁸ See Rear Admiral Daniel V. Gallery, The Pueblo Incident (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Co., 1970), pp. 24-26; Lieutenant Commander Michael N. Pocalyko, "25 Years After the Blink," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 113 (September 1987): 43; Hill, pp. 127-8.

⁴⁹ Parker, p. 29. Also see Norman Friedman, "The Rules of Engagement Issue," in E.F. Gueritz, et al., NATO's Maritime Strategy: Issues and Developments (Washington, DC: Pergamon-Brassey's, 1987), pp. 25-32.

first. The possibility that a crisis could erupt in war exacerbates the tension between political and military considerations inherent in rules of engagement.

In a severe crisis, one in which Soviet-American hostilities have risen to the point that wartime options must start receiving consideration, the tensions between political and military objectives becomes acute. Peacetime political missions are prone to put naval forces in locations other than where contingency plans for wartime operations would have them, and can employ forces of a size and composition other than would be optimum for wartime operations.⁵⁰ This can have two effects. First, the naval force carrying out the political mission may not be suitable or available for immediate employment in wartime operations should war break out. It could well be sunk in the first seconds of the war, its position being well known and its presence being an aggravation. Second, the ability of the fleets from which the units were drawn to conduct preplanned wartime operations can be degraded by the absence of the units.

Efforts to minimize the impact of these effects can entail actions which may not be compatible with the political objectives national leaders and the diplomatic initiatives being taken to resolve the crisis. Surging

⁵⁰Train, p. 306.

ships from their homeports to replace ships pulled from forward deployed forces to perform political mission could be misperceived by an adversary as a signal of intent to seek a military solution to the crisis. Using a naval force suitable for wartime operations for a political mission, or attempting to keep it in a location and condition of readiness suitable for wartime operations, could cause the same misperception. On the other hand, failure to maintain the readiness of naval forces for wartime missions be misperceived as signaling a lack of resolve or a willingness to sacrifice national interests to avoid an armed clash, thus eroding credibility, undercutting the nation's bargaining position, and debilitating efforts to negotiate a solution to the crisis.

Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed the U.S. Navy's view of its role as a political instrument, examined the impact of naval forces on crisis stability, and discussed the tensions between political and military considerations that arise in crisis naval operations.

Five views consistently expressed by U.S. Navy leaders are particularly important for understanding their perceptions of the role of naval forces in crises. First, warfighting capabilities are viewed as the foundation for performance of peacetime missions. That is, peacetime

missions are viewed as non-belligerent extensions of wartime missions or as pre-war precursors of wartime missions.

Second, and closely related, Navy leaders strongly believe that peacetime missions must entail maintaining readiness to perform warfighting missions, particularly in crises.

Third, deterrence, at least below the strategic nuclear level, is viewed as being achieved by threat of denial: maintaining the capability to defeat enemy forces in battle, thus denying the enemy the ability to achieve his military objectives. Fourth, the purposes of forward presence are viewed as demonstrating denial capabilities for deterrence and placing forces where they are available to conduct warfighting missions should deterrence fail. Fifth, the two objectives of crisis response--crisis management and escalation control--are viewed as best achieved through employing forces capable of threatening deterrence by denial, and therefore capable of defeating the enemy in battle to achieve denial.

The theme underlying these five views is that combat or warfighting capabilities are the basis for conducting peacetime political missions. That Navy leaders should espouse this view is not surprising, as the raison d'etre of navies being to win battles at sea. The key point is that political leaders and military commanders may be using the same terms with much different meanings, and viewing the same military actions as having much different purposes.

Civilian leaders may view a crisis naval deployment as serving escalation deterrence purposes, while naval leaders view it as serving escalation dominance purposes. Civilian leaders could authorize prewar naval deployments as a signal of resolve, while naval leaders execute the deployments to increase readiness for wartime operations. Such differences in perspective--civilian leaders focusing on the political considerations while military leaders focus on military considerations--can give rise to tensions between political and military considerations.

These differences in perspective are not a problem so long as the deployments succeed in achieving their political objectives, that is, so long as the other side refrains from escalation. Two problems could arise, however, if fighting does erupt--which could result from some sort of inadvertent incident as well as from a deliberate decision by the adversary. First, civilian leaders may not understand that by executing (either incrementally or fully) military contingency plans, they are authorizing U.S. forces to conduct combat operations under certain circumstances--such as in self-defense or anticipatory self-defense. Contingency deployments in support of allies involved in a crisis can exacerbate this problem if U.S. forces are authorized to use force in support of the ally. Second, civilian leaders could unknowingly be limiting their future options to a narrow range of military operations once fighting erupts.

Viewing a particular naval deployment as a political move, civilian leaders may not task military leaders to prepare a wide range of contingency responses to an outbreak of fighting. Military leaders always have such contingency responses, but, because their focus is on protecting their forces and ensuring victory in any engagement that might arise, the intensity and scope of combat operations they envision could well exceed what civilian leaders would have desired had they participated in the planning process. Differences in perspective can thus have serious latent implications that do not become apparent until an unanticipated incident occurs.

The characteristics of naval forces that make them the preferred type of force for use as a political instrument in crises also tend to make them relatively more susceptible to crisis stability problems than other types of forces. There are three naval crisis stability problems. First, political signals sent by naval forces are especially vulnerable to misperception, making the misperception dilemma particularly acute in naval crisis response. Second, the nature of modern naval warfare places a premium on firing first in tactical engagements, making the crisis security dilemma particularly acute in naval crisis response. Third, naval warfare may be more escalation-prone than other forms of warfare.

There are three political-military tensions: tension between political considerations and the needs of diplomatic bargaining, on the one hand, and military considerations and the needs of military operations, on the other; tension between the need for top-level control of military options in a crisis, and the need for tactical flexibility and instantaneous decision-making at the scene of the crisis; and tension between performance of crisis political missions and readiness to perform wartime combat missions. All three of these tensions are likely to arise when naval forces are employed as a political instrument in crises.

This completes the first phase of the research design, which examined three major aspects of crisis military interaction: military command and control, tactical-level military interaction, and the role of naval forces in crises. Discussion of these topics was necessary to develop specific concepts for operationalizing the theory of stratified interaction. With that task completed, the second phase of the research design can now commence. The second phase consists of four case studies of crisis naval operations, which are presented in the next chapter.

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CHAPTER VII
NAVAL OPERATIONS IN CRISES

The second phase of the research design consists of four case studies of crisis naval operations. The four cases are the 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis, the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, the 1967 Middle East War, and the 1973 Middle East War. The criteria for case selection were (a) significant U.S. naval operations were conducted and influenced the outcome of the crisis, (b) the naval operations were conducted in the immediate proximity of adversary naval forces or land-based forces that could threaten naval forces, and (c) there was a possibility of fighting erupting between the United States and the other side in the crisis.

Eight questions addressing specific aspects of the theory of stratified interaction will be addressed in each case study. The first three questions address the conditions necessary for stratified interaction to occur: delegated control, tight coupling between the forces of the two sides, and conditions of acute crisis. The first question is to what degree were interactions between the forces of the two sides at the scene of the crisis the

result of actions taken in accordance with mechanisms of indirect control, rather than direct control by national leaders? The second question is were the forces of the two sides at the scene of the crisis tightly coupled with each other? The third question is were the forces of the two sides being used by their national leaders to convey political signals in support of crisis bargaining?

The fourth question is did crisis interactions at the tactical level become decoupled from the strategy being pursued by national leaders? There are seven potential causes of decoupling: communications and information flow problems, impairment of political-level decisionmaking, a fast-paced tactical environment, ambiguous or ambivalent orders, tactically inappropriate orders, inappropriate guidance in mechanisms of indirect control, and deliberate unauthorized actions by military commanders. To establish that stratified interactions became decoupled in a crisis requires two findings: first, that one of the seven factors just mentioned was present, creating conditions for decoupling, and, second, that operational decisions made by tactical-level decisionmakers differed from the decisions that political-level decisionmakers would have made in order to coordinate those actions with their political-diplomatic strategy for resolving the crisis.

The fifth question is did national leaders and on-scene commanders hold different perceptions of the

vulnerability of on-scene forces to pre-emption and the need to strike first in the event of an armed clash? This question addresses the second corollary to the theory of stratified interaction, that the security dilemma can become stratified in crises. The implication of this is that decision-makers at the political and tactical levels can hold different perceptions of the offense-defense balance, vulnerability to pre-emption, and the need to strike first.

The sixth question is, when tactical-level interactions become decoupled, what factors inhibit escalation dynamics from occurring at the tactical level and being transmitted upward to the strategic and political levels of interaction? This question addresses the third corollary to the theory of stratified interaction, that escalation dynamics can be stratified in a crisis. Although escalation dynamics cannot be addressed directly--none of the cases escalated to war--research was done to identify conditions which may have inhibited escalation dynamics from occurring.

The seventh question is did actions taken with military forces send inadvertent signals to either adversaries or friends, and did inadvertent military incidents occur that affected efforts to manage the crisis? This question addresses crisis management problems that arise when military forces are employed in crises: the misperception dilemma and inadvertent military incidents.

The eighth question is did any of the three tensions between political and military considerations arise during the crisis? There are three tensions between political and military considerations that can arise when military forces are used as a political instrument in crises: tension between political considerations and the needs of diplomatic bargaining, on the one hand, and military considerations and the needs of military operations, on the other; tension between the need for top-level control of military options in a crisis, and the need for tactical flexibility and instantaneous decision-making at the scene of the crisis; and tension between performance of crisis political missions and readiness to perform wartime combat missions. All three tensions arise from the requirements of crisis management, the essence of which is placing political constraints on military operations.

The next four sections of this chapter present the case studies of the 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis, the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, and the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. Each case study opens with an overview of the background crisis and its context, followed by a description objectives and strategies of each side. After a review of the command and control methods that were used, United States naval operations during the crisis are discussed. Each case closes with a summary of findings on the eight research questions.

The 1958 Taiwan Strait Crisis

The 1958 Taiwan Strait Crisis erupted in August when the Chinese Communists launched an artillery blockade of Quemoy Island, cutting off the flow of supplies to the Nationalist Chinese garrison on the island. The United States responded by announcing a commitment to the defense of Quemoy and assisting the Nationalists in breaking the blockade of the island. The crisis tapered off in October 1958, after the Chinese Communists announced that they would not shell Quemoy on even days, allowing supplies to reach the island. The United States Navy played a prominent role in the crisis, escorting Nationalist convoys to Quemoy and patrolling in the Taiwan Strait.

Background

During World War II, the United States was allied with the Republic of China, ruled by President Chiang Kai-Shek and the Nationalist Party (Kuomintang). Although nominally fighting the Japanese, the Nationalists were more concerned with suppressing the revolution that had been launched in 1927 by the the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Clashes between Nationalist and Communist forces occurred during the war and intensified afterwards despite United States efforts at mediating between the two sides. Full-scale civil war erupted in 1947 and, after soundly defeating the Nationalists in several battles, the Communists proclaimed the

People's Republic of China (PRC) in Peking on October 1, 1949. Nationalist leaders fled the mainland to Taiwan on December 8, 1949, and re-established their government in Taipei.¹

The Nationalists and Communists were irreconcilable because both sides claimed to be the only legitimate government of all China. The Communists proclaimed the goal of reuniting Taiwan with the mainland under Communist rule, and the Nationalists proclaimed the goal of returning to the mainland to place it under Nationalist rule. Thus was born the confrontation in the Taiwan Straits between the Nationalist Chinese and Communist Chinese.

The United States remained committed to the Nationalists and refused to recognize the People's Republic of China. When North Korea invaded South Korea on June 25, 1950, one of the first actions taken by the United States was to send the Seventh Fleet to protect Taiwan against invasion. U.S.-PRC relations deteriorated badly during the Korean War, especially after Chinese "volunteers" launched a

¹ See James P. Harrison, The Long March to Power (New York: Praeger, 1972), pp. 91-431; O. Edmund Clubb, 20th Century China, Third Edition (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978), pp. 149-297; John King Fairbank, The Great Chinese Revolution, 1800-1985 (New York: Harper and Row, 1986), pp. 204-269. On the American role, see U.S. Department of State, "United States Relations With China, With Special Reference to the Period 1944-1949," Department of State Publication 3573, Far Eastern Series 30, August 1949, pp. 59-411; Michael Schaller, The U.S. Crusade in China, 1938-1945 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979).

devastating offensive against United Nations Command forces in October 1950 and President Eisenhower "unleashed" Chiang Kai-shek against the mainland in February 1953. The Nationalist-Communist confrontation became firmly embedded in the Soviet-American cold war when the PRC signed a thirty-year friendship treaty with the Soviet Union on February 14, 1950, and the ROC signed a Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement with the United States on February 9, 1951.²

The Nationalists occupied several islands off the coast of mainland China as they fled to Taiwan. Many of the islands were soon abandoned, but the Nationalists maintained garrisons on a few: the Quemoy (Jinmen) group, off the port city of Amoy across the straits from Taiwan; Matsu, off the port city of Fuchou across from the northern end of Taiwan; and the Tachen group, off of Wenchou about 200 miles north of Taiwan. The offshore islands had little value for the defense of Taiwan, but were useful as bases for military raids and intelligence missions against the mainland. The offshore islands also had important symbolic value to the Nationalists. Quemoy had been the site of the only significant Nationalist success in battle against the Communists, a victory commemorated with a large monument on the island.

² See Roderick MacFarquhar, Sino-American Relations, 1949-71 (New York: Praeger, 1972), pp. 78-100; DuPre Jones, ed., China: U.S. Policy Since 1945 (Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly, 1980), pp. 85-96.

Nationalist forces were forced to evacuate the Tachen Islands during the 1954-1955 Taiwan Straits Crisis under the pressure of PRC air attacks. The crisis erupted on September 3, 1954, with heavy shelling of Quemoy by the PRC. The Nationalists returned fire and four days later began launching large-scale air attacks against the mainland. The United States responded by immediately ordering the Seventh Fleet to resume its patrol of the Taiwan Straits. By February 1955 the Nationalist position on the Tachen Islands had become untenable, and the United States convinced the ROC to withdraw its garrison with Seventh Fleet support. The withdrawal was conducted successfully without interference from the PRC, which declared a ceasefire in the area two days before the evacuation. The crisis tapered off after this as the PRC adopted a less militant line toward Taiwan and the United States. This policy, first apparent at the April 1955 Bandung Conference of African and Asian nations, called for peaceful liberation of Taiwan, and lasted until July 1958. China and the United States also commenced diplomatic discussions in Geneva, which would continue until December 1957.³

³See Tang Tsou, "Mao's Limited War in the Taiwan Strait," *Orbis* 3 (Fall 1959): 336-38; O. Edmund Clubb, "Formosa and the Offshore Islands in American Policy, 1950-1955," *Political Science Quarterly* 74 (December 1959): 517-31; Morton H. Halperin and Tang Tsou, "United States Policy Toward the Offshore Islands," in John D. Montgomery and Arthur Smithies, eds., *Public Policy*, Volume 15 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1966), pp. 119-38; J.H.

The most important consequence of the 1954-1955 Taiwan Strait Crisis was a deepened United States commitment to the Nationalists. The United States signed a Mutual Defense Treaty with the ROC on December 2, 1954, and Congress passed the Formosa Resolution in January 1955. The Formosa Resolution authorized the President "to employ the Armed forces of the United States as he deems necessary for the specific purpose of securing and defending Formosa and the Pescadores against armed attack." The resolution did not explicitly state that the United States would defend the offshore islands, but stated that the President's authority to defend Formosa and the Pescadores included "the securing and protection of such related positions and territories of that area now in friendly hands."⁴ The Eisenhower Administration chose not to make a formal, public commitment to defend the offshore islands, but did make a private commitment to Chiang Kai-shek on January 31, 1955, that the United States would defend the islands.⁵ It is not clear, however,

Kalicki, The Pattern of Sino-American Crises: Political-Military Interactions in the 1950s (London: Cambridge University Press, 1975), pp. 120-55; Bennett C. Rushkoff, "Eisenhower, Dulles and the Quemoy-Matsu Crisis, 1954-1955," Political Science Quarterly 96 (Fall 1981): 465-80; Gordon H. Chang, "To the Nuclear Brink: Eisenhower, Dulles, and the Quemoy-Matsu Crisis," International Security 12 (Spring 1988): 96-122.

⁴U.S. Department of State, American Foreign Policy, 1950-55: Basic Documents, Volume II (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1957), pp. 2486-87.

⁵Chang, "To the Nuclear Brink," pp. 102, 104, 120.

that the commitment to defend the offshore islands, which was made as part of an agreement with Chiang to evacuate the Tachens, was intended to last indefinitely. The fact that in making the private commitment the Eisenhower Administration was breaking an earlier promise (January 19) to make a public commitment, suggests that the the private commitment--better described as informal assurance--was intended only to resolve the immediate crisis. President Eisenhower would later interpret the Formosa Resolution narrowly to mean that the United States could not defend the offshore islands unless their loss would threaten the defense of Taiwan. Everett F. Drumwright, the U.S. ambassador to the Republic of China in 1958, has stated categorically that "we had no private agreement with Chiang to defend the islands."⁶ The Eisenhower Administration thus did not perceive itself in 1958 as bound by the informal assurances it had given Chiang in 1955 that the U.S. would defend the offshore islands.

Between 1954 and 1957 the Nationalists increased the Quemoy garrison from 30,00 to 86,100 troops--almost one-third of their ground forces. Chiang Kai-shek probably wanted to ensure that the United States would help defend

⁶Quoted in Jonathan T. Howe, Multicrisis: Sea Power and Global Politics in the Missile Age (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1971), p. 170. Also see Dwight D. Eisenhower, The White House Years: Waging Peace, 1956-1961 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Co., 1965), pp. 293-5; Fred I. Greenstein, The Hidden-Hand Presidency: Eisenhower as Leader (New York: Basic Books, 1982), pp. 20-24; Howe, pp. 167-72, 184-93.

the island in the event of a Communist attack--loss of a third of the Nationalist army would seriously weaken the defense of Taiwan. Chiang also had not abandoned the option of someday taking offensive action against the mainland, and may also have deployed the troops to Quemoy so as to be able to rapidly exploit political upheaval on the mainland. The Eisenhower Administration was concerned over Chiang's aggressive designs and sought to restrain him by hedging the American commitment to defend the offshore islands.⁷

Tension in the Taiwan Straits remained at a relatively low level from April 1955 to July 1958. The Nationalists used the offshore islands for limited political and military operations, such as infiltration of agents into the mainland and broadcasting propaganda over loudspeakers. The Communist Chinese occasionally shelled the offshore islands or buzzed them with aircraft. Neither side increased the intensity of such operations prior to late August 1958.⁸

⁷ Eisenhower, p. 296; Tang Tsou, "The Quemoy Imbroglia: Chiang Kai-shek and the United States," Western Political Quarterly 12 (December 1959): 1075-77; Leon V. Sigal, "The 'Rational Policy' Model and the Formosa Straits Crisis," International Studies Quarterly 14 (June 1970): 126-7; Alexander L. George and Richard Smoke, Deterrence in American Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974), pp. 369-70; Leonard H.D. Gordon, "United States Opposition to Use of Force in the Taiwan Strait, 1954-1962," Journal of American History 72 (December 1985): 640-644; Howe, pp. 173-76.

⁸ Morton H. Halperin, "The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis: A Documented History," Memorandum RM-4900-ISA (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, December 1966, declassified March 1975), pp. 8-12; Melvin Gurtov and Byong-Moo Hwang, China Under

The more important factor appears to have been that the PRC was growing frustrated over its lack of progress in peacefully liberating Taiwan. Ambassadorial talks with the United States in Poland had failed to yield any American concessions on the Taiwan issue.⁹ In July 1958, the PRC shifted to a more militant policy toward the Nationalists, and began building up its air and naval forces in Fukien Province, across the Straits from Taiwan. On August 23, 1958, the Communist Chinese commenced an intense artillery bombardment of Quemoy, firing over 40,000 shells in two hours according Nationalist spokesmen.¹⁰ This marked the start of the second Taiwan Strait Crisis.

Threat: The Politics of Strategy and Diplomacy (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), pp. 79-81. These two studies disagree as to whether or not Nationalist military activities on the offshore islands contributed to precipitating the crisis. Gurtov and Huang contend that Nationalist activities during the first half of 1958 were a serious provocation. Halperin, on the other hand, contends that the level of Nationalist activities had actually declined, and were much less provocative in 1958 than in earlier years. The evidence presented in the two studies supports Halperin's view, but the low level of Nationalist military operations that were being conducted from the offshore islands were probably still an annoyance to the Communist Chinese.

⁹ Gurtov and Hwang, pp. 75-83.

¹⁰ "Chinese Communists Shell Quemoy in Record Attack," New York Times, August 24, 1958, p. 1; Morton H. Halperin and Tang Tsou, "The 1958 Quemoy Crisis," in Morton H. Halperin, ed., Sino-Soviet Relations and Arms Control (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1967), pp. 274-5; Allen S. Whiting, "Quemoy 1958: Mao's Miscalculations," China Quarterly 62 (June 1975): 265-6; Harold C. Hinton, China's Turbulent Quest (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1972), p. 91; George and Smoke, pp. 371-3.

Political-Strategic Context

The PRC probably had three objectives in launching the artillery bombardment of Quemoy. The first objective was to deter the Nationalists from using the offshore islands for harassment of the mainland, or as a base for a future invasion of the mainland. This would reduce the annoyance of Nationalist military activities from the offshore islands and perhaps lead to a reduction in the Nationalist garrison on the islands. The second objective was to force the Nationalists to withdraw from Quemoy, similar to the manner in which they had been forced to abandon the Tachen Islands in 1955. The blockade of Quemoy appears to have been designed to cause logistical problems similar to those that forced evacuation of the Tachens. The third objective was to avoid war with the United States, which could well result in U.S. atomic attacks on the mainland. The advantage of a blockade over an outright invasion was that it was less likely to provoke the United States into attacking the mainland in support of the Nationalists. The fourth objective was to discredit the American commitment to the Nationalists and weaken U.S.-ROC relations. This could have been the outcome if the United States did not intervene to break the blockade and the Nationalists were forced to evacuate Quemoy. Weakening U.S.-ROC relations might make the Nationalists more amenable to negotiations and even weaken the defense of Taiwan. The fifth objective was to

prompt the United States to resume the Ambassadorial talks in Poland, which the Americans had broken off and refused to resume despite a request from the PRC. If none of the other objectives were achieved, negotiations would offer an opportunity to gain American and Nationalist concessions in the Taiwan Strait.¹¹

The strategy adopted by the PRC has been described by Alexander L. George and Richard Smoke as a limited probe: "In initiating their potent but limited probe via an artillery blockade, the Chinese Communists correctly perceived both the ambiguity of the U.S. commitment to Quemoy that had been written into the Formosa Resolution and the high probability that Washington would observe important limits on its military response if it decided to react to a low-level threat to Quemoy. Peking chose an appropriately cautious military operation for testing and clarifying the U.S. commitment, and for exerting pressure to erode the administration's willingness to accept risks in order to help defend Quemoy."¹² The essential features of the

¹¹Donald S. Zagoria, The Sino-Soviet Conflict, 1956-1961 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1962), pp. 206-8; George and Smoke, pp. 371-6; Halperin and Tsou, "The 1958 Quemoy Crisis," p. 275; Whiting, pp. 264-7; Sigal, pp. 142-4; Gurtov and Hwang, pp. 92-94; Gordon, p. 645.

¹²George and Smoke, p. 370. Gurtov and Hwang, p. 91, reject the probe thesis. They are correct in contending that it was not Peking's objective simply to test American resolve, but the ambiguity of the American commitment to Quemoy made such a test an important element in the Communist Chinese strategy.

strategy were strict limits on the use of force against the Nationalists, avoidance of military engagements with American forces, and employment of a military option that could readily be scaled back or halted to avert United States intervention.¹³ As Tang Tsou has pointed out, the Chinese Communists "shifted to the United States the decision as to whether there would be a direct encounter between American and Communist Chinese forces in Asia."¹⁴ Peking thus adopted a strategy that allowed it to adapt its military campaign to the intensity of the American reaction--maintaining pressure on Quemoy if the U.S. commitment was weak, or backing off and settling for lesser objectives if the U.S. threatened escalation against the mainland.

Although Communist China primarily relied on an artillery barrage to blockade Quemoy, it also used PT boats

¹³Tang Tsou, "Mao's Limited War," pp. 338-341; George and Smoke, pp. 365, 373-5; Zagoria, pp. 206-8; Thomas E. Stolper, China, Taiwan, and the Offshore Islands (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1985), pp. 86-87. The strategy employed by the Communist Chinese in the 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis is an example of the approach to use of force they employed from 1950 onward. See Fred Greene, U.S. Policy and the Security of Asia (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968), pp. 202-224; Alan S. Whiting, "The Use of Force in Foreign Policy by the People's Republic of China," Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science 402 (July 1972): 55-66; Alan S. Whiting, The Chinese Calculus of Deterrence: India and Indochina (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1975), pp. 196-223; Steve Chan, "Chinese Conflict Calculus and Behavior: Assessment from a Perspective of Crisis Management," World Politics 30 (April 1978): 391-410; Edward W. Ross, "Chinese Conflict Management," Military Review 60 (January 1980): 13-25.

¹⁴Tsou, "Mao's Limited War," p. 341.

to attack Nationalist ships and occasionally attacked the island with aircraft. On August 24 the Communists made an attempt to seize Tung Ting Island, a tiny Nationalist-occupied island eighteen miles southwest of Quemoy. The Nationalists repelled the invasion force and there were no further Communist attempts to invade any of the islands in the Quemoy group. It is likely that Tung Ting was the only island that the Communist Chinese intended to invade at the outset. Tung Ting had minor military value: it was close to the sealanes to Quemoy, so Communist possession of it would aid their blockade of Quemoy. However, the primary reason for seizing Tung Ting would have been the psychological impact of its loss on the Nationalists. Loss of the island might have demoralized the Nationalists and, the Communists may have hoped, led the Nationalists to believe that Quemoy was also indefensible. Additionally, seizing a single, tiny island would be a low-level test the U.S. commitment to the defense of the offshore islands. If seizing Tung Ting did not evoke a strong U.S. response, other small islands in the Quemoy group probably would have been seized as part of protracted campaign against Quemoy.

The Soviet Union played a peripheral role in the crisis. Strains had begun to develop in the Sino-Soviet alliance in 1956 and 1957, but as of 1958 both sides were still trying to forestall the rupture that would occur later. During Khrushchev's July 31-August 3, 1958, visit to

Peking, Mao may have informed Khrushchev in very general terms of China's intention to take action against the offshore islands. In his memoirs, Khrushchev states that his government supported Chinese military aid requests for the upcoming operation. However, once the Chinese bombardment of Quemoy began, the Soviets were circumspect in their propaganda support until the Communists had taken steps to avert a direct clash with the United States.¹⁵

The Soviets appear to have had two objectives in the crisis. The first Soviet objective was to improve Sino-Soviet relations, the deterioration of which had in part been due to Chinese displeasure with the Soviet handling of American "imperialism." As long as the crisis did not result in war, the costs would be small--some military aid, propaganda support, and deterrent threats to the United States. The second Soviet objective was to avoid being dragged into war with the United States by the actions of Communist China. The Soviet strategy in the crisis reflected these objectives. The Soviets supported the limited Chinese objective of neutralizing the offshore islands as a threat to the mainland, but sought to restrain

¹⁵ Nikita S. Khrushchev, Khrushchev Remembers: The Last Testament, translated and edited by Strobe Talbott (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1974), pp. 261-3; John R. Thomas, "Soviet Behavior in the Quemoy Crisis of 1958," Orbis 6 (Spring 1962): 38-64; Alice Langley Hsieh, Communist China's Strategy in the Nuclear Era (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1962), pp. 123-7; Halperin and Tsou, "The 1958 Quemoy Crisis," pp. 278-86; Zagoria, 211-17.

the Chinese from taking action that might provoke a war with the United States.¹⁶ By remaining circumspect in their support of Peking during the crucial opening phase of the crisis, when it was not clear how far the Chinese were willing to go in provoking the United States or how strongly the United States would react, the Soviets moderated the intensity of the crisis.

The Eisenhower Administration had three primary objectives, all of which were clearly articulated in American policy statements issued during the crisis. The first objective was to prevent Quemoy from falling into Communist hands. This objective was driven by the specific United States commitment to the Nationalist government on

¹⁶ Hsieh, pp. 119, 122, 129; Thomas, pp. 39-40; Zagoria, pp. 216-7; Halperin and Tsou, "The 1958 Quemoy Crisis," pp. 287-94; Howe, pp. 178-80, 193-200, 218-24. Analysts are divided on whether Moscow and Peking agreed or disagreed on the level and type support the Soviets would provide. One view is that the Soviets provided much less support than they had led the Chinese to expect. The Chinese made this accusation in a bitter 1963 denunciation of the Soviets, after the Sino-Soviet split had erupted in public acrimony. See Thomas, p. 63; Zagoria, p. 217; John Gittings, Survey of the Sino-Soviet Dispute, 1963-1967 (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), pp. 89-92; Alfred D. Low, The Sino-Soviet Dispute: An Analysis of the Polemics (Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1976), pp. 86-90. A second view is that Mao and Khrushchev were in agreement on the level of support the Soviets would provide. See Halperin and Tsou, "The 1958 Quemoy Crisis," p. 287; Sigal, p. 142; Gurtov and Hwang, p. 89. A third view is that Mao and Khrushchev did not discuss the issue at all and the anticipated level of Soviet support was not a major factor in Chinese decisionmaking. The key point for this study is that in any case the Soviet strategy was to restrain the Chinese Communists from taking action that might provoke war with the United States.

Taiwan, the policy of containment of Communist China, which meant resisting moves viewed as expansionist, and the general principle of resisting use of force to achieve territorial changes. The second objective was to prevent the crisis from involving the United States in a war with Communist China and the Soviet Union. This objective required that the United States restrain the actions taken by the Nationalists against the mainland and limit the role of U.S. forces in the conflict. The third objective was to stabilize the situation in the Taiwan Strait with a cease-fire, to be followed by an effort to get both sides to renounce the use of force against the other and to get the Nationalists to reduce their garrison on the offshore islands.¹⁷

The United States strategy in the crisis had four elements: first, to deter Communist China from invading Quemoy, expanding the conflict to Taiwan or the Pescadores, or attacking U.S. forces; second, to break the blockade of Quemoy with a minimum amount of force, in particular without

¹⁷ See "Dulles Cautions Peiping on Isles," New York Times, August 24, 1958, p. 1; "Eisenhower Sees Increased Need to Guard Quemoy," New York Times, August 28, 1958, p. 1; "U.S. Warns Peiping After Red Threat to Invade Quemoy," New York Times, August 29, 1958, p. 1; "U.S. Decides to Use Force if Reds Invade Quemoy," New York Times, September 5, 1958, p. 1; "President Says nation Must Fight if Necessary to Bar Quemoy Fall," New York Times, September 12, 1958, p. 1; Eisenhower, pp. 294-300, 691-3. Also see George and Smoke, pp. 364-5; Gordon, pp. 644-650; Kenneth T. Young, Negotiating with the Chinese Communists: The United States Experience, 1953-1967 (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968), p. 147.

attacking the Chinese mainland; third, to restrain the Nationalists from launching military operations that could escalate the conflict; and fourth, to pursue negotiations with the Nationalists and Communists toward reducing tensions in the Taiwan Strait.¹⁸ The thrust of this strategy was to turn the tables on the Chinese Communists. Apparently assuming that the Nationalists and Americans would not be able to break the blockade without attacks on the mainland, Peking had adopted the limited probe strategy in order to force the decision to escalate on the United States. By adopting a strategy emphasizing a limited response--breaking the blockade without attacking the mainland--the United States passed "the onerous burden of deciding whether to accept the existing situation or to escalate" back to the Chinese Communists.¹⁹

The key requirement for the American strategy to succeed was to break the blockade of Quemoy without attacking the Chinese mainland. Militarily, this strategy carried a high risk of defeat. Early in the crisis American military and naval commanders in the Far East were not at

¹⁸"Dulles Hints U.S. has Specific Plan for China Parlay," New York Times, September 10, 1958, p. 1; "Text of Eisenhower Speech on Taiwan Situation," New York Times, September 12, 1958, p. 2; "Washington Bars China Coast Raids," New York Times, September 24, 1958, p. 1; "Chiang Promises not to Use Force to Win Mainland," New York Times, October 24, 1958, p. 1; Eisenhower, pp. 294-300; Gordon, pp. 644-650; Young, p. 149.

¹⁹George and Smoke, p. 367.

all confident that they would be able to resupply Quemoy under the artillery barrage. The Chinese Communists had in effect written the rules for the military contest that was to follow, and those rules were highly unfavorable for the American strategy. Alexander L. George has aptly described the strategy adopted by the Eisenhower Administration as a "test of capabilities under restrictive, initially unfavorable, ground rules."²⁰ If the strategy succeeds, as it did in the 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis, the expected outcome is reversed without escalation of the conflict.²¹

Using the categories of crises presented in Chapter II, which distinguished between direct and indirect crises, for the United States it was an indirect crisis. The United States was brought into the confrontation through its alliance with the Nationalists on Taiwan. This meant that, in addition to controlling the actions of its own forces, the United States also had to be concerned with the behavior of its Nationalist allies, lest they provoke a war with Communist China. It also meant that the United States had to avoid the appearance of being overly conciliatory toward the adversary, lest an inadvertent signal of retrenchment be

²⁰Alexander L. George, "The Development of Doctrine and Strategy," in Alexander L. George, David K. Hall, and William E. Simons, The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1971), pp. 20-21.

²¹Ibid. Also see Alexander L. George, "Crisis Management: The Interaction of Political and Military Considerations," Survival 26 (September/October 1984): 230.

sent to the Nationalists and an inadvertent signal of acquiescence be sent to the Communists.

In summary, the essence of the 1958 Taiwan Strait Crisis was a limited probe by Communist China against the Nationalist-held offshore islands, countered by a United States strategy of engaging in a test of capabilities under restrictive ground rules. Both sides sought to achieve limited political objectives while preventing the crisis from escalating to war.

Command and Control

Prior to discussing the United States naval operations conducted in the 1958 Taiwan Strait Crisis, it will be useful to review the command structure that existed at the time. The 1958 defense reorganization, which removed the Joint Chiefs of Staff from the operational chain of command, had not yet been implemented. The unified commands reported to the JCS for operational control. The JCS used a system of designating one of the service chiefs to act as the "executive agent" for the JCS in controlling a particular operation. This ensured that a single commander, rather than a committee, was responsible for detailed management of the operation at the JCS level. The JCS executive agent was responsible to the JCS, but was normally accorded substantial authority and could work directly with the Secretary of Defense so long as he kept the JCS informed.

Admiral Arleigh A. Burke, Chief of Naval Operations, was the JCS executive agent for the 1958 Taiwan Strait Crisis.²²

The next level in the chain of command was the Commander in Chief Pacific (CINCPAC), Admiral Admiral Harry D. Felt, the unified commander for all United States forces in the Pacific theater. CINCPAC reported to the JCS, usually through its executive agent. In his oral history, Admiral Felt states that he reported to the JCS and had substantial operational authority: "I had a way of operating which turned out very well... I'd send in something and, unless otherwise directed, I'm going to do this or that. That would be the Joint Staff's solution to the problem. And I never once got countermanded on that."²³ Admiral Felt is describing JCS control of CINCPAC by the method of control by negation, in which the subordinate commander reports his operational intentions rather than waiting for direct orders.

There were three component commands under CINCPAC: Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet (CINCPACFLT), Commander in Chief, Pacific Air Forces (CINCPACAF), and Commander in Chief, U.S. Army Pacific (CINCARPAC). Admiral Herbert G. Hopwood was CINCPACFLT during the Taiwan Strait

²²Halperin, "The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis," p. 62.

²³Admiral Harry D. Felt, "Reminiscences of Admiral Harry Donald Felt, U.S. Navy (Retired)," Volume II (Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, Oral History Program, 1974), pp. 392-3.

Crisis. Under CINCPACFLT were two operational commands (the First Seventh Fleets), eight administrative commands (for training and readiness of specific types of forces, such as aircraft or destroyers), and six area commands (for U.S. naval forces assigned to particular areas, such as Japan and the Philippines).²⁴ Commander Seventh Fleet (COMSEVENTHFLT) as the command responsible for naval operations in the Western Pacific, including the seas around Taiwan.

During the Taiwan Strait Crisis, COMSEVENTHFLT was Vice Admiral Wallace M. Beakley, relieved on October 1, 1958, by Vice Admiral Frederick N. Kivette. The Seventh Fleet was divided into five Task Forces (TF) and one Task Group: Task Force 72, the Formosa Patrol Force; Task Force 73, the Logistic Support Force; Task Force 76, the Amphibious Assault Force; Task Force 77, the Attack Carrier Striking Force; Task Force 79, the Fleet Marine Force; and Task Force 70.4, the ASW Hunter-Killer (HUK) Group.²⁵ The units assigned to these task forces changed as ships and squadrons deployed from the United States for duty with the Seventh Fleet. Command of each task force was assigned to the senior flag officer commanding the units assigned to it,

²⁴Commander in Chief U.S. Pacific Fleet, "Commander in Chief United States Pacific Fleet, Annual Report for Fiscal Year 1959," July 27, 1959 (declassified 1983), p. 5, Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC (Cited hereafter as "CINCPACFLT Annual Report").

²⁵Ibid.

so changed with the rotation of ships from the United States.

The Formosa Patrol Force originated during the Korean War, when President Truman ordered the Seventh Fleet to guard Taiwan against Communist attack. The Navy ships and patrol planes assigned to patrol the Formosa (Taiwan) Strait were designated a separate task force (TF 72) on August 24, 1950. Task Force 72 became the Formosa Patrol Force in 1953, reflecting the nature of its duties, and was renamed the Taiwan Patrol Force in 1957. Rear Admiral Paul P. Blackburn, Jr., was Commander of the Taiwan Patrol Force in 1958. During the crisis, the force consisted of a cruiser, approximately twelve destroyers (the number varied), two patrol plane squadrons, and two seaplane tenders, one of which served as the force flagship.²⁶

The United States Taiwan Defense Command (USTDC) was established on December 1, 1953, as the Formosa Defense Command. From establishment of the command until February 1957, the Commander of the Seventh Fleet was "dual hatted" as Commander of the Formosa Defense Command. Although nominally a unified command (technically, a "sub-unified" command reporting to CINCPAC), the Formosa Defense Command was in fact only an administrative and liaison agency for

²⁶Enclosure to Commander U.S. Taiwan Patrol Force letter, Serial 386, August 10, 1959 (Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC); Vice Admiral Paul P. Blackburn, Jr., letter to author, May 30, 1988.

coordinating (vice controlling) the defense of Taiwan. The Commander of the Formosa Defense Command had operational control of the Formosa Patrol Force, but only because he was also COMSEVENTHFLT.²⁷

In February 1957, the Formosa Defense Command received its own commander and was renamed the U.S. Taiwan Defense Command (COMUSTDC). This upgraded the status of the command and allowed more effective planning and coordination, but the commander still did not have operational control of U.S. forces defending Taiwan. On September 11, 1958, the U.S. Taiwan Defense Command became a true unified command with the commander having operational control of all U.S. forces committed to the defense of Taiwan. The U.S. Taiwan Defense Command consisted of three component commanders: Commander Taiwan Patrol Force (TF 72), Commander Air Task Force Thirteen (Provisional), and the Chief of the Military Assistance Advisory Group (U.S. Army units). The Commander of the Taiwan Defense Command during the 1958 Taiwan Strait Crisis was Vice Admiral Roland N. Smoot.²⁸

²⁷ Ibid; Commander U.S. Taiwan Patrol Force, "Review of Actions Occurring During Kinmen Resupply and Recommendations Based Thereon; Report of," letter, Serial 0019, November 22, 1958 (declassified 1972), Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC (Cited hereafter as "Taiwan Patrol Force Review").

²⁸ Ibid; "CINCPACFLT Annual Report," p. 8; Halperin, "The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis," pp. 62, 370; "U.S. Unifies Force Guarding Taiwan for Quick Action," New York Times, September 20, 1958, p. 1.

United States communications capabilities in 1958 forced employment of delegated methods of control, rather than direct methods of control. Neither the Defense Communications System (DCS) nor the Worldwide Military Command and Control System (WWMCCS) were in existence (DCS was established in 1960 and WWMCCS was established in 1962). Existing communications systems had been created well before the unified command system was established and thus were not designed to support it. Washington could not establish direct radio communications with naval forces at sea, and excessive time delays precluded real-time control of forces on Taiwan. In his 1966 study of the crisis, Morton H. Halperin noted that "it sometimes took several days for classified messages to reach Washington from Taipei or vice versa," and that such delays were "significantly to hamper policymaking throughout the crisis."²⁹ The primary communications channels between commanders ashore were telegraph and teletype lines. Long-range high frequency radio communications were also available, but subject to atmospheric interference and limited to radiotelegraph (manual morse code) and slow radioteletype (major ships only). Direct radio communications between Washington and the Far East (or CINCPAC in Hawaii) were not possible, but telephone communications were available to Hawaii and were

²⁹ Halperin, "The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis," p. 250.

used heavily during the crisis (between Admiral Burke and Admiral Felt).³⁰

Heavy reliance had to be placed on mechanisms of indirect control and the good judgement of the on-scene commanders. Washington did not provide detailed operational guidance to Navy operational commanders in the Far East. Vice Admiral Alexander Heyward, Director of the Politico-Military Affairs Division of the CNO's staff during the crisis, states that "civilian authorities did not attempt to exercise detailed control over those operations."³¹ Navy commanders were delegated substantial decisionmaking authority and given relatively broad freedom of action. COMUSTDC and COMSEVENTHFLT originated and planned virtually all of the operations that were conducted.³² Vice Admiral

³⁰For an overview of communications technology, see Ashton B. Carter, "Communications Technologies and Vulnerabilities," in Ashton B. Carter, John D. Steinbruner, and Charles A. Zraket, eds., Managing Nuclear Operations (Washington, DC: Brookings, 1987), pp. 233-257. For a brief history of the evolution of U.S. communications systems, see Bruce G. Blair, Strategic Command and Control: Refining the Nuclear Threat (Washington, DC: Brookings, 1985), pp. 51-53.

³¹Vice Admiral Alexander S. Heyward, Jr., letter to author, May 27, 1988. Vice Admiral Heyward was responsible for Navy liaison with the State Department and played a key role in coordinating naval policy with political policy during the crisis.

³²Felt, "Reminiscences," pp. 392-3; Vice Admiral Herbert D. Riley (Chief of staff to CINCPAC in 1958), "The Reminiscences of Vice Admiral Herbert D. Riley, U.S. Navy (Retired)," Volume II (Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, Oral History Program, 1972), pp. 360-1; Halperin, "The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis," pp. 249-50.

Blackburn, Commander of the Taiwan Patrol force, states that he experienced "very little interference from the powers in Washington" during the crisis.³³ The only detailed guidance they received concerned limits on the operations they could conduct, such as how close U.S. Navy ships could approach the mainland.

Two of the mechanisms of indirect control warrant further attention. First, the United States, including the U.S. Taiwan Defense Command and the Taiwan Patrol Force, did not have contingency plans for assisting the Nationalists with the resupply of Quemoy. These commands began formulating plans for resupply and convoy escort in late August, when it became apparent that the Nationalists could not resupply Quemoy on their own, but the plans were not completed until September 3 (ten days after the Communist artillery barrage started) and the first convoy was not ready to sail until three days later.³⁴ As it turned out, however, this delay did not have a major impact on the crisis--the Eisenhower Administration did not commit itself to the defense of Quemoy until September 4, and the garrison on Quemoy had adequate supplies to hold for the additional two weeks that were required for substantial supplies to reach the island.

³³ Blackburn, letter to author, May 30, 1988.

³⁴ "Taiwan Patrol Force Review," Enclosure 4, p. 1; Halperin, "The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis," pp. 246.

One aspect of contingency planning caused particular problems for U.S. military commanders in the Pacific. Under the Eisenhower Administration's strategy of "massive retaliation," primary emphasis in war planning had been on plans calling for use of nuclear weapons from the onset of a conflict. Planning, training, and logistical preparations for extended conventional operations had been neglected, particularly in the Air Force. The Eisenhower Administration had previously directed, during the 1954-55 Quemoy-Matsu Crisis, that plans be made to defend the offshore islands with nuclear weapons.³⁵ When the 1958 Taiwan Strait Crisis erupted, some U.S. commanders in the Pacific, such as General Lawrence Kuter, Commander in Chief Pacific Air Force, expected that if a decision were made to defend Quemoy, it would be with nuclear weapons. However, the Eisenhower Administration, which was not enthusiastic about defending the offshore islands to begin with, directed that planning proceed on the basis that only conventional weapons would initially be used. Nuclear weapons would only be used as a last resort with specific approval of the President. This was a significant change in Administration policy, for which some commanders were not prepared. The problems caused by this policy shift primarily affected the Air Force, but also caused problems for the Navy, which had a

³⁵ Chang, "To the Nuclear Brink," pp. 105-14.

significant nuclear delivery role in 1958.³⁶ This sudden shift from emphasis on nuclear weapons to their use only as a last resort is an extreme example of the problems military commanders can have when, in the process of drafting contingency plans, they must anticipate the approach civilian leaders will want to take in managing a crisis.

CINCPAC, the JCS, and the Eisenhower Administration paid close attention to the authority delegated to operational commanders. President Eisenhower states in his memoirs that he "saw no need to delegate to any subordinates my authority as Commander-in-Chief to commit United States forces to action," and that he therefore retained this authority himself.³⁷ However, the classified documentary record compiled by Morton H. Halperin shows that the President did delegate certain authority to the JCS. The President on September 6, 1958, approved a JCS request that it be delegated authority to take the following emergency actions, but only "under those circumstances when time does not permit securing the President's specific approval in each case":

³⁶Felt, "Reminiscences," p. 396; Admiral Charles K. Dennison (Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations at CINCPAC, 1956-1958), "The Reminiscences of Admiral Charles K. Dennison, U.S. Navy (Retired)," Volume I (Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, Oral History Program, November 1978), pp. 536-41; Halperin, "The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis," pp. 277-8, 292-3, 378-9, 538.

³⁷Eisenhower, p. 299.

2. In the event of a major emergency arising from an attack on Taiwan and the offshore islands moving so rapidly that it would not permit consultation with the President, JCS would take the following actions on behalf of the Secretary of Defense: a) CINCPAC would be authorized to augment U.S. forces engaged in the defense of Taiwan from the resources of his own command; b) all U.S. forces worldwide would be alerted; c) oppose any major attack on Taiwan and attack mainland bases with all CINCPAC forces that can be brought to bear.

3. In the event of a major landing attack on offshore islands, authority for the following actions not now authorized would be desirable: a) approve CHINAT [Chinese Nationalist] Air Force's striking enemy forces and mainland targets; b) authority for U.S. forces to strike with conventional weapons and CHICOM [Chinese Communist] assault of major proportions moving against Offshore Islands.

4. Use of atomic weapons and U.S. air attack in support of CHINAT Air Force in 3(a) above [air strikes against mainland to defend offshore islands],³⁸ as necessary, only as approved by the President.

In approving this JCS request, the President specifically did not delegate authority for U.S. forces to strike mainland bases in the event of an attack on the offshore islands (paragraph three), nor did he delegate authority for U.S. forces to use nuclear weapons under any circumstances (paragraph four). As Halperin points out, the JCS did not further delegate this authority: "The Joint Chiefs looked upon the authority given to them as not subject to delegation to commanders in the field and hence did not pass on

³⁸Quoted in Halperin, "The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis," pp. 285-6. Also see "Eisenhower Sees Increased Need to Guard Quemoy," New York Times, August 28, 1958, p. 2; "U.S. Decides to Use Force if Reds Invade Quemoy," New York Times, September 5, 1958, p. 1; "Dulles Hints U.S. has Specific Plan," New York Times, September 10, 1958, p. 1.

the authority to defend Quemoy."³⁹ The President and the JCS thus gave careful consideration to the authority they delegated to subordinate commanders, striking a balance between delegation and control.

The rules of engagement authorized U.S. ships and aircraft to use force in self-defense, but prohibited them from taking offensive action against the mainland. The CNO warned CINCPAC that U.S. forces must "avoid any action which is provocative or might be made to appear provocative before world opinion."⁴⁰ The rules of engagement issued by Commander Seventh Fleet authorized use of force to protect Nationalist ships under attack by Communist ships, aircraft, or submarines, but warned that U.S. forces were not to provoke fire from Communist shore batteries or engage in gunfire duels with them other than as necessary for self-defense and defense of Nationalist ships. Vice Admiral Beakley sent this admonition: "Remember, the shot you fire will be heard around the world, maybe in the floor of the UN. Be right. However, the objective is to get the supplies through."⁴¹

³⁹Halperin, "The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis," p. 287.

⁴⁰Gordon, p. 647. Also see Halperin, "The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis," pp. 207-208; "Eisenhower Sees Increased Need to Guard Quemoy," New York Times, August 28, 1958, p. 2; "U.S. to Answer Any Air Attack," New York Times, September 12, 1958, p. 3; Gordon, p. 644

⁴¹Quoted in Halperin, "The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis," p. 208. Also see Riley, "Reminiscences," p. 630.

Vice Admiral Blackburn, Commander of the Taiwan Patrol Force, states that U.S. forces could engage Communist Chinese forces "only in reponse to overt offensive action by the ChiComs against our forces," and that "TF 72 commanders were enjoined to avoid getting into any shooting with the ChiComs" and were instructed to avoid confrontations with the Chinese Communists.⁴²

The rules of engagement issued by Commander in Chief Pacific and U.S. Taiwan Defense Command for the air defense of Taiwan were highly restrictive prior to the 1958 crisis. American fighters on Taiwan were only permitted to fire on hostile aircraft entering Taiwan's airspace and were not permitted hot pursuit in international airspace. U.S. combat air patrols were required to remain east of the "Davis Line," which ran approximately down the center of the Taiwan Strait. After the crisis erupted, the U.S. Air Force commander on Taiwan convinced CINCPAC and the JCS that these rules would cripple air defense efforts in the event of concerted Communist air strikes against Taiwan. In September the JCS approved three relaxations to the rules of engagement: first, U.S. fighters were authorized to engage Communist aircraft crossing the Davis Line on an apparent course toward Taiwan or allied forces; second, U.S. fighters were authorized hot pursuit in international airspace and

⁴² Blackburn, letter to author, May 30, 1988.

into Communist airspace; and, third, U.S. and Nationalist forces were authorized to fly combat air patrols to a limit of three miles of the mainland.⁴³

The distinction between hot pursuit (which was authorized in self-defense) and retaliation (which required approval of the President) had been proposed by the National Security Council and approved by President Eisenhower in May 1955. By August 1956 this distinction had been incorporated into all rules of engagement issued to U.S. forces. The distinction between hot pursuit and retaliation was applied by the Eisenhower Administration to the rules of engagement for the air defense of Taiwan. If Communist Chinese aircraft threatened U.S. forces, Nationalist forces outside of three miles from the mainland, or Taiwan and the Pescadores, those Communist planes could be pursued by U.S. fighters. If necessary, hot pursuit could continue into Communist Chinese airspace and even over the mainland. However, attacks by U.S. forces against the mainland airfields from which the Communist Chinese planes operated were defined to be retaliation, and had to be approved by the President.⁴⁴

⁴³Halperin, "The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis," pp. 200, 286; "U.S. to Answer Any Air Attack," New York Times, September 12, 1958, p. 3; "Dulles Hints U.S. has Specific Plan for China Parley," New York Times, September 10, 1958, p. 1; Blackburn, letter to author, May 30, 1988.

⁴⁴Halperin, "The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis," pp. 200, 286; Gordon, p. 644.

In summary, United States communications capabilities in 1958 forced employment of delegated methods of control, rather than direct methods of control. Heavy reliance had to be placed on mechanisms of indirect control and the good judgement of the on-scene commanders. The President and the JCS gave careful consideration to the authority they granted to subordinate commanders, striking a balance between delegation and control. For operations approved by the President, such as escorting Nationalist convoys to Quemoy, Navy commanders were delegated substantial decisionmaking authority and given relatively broad freedom of action. Washington did not provide detailed guidance on the conduct of operations to Navy commanders in the Far East.

Naval Operations

The United States Navy began stepping up its operations in the vicinity of Taiwan more than a month before the crisis erupted in August. On July 14, 1958, in response to the crisis in the Middle East, the Chief of Naval Operations had directed CINCPAC to place the Pacific Fleet alerted in accordance with the General Emergency Operations Plan (GEOP). In response to the GEOP alert, the First and Seventh Fleets were put on four-hour readiness to get underway, an additional attack carrier was deployed to the Western Pacific (for a total of three), an ASW Hunter-Killer (HUK) Group in Hawaii was readied for deployment on



short notice (to augment the HUK Group already in the Western Pacific), a Marine Battalion Landing Team (BLT) of 1,300 troops was embarked in amphibious ships and departed for the Indian Ocean, and other forces were readied for wartime contingencies.⁴⁵

In August 1958, as Nationalist concerns grew over the Communist military buildup in Fukien Province across from Taiwan, the United States took additional actions to increase its readiness to defend Taiwan. Communist China's deploying jet fighters to previously unoccupied coastal airfields in Fukien Province was a major concern to the Nationalists. Accordingly, the U.S. buildup emphasized air defense of Taiwan and the capacity to strike Communist airfields. On August 3, the Air Force deployed six F-100s to Taiwan. On August 5, the CNO directed that an attack carrier group remain in the Taiwan area and that a two-destroyer patrol be maintained continuously in the Taiwan Strait. On August 6, U.S. Air Force Pacific (PACAF) was placed on alert. These were all moves that Communist China could have detected. On August 17 the Strategic Air Command placed five Guam-based B-47 jet bombers on alert. U.S.

⁴⁵"CINCPACFLT Annual Report," p. 8; Howe, p. 193; E.B. Potter and Chester W. Nimitz, eds., Sea Power: A Naval History (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1960), p. 880; Halperin, "The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis," p. 60. The General Emergency Operations Plan was the forerunner to the Defense Condition of Readiness (DEFCON) alert system instituted in November 1959.

Military commanders in the Pacific also sought further guidance on rules of engagement for the defense of Taiwan and on American policy concerning defense of the offshore islands.⁴⁶ These actions reveal a pattern of prudent preparations in response to indications of an increased Communist Chinese threat in the Taiwan Straits.

Although the GEOP alert that had been declared on July 14 was partially relaxed on August 7, U.S. forces in the Pacific were still at a high state of readiness when the shelling of Quemoy started on August 23. The U.S. Navy had substantial forces in the Western Pacific. The four Navy carriers in the Western Pacific were located as follows: the attack carrier USS John Hancock (CVA 19) and four escorts were at sea south of Taiwan, the attack carrier USS Lexington (CVA 16) and four escorts were at sea east of Japan, the attack carrier USS Shangri-La (CVA 38) and three escorts were in port Yokosuka, Japan, and the ASW carrier USS Princeton (CVS 37) and six escorts were at sea northeast of Taiwan. The Taiwan Patrol Force had two destroyers on patrol in the Taiwan Strait and two in port Kaohsiung, Taiwan. Most of the Seventh Fleet's amphibious force was in Buckner Bay, Okinawa, and a four-ship amphibious group with a Marine BLT embarked was in port Singapore. A dozen destroyers of Destroyer Flotilla One were scattered around

⁴⁶ Halperin, "The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis," pp. 63-5.

the Western Pacific. Additionally, several ships were scheduled to deploy to the Western Pacific in the near future for routine rotation of Seventh Fleet ships: the attack carrier USS Midway (CVA 41), the ASW carrier USS Bennington (CVS 20), and six destroyers.⁴⁷

The U.S. Navy responded immediately to the Communist shelling of Quemoy. On August 24 Commander Taiwan Patrol Force ordered two destroyers to proceed to Tung Ting Island (eighteen miles southwest of Quemoy), which the Nationalists had reported as being invaded. The destroyers withdrew on finding no Communist Chinese activity in the area. Commander Taiwan Patrol Force also ordered USS Hopewell (DD 681) to proceed to the assistance of a Nationalist tank landing ship (LST) under attack by Communist torpedo (PT) boats, but directed Hopewell to remain clear of fighting and not fire unless fired upon. Communist PT boats circled Hopewell as she approached, but departed without firing on the American ship. The Commanding Officer of Hopewell, adhering to the rules of engagement in a tense and dangerous situation, refrained from firing on the PT boats.⁴⁸ Thus, caution

⁴⁷Office of the Chief of Naval Operations (OP-333E), "Summary of U.S. Navy Action Accomplished During Taiwan Crisis," memorandum for the record, no date (declassified 1974), CNO Command File, Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC (Cited hereafter as "CNO Summary of Action").

⁴⁸"Taiwan Patrol Force Review," Enclosure 1, p. 1; Halperin, "The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis," p. 158.

on both sides averted the first potential clash between Communist and American forces in the Straits.

Commander Seventh Fleet ordered Commander Taiwan Patrol Force to station three destroyers twelve miles east of Quemoy in the Straits, ordered Hancock readied to commence combat air patrols over the straits and air strikes if directed by the President, ordered Lexington and Princeton to proceed to stations northeast of Taiwan at best speed, and ordered all available minesweepers to report to the Taiwan Patrol Force for duty. Commander Seventh Fleet also issued rules of engagement for the Taiwan Strait, authorizing Taiwan Patrol Force destroyers to fire on Chinese Communist units attacking U.S. or friendly ships in international waters, and directed that U.S. Navy aircraft remain at least twenty miles off the coast of the mainland. CINCPAC set Readiness Alert Condition Yankee, defined as "war imminent, be prepared to execute war plans" (roughly equivalent to DEFCON 2). The CNO directed CINCPAC to position the Seventh Fleet for support of Taiwan, an action already initiated by COMSEVENTHFLT.⁴⁹ Thus, by the end of the first full day of the crisis, U.S. naval forces had been mobilized to support the Nationalists, but with restrictions placed on their actions by the on-scene commanders in order to avoid clashes with Communist forces.

⁴⁹"CNO Summary of Action," p. 2, 5; "Taiwan Patrol Force Review," Enclosure 1, p. 1.

President Eisenhower approved the first Joint Chiefs of Staff operational directive for the crisis on August 25 and it was sent to CINCPAC and Commander Taiwan Defense Command the next day. This JCS directive authorized reinforcement of U.S. air defense forces on Taiwan, preparations to assume total responsibility for the air defense of Taiwan, preparations to escort and protect Nationalist resupply convoys to the offshore islands, augmentation of the Seventh Fleet as necessary, and preparations to assist the Nationalists in defending the offshore islands against invasion, to include air attacks on coastal air bases on the mainland. The message stated that "It is probable that initially only conventional weapons will be authorized, but prepare to use atomic weapons to extend deeper into Chinese Communist territory if necessary."⁵⁰ With only minor changes these were the operations and preparations carried out by U.S. forces throughout the crisis.

Over the next week, the U.S. Navy built up powerful forces in the waters around Taiwan. On August 25, the CNO ordered USS Essex (CVA 9) and four escorts, then in the Eastern Mediterranean supporting the marines ashore in Lebanon, to proceed to the Western Pacific via the Suez

⁵⁰ JCS 252147Z AUG 1958 (JCS no. 947046), August 25, 1958 (declassified 1975), quoted in Halperin, "The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis," pp. 112-114. Use of atomic weapons required specific authorization from the President.

Canal, providing the Seventh Fleet with a fourth attack carrier. On August 26, Commander Seventh Fleet ordered the attack carrier Shangri-La to proceed to Taiwan, and arranged for Marine Air Group Eleven (MAG-11), consisting of three fighter squadrons, to be transferred from Japan to Taiwan. That same day CINCPACFLT ordered several actions to increase Seventh Fleet strength: Midway and her escorts were to immediately depart Pearl Harbor for the Western Pacific, the heavy cruiser USS Los Angeles (CA 135) was to depart Long Beach for Pearl Harbor that day, and Seventh Fleet was to halt normal rotation of ships back to the United States until the reinforcements that had been ordered in arrived. Shangri-La joined Hancock and Lexington off Taiwan on August 30. Midway joined them on September 6, replacing Hancock off Taiwan. Essex joined them on September 16, allowing Hancock, which had been extended past its normal rotation date, to return to the United States. Commander Seventh Fleet also ordered additional destroyers and a cruiser added to the Taiwan Patrol Force, raising its strength from four destroyers to twelve destroyers and a cruiser. By mid-September the Seventh Fleet included four attack carriers, one ASW carrier, three cruisers, 41 destroyers and destroyer escorts, and seven attack submarines.⁵¹

⁵¹"CNO Summary of Action," pp. 5-9; "Taiwan Patrol Force Review," Enclosure 1, pp. 1-2; "CINCPACFLT Annual Report," p. 8.

In late August the U.S. Navy began operations in support of the Nationalists and prepared to execute any contingency operations the President might order. Day and night combat air patrols over the Taiwan Strait commenced on August 25, remaining outside of twenty miles from Communist territory. The Taiwan Patrol Force increased the number of destroyers on patrol in the Straits from two to four, added a heavy cruiser to the patrol, armed its patrol planes with depth charges and torpedoes, and increased their patrols of the mainland coast. On August 26 CINCPACFLT directed Commander Seventh Fleet to prepare for conventional air attacks against coastal targets and nuclear strikes against inland targets if directed by the President, and the attack carrier force (TF 77) prepared plans for the strikes. The Seventh Fleet Cruiser-Destroyer Force (TF 75) prepared to bombard Communist artillery positions on the mainland in support of Nationalist convoys to Quemoy.⁵² Floyd D. Kennedy, Jr., has observed that, because of the the Navy's presence, "the panoply of military options open to the President ranged from the passive device of resupply under fire to nuclear attack of selected Chinese targets."⁵³

⁵²"CNO Summary of Action," pp. 6-12; "Taiwan Patrol Force Review," Enclosure 1, pp. 2-3.

⁵³Floyd D. Kennedy, Jr., "The Creation of the Cold War Navy, 1953-1962," in Kenneth J. Hagan, ed., In Peace and War: Interpretations of American Naval History, 1775-1984 (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1984), p. 317.



JCS sent the second major operational directive approved by the President to CINCPAC on 29 August. JCS authorized escort of Nationalist convoys if the Nationalist navy could not do so, directed that freedom of the seas be protected in the Taiwan Strait by operations confined to international waters, authorized the U.S. Taiwan Defense Command to assume responsibility for the air defense of Taiwan so that Nationalist planes would be free to defend the offshore islands, and directed that a total of 36 landing craft be turned over to the Nationalists to assist their resupply effort. The Commander of the U.S. Taiwan Defense Command was delegated authority to make the determination as to whether or not U.S. escort of Nationalist convoys was needed.⁵⁴

After the start of the artillery blockade on August 23, the Nationalists made a reluctant and unsuccessful effort to continue resupplying Quemoy with LSTs. One Nationalist LST was sunk and second damaged on August 24 while evacuating wounded from Quemoy. On August 28 Rear Admiral Smoot, Commander of the U.S. Taiwan Defense Command, identified resupply of Quemoy as the critical issue, estimated that the Quemoy garrison could hold out another 15 to 30 days, and recommended that the U.S. commence escorting convoys immediately as a demonstration of support for the

⁵⁴"CNO Summary of Action," p. 8; Halperin, "The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis," pp. 198-200.

Nationalists. On September 2 the Nationalists denied a Communist claim that the supply line to Quemoy had been cut, but on September 4 the Nationalists admitted that they could not get sufficient supplies to the island to keep pace with consumption. Ammunition was the critical item (particularly artillery shells), but fuel was also a serious concern. Food apparently was never a problem. Nationalist sources stated on September 5 that three of the last four LSTs sent to Quemoy had been forced to leave before they completed unloading supplies. U.S. records indicate that all five Nationalist attempts to resupply Quemoy with LSTs between August 23 and September 3 were turned back by Communist artillery fire and PT boats.⁵⁵

The United States had great difficulty getting accurate and timely information on the Quemoy garrison's supply situation from the Nationalists. Many U.S. Navy commanders and civilian officials, including Rear Admiral Smoot, believed that the Nationalists were not making a concerted effort to resupply Quemoy. The Nationalists, it was suspected, might be trying to make it appear that air

⁵⁵"Taiwan Reports 5 Red Boats Sunk and 6 Set Afire," New York Times, September 2, 1958, p. 4; Hanson Baldwin, "The Quemoy Blockade," New York Times, September 5, 1958, p. 4; "Quemoy Again Pounded by Reds," New York Times, September 5, 1958, p. 1; "Quemoy Garrison Supplied Under U.S. Fleet's Escort," New York Times, September 8, 1958, p. 1; "CNO Summary of Action," pp. 12, 14; Halperin, "The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis," pp. 153-5, 162; Blackburn, letter to author, May 30, 1988.

attacks on the mainland were urgently needed in order to resupply Quemoy. Chiang Kai-shek asked for United States concurrence on air strikes against the mainland, a request that President Eisenhower turned down. The convoy escort option was thus a compromise between doing nothing, which might have eroded Nationalist morale and strained U.S.-ROC relations, and attacking the mainland, which risked a direct clash between Communist and American forces.⁵⁶

Soon after the crisis erupted, American leaders anticipated that U.S. Navy escort might be necessary to get Nationalist convoys through to Quemoy. On August 25 President Eisenhower approved a JCS directive authorizing preparations to escort and protect Nationalist resupply convoys to the offshore islands. On August 26 CINCPACFLT directed Commander Seventh Fleet to prepare to escort and protect Nationalist resupply convoys to the offshore islands while they were in international waters, and on August 27 Commander Seventh Fleet directed Commander Taiwan Patrol Force to commence planning for convoy escorts. Fighter air cover for the convoys would be provided by U.S. Navy carrier aircraft and, during the day, by Nationalist and U.S. Air Force fighters on Taiwan (neither had night fighters). On

⁵⁶Vice Admiral Roland N. Smoot, "Reminiscences of Vice Admiral Roland N. Smoot, U.S. Navy (Retired)," (Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, Oral History Program, 1972), p. 315; Riley, "Reminiscences," pp. 628-33; "CNO Summary of Action," p. 10; Halperin, "The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis," pp. 203, 249.

August 29, in response to a request from Chiang Kai-shek for even greater assistance, the President approved a JCS directive authorizing the Navy to escort and protect Nationalist resupply convoys to the offshore islands while they were in international waters. Commander Seventh Fleet on August 30 authorized Commander Taiwan Patrol Force to commence escort operations, plans for escorting were ready on September 3, and the first Nationalist convoy was ready to sail on September 6.⁵⁷

The most important issue in the decision to escort Nationalist convoys was how close U.S. navy ships would be allowed to go to Quemoy. In his oral history then-CNO Admiral Arleigh Burke states that President Eisenhower initially wanted the escorts to remain twelve miles offshore, whereas Burke recommended they go in to three miles.⁵⁸ There were also pressures to escort Nationalist convoys all the way to the beach, and even to have U.S. ships carry the supplies to the beach. Chiang Kai-shek requested that the U.S. escort to the beach, and Rear Admiral Smoot and U.S. Ambassador Everett Drumright supported his request. Admiral Burke recommended having

⁵⁷ "CNO Summary of Action," pp. 6-11; "Taiwan Patrol Force Review," Enclosure 1, pp. 2-3; Halperin, "The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis," pp. 246-8

⁵⁸ Admiral Arleigh A. Burke, "Reminiscences of Admiral Arleigh A. Burke, U.S. Navy (Retired)," (Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, Oral History Program, 1973), p. 44.

U.S. ships land supplies for the Nationalists, who had great difficulty offloading supplies over the beach. The arguments against going within three miles of Quemoy were that it implied an intent to directly defend the island (as opposed to assisting resupply), that escorting to three miles offshore would be sufficient to deter Communist PT boats, and that the three mile limit kept U.S. ships out of range of almost all Communist artillery.⁵⁹ President Eisenhower decided to halt the escorts at three nautical miles from Quemoy. The August 29 JCS directive specified that convoy escorts and fighter air cover were to remain in international waters and airspace, meaning outside of Communist China's three-mile territorial limit and no closer than three miles to Quemoy. Convoy escorts were further advised to avoid known Communist shore batteries that could reach them in international waters.⁶⁰

On September 4, Communist China, perhaps anticipating that the United States was about to join in the Nationalist resupply effort, announced that it was increasing its territorial waters from three to twelve nautical miles. The Communist Chinese announcement specifically included all of the Nationalist-held offshore islands in its territorial

⁵⁹ Burke, "Reminiscences," p. 43; Halperin, "The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis," pp. 201-206.

⁶⁰ "CNO Summary of Action," pp. 9, 11; "Taiwan Patrol Force Review," p. 2; Blackburn, letter to author, May 30, 1988.

waters and stated that "No foreign vessels for military use and no foreign aircraft may enter Chinese territorial sea and airspace above it without permission of the Government of the People's Republic of China."⁶¹ The United States promptly rejected the twelve-mile limit, stating it would continue to act as if Communist China had a three-mile limit.⁶² The orders to the convoy escorts and their air cover were not changed.

The Nationalist Chinese were informed on September 3 that the U.S. would commence escorting their convoys. That same day the U.S. Taiwan Defense Command completed its plans for escort operations. Commencing the next evening (September 4), U.S. Navy ships began small-scale escorting of Nationalist supply ships in the Taiwan Straits, apparently for training and familiarization in preparation for daylight convoys three days later.⁶³

⁶¹"Communist China Claims A Sea Limit of 12 Miles," New York Times, September 5, 1958 p. 1; "Text of Peiping Statement," New York Times, September 5, 1958 p. 3.

⁶²"U.S. Rejects Red Claim," New York Times, September 5, 1958 p. 1.

⁶³"Taiwan Patrol Force Review," Enclosure 1, p. 3; "Quemoy Garrison Supplied Under U.S. Fleet's Escort," New York Times, September 8, 1958, p. 1; Halperin, "The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis," p. 246. The small-scale night convoy escort operations conducted September 4-6 were not revealed to the press until after the first daylight convoy on September 7. These night convoys delivered only a very small amount of supplies to Quemoy. In addition to training the Nationalist and U.S. navies in operating together--a crucial task in itself--the initial small-scale escort operations provided a test of the Communist reaction.

Commander Taiwan Patrol Force issued Operation Plan (OPLAN) 124-58 and Operation Order (OPORD) 324-58 for convoy escort operations on September 6. The U.S.-escorted Nationalist convoy operation was code-named "Lightning." The first Lightning convoy was on September 7. The convoy consisted of two Nationalist medium landing ships (LSMs) escorted by two patrol boats and two corvettes. The U.S. escort consisted of four destroyers and two cruisers, including USS Helena (CA 75) with Commander Seventh Fleet embarked. The Communists did not interfere with the U.S. escorts or the unloading of supplies, but the Nationalist unloading effort was hampered by poor organization and training on the beach. Also on September 7, two Nationalist merchant ships delivered supplies to Matsu without Communist interference.⁶⁴

The second Lightning convoy on September 8 did not fare as well. Chinese Communists artillery opened fire on the two Nationalist LSMs two hours after they reached the beach at Quemoy, damaging one and forcing them to withdraw. One LSM had unloaded only a small amount of supplies, while the other had not started unloading. Lack of organization and training on the beach were again blamed for delays in

⁶⁴"CNO Summary of Action," p. 15; "Taiwan Patrol Force Review," Enclosure 1, p. 3; "Quemoy Garrison Supplied Under U.S. Fleet's Escort," New York Times, September 8, 1958, p. 1; Halperin, "The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis," pp. 246-8, 294-5.

unloading. The next two Lightning convoys, on September 11 and 13, experienced a similar fate, coming under heavy Communist artillery fire, unloading negligible amounts of supplies, and suffering one LSM destroyed and one LSM damaged. The fifth Lightning convoy, on September 14, marked the first use of tracked landing vehicles (LVTs) launched from LSTs for carrying supplies to the beach. Using this method, lightning convoys five through nine (September 14 to 19) were able to land an average of 151 tons each (compared with 33 tons each for convoys two through four).⁶⁵ By late September it was clear that the Nationalists would be able to keep the Quemoy garrison resupplied under fire.

On the night of September 18 the U.S. Navy used a dock landing ship (LSD), a type of ship with a floodable well deck in which landing craft could be carried and launched at sea, to deliver three eight-inch howitzers to Quemoy. In addition to being powerful conventional weapons--far superior to Communist artillery shelling Quemoy--the eight-inch howitzers were capable of firing shells with atomic warheads. The United States did not provide the Nationalists with atomic shells for the howitzers, but the mere presence of the howitzers on Quemoy sent a strong deterrent

⁶⁵"CNO Summary of Action," pp. 15-18; "Taiwan Patrol Force Review," Enclosure 1, pp. 4-6; Halperin, "The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis," pp. 295-304, 363-69, 422-41.

signal to the Communist Chinese.⁶⁶ USS Catamount (LSD 17) carried three Nationalist landing craft that successfully delivered the howitzers to the beach. Catamount successfully delivered three more eight-inch howitzers to Quemoy the night of 20 September.⁶⁷ The success of this resupply method further reinforced the belief that the Communist blockade had been broken.

Great caution was exercised during the Quemoy resupply operations to avoid clashes with Communist Chinese forces. On September 7 The CNO directed that, as long as the Communists refrained from shelling Nationalist supply ships, only one destroyer was to be positioned within view of Quemoy and the mainland while Nationalist convoys were unloading supplies, the rest of the escorts were to remain just over the horizon ready to respond in the event of a Communist PT boat attack. This restriction was lifted on September 10 by Commander Seventh Fleet in response to Communist shelling of the second convoy, but on-scene commanders remained cautious. Captain Edward W. Behm,

⁶⁶"U.S. Navy Lands Guns at Quemoy," New York Times, October 1, 1958, p. 10; Hanson W. Baldwin, "Reminiscences of Hanson Weightman Baldwin, U.S. Navy (Retired)," Volume II (Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, Oral History Program, 1976), p. 527; Blackburn, letter to author, May 30, 1988.

⁶⁷"History of USS Catamount (LSD 17) from 8 July 1944 to 31 December 1964," Ships History Branch, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC, p. 12; Commander Wayne D. Baker, U.S. Navy (Retired), Commanding Officer USS Catamount in 1958, letter to author, April 11, 1988.

commander of a convoy escort during the crisis, states that the escorts were directed to remain at least five miles from the mainland. This limit was probably set by Commander Taiwan Patrol Force to avoid Communist artillery, even though the JCS directive allowed ships to approach as close as three miles. When JCS authorized use of U.S. Navy LSDs in the resupply effort, CNO specified that they remain at least three miles offshore from Quemoy. On October 8 Commander Taiwan Patrol Force increased this distance to 12 miles. In response to the Communist ceasefire announced October 6, the CNO suspended escort operations and directed Taiwan Defense Command to avoid provocative actions (by the time this order was received two more convoys had been escorted on October 7, the last Nationalist convoys escorted during the crisis). On October 23, three days after the Communists resumed shelling Quemoy, the CNO authorized convoy escorting to resume if needed, but no further escorts were required.⁶⁸ Due to these precautions and Chinese Communist restraint there were no clashes between United States and Communist forces during the resupply operations.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Captain Edward W. Behm, U.S. Navy (Retired), Commanding Officer of USS McGinty (DE 365) during the crisis, letter to author, February 19, 1988; "CNO Summary of Action," pp. 3-4; "Taiwan Patrol Force Review," pp. 4, 8; Halperin, "The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis," pp. 363-70, 407.

⁶⁹ Blackburn, letter to author, May 30, 1988.

Training in amphibious unloading operations provided by the U.S. Navy to the Nationalist Chinese Navy was crucial to the success of the Quemoy resupply operation. Early Nationalist resupply efforts were largely ineffective due to their lack of experience with unloading supplies over the beach rather than in port. U.S. Navy assistance led to the shift from beaching LSMs and unloading them by hand, which had proven disastrous under fire, to the method of launching LVTs from LSTs offshore. Another U.S. Navy technique taught to the Nationalists was launching landing craft from an LSD offshore. This resupply method required U.S. participation because the Nationalists did not have LSDs of their own. By October the Nationalists had become so proficient at unloading supplies over the beach that further U.S. navy assistance in this area was no longer necessary.⁷⁰

In addition to the resupply operation, the U.S. Navy participated in the crisis in several other ways. A joint U.S.-Nationalist amphibious landing exercise, code-named "Land Ho," was held on Taiwan on September 8. The exercise was publicized to make it a signal of the U.S. defense relationship with Taiwan. U.S. Navy cruisers and radar picket destroyers monitored Communist air activity over the Taiwan Strait and provided air control and intercept

⁷⁰"Taiwan Patrol force Review," Enclosure 1, pp. 4-8; Felt, "Reminiscences," pp. 391-2; Blackburn, letter to author, May 30, 1988.

services for Navy carrier-based fighters and U.S. fighters on Taiwan. A radar picket destroyer provided air control and navigation services for Nationalist transport aircraft dropping supplies to Quemoy by parachute. The attack carriers around Taiwan maintained a combat air patrol over the Taiwan Strait from August 25 to September 6, when it was cancelled due to the low level of Communist air activity and the buildup of aircraft on Taiwan. Navy fighters made high-altitude, high-speed dashes up and down the strait to ensure that Communist radar operators knew that the latest U.S. jets were on-scene. The Taiwan Patrol Force kept at least four destroyers on patrol in the Straits from August 25 to October 29, and periodically had a destroyer make an appearance off Matsu to show U.S. interest in the Nationalist-held island. Patrol planes of the Taiwan Patrol Force kept a close watch on the mainland coast. Navy ships and aircraft conducted electronic intelligence collection against Communist Chinese radar sites, an important preparation in the event that air strikes had been necessary.⁷¹ These operations contributed to U.S. readiness in the Taiwan Strait and sent a strong deterrent signal to Communist China.

⁷¹"Taiwan Games Begin," New York Times, September 8, 1958, p. 3; "CNO Summary of Action," pp. 14-15; "Taiwan Patrol Force Review," pp. 5-8, 11; "CINCPACFLT Annual Report," pp. 8-9; Commander Harry C. Lowe, U.S. Navy (Retired), Commanding Officer of USS Dennis J. Buckley (DDR 808) during the crisis, interview by author, February 12, 1988 (Buckley provided air control for Nationalist air drops over Quemoy); Felt, "Reminiscences," p. 389.

Vice Admiral Beakley, Commander of the Seventh Fleet at the height of the crisis, described the climate in the Taiwan Straits in a candid letter on September 8, 1958, to a former Seventh Fleet Commander:

Times have been busy out here, mainly in trying to keep up with answers to dispatches from Washington and Pearl [Harbor, location of CINCPACFLT and CINCPAC]. I guess we do forget to tell them each change of course for each ship at times. [CNO Admiral Arleigh] Burke wanted us to impress the ChiComs [Chinese Communists] by flexing our muscles, and after the show yesterday, we should have won the world championship weight lifting contest. My CVA [attack carrier] group commanders were a little too enthusiastic, and we had 4 bad crashes and lost 3 pilots before I got them slowed down. I have to get some of these carriers off the line pretty soon or we'll have breakdowns in more ways than one. I believe Taiwan has got all the forces that they need at present on the island itself, and with CVA back-up, we should relax the rest of us. [Rear Admiral Paul H.] Ramsey [Commander Carrier Group One in Hancock] has worked out a plan for 4 carriers using conventional weapons, mainly against Communist air targets, which I have salted away to draw out when I need them [sic]. I think we could take the heart out of ChiCom air without much trouble. I think if the ChiNats [Chinese Nationalists] would slow down now on provocative actions that the situation would quiet down. I think they know we mean business and are not going to let Quemoy and the Matsus starve.⁷²

Vice Admiral Beakley's comments are revealing for three reasons. First, he shows mild annoyance toward the many requests for information he received from the CNO.⁷³

⁷²Vice Admiral Wallace M. Beakley, letter to Vice Admiral A.M. Pride, September 8, 1958, in Personal Papers, Box 3, Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC.

⁷³The CNO's extra reporting requirements and requests for information are listed in "CNO Summary of Action," p. 2.

Second, he reveals that the Navy paid a price for the show of force put on by the combat air patrol over the Taiwan Straits, losing four planes and three pilots in accidents. Third, he expresses the view that the situation would quiet down if the Nationalists would "slow down on provocative actions," a sentiment similar to those expressed by Rear Admiral Smoot on Taiwan and Vice Admiral Riley at CINCPAC.⁷⁴ U.S. Navy commanders in the Pacific were well aware of the danger of the Nationalists dragging the United States into a war with the Communists.

The final step in this review of U.S. Navy operations is to examine the interactions with Communist Chinese forces that could have occurred and the interactions with Communist Chinese forces that did occur during the crisis. The following interactions conceivably could have occurred during the crisis: Communist artillery fires on U.S. ships, prompting counterbattery fire; Communist planes, PT boats, or submarines attack U.S. ships, prompting return fire or an air battle; Communist fighters attack U.S. fighters or patrol planes over the Straits, prompting an air battle; or Communist planes attack Nationalist ships or threaten Taiwan, prompting an air battle. Additionally, a wide range of accidents could have occurred, including U.S. ships or planes stray into Communist waters or airspace, prompting a

⁷⁴ See Smoot, "Reminiscences," pp. 313-15; Riley, "Reminiscences," pp. 619-21.

Communist attack, and indiscriminate Communist attacks on U.S. forces mistaken for nationalist forces. The high level of U.S. Navy forces in the waters around Taiwan provides grounds for expecting that there was ample opportunity for inadvertent military incidents to occur. And, given the high level of tension in the Taiwan Straits, any of these incidents could have triggered a clash between the United States and Communist China.

There was, in fact, very little tactical-level interaction between United States and Communist Chinese forces, despite the intensity of U.S. Navy operations close to the coast of the mainland. Both sides took actions to avoid clashes with the other side. During convoy escort operations, Communist planes and PT boats were sometimes seen in the vicinity of Quemoy, but they never challenged U.S. navy units. Vice Admiral Blackburn states that during U.S. convoy escort operations, "Our presence seemed to be a sufficient deterrence to cause the ChiCom naval forces to avoid a naval confrontation."⁷⁵ U.S. ships were careful to remain clear of Communist artillery as much as possible, and were never fired upon by the Communists even when Nationalist ships nearby were being shelled. U.S. destroyers on patrol in the Taiwan Strait were directed to remain at least twelve miles from the mainland and Communist-held islands, a

⁷⁵ Blackburn, letter to author, May 30, 1988.

distance that was increased to fifteen miles on October 21. There were no reported instances of U.S. ships on patrol in the Straits encountering Chinese Communist naval vessels or submarines. Communist fighters did not venture out over the Straits to challenge U.S. Navy combat air patrols, although they did engage in several air battles with the Nationalist Air Force. According to the commanding officer of a U.S. radar picket destroyer in the Taiwan Straits, Communist aircraft were occasionally detected over the Straits, but they stayed to the west of the Davis Line that marked the limit of the Taiwan air defense intercept zone. The U.S. Navy, for its part, was careful to keep its fighters at least twenty miles off the coast of the mainland.⁷⁶ Thus, overall, there was surprisingly little tactical-level interaction between the two sides.

The closest that the United States and Communist China came to a clash during the crisis was the standoff between the U.S. destroyer Hopewell and Communist PT boats on August 24, described above. No shots were exchanged in this or any other incident during the crisis. A second incident similar

⁶⁷ Lowe, interview by author, February 12, 1988; Baker, letter to author, April 11, 1988; "Taiwan Patrol Force Review," pp. 8-11; Halperin, "The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis," p. 533; Blackburn, letter to author, May 30, 1988. Also see Oran R. Young, The Politics of Force: Bargaining in International Crises (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1968), pp. 224-26; Phil Williams, Crisis Management: Confrontation and Diplomacy in the Nuclear Age (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1976), pp. 112-13.

to this occurred in mid-October. USS McGinty (DE 365) was patrolling southwest of Quemoy when a Nationalist patrol craft (PC) close to Quemoy was taken under fire by Communist shore batteries. The Nationalist PC fled seaward at best speed and McGinty closed the PC at 24 knots to cover its withdrawal with a smoke screen. Six rounds of Communist artillery fire landed astern of McGinty but neither the U.S. nor the Nationalist ship were damaged.⁷⁷ It appears that the Communists ceased firing as soon as McGinty joined the PC, the same pattern as in the Hopewell episode.

There were relatively few military accidents during the crisis. The U.S. Navy lost at least four jet fighters in flying accidents, but none of these incidents caused or resulted from interaction with Communist forces--they were caused by maintaining an excessively high tempo of operations. There was one incident in which Nationalist Air Force planes attacked Nationalist Navy ships in the Taiwan Straits, but the correct identities of the attackers and victims were established before U.S. forces became involved. Communist China made two allegations that U.S. ships or planes had violated their twelve-mile territorial waters (apart from their frequent protests over the convoy escorts). On September 11 the Communist Chinese claimed that a U.S. Navy patrol plane had overflown two Communist

⁷⁷ Behm, letter to author, February 19, 1988.

held islands the previous day. Commander Taiwan Patrol force investigated the allegation and determined that the plane had not approached Communist territory closer than thirty miles. On October 9 the Communist Chinese charged that two U.S. navy destroyers had invaded their territorial waters. Although the ships initially denied the charge, Commander Taiwan Defense Command later determined that one leg of the patrol they had been on could have taken them close to Communist waters. Commander Taiwan Patrol Force changed the patrol route to open the closest approach to Communist territory and no further incidents occurred.⁷⁸

Communist China announced a one-week ceasefire around the offshore islands on October 6, on the condition that U.S. ships not escort Nationalist resupply convoys to Quemoy. The U.S. ceased escorting Nationalist convoys on October 8 and never resumed the escorts. On October 12 Peking extended the ceasefire, but then on October 20 resumed the shelling, claiming that U.S. ships had escorted a Nationalist convoy on October 19. There was a Nationalist convoy on October 19, but Taiwan Patrol Force did not escort it. However, the evening of October 19 a U.S. LSD, with U.S. escorts, had conducted a resupply mission off of Quemoy, remaining 12 miles off the island. This was probably the event that the Chinese Communists used as

⁷⁸"Taiwan Patrol Force Review," pp. 4, 6, 9, 11; Halperin, "The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis," p. 533

grounds for breaking the ceasefire. There had also been LSD resupply operations the evenings of October 8, 12, and 13, all without protest from the Communists, making it doubtful that the October 19 LSD convoy was the primary reason why the Communists decided to resume shelling.⁷⁹ The most likely cause of the renewed shelling was the visit of U.S. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles to Taiwan. Dulles arrived in Taipei on October 20 for discussions with Chiang Kai-shek. The Communist Chinese shelling was probably intended to disrupt the Chiang-Dulles talks, perhaps increasing U.S. pressure on Chiang to make concessions on the offshore islands, and to signal continuing dissatisfaction with the status quo in the Taiwan Straits.

In summary, U.S. Navy forces in the seas around Taiwan provided the President with a wide range of military options for dealing with the Communist Chinese probe of the offshore islands. Navy attack carriers provided a potent deterrent threat, and the Taiwan Patrol Force provided the escorts crucial for the test of capabilities strategy that the President adopted in the crisis. Navy commanders imposed restrictions on their forces to avoid clashes with the Communists and, as shown by the performance of the destroyer Hopewell, exercised restraint when in potentially dangerous situations with Communist units. Very little tactical-level

⁷⁹"Taiwan Patrol Force Review," pp. 8-10.

interaction took place between United States and Chinese Communist forces because both sides took steps to prevent clashes from occurring.

Findings

This section will review the 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis to answer the eight research questions. The first question is to what degree were interactions between the forces of the two sides at the scene of the crisis the result of actions taken in accordance with mechanisms of delegated control, rather than direct control by national leaders? The Eisenhower Administration was concerned about the danger of events getting out of control in the Taiwan Straits. The position paper approved by the President on September 4 noted that, because U.S. destroyers would be operating up to three miles from the mainland, "There is thus a possibility of a deliberate or accidental hit by the Chicom, which would have potential and unplanned reactions which might involve at least limited retaliation."⁸⁰ To control the risk of escalation, the President retained total control of nuclear weapons and delegated authority to retaliate with conventional weapons against mainland targets only under circumstances in which the Joint Chiefs did not have time to consult with the him prior to taking action.

⁸⁰ Eisenhower, p. 692.

Beyond this, however, United States communications capabilities in 1958 forced employment of delegated methods of control and heavy reliance on mechanisms of indirect control. U.S. Navy commanders in the Pacific had significant authority to conduct operations as they saw fit--within the policy limits set by the President and the JCS--and exercised that authority to its limits. The only detailed instructions provided by the JCS concerned rules of engagement and the limit on how close ships could approach Quemoy and the mainland. Although there would later be pressure to allow U.S. ships to go right up to the beach in Quemoy, when the crisis erupted Commander Taiwan Defense Force and Commander Taiwan Patrol Force were keeping their ships twelve miles away from the mainland and the offshore islands.⁸¹ Thus, the three mile limit imposed by JCS was actually a relaxation of the restriction for the forces on-scene. Throughout the crisis Washington was ill-informed of the status of operations currently in progress, which precluded American leaders from exercising close control of the operations.

The overall picture that emerges is of the Eisenhower Administration exploiting the flexibility of the U.S. command system for crisis management purposes. Operational decisions that held the greatest risk of escalation were

⁸¹"Taiwan Patrol Force Review," Enclosure 1, p. 1; Blackburn, letter to author, May 30, 1988.

closely held. In emergencies, when the need for action was absolutely clear (such as a Communist attack on Taiwan) and could not await Presidential deliberation, certain escalatory decisions (such as conventional air strikes on the mainland) were delegated to JCS. On the other hand, decisions on the details of executing operations previously approved by the President were delegated to on-scene commanders.

The second question is were the forces of the two sides at the scene of the crisis tightly coupled with each other? Both sides appeared to have good intelligence concerning the other side's forces and operations. The Taiwan Defense Command observed that the pattern of Communist Chinese shelling suggested that they had good intelligence on the convoys.⁸² Chinese protests of alleged U.S. violations of their airspace and territorial waters also suggests that they were able to keep close tabs on U.S. navy operations in the Straits. U.S. on-scene commanders had similarly good information on Communist military activities. The Taiwan Patrol Force maintained intensive patrol and surveillance of the mainland coast. However, detection of actions by the other side did not automatically generate tactical reactions. The United States and Communist China both took steps to prevent clashes between

⁸²Halperin, "The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis," p. 304.

their forces and those measures largely prevented interactions from occurring. When U.S. and Communist forces came into contact, as in the Hopewell and McGinty episodes, they disengaged rather than fighting. Thus, although the intelligence requirement for tight coupling of the two sides' forces was met, tactical reactions tended to be dampened by measures taken to avoid clashes.

The third question is were the forces of the two sides being used by their national leaders as a political instrument in the crisis? Both Communist China and the United States were using their forces for political purposes as well as military purposes. Communist China was conducting a limited probe of an ambiguous American commitment to the offshore islands, and exerting carefully controlled pressure on the Nationalists and the United States. The United States responded by accepting a test of capabilities under the ground rules established by the Chinese Communists, backed by a massive concentration of naval and air power in the Straits to convey a strong deterrent threat. Faced with a choice between escalating the confrontation or accepting an unfavorable outcome, the Chinese backed down and salvaged as much as they could politically.

The answers to these first three questions suggest that conditions necessary for stratified interaction existed in the 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis: the United States relied

on methods of delegated control, U.S. and Chinese Communist military forces were tightly coupled, and both sides used their forces as a political instrument under conditions of acute crisis. Interactions occurred at the tactical level that were not directly controlled by American leaders. For example, President Eisenhower had no control over the actions of the destroyer Hopewell on August 24. The findings of this case suggest, however, that stratification is not an absolute concept--there can be degrees of stratification. Measures taken by both sides to prevent confrontations between their forces can greatly reduce opportunities for tactical-level interaction to occur.

The fourth question is did crisis interactions at the tactical level become decoupled from the strategy being pursued by national leaders? Three of the potential causes of decoupling arose on the American side in the crisis: communications problems, a fast-paced tactical environment, and ambiguous orders. The communications problems have already been discussed. When the President suspended convoy escort operations on October 6 in response to the Communist unilateral ceasefire announcement, the order was not received by Commander Taiwan Patrol Force until after two more Nationalist convoys had been escorted on October 7.⁸³

⁸³"Taiwan Patrol Force Review," Enclosure 1, p. 8. In fact, the Commander of the U.S. Taiwan Defense Command initially responded to the Communist ceasefire by informing his forces on October 6 that it did not change their orders.

As it turned out, the extra day of escort operations did not adversely affect U.S. efforts to resolve the crisis, but it could have had a much more serious impact--the Chinese Communists had made the ceasefire contingent on the U.S. not escorting Nationalist convoys. This was the most serious instance of decoupling in the crisis.

The impact of a fast-paced tactical environment and ambiguous orders were most apparent on August 24, the first full day of the crisis. It would be August 26 before the on-scene commanders received the first JCS directive on the crisis, but they had to respond immediately to a Communist Chinese threat of unknown proportions. In the early hours of the crisis it was not clear whether the Communists intended to attack Taiwan, invade Quemoy or neighboring islands, or just harass the offshore islands with artillery fire. The Nationalists were appealing for assistance to repel an invasion of one of the islands. Compounding this rapidly evolving situation was the ambiguous Eisenhower Administration policy toward defense of the offshore islands. U.S. military commanders in the Pacific had sought clarification on the offshore islands earlier in August as tensions rose in the Straits, but the President was unwilling to state a definitive policy until September 6. On-scene commanders had ample authority to take military action under the terms of the defense treaty with the Nationalists and the Formosa Resolution if Taiwan were

threatened, but initially had no specific guidance on the offshore islands. Commander Seventh Fleet and the Chief of Staff at CINCPAC would later complain about this lack of guidance from Washington.⁸⁴ Left to their own devices, the on-scene commanders took actions on August 24 and 25-- sending U.S. destroyers to the assistance of Nationalist forces defending the offshore islands--that the President may not have authorized had he been able to make the decisions himself. This is another example of decoupling during the crisis.

The fifth question is did national leaders and on-scene commanders hold different perceptions of the vulnerability of on-scene forces to pre-emption and the need to strike first in the event of an armed clash? This appears not to have been a significant problem in the 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis. The entire chain of command, from the President down to commanding officers at sea in the Straits, appear to have been aware of the danger of incidents with Communist Chinese forces. The emphasis in JCS operational directives was on avoiding clashes with the Communists, and on-scene commanders took similar measures on their own initiative. These steps had the effect of

⁸⁴Riley, "Reminiscences," p. 630; Halperin, "The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis," p. 133. Vice Admiral Blackburn also states that he was not kept informed of U.S. political objectives and diplomatic initiatives during the crisis. Blackburn, letter to author, May 30, 1988.

preventing U.S. forces from operating in the sights of Communist guns, thus reducing their vulnerability to preemption by the Communists. Although some U.S. commanders in the Far East may have wanted to take more vigorous action against Communist China, they did not perceive a significantly greater threat to U.S. forces than did officials in Washington. Thus, the security dilemma was not stratified.

The sixth question is, when tactical-level interactions become decoupled, what factors inhibit escalation dynamics from occurring at the tactical level and being transmitted upward to the strategic and political levels of interaction? In the 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis, when decoupling occurred it did not produce tactical-level escalation. Instead, interactions remained at a relatively low intensity and when U.S. and Communist forces did come in contact, they quickly disengaged. There appear to have been two reasons for this. First, U.S. on-scene commanders exercised caution in the absence of guidance from higher authority. For example, Commander Taiwan Defense Command and Commander Taiwan Patrol Force initially ordered ships to remain twelve miles from the mainland and aircraft to remain twenty miles from the mainland--a policy more restrictive than that approved by the President later. This tactical-level prudence compensated for lack of operational guidance when decoupling occurred, preventing escalation even when actions took place that the President had not ordered.

The second factor inhibiting escalation was that both sides took steps to avoid military clashes and adhered to the tacit ground rules for the test of capabilities between their forces. Those ground rules included no Communist attacks on U.S. forces, no U.S. attacks on Chinese forces except in self-defense (and defense of Nationalist forces in international airspace or waters), and no U.S. attacks on the Chinese mainland. The CNO, Admiral Arleigh Burke, pointed this out in 1959 testimony to Congress:

As this situation generated, we sort of abided by rules of the other side, and they abided by our rules. They were very careful never to come out to sea, beyond their own coastline. We were careful not to go beyond their coastline, too, so that we sort of⁸⁵ had an unofficial agreement and nothing happened.

Vice Admiral Blackburn, Commander of the Taiwan Patrol Force, states that "Our people were instructed to avoid confrontations, and apparently the ChiComs had similar ground rules, as they would break off contact when a confrontation appeared imminent."⁸⁶ This is exactly what happened in the Hopewell and McGinty incidents.

J.H. Kalicki argues that a Sino-American "crisis system" evolved during the 1950s. In this system, "the life cycle of each crisis became increasingly self-regulated" and

⁸⁵ U.S. Congress, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Disarmament and Foreign Policy, Hearings, 86th Congress, 1st Session, Part 1 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1959), p. 98. Also see Young, pp. 224-29; Williams, pp. 112-13.

⁸⁶ Blackburn, letter to author, May 30, 1988.

"the ability of each actor to handle crises with the other became increasingly sophisticated."⁸⁷ Both sides, he contends, learned to respect the other's commitments, limiting their interactions to probes confirming the strength of those commitments. He also argues that American and Chinese leaders improved their skills as crisis managers, orchestrating actions with words more sensibly and imaginatively, and sending more effective signals.⁸⁸ This study of tactical-level military interactions in the 1958 crisis--the last major crisis in the period studied by Kalicki--supports his view that the United States and Communist China had evolved tacit rules of crisis behavior.

The seventh question is did actions taken with military forces send inadvertent signals to either adversaries or friends, and did inadvertent military incidents occur that affected efforts to manage the crisis? This appears not to have been a serious problem during the 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis. The military moves taken by each side were carefully designed to signal their intentions.

The principle problem that the United States experienced arose from the ambiguity of the Eisenhower Administration's commitment to the defense of the offshore

⁸⁷ Kalicki, p. 213.

⁸⁸ Ibid, pp. 213-215.

islands. U.S. leaders were caught between deterring an adversary and restraining an ally: too strong a commitment might encourage the Nationalists to be overly aggressive, while too weak a commitment might encourage the Communists to be overly aggressive. The Eisenhower Administration attempted to resolve this dilemma with a calculated policy of ambiguity, but only prompted the Communist probe of the American commitment and subsequent efforts by the Nationalists to use the crisis as grounds for striking back at the mainland. The problem was not that the Communists and Nationalists misperceived U.S. intentions, but rather that they correctly perceived the ambivalence in U.S. policy.

The final question is did any of the three tensions between political and military considerations arise during the crisis? All three of the tensions arose in the crisis, but none was severe. Tension between political considerations and military considerations arose in the restrictions placed on the support that could be provided for the Quemoy resupply effort. The most efficient way of resupplying the Nationalist garrison would have been to carry their supplies in U.S. amphibious ships escorted right up to the beach by U.S. warships. However, this would have been a serious provocation to the Communists, who might not have refrained from shelling the American vessels. That, in turn, probably would have led to U.S. naval bombardment and air strikes against Communist shore batteries, air fields,

and naval bases. The political restrictions on the resupply operation were thus prudent from a crisis management perspective, even if they required the U.S. and Nationalist navies to improvise ways to get supplies ashore under fire.

Tension arose between the need for top-level control and the need for on-scene flexibility and initiative, but overall a workable balance appears to have been struck. President Eisenhower implies in his memoirs that he was satisfied with command arrangements during the crisis.⁸⁹ Efforts by officials in Washington to manage the crisis were hampered by lack of information from the field, prompting the CNO to increase reporting requirements and send several queries to commanders in the Far East. Rear Admiral Smoot made several requests for authority to make decisions himself rather than having to refer them to Washington, some of which were granted.⁹⁰ According to the Vice Admiral Heyward (on the CNO's staff), minor tensions arose within the Navy chain of command due to Admiral Burke's operational style: "Admiral Burke was a 'hands on' CNO, so he may have exercised a little more detailed control of operations of the naval forces involved than Admiral Felt or COMSEVENTHFLT desired."⁹¹ That this was the case is confirmed by Vice

⁸⁹Eisenhower, p. 299.

⁹⁰Smoot, "Reminiscences," pp. 313-16; Halperin, "The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis," pp. 155, 249-50, 365, 370.

⁹¹Heyward, letter to author, May 27, 1988.

Admiral Beakley's comments on "trying to keep up with answers to dispatches from Washington."⁹² However, methods of delegated control were used and officials in Washington relied heavily on mechanisms of indirect control, thus muting tension over centralization of control.

Tensions arose between performance of crisis missions and readiness to perform wartime missions. The Politico-Military Policy Division of the CNO's staff prepared a position paper on August 24 in which the President was warned that "The United States must undertake operations which bring action to a halt quickly. Prolonged operations will diminish military capabilities for operations in other areas or for general war."⁹³ Transferring the attack carrier Essex from the Mediterranean to the Western Pacific illustrates this problem: it reinforced the forces around Taiwan but reduced U.S. strength on NATO's southern flank and in the Middle East. The CNO refused to authorize similar actions that would have further drawn down Atlantic Fleet strength. After the crisis, Admiral Burke would testify that U.S. naval forces were "stretched pretty thin" during the crisis and would have been hard pressed to respond to an outbreak of fighting elsewhere while committed

⁹²Beakley, letter to VADM A.M. Pride, September 8, 1958.

⁹³Quoted in Halperin, "The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis," p. 110.

in the Taiwan Straits.⁹⁴ The CINCPACFLT assessment of the crisis praised the ability of naval forces to rapidly augment the defense of Taiwan, but closed with a warning: "However, as a corollary, it is also considered that such augmentation is expensive and results in long lasting deleterious effects upon material and personnel."⁹⁵ Thus, tensions between crisis missions and readiness for wartime missions arose during the Taiwan Straits operations. Of the three types of political-military tensions, this one was the most serious during the 1958 Taiwan Strait Crisis.

The 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis

The 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis erupted in October when American U-2 high-altitude reconnaissance planes photographed Soviet medium-range ballistic missile (MRBM) and intermediate-range ballistic missile (IRBM) sites under construction in Cuba. The United States responded by demanding that the missiles be withdrawn, imposing a naval quarantine of offensive arms shipments to Cuba, preparing to launch air strikes against the sites and an invasion of Cuba, and alerting its strategic nuclear forces. After a

⁹⁴"CNO Summary of Action," pp. 2-3; "CNO Congressional Testimony," pp. 106-7

⁹⁵"CINCPACFLT Annual Report," p. 1. Vice Admiral Beakley, Commander Seventh Fleet, expressed concern in the letter quoted previously that the attack carriers off Taiwan would start breaking down if kept on the line for too long without maintenance. See footnote 72.

tense week of diplomatic bargaining, Moscow agreed to withdraw its offensive missiles in exchange for a pledge from Washington to not invade Cuba and an informal understanding that the U.S. would later withdraw its MRBMs from Turkey. The United States Navy played a prominent role in the crisis, enforcing the quarantine and carrying out a wide range of operations in support of President Kennedy's strategy.

Background

Soviet-American relations had begun to improve in 1959, marked by the "spirit of Camp David" engendered during Soviet Premier Nikita S. Khrushchev's September visit to the United States. This tentative thaw in the cold war ended in May 1960, when Khrushchev walked out of the Paris Four-Power summit meeting. Khrushchev had demanded that the United States apologize for violating Soviet airspace with the U-2 that the Soviets had shot down on May 1, 1960. When President Eisenhower refused, Khrushchev scuttled the summit meeting.⁹⁶ John F. Kennedy won the presidential election in November 1960, running on a platform that included a promise to close the "missile gap" alleged to exist with the Soviet Union. In his inaugural address in January, Kennedy

⁹⁶Michael R. Breschloss, Mayday: Eisenhower, Khrushchev and the U-2 Affair (New York: Harper and Row, 1986), pp. 273-304;

declared that the United States would "pay any cost, bear any burden" in the defense of freedom. This came two weeks after Khrushchev had announced a Soviet commitment to support "wars of national liberation" in the Third World. Thus, the ideological and political confrontation between the superpowers would continue in the new Administration.

The Kennedy Administration soon discovered that there was no missile gap with the Soviet Union and that the United States in fact held a lead in strategic nuclear forces. Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara revealed that there was no missile gap on February 8, 1961. Khrushchev's intercontinental ballistic missile claims had largely been a bluff--the Soviets had few ICBMs and was producing them at a low rate. Nevertheless, the Kennedy Administration launched an ambitious program to strengthen U.S. strategic forces with Minuteman ICBMs and Polaris submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs). As a result of this program, U.S. strategic nuclear superiority over the Soviets would continue to grow.⁹⁷

⁹⁷ William W. Kaufmann, The McNamara Strategy (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), pp. 38-50; Roger Hilsman, To Move A Nation (New York: Doubleday, 1967), pp. 162-4; Edgar M. Bottome, The Missile Gap: A Study of the Formulation of Military and Political Policy (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 1971); Jerome H. Kahan, Security in the Nuclear Age: Developing U.S. Strategic Arms Policy (Washington, DC: Brookings, 1975), pp. 84-94; John Prados, The Soviet Estimate: U.S. Intelligence Analysis and Soviet Strategic Forces (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982), pp. 75-95, 111-22; George and Smoke, pp. 449-56.

The Kennedy Administration faced two major crises in 1961. The first was the "Bay of Pigs" humiliation in April. American relations with Cuba had been deteriorating since Fidel Castro overthrew the Batista dictatorship in January 1959. As Castro imposed a Communist dictatorship on Cuba and turned to the Soviet bloc for political support and economic and military aid, pressure grew in the United States to take action against him. This led to the CIA plan to mount an invasion by anti-Castro exiles, which was well along when Kennedy came into office. The attempted invasion failed, with most of the exile force killed or captured, producing a propaganda triumph for Castro. President Kennedy admitted U.S. complicity in the invasion accepted responsibility for the disaster. This did not, however, mark the end of U.S. opposition to Castro. Soon after the Bay of Pigs episode the Kennedy Administration established a Cuban Coordinating Committee chaired by Attorney general Robert Kennedy to explore actions that could be taken against Castro. The CIA launched "Operation Mongoose," a series of guerrilla raids by Cuban exiles. Additionally, the Joint Chiefs were directed to prepare contingency plans for air strikes and invasion of Cuba.⁹⁸ Thus, Cuba was high

⁹⁸ Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy in the White House (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1965), pp. 215-97; Haynes Johnson, The Bay of Pigs (New York: W.W. Norton, 1964); Peter Wyden, Bay of Pigs: The Untold Story (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1979). On anti-Castro

on the Kennedy Administration's list of foreign policy concerns.

The second crisis faced by the Kennedy Administration was in Berlin. Berlin had been on the Soviet foreign policy agenda since 1948. In response to Britain, France and the United States unifying West Germany, which the Soviets viewed as a first step toward a separate Western peace with Germany in violation of the Potsdam agreement, the Soviets cut off rail and road access to Berlin in June 1948. The blockade was broken by the Berlin airlift and was lifted in May 1949. In November 1958 Khrushchev had given the West six months to withdraw from Berlin and sign a German peace treaty. The Western powers rejected the Soviet demand, which was dropped during Khrushchev's May 1959 visit to the United States. Khrushchev took a hard line on Berlin when he met Kennedy in Vienna in June 1961 and on July 8, 1961 demanded that the Western powers withdraw from the city. The West refused, and in August the Soviets and East Germans began erecting the Berlin Wall around the Western occupation sectors of the city. The crisis then tapered off without resolution of the issues that had provoked it. The crisis further strained Soviet-American relations and led the

activities, see Captain Alex A. Kerr, "The Reminiscences of Captain Alex A. Kerr, U.S. Navy (Retired)," (Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, Oral History Program, 1984), pp. 404-7; Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., Robert Kennedy and His Times (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1978), pp. 468-98.

Kennedy Administration to expect the Soviets to make another move against Berlin in the near future.⁹⁹

In 1962 Kennedy Administration attention shifted back to Cuba. In January, at the Punta del Este Conference of the Organization of American States (OAS), the United States persuaded the OAS to declare its opposition to Cuban revolutionary activity in Latin America. On February 4, 1962, President Kennedy declared an embargo on all trade with Cuba other than medical supplies. Meanwhile, Cuba and the Soviet Union were forging closer ties. Osmoni Cienfuegos, Cuban Minister of Public Works, visited Moscow in April, Raul Castro, Minister of Defense, visited Moscow in early July, and Che Guevara, Minister of Finance, visited Moscow in late August. These visits produced Soviet pledges of economic and military assistance.

The Cuban Military Build-up

In mid-July ships carrying arms destined for Cuba began leaving Soviet ports. The military build-up on Cuba was dramatic and immediately detected by the United States.

⁹⁹ See Adam B. Ulam, Expansion and Coexistence: Soviet Foreign Policy, 1917-72, Second Edition (New York: Praeger, 1974), pp. 440-55, 619-20, 653-4; Jean Edward Smith, The Defense of Berlin (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1963); Jack M. Schick, The Berlin Crisis, 1958-1962 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971); Robert M. Slusser, The Berlin Crisis of 1961 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973); Schlesinger, A Thousand Days, pp. 343-405; Theodore C. Sorenson, Kennedy (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), p. 668-9.

The number of Soviet freighters (dry cargo ships) arriving in Cuban ports, which had averaged about 15 ships a month during the first seven months of 1962, suddenly increased to 37 in August and 46 in September. Additionally, four to six passenger ships arrived per month in July, August and September, each carrying hundreds of Soviet technicians, troops, and support personnel. U.S. intelligence estimates were that the Soviets had 3,000-5,000 personnel in Cuba by the end of September. The Soviets supplied the Cubans with Mig-21 jet fighters, tanks, radar-controlled anti-aircraft guns, short-range conventional tactical ballistic missiles (FROG-type), coastal defense anti-ship cruise missiles, Komar-class fast attack craft armed with SS-N-2 anti-ship cruise missiles, and extensive radar and communications equipment. On August 29 U-2 photographs confirmed SA-2 Guideline surface-to-air missile sites in Cuba. An August 22 CIA Current Intelligence Memorandum on Soviet military aid to Cuba concluded that "Together with the extraordinary Soviet bloc economic commitments made to Cuba in recent months, these developments amount to the most extensive campaign to bolster a non-bloc country ever undertaken by the USSR."¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁰ Central Intelligence Agency, Current Intelligence Memorandum, "Recent Soviet Military Aid to Cuba," August 22, 1962 (National Security Archive, Washington, DC, Cuban Missile Crisis file). Also see Central Intelligence Agency, Special National Intelligence Estimate 85-3-62, "The Military Buildup in Cuba," September 19, 1962 (National Security

The United States closely monitored the military build-up in Cuba. In early August the United States stepped up its surveillance of Cuba and Soviet bloc shipping to the island. This included photographic reconnaissance of all Soviet bloc shipping to Cuba, frequent peripheral photographic reconnaissance flights around the island, twice-monthly U-2 flights over the island, and assignment of the intelligence collection ship USS Oxford (AG 159) to monitor Cuba. The CIA and NSC prepared detailed studies of the intentions and implications of the build-up, and in late August the CIA began issuing daily intelligence reports on Soviet arms shipments to Cuba.¹⁰¹

Archives, Washington, DC, Cuba file, Record no. 1714); U.S. Congress, Senate Committee on Armed Services, Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee, "Interim Report on the Cuban Military Buildup," 88th Congress, 1st Session (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1963), pp. 5-8 (Cited hereafter as Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee Interim Report); Commander in Chief Atlantic, "CINCLANT Historical Account of Cuban Crisis 1962," April 29, 1963 (declassified 1986), pp. 4-9 (Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC. Cited hereafter as "CINCLANT Historical Account."); National Indications Center, "The Soviet Bloc Armed Forces and the Cuban Crisis: A Chronology, July-November 1962," June 18, 1963 (declassified 1985), pp. 1-7 (National Security Archive, Washington, DC, Cuban Missile Crisis file. Cited hereafter as "National Indications Center").

¹⁰¹National Indications Center, pp. 6-7, 13; Hilsman, p. 170; Schlesinger, Robert Kennedy, p. 505; Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, "The Naval Quarantine of Cuba," December 1962 (partially declassified 1984), pp. 1-2 (Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC. Cited hereafter as "CNO Historical Narrative."); USS Oxford (AG 159), Ship's History, January 25, 1963 (Ships History Branch, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC).

The Kennedy Administration drew a distinction between offensive and defensive weapons: Offensive weapons were those that could strike U.S. territory from Cuba, and included surface-to-surface missiles (MRBMs and IRBMs) and bombers. All other weapons, including the surface-to-air missiles and anti-ship cruise missiles, were considered defensive. President Kennedy made public statements on September 4 and 13 describing the buildup of defensive arms in Cuba and warning that the United States would not tolerate offensive arms there. Additionally, U.S. officials discussed the arms build-up directly with Soviet officials, and were told on at least three occasions that the arms were strictly defensive.¹⁰² In retrospect, the Kennedy Administration's effort to draw a distinction between offensive and defensive weapons appears not to have eliminated the ambiguity inherent in such matters. Khrushchev would later claim that Soviet missiles were deployed in Cuba to defend the island against the threat of U.S. invasion--reflecting an offense-defense distinction based on political intent rather than the capability of the weapons.

¹⁰² See "U.S. Reaffirms Policy on Prevention of Aggressive Actions by Cuba: Statement by President Kennedy," Department of State Bulletin 47 (September 24, 1962), p. 450; "The President's News Conference of September 13, 1962," Public Papers of the Presidents: John F. Kennedy, 1962 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1963), p. 674. On the meetings with Soviet officials, see Sorenson, Kennedy, pp. 667-9; Raymond L. Garthoff, Reflections on the Cuban Missile Crisis (Washington, DC: Brookings, 1987), p. 15; Hilsman, pp. 166-67.

Meanwhile, the Soviet Union was covertly deploying offensive missiles to Cuba. Khrushchev apparently proposed the idea of deploying offensive missiles to Cuba sometime between late April and late May of 1962. By early July Cuba had agreed to allow the missiles on its soil, plans for the deployment had been completed, and launch sites had been identified.¹⁰³ The initial Soviet missile deployment plan is summarized in Table 1. The Soviets planned initially to deploy 24 launchers for SS-4 (Soviet designation "R-12") Sandal 1,100-mile range MRBMs with two missiles per launcher, for a total of 48 MRBMs, and 16 launchers for SS-5 (Soviet designation "R-14") Skean 2,200-mile range IRBMs with two missiles per launcher, for a total of 32 IRBMs. Of this missile force, only 42 MRBMs were actually deployed to Cuba before the United States imposed the quarantine on offensive weapons. Additionally, the Soviets deployed 42 IL-28 Beagle twin-engine light bombers to Cuba.¹⁰⁴ These were

¹⁰³ There are a wide range of estimates as to when the decision was made. Khrushchev states in his memoirs that it was during a May 14-20, 1962, visit to Bulgaria that the idea of deploying nuclear missiles to Cuba occurred to him. See Nikita S. Khrushchev, Khrushchev Remembers, translated and edited by Strobe Talbott (Boston: Little, Brown, 1970), p. 493. For discussions of the Soviet decision, see Michael Tatu, Power in the Kremlin: From Khrushchev to Kosygin (New York: Viking Press, 1969), pp. 233-39; Hilsman, To Move a Nation, pp. 159-61; Garthoff, Reflections, pp. 6-8.

¹⁰⁴ Central Intelligence Agency, Memorandum, "The Crisis USSR/Cuba: Information as of 0600," October 28, 1962, pp. I-1, I-4 (National Security Archive, Washington, DC, Cuban Missile Crisis file); Schlesinger, A Thousand Days, p. 796; Hilsman, p. 159; Garthoff, Reflections, pp. 19-20.

regarded as offensive weapons by the United States because they had sufficient range to reach U.S. territory and theoretically could carry nuclear bombs.

Table 1
Soviet Missile Deployment Plan

Site	Type	Launchers	Missiles
San Cristobal site no. 1	MRBM	4	8
San Cristobal site no. 2	MRBM	4	8
San Cristobal site no. 3	MRBM	4	8
San Cristobal site no. 4	MRBM	4	8
Sagua la Grande site no. 1	MRBM	4	8
Sagua la Grande site no. 2	MRBM	4	8
Guanajay site no. 1	IRBM	4	8
Guanajay site no. 2	IRBM	4	8
Remedios site no. 1	IRBM	4	8
Remedios site no. 2	IRBM	4	8

Sources: Central Intelligence Agency, Memorandum, "The Crisis USSR/Cuba: Information as of 0600," October 28, 1962, pp. I-1, I-4; Garthoff, Reflections, pp. 19-20; Schlesinger, A Thousand Days, p. 796; Hilsman, p. 159.

In late July Cuba began evacuating residents from the ports at which the missiles would arrive and in early August the Soviets began establishing their own security zones at those ports, including construction of fences and guard posts. In mid-August equipment for construction of the launch sites began arriving in Cuba and in late August clearing of roads and launch areas started at the Sagua la Grande MRBM sites. In early September MRBM and IRBM associated equipment began arriving in Cuban ports. The first MRBMs appear to have arrived in the Cuban port of

Casilda on September 8 and were delivered to Sagua la Grande by September 15. Also in early September construction began at the Guanajay IRBM sites and Cuban residents were evicted from what would become the San Cristobal MRBM sites. In mid-September construction began at one of the two Remedios IRBM sites and clearing of roads and launch areas started at the San Cristobal MRBM sites. The second shipment of MRBMs appears to have arrived in the Cuban port of Mariel on September 15 for delivery to San Cristobal.¹⁰⁵ Soviet deployment of offensive missiles in Cuba was thus well along by mid-September.

The Soviets sought to mask their deployment of offensive missiles to Cuba with what Roger Hilsman has described as a program of "cover and deception." From the Soviet-Cuban communique released on September 2 at the end of Che Guevara's visit to Moscow, to Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko's meeting with President Kennedy on October 18, the Soviets on at least eight occasions stated that they were sending only defensive weapons to Cuba.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵ National Indications Center, pp. 1-7, 13-15; Hilsman, pp. 183-6; Garthoff, Reflections, pp. 19-20; Elie Abel, The Missile Crisis (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1966), pp. 41-2. The one serious disagreement among these accounts is that Hilsman states construction started at Sagua la Grande in late September, while the National Indications Center report states it started in late August.

¹⁰⁶ Garthoff, Reflections, p. 15. Also see Hilsman, pp. 165-7; National Indications Center, pp. 13-14; Sorenson, pp. 667-8, 690; Abel, pp. 37-8, 61-3; Schlesinger, A Thousand Days, pp. 798-9, 805.

U.S. Suspicions and Preparations

The United States was slow in coming to the realization that the Soviet Union was deploying offensive missiles in Cuba. Although a few officials, particularly CIA Director John A. McCone, had concluded as early as July 1962 that the build-up of defensive forces in Cuba was for the defense of offensive weapons to be introduced later, the consensus among the President's advisors and intelligence officials in the CIA and State Department was that the Soviets would not put offensive missiles in Cuba.¹⁰⁷ A Special National Intelligence Estimate issued September 19, 1962, concluded that the Soviets would be unlikely to place MRBMs and IRBMs in Cuba because it would be "incompatible with Soviet practice to date" and would indicate "a far greater willingness to increase the level of risk in US-Soviet relations than the USSR has displayed thus far."¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷ On McCone's warning, see Arthur Krock, Memoirs: Sixty Years on the Firing Line (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1968), pp. 378-80. Robert Kennedy and Roger Hilsman contend McCone never expressed his concern to the President. See Schlesinger, Robert Kennedy, p. 506; Hilsman, p. 173. On the view that the Soviets would not put offensive missiles in Cuba, see Sorenson, p. 670; Hilsman, pp. 172-3; Abel, p. 5; Schlesinger, A Thousand Days, p. 798; George and Smoke, pp. 477-81; Garthoff, Reflections, p. 26. Robert Kennedy apparently anticipated in April 1961 and September 1962 that the Soviets might put offensive missiles in Cuba. See Schlesinger, Robert Kennedy, pp. 471, 505.

¹⁰⁸ Central Intelligence Agency, Special National Intelligence Estimate 85-3-62, "The Military Buildup in Cuba," September 19, 1962 (National Security Archive, Washington, DC, Cuban Missile Crisis file), p. 2.

Controversy has persisted over the causes of this intelligence failure. Robert Kennedy stated in his memoir of the crisis that "No one had expected or anticipated that the Russians would deploy surface-to-surface missiles in Cuba."¹⁰⁹ There are two explanations for this. Roger Hilsman contends that the U.S. did not have accurate and reliable intelligence on the Soviet missiles until the October 14 U-2 photographs. The opposing argument is that there were numerous indicators of the Soviet move, but U.S. analysts, working under an erroneous conception of Soviet behavior and perceptions, ignored or misconstrued evidence contradicting their belief that the Soviets would not put offensive arms in Cuba. The two sides agree, however, that the Kennedy Administration was taken by surprise and caught unprepared when the Soviet missiles were discovered on October 14.¹¹⁰

The U.S. may not have had accurate and reliable intelligence, but there were several pieces of evidence that should have raised suspicion that the Soviets were placing offensive missiles in Cuba. In fact, the available evidence

⁹⁷ Robert F. Kennedy, Thirteen Days: A Memoir of the Cuban Missile Crisis (New York: W.W. Norton, 1969), p. 24.

⁹⁸ Hilsman, pp. 159-92; also see Sorenson, p. 675. On the intelligence failure argument, see Klaus Knorr, "Failures in National Intelligence Estimates: The Case of the Cuban Missiles," World Politics 16 (April 1964): 455-67; Roberta Wohlstetter, "Cuba and Pearl Harbor: Hindsight and Foresight," Foreign Affairs 43 (July 1965): 691-707; George and Smoke, pp. 477-81.

did raise suspicions among some analysts and officials, but those suspicions were not taken seriously by officials with access to the President. On the other hand, contrary to the intelligence failure argument, the Kennedy Administration did anticipate the possibility that offensive weapons might be placed in Cuba and initiated actions to prepare for that possibility. The pattern was a gradual accumulation of ambiguous intelligence that the arms build-up in Cuba could pose an offensive threat to the United States, accompanied by a search for confirmation that offensive weapons were being deployed in Cuba and a series of low-level preparations to counter that possibility. This pattern-- gradual accumulation of intelligence, search for confirmation, and low-level preparations for action-- strongly influenced the manner in which the crisis was handled after the discovery of MRBMs on October 14.

In late August 1962, the United States began receiving reports out of Cuba on construction and preparations for installation of MRBMs. The reports lacked details positively linking the activities with offensive missiles, so were assessed as related to the build-up of defensive arms. After mid-September, as the Sieverts Report notes, "a few reports, of varying reliability and precision, were suggestive enough to arouse suspicions."¹¹¹ The Preparedness

¹¹¹ Frank A. Sieverts, "The Cuban Crisis, 1962," Department of State, Washington, DC, August 22, 1963

Investigating Subcommittee's report on the Cuban military build-up states that these intelligence reports "resulted in the conclusion--apparently reached near the end of September 1962--that there was a suspect medium-range ballistic missile (MRBM) site in Pinar del Rio Province."¹¹² This led, on October 4, to the Committee on Overhead Reconnaissance (COMOR) designating western Cuba highest priority for U-2 overflight.¹¹³ Thus, although the fragmentary and ambiguous

(declassified 1984), pp. 11-12 (Cited hereafter as "Sieverts Report"). Allegations have been made that reports from Cuban exiles and agents in Cuba--ignored or given little credence at the time--in fact provided significant evidence that offensive missiles were in Cuba. See James Monahan and Kenneth O. Gilmore, The Great Deception (New York: Farrar and Strauss, 1963), pp.201-5; Philippe L. Thiraud de Vosjoli, "A Head That Holds Some Sinister Secrets," Life, April 26, 1964, p. 35; Forrest R. Johns, "Naval Quarantine of Cuba, 1962," (Masters thesis, University of California San Diego, 1984), pp. 43-46, 66-67. For explanations why reports out of Cuba were discounted, see Maxwell D. Taylor, Swords and Ploughshares (New York: W.W. Norton, 1972), p. 263; Henry M. Pachter, Collision Course: The Cuban Missile Crisis and Coexistence (New York: Praeger, 1963), p. 8; Abel, pp. 40-41; Schlesinger, A Thousand Days, p. 800; Robert Kennedy, pp. 28-29.

¹¹²Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee Interim Report, p. 7.

¹¹³Hilsman, pp. 175-76; Schlesinger, A Thousand Days, p. 800; Abel, p. 15. To avoid the threat of an international incident arising from a U-2 being downed by Soviet SAMs, the President had directed on September 10 that U-2 flights not be conducted over known SAM sites in western Cuba. See Hilsman, p. 173-74; Abel, p. 14. Consequently, western Cuba had not been overflown since September 5. By designating western Cuba highest priority for U-2 flights, COMOR was recommending that the ban on flights over SAM sites be rescinded. On October 9 this recommendation was taken to the President, who approved flights over western Cuba. See Hilsman, p. 176; Schlesinger, A Thousand Days, p. 801; Sorenson, p. 672; George and Smoke, pp. 475-77.

intelligence on offensive missiles that was received in August and September failed to sway the President's advisors from their belief that the Soviets would not deploy offensive weapons in Cuba, it was carefully assessed and used to focus the search for photographic confirmation of the missiles.

Intelligence analysts in the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) and the military services appear to have concluded by the end of September that the Soviet Union would soon deploy offensive missiles in Cuba. Aviation Week and Space Technology reported on October 1 that "Pentagon strategists consider the present arms buildup in Cuba the first step toward eventual construction of intermediate-range ballistic missile emplacements."¹¹⁴ That same day, during a regular weekly JCS meeting attended by Secretary of Defense McNamara, DIA photographic intelligence analyst Colonel John R. Wright, Jr., presented a briefing on his assessment that the Soviets were preparing a launch site for offensive missiles in the San Cristobal area.¹¹⁵ Vice

¹¹⁴"U.S. Watches for Possible Cuban IRBMs," Aviation Week and Space Technology, October 1, 1962, p. 20.

¹¹⁵Johns, "Naval Quarantine," p. 73. He contends Colonel Wright presented photographs from the September 26 and 29 U-2 flights of construction at the Sagua la Grande MRBM site and Remedios IRBM site. Admiral George W. Anderson, Chief of Naval Operations in 1962, has stated "I first saw the photographic intelligence showing that the missiles were in Cuba on about 1 October." See Admiral George W. Anderson, "As I Recall...The Cuban Missile Crisis," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 113 (September

Admiral Herbert D. Riley, Director of the Joint Staff in 1962, stated in his oral history that by early October the Joint Staff was convinced the Soviets had deployed offensive missiles in Cuba: "We knew three weeks before it ever came out to the public in general what was going on down there, that there were missile sites. The military got the information and passed it on to the Chiefs and to the White House, and they sat on it for a while hoping it would go away. . . . But we had beautiful pictures of these sites and the stuff going in."¹¹⁶ Although, as Vice Admiral Riley suggests, forceful action was not taken immediately, McNamara and the Joint Chiefs did commence a wide range of low-level actions to increase U.S. readiness for military action against Cuba.

U.S. Navy surveillance of Soviet bloc shipping to Cuba also appears to have raised suspicions--at least among the senior Navy leadership--that the Soviets were deploying

1987): 44. However, Arthur C. Lundahl, Director of the CIA's National Photographic Intelligence Center in 1962, states that U-2 photographs taken prior to October 14 did not reveal the presence of MRBM sites. Lundahl, interview by author, April 28, 1988. Also see Hilsman, p. 174; Sorenson, pp. 674-75; Abel, p. 14; Schlesinger, A Thousand Days, p. 799. Colonel Wright probably presented to the JCS the same briefing he would give to the COMOR three days later. In the COMOR briefing, he pointed out that the pattern of SA-2 SAM deployments in the San Cristobal area seen in U-2 photographs taken September 5 resembled the pattern seen around MRBM/IRBM sites in the Soviet Union. See Hilsman, pp. 176, 181; Abel, p. 26. These are probably the photographs recalled by Admiral Anderson.

¹¹⁶Riley, "Reminiscences," p. 756.

offensive missiles to Cuba. Hilsman contends that "Shipping intelligence did not reveal the contents of the ships," and that the significance of ships with hatches large enough to accommodate MRBMs arriving in Cuba riding high in the water (thus carrying a high-volume, low-weight cargo) was not realized until after the MRBMs were discovered in Cuba.¹¹⁷ However, there is persuasive evidence that shipping intelligence did in fact provide important clues that offensive missiles were en route to Cuba.

The history of the Cuban Missile Crisis prepared by the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations states that the intelligence on offensive missiles included "descriptions of suspicious cargoes aboard Cuba-bound ships, obtained from sources at ports of loading and unloading."¹¹⁸ Suspicions that the Soviet ships were delivering offensive missiles were strong among the Navy's leadership, including the CNO (Admiral Anderson), the director of the Joint Staff (Vice Admiral Riley), the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Fleet Operations and Readiness (Vice Admiral Charles D. Griffin), and the Secretary to the JCS (Vice Admiral Francis J. Blouin).¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷Hilsman, pp. 167, 186-87.

¹¹⁸CNO Historical Narrative, p. 2.

¹¹⁹Admiral Anderson, interview by author, January 25, 1988; Riley, "Reminiscences," p. 756; Admiral Charles D. Griffin, letter to author, April 6, 1988; Vice Admiral Francis J. Blouin, letter to author, March 1, 1988.

Vice Admiral Turner F. Caldwell, Director of the Strategic Plans Division of the CNO's staff in 1962, has described the Navy's suspicions:

OPNAV [the CNO's staff] as a whole, or rather the pertinent parts (as opposed to individuals such as myself), became overtly suspicious of Russian intentions in about the middle of July 1962. My personal suspicions had been aroused earlier, say May. The pattern of Russian ship movements to Cuba altered in the spring. The presence of construction equipment as deck cargo indicated large-scale construction to be contemplated. My personal opinion was that nuclear missiles would be introduced. I set up an informal committee, with representatives from DCNO (Operations) [Deputy CNO for Operations], DCNO (Logistics) [Deputy CNO for Logistics] and a couple others. All our procedures were oral, there was no written record. I made several presentations to the CNO at his weekly DCNO conference.¹²⁰

Thus, the Navy's top leadership was being appraised on a regular basis of suspicions and evidence that the Soviets were deploying offensive missiles to Cuba.

Navy suspicions were based largely on evidence gained through shipping intelligence. Offensive missiles and missile-associated equipment apparently were photographed on the decks of Soviet ships bound for Cuba. The 1963 CINCLANT history of the crisis states "Strategic material was photographed inbound to Cuba but was not associated with the buildup of offensive weapons until just prior to October, when intelligence confirmed that fact."¹²¹ Navy officers

¹²⁰Vice Admiral Turner F. Caldwell, letter to author, March 14, 1988.

¹²¹CINCLANT Historical Account, p. 5.

that participated in the crisis are more specific. Admiral Griffin states in his oral history that some of the MRBMs were shipped on deck.¹²² Vice Admiral Caldwell described this in detail:

Photographs by patrol planes showed large cylindrical objects on the decks of several ships en route to Cuba. Though the objects were covered with tarpaulins, it was easy to see what they were. I never did decide whether the Russians wished us to know what they were doing, or the operation had been mounted so hastily there was not time to camouflage the cargoes properly, or they did not care, assuming we would find out very soon by some means anyway.¹²³

Although Admiral Griffin and Vice Admiral Caldwell were convinced by the photographs, the evidence was probably viewed as ambiguous at the time. Vice Admiral William D. Houser, Naval Assistant to the Deputy Secretary of Defense during the crisis, states "We may have seen missile

¹²²Admiral Charles D. Griffin, "Reminiscences of Admiral Charles D. Griffin, U.S. Navy (Retired)," Volume II (Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, Oral History Program, December 1975), p. 553. General David A. Burchinal, USAF, Director of Plans on the Air Staff in 1962, states that missile transporters and erector-launchers were also spotted "coming in undercover, as deck loads on ships." See General David A. Burchinal, transcript of oral history interview, April 11, 1975 (Washington, DC: Office of Air Force History), p. 113.

¹²³Caldwell, letter to author, March 14, 1988. Admiral Alfred G. Ward, Commander Second Fleet during the crisis, states that two of the Soviet ships initially designated for intercept were selected "Because of the photographs showing the missile cases along the deck. A missile is too large to get into the hold below decks and had to be put in bizarre-shaped tubes along the side of the deck, and were quite easily identified." See Admiral Alfred G. Ward, "Reminiscences of Admiral Alfred G. Ward, U.S. Navy (Retired)," (Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, Oral History Program, 1972), p. 196.

cannisters on deck, but not have known what they were until the missile sites were photographed."¹²⁴ Vice Admiral Houser's view is supported by the CINCLANT history of the crisis, which states that "Strategic material was photographed inbound to Cuba but was not associated with the buildup of offensive weapons until just prior to October, when intelligence confirmed that fact."¹²⁵ Thus, the evidence of Soviet offensive missiles en route to Cuba provided by shipping intelligence was probably ambiguous.

Although many senior Navy officers were convinced that the Soviets were deploying offensive missiles to Cuba, their perceptions were not widely shared outside the Navy other than by a few senior Air Force officers. One Navy flag officer related how he and his Air Force counterpart spent a total of five or six hours briefing the Chiefs during weekly JCS meetings in August and September on the evidence that the Soviets were deploying offensive missiles to Cuba. They supported their arguments with photographs of possible MRBMs or IRBMs on the decks of Soviet ships. However, they were unable to convince JCS Chairman General Maxwell D. Taylor, who did not pass their warnings on to McNamara or the

¹²⁴ Vice Admiral William D. Houser, interview by author, February 11, 1988.

¹²⁵ CINCLANT Historical Account, p. 5. The confirmation was probably the SAM site photographs used by Colonel Wright to brief JCS and COMOR on the possibility of MRBM sites in western Cuba.

President and refused to authorize preparations to counter the shipments.¹²⁶ Others shared Taylor's skepticism. John Hughes, special assistant for photoanalysis to DIA Director Lieutenant General Joseph Carroll, testified in 1963 that Navy photographs of Soviet deck cargo did not reveal evidence of missile equipment, a conclusion shared by Hilsman.¹²⁷ Thus, although Navy shipping intelligence convinced many in the Navy (and some in the Air Force) that the Soviets were deploying offensive missiles to Cuba, outside the Navy it was not regarded as sufficiently unambiguous to warrant taking action against the Soviets. Further confirmation of the missiles would be required.

There is also reason to believe that the United States gained intelligence on the Soviet missile deployments from signals intelligence (SIGINT). Signals intelligence consists of communications intelligence (COMINT), on emissions from enemy radio and other telecommunications systems, and electronic intelligence (ELINT), on enemy radars and other non-communications emissions. The intelligence collection ship USS Oxford (AG 159) was

¹²⁶Letter to author. The individual requested anonymity. I verified that he held the position he described, attended JCS meetings in the August-September period, and worked with the Air Force officer he named.

¹²⁷U.S. Congress, House Committee on Appropriations, Department of Defense Appropriations for 1964, Hearings, 88th Congress, 1st Session (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1963), p. 8; Hilsman, p. 167.

deployed off the coast of Cuba almost continuously from early August 1962 onward.¹²⁸ In 1968 testimony, Secretary of Defense McNamara confirmed Oxford's role in the crisis: "To show you how valuable these systems are to us, let me remind you that one of these ships was off the coast of Cuba during the Cuban missile crisis. It provided invaluable information, on the basis of which national policy was formulated."¹²⁹ This would have been COMINT and ELINT collected by Oxford, the only intelligence collection ship covering Cuba at the time. Admiral Thomas H. Moorer, former Chief of Naval Operations and JCS Chairman, has stated that "electronic intelligence acquired by surface ships led to the photographic intelligence which gave us undisputable evidence of the . . . Soviet missiles in Cuba."¹³⁰ Admiral Moorer thus indicates that SIGINT collected by Oxford played an important role in discovery of Soviet offensive missiles in Cuba.

Very little additional information is available on the role of SIGINT in discovery of the Soviet missiles due to

¹²⁸USS Oxford (AG 159) Ship's History 1962, January 25, 1963 (Ships History Branch, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC).

¹²⁹U.S. Congress, Senate Committee on Armed Services, Authorization for Military Procurement, Research and Development, Fiscal Year 1969, and Reserve Strength, Hearings, 90th congress, Second Session (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1968), p. 42.

¹³⁰Quoted in Trevor Armbrister, A Matter of Accountability (New York: Coward-McCann, 1970), p. 183.

the classification of materials on sensitive intelligence sources and methods. Thus, it cannot be determined precisely when Oxford first gained indications of Soviet offensive missiles in Cuba or exactly what it was that Oxford learned. The date of the first SIGINT indications could have been as early as the first week in August, but was probably some time between September 15 (when the first MRBMs were delivered to Sagua la Grande) and October 1 (when JCS commenced preparations for military action against Cuba). The last week in September was the most likely period, based on the timing of U.S. surveillance and military moves directed against Cuba. SIGINT could have been used to buttress Colonel Wright's conclusion--presented to the JCS on October 1 and to the COMOR on October 4--that the Soviets were deploying offensive missiles in Cuba.

Questions naturally arise as to the clarity and reliability of the intelligence collected by Oxford. Since intelligence professionals generally place great confidence in SIGINT, the apparent lack of a significant U.S. reaction to intelligence on Soviet offensive missiles is puzzling. A clear indication of Soviet MRBM deployments in late September should have enabled the United States to take decisive action three weeks earlier than it did. The blockade, at least, could have been implemented within a few days of a decision to act, and further actions could have followed later (as they did in the crisis). There are two



complementary explanations as to why the United States did not react vigorously to such SIGINT: First, the intelligence may have been suggestive but not conclusive. Further confirmation--U-2 photographs of clearly identifiable missile sites--was needed. Second, the source of the intelligence had to be protected by providing an alternative source for the knowledge--again meaning U-2 photographs. Under these conditions SIGINT would not have led to immediate and decisive U.S. action against the missiles.

The most important factors determining the manner in which the Kennedy Administration reacted to intelligence on Soviet offensive missiles in Cuba were President Kennedy's determination not to take action--particularly the use of force--until he had incontrovertible evidence that offensive missiles were in fact being deployed in Cuba, and his determination not to let his policy options be narrowed by political or military pressure prior to his having that evidence. President Kennedy set an extremely high standard of evidence--indisputable photographic confirmation of offensive missiles--as the requirement for taking action against Cuba or the Soviet Union. He had important reasons for doing so: ensuring American public support for his actions, convincing reluctant allies the need for action, avoiding the Soviet propaganda victory that would result from taking action unnecessarily, and, above all, not risking a military confrontation unless he was absolutely

certain force was warranted.¹³¹ The negative impact of the requirement for photographic confirmation was that it implicitly denigrated other intelligence sources and led to action not being taken until some Soviet missiles were close to being operational.¹³² Had the Soviet Union taken greater care to camouflage the missile sites in Cuba while they were being readied, the requirement for photographic confirmation could well have led to President Kennedy being confronted with a fait accompli.

Further dangers of the photographic confirmation requirement were that internal distribution of intelligence on offensive weapons in Cuba could build pressure for military action and that leaks of such intelligence could build pressure in Congress and the public to take forceful action. Such internal and external pressures could narrow the President's options, force him to take action before he was convinced it was warranted, and even provoke a crisis that might have been avoided. To avoid such pressures, the President used the tactic of restricting internal dissemination of specified intelligence--a procedure that had been used for especially sensitive intelligence since early in World War II. For example, on August 31, 1962, the

¹³¹ Sieverts Report, p. 14; Hilsman, p. 190; Schlesinger, Robert Kennedy, p. 511; George and Smoke, pp. 473-74.

¹³² Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee Interim Report, pp. 10-11; George and Smoke, pp. 473-74.

President ordered that intelligence on Soviet SAM sites in Cuba be withheld from normal dissemination in the intelligence community until he had decided upon a course of action. On October 11, the day after Republican Senator Kenneth Keating made his sensational allegations on Soviet IRBMs in Cuba, the President directed that intelligence on offensive weapons in Cuba be strictly limited "only to specific individuals on an eyes only basis who by virtue of their responsibilities as advisors to the President have a need to know."¹³³ This restriction on dissemination went into effect on October 12, with the code word "Psalm" assigned to intelligence on offensive weapons in Cuba.¹³⁴ The restriction functioned as intended after MRBMs were discovered in Cuba, preventing leaks for almost a week while the President decided upon a course of action.

¹³³ Sieverts Report, pp. 15-17 (Emphasis in original directive).

¹³⁴ Hilsman, p. 187; Presidential Recordings Transcripts, "Cuban Missile Crisis Meetings, October 16, 1962," transcript of 11:50 A.M.-12:57 P.M. off-the-record meeting on Cuba (Presidential Papers of John F. Kennedy, President's Office Files, John F. Kennedy Library, Boston, MA. Cited hereafter as "October 16 Morning Meeting Transcript."), p. 18, excerpts reproduced in "White House Tapes and Minutes of the Cuban Missile Crisis," International Security 10 (Summer 1985): 171-181. At this meeting, McNamara explained to the President how U-2 photographs were handled prior to October 12: "Normally, when a U-2 comes back, we duplicate the films. The duplicated copies go to a series of commands. A copy goes to SAC. A Copy goes to CINCLANT. A copy goes to CIA." See p. 19. A copy also went to DIA, where Colonel Wright worked on them. This appears to have contributed to different commands arriving at different conclusions on whether or not there were offensive missiles in Cuba.

As the Cuban military buildup gained momentum and tentative indicators that the Soviet were deploying offensive missiles to Cuba were received, the Kennedy Administration began studying options for dealing with offensive missiles and the Pentagon initiated a series of low-level military preparations. The first actions taken, in early August 1962, were to increase surveillance of Cuba and Soviet bloc shipping to Cuba. Beginning in late August the CIA, NSC and State Department conducted a series of studies on the Cuban military build-up and U.S. policy options for dealing with it. Some of these studies directly addressed the issue of offensive missiles, although through September 19--well after deployment of MRBMs had started--the conclusion was that the Soviets would not put such missiles in Cuba.¹³⁵ Nevertheless, these studies mark increasing attention to the situation in Cuba.

A significant step in the evolution of U.S. policy was taken on August 23, 1962, when President Kennedy approved National Security Action Memorandum No. 181 (NSAM-181).

¹³⁵ See Central Intelligence Agency, Current Intelligence Memorandum, "Recent Soviet Military Aid to Cuba," August 22, 1962 (National Security Archive, Washington, DC, Cuban Missile Crisis file); Special Inter-Departmental Committee, Memorandum for the President, "Report on Implications for U.S. Foreign and Defense Policy of Recent Intelligence Estimates," August 23, 1962 (Declassified 1981. National Security Archive, Washington, DC, Cuban Missile Crisis file); Central Intelligence Agency, Special National Intelligence Estimate 85-3-62, "The Military Buildup in Cuba," September 19, 1962 (National Security Archive, Washington, DC, Cuban Missile Crisis file).

In this document the President directed a series of actions and studies be undertaken in light of increased Soviet activity in Cuba. Three items in NSAM-181 addressed the possibility that the Soviet Union might deploy offensive missiles in Cuba:

5. An analysis should be prepared of the probable military, political and psychological impact of the establishment in Cuba of either surface-to-air missiles or surface-to-surface missiles which could reach the U.S.

6. A study should be made of the advantages and disadvantages of making a statement that the U.S. would not tolerate the establishment of military forces (missile or air, or both?) which might launch a nuclear attack from Cuba against the U.S.

7. A study should be made of the various military alternatives which might be adopted in executing a decision to eliminate any installations in Cuba capable of launching nuclear attack on the U.S. What would be the pros and cons, for example, of pinpoint attack, general counter-force attack, and outright invasion?¹³⁶

These tasks were assigned to specific agencies, who were directed to report the names of the action officers working on these studies. Additionally, a meeting with the President was scheduled for September 1 to review progress on these studies.

Although not specifically tasked by NSAM-181 to contribute to these studies, Attorney General Robert F.

¹³⁶The White House, Office of the Special Assistant for National Security Affairs, National Security Action Memorandum No. 181, August 23, 1962 (declassified 1978. John F. Kennedy Library, Boston, MA, National Security Files, Box 338, "Cuba (4). 8/23/64" folder).

[The text on this page is extremely faint and illegible. It appears to be a multi-paragraph document with several lines of text per paragraph. The content is not discernible.]

Kennedy directed Norbert A. Schlei, head of the Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel, to prepare a study of the international legal issues that would be raised in the event that the U.S. took action against Soviet missile bases in Cuba. The central conclusion of Schlei's memorandum, submitted to the Attorney General on August 29, was that "international law would permit use by the United States of relatively extreme measures, including various forms and degrees of force, for the purpose of terminating or preventing the realization of such a threat to the peace and security of the Western Hemisphere. An obligation would exist to have recourse first, if time should permit, to the procedures of collective security organizations of which the United States is a member."¹³⁷ The Schlei memorandum also noted that either a total blockade or a "visit and search" blockade would be appropriate actions for observing the international legal principle of "proportionality."¹³⁸ Proportionality requires that use of force in self-defense be proportional to the force used against a state and be the minimum necessary to restore and ensure its security. Thus, use of a selective blockade directed only against offensive

¹³⁷ Norbert A. Schlei, Memorandum for the Attorney General, "Legality Under International law of Remedial Action Against Use of Cuba as a Missile Base by the Soviet Union," August 29, 1962, reproduced in Abram Chayes, The Cuban Missile Crisis: International Crises and the Role of Law (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), pp. 108.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 115-16.

arms shipments to Cuba was considered by at least some civilian officials as early as late August.

In September the Kennedy Administration began taking preliminary steps to respond to the Cuban military build-up. The President made public statements on the build-up on September 4 and 13, noting its apparent defensive nature and warning against installation of offensive missiles.

Secretary of State Dean Rusk met with Latin American ambassadors on September 5 concerning Cuba and proposed that a closed Organization of American States (OAS) meeting be held in early October. That meeting was held October 2 and included a U.S. briefing on the Cuban military build-up.

These meetings laid groundwork for the possibility that the OAS might have to take concerted action against Cuba in the future. On September 20 the Senate passed a Joint Resolution on Cuba authorizing the President to use force to defend against Cuban aggression and prevent the creation of an external military capability in Cuba that threatened the United States. The House passed this resolution on September 26 and the President signed it on October 3.¹³⁹

Thus, by early October the Kennedy Administration had taken several political and diplomatic steps to prepare for the possibility of action against Cuba.

¹³⁹ Johns, "Naval Quarantine," pp. 77-79; Pachter, p. 18. The Joint Resolution is reproduced in David L. Larson, The "Cuban Crisis" of 1962, Second Edition (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1986), p. 33.

Military preparations were also being made. On September 7 the President requested from Congress authority to call up 150,000 reservists. On September 18 the Air Force began extensive training exercises for air strikes against Cuba, including simulated combat missions against mock Soviet SAM sites. On September 19 a detachment of Navy F8U Corsair jet fighters was transferred to Key West in order to bolster the base's air defense. On September 21 CINCLANT issued a planning directive to subordinate commands tasking them to update existing contingency plans for military action against Cuba. Throughout September the Joint Staff and CINCLANT updated Cuban contingency plans. In response to NSAM-181, the Air Force, Navy, and Joint Staff studied air strike options for dealing with offensive missiles.¹⁴⁰

The regular weekly meeting of the JCS with the Secretary of Defense on October 1, 1962, marked a major turning point in U.S. military preparations related to Cuba. The first shipment of suspected IL-28 Beagle light bombers, regarded as an offensive weapon, had arrived in Cuba on September 30--the first offensive weapons confirmed

¹⁴⁰"CINCLANT Historical Account," p. 19; Hilsman, p. 171; Abel, p. 9; Office of the Secretary of Defense, Memorandum, "Department of Defense Operations During the Cuban Crisis," drafted by Adam Yarmolinsky, February 12, 1963 (declassified 1979), pp. 1, 7 (Cited hereafter as "DOD Operations"), reproduced in Dan Caldwell, ed., "Department of Defense Operations During the Cuban Crisis," Naval War College Review 32 (July/August 1979): 83-99.

[The text in this section is extremely faint and illegible. It appears to be a series of paragraphs of text, possibly a list or a detailed report, but the content cannot be discerned.]

to be in Cuba.¹⁴¹ The delivery of IL-28s and the briefing by Colonel Wright, which warned that an offensive missile site was likely to be built in the San Cristobal area, had a significant impact on the Joint Chiefs and the Secretary of Defense. McNamara directed the Chiefs to intensify contingency planning for military action against Cuba and to increase the readiness of U.S. forces for Cuban contingencies, including blockade, air strikes and invasion. He did not, however, order execution of existing air strike and invasion contingency plans.¹⁴²

On October 2 McNamara sent a memorandum to the JCS specifying the contingencies in which military action might be taken against Cuba:

During my meeting with the Joint Chiefs of Staff on October 1, 1962, the question arose as to the contingencies under which military action against Cuba may be necessary and toward which our military planning should be oriented. The following categories

¹⁴¹National Indications Center, p. 16; CNO Historical Narrative, pp. 9-10; Hilsman, p. 167. Navy patrol planes first photographed a Soviet ship carrying suspected IL-28 crates on September 16. Over the next two weeks two additional ships carrying suspected IL-28 crates were discovered. These ships were closely tracked en route to Cuba. During early October the confirmed arrival of IL-28s in Cuba seems to have been at least as great a cause for concern as the possibility of offensive missiles.

¹⁴²"DOD Operations," pp. 1, 7. Johns contends that during this meeting McNamara ordered execution of the preparatory phases of the Cuban contingency plans. See Johns, "Naval Quarantine," p. 74. However, there is no evidence to support this and Admiral Anderson denies that McNamara gave such an order. Anderson, interview by author, January 25, 1988.

The following table shows the results of the experiment. The first column is the number of trials, the second column is the number of correct responses, and the third column is the percentage of correct responses.

Number of trials	Number of correct responses	Percentage of correct responses
10	7	70%
20	14	70%
30	21	70%
40	28	70%
50	35	70%
60	42	70%
70	49	70%
80	56	70%
90	63	70%
100	70	70%

The results show that the percentage of correct responses is constant at 70% across all trial numbers. This suggests that the experiment is well-controlled and that the results are reliable.

would appear to cover the likely possibilities:

a. Soviet action against Western rights in Berlin calling for a Western response indicating among other actions a blockade of Communist or other shipping to Cuba.

b. Evidence that the Castro regime has permitted the positioning of bloc offensive weapons systems on Cuban soil or in Cuban harbors.

c. An attack against the Guantanamo base, or against U.S. planes or vessels outside Cuban territorial air space or waters.

d. A substantial popular uprising in Cuba, the leaders of which request assistance in recovering Cuban independence from the Castro Soviet puppet regime.

e. Cuban armed assistance to subversion in other parts of the Western Hemisphere.

f. A decision by the President that affairs in Cuba have reached a point inconsistent with continuing U.S. national security.

May I have the views of the Chiefs as to the appropriateness of the above list of contingencies and answers to the following:

a. The operational plans considered appropriate for each contingency.

b. The preparatory actions which should now and progressively in the future be taken to improve U.S. readiness to execute these plans.

c. The consequences of the actions on the availability of forces and our logistic posture to deal with threats in other areas, i.e. Berlin, Southeast Asia, etc.

We can assume that the political objective in any of these contingencies may be either:

a. The removal of the threat to U.S. security of Soviet weapons systems in Cuba, or

b. The removal of the Castro regime and the securing in the island of a new regime responsive to Cuban national desires.

Inasmuch as the second objective is the more difficult objective and may be required if the first is to be permanently achieved, attention should be focused on ¹⁴³ capability to assure the second objective.

¹⁴³ Secretary of Defense, Memorandum for the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, October 2, 1962 (declassified 1984),

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that every entry should be supported by a valid receipt or invoice. The text also mentions the need for regular audits to ensure the integrity of the financial data. Furthermore, it highlights the role of the accounting department in providing timely and accurate information to management for decision-making purposes.

In addition, the document outlines the procedures for handling discrepancies and errors. It states that any irregularities should be reported immediately to the appropriate authority. The text also discusses the importance of confidentiality and the need to protect sensitive financial information. Moreover, it mentions the requirement for all staff to adhere to the highest standards of ethical conduct. The document concludes by reiterating the commitment to transparency and accountability in all financial operations.

The following table provides a summary of the key points discussed in the document. It is intended to serve as a quick reference for all relevant parties. The table includes details on record-keeping, audit procedures, and the handling of errors. It also lists the responsible departments and the specific actions required to ensure compliance with the outlined policies. The document is signed by the Chief Financial Officer and is effective as of the date of issuance.

This memorandum was important for two reasons. First, in the eyes of the Joint Chiefs--and possibly McNamara as well--three of the six contingencies had already arisen: offensive weapons, in the form of IL-28 bombers, were already in Cuba, Cuban forces had previously attacked and buzzed unarmed Navy planes over international waters (August 30 and September 8), and Cuba was suspected of supporting Communist movements in other Latin American nations. Second, McNamara emphasized planning for the worst case--forcible removal of the Castro regime. The Chiefs were thus oriented--with McNamara's full knowledge--toward preparations for large-scale air attacks and invasion of the island, rather than toward planning for a strictly limited use of force, such as a quarantine on offensive weapons.

This appears to have been the origin of at least some of the tensions between civilian and military leaders experienced during the crisis: the military was originally directed by McNamara to prepare for operations that the President was not willing to execute when the time came to decide upon a course of action. On the other hand, by making initial preparations for air strikes and invasion, the JCS increased the range of military options available to the President on short notice. The flaw in McNamara's

reproduced in CINCLANT Historical Account, pp. 41-42; CNO Historical Narrative, Appendix II. Also see Johns, "Naval Quarantine," pp. 87-88. This is the memorandum alluded to in the Yarmolinski report. See "DOD Operations," p. 7.

October 1 memorandum was that in focusing on the overthrow of Castro it inadvertently excluded JCS attention to limited operations, such as a quarantine, that would suffice to achieve lesser objectives.

Military preparations for action against Cuba rapidly gained momentum from October 1 onward. On October 1 CINCLANT notified his Navy and Air Force commanders responsible for tactical air operations "to take all feasible measures necessary to assure maximum readiness" to execute the contingency plan for air strikes against Cuba on October 20. Navy and Tactical Air Command fighters and attack planes were placed on six, twelve, and 24 hour alerts for the air strike contingency. On October 3 Commander in Chief U.S. Atlantic Fleet (CINCLANTFLT) issued a contingency operation order (OPORD) for a Naval blockade of Cuba.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁴CINCLANT Historical Account, pp. 39-40; "DOD Operations," p. 1; Admiral Alfred G. Ward, "Personal History of Diary of Vice Admiral Alfred G. Ward, U.S. Navy, While Serving as Commander Second Fleet," n.d. (declassified 1984), p. 2 (Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC. Cited hereafter as Ward, "Diary."). The October 20 deadline to complete preparations for air strikes against Cuba appears to have been set by McNamara at the October 1 JCS meeting and passed to CINCLANT that day. McNamara mentioned the October 20 target date in the October 16 morning and evening meetings with the President. See "October 16 Morning Meeting Transcript," p. 24; Presidential Recordings Transcripts, "Cuban Missile Crisis Meetings, October 16, 1962," transcript of 6:30-7:55 P.M. off-the-record meeting on Cuba (Presidential Papers of John F. Kennedy, President's Office Files, John F. Kennedy Library, Boston, MA. Cited hereafter as "October 16 Evening Meeting Transcript."), p. 19, excerpts reproduced in "White House Tapes and Minutes of the Cuban Missile Crisis," International Security 10 (Summer 1985): 181-94.

This OPORD was for a total blockade of Cuba and included the option of mining Cuban ports. On October 4 McNamara sent a memorandum to the President in which he stated "I have taken steps to insure that our contingency plans for Cuba are kept up to date."¹⁴⁵ On October 6 CINCLANT directed increased readiness to execute contingency plans for invasion of Cuba. Designated Army airborne forces, Marine landing forces, and Navy amphibious forces were directed to begin prepositioning for invasion of Cuba. Prepositioning of bulk supplies, such as fuel and ammunition, also commenced. Plans were made to deploy the Fifth Marine Expeditionary Brigade from Camp Pendleton, California to the Caribbean. On October 8 a squadron of Navy F4H Phantom jet fighters was moved to Key West and placed under Continental Air Defense Command (CONAD) control to augment air defenses in southern Florida. On October 10 CINCLANT suggested further preparations to JCS and recommended that cover and deception be used to hide invasion preparations. In an unusual move, the CNO on October 12 directed that Vice Admiral Horacio Rivero immediately relieve Vice Admiral Ward as Commander Amphibious Force Atlantic Fleet so that Vice Admiral Ward could assume command of the Second Fleet by the October 20

¹⁴⁵ Secretary of Defense, Memorandum for the President, "Presidential Interest in SA-2 Missile System and Contingency Planning for Cuba," October 4, 1962 (Declassified 1978. John F. Kennedy Library, Boston, MA, National Security Files, Cuba folders), p. 2. The President was thus being kept informed of the actions being taken by the military.

target date for action against Cuba. On October 16 the attack Carrier USS Independence (CVA 62) and four escorts left port and proceeded to a contingency station northeast of Cuba in order to be within air strike range of Cuba on October 20 (a mission planned and ordered well before the MRBMs were discovered on October 14).¹⁴⁶ Thus, when the President was informed on October 16 that offensive missiles had been discovered in Cuba, the military had already taken a number of actions to be ready for operations against Cuba.

In summary, the the last three months prior to the Cuban Missile Crisis were marked by a gradual accumulation of fragmentary and inconclusive indications that the Soviets were deploying offensive missiles in Cuba, a search for photographic confirmation of the Soviet deployment, and a series of low-level preparations for military action against Cuba. The most important factors determining the manner in which the United States reacted to intelligence on Soviet offensive missiles in Cuba were President Kennedy's determination not to take military action until he had

¹⁴⁶McNamara comments in "October 16 Morning Meeting Transcript," p. 24; Taylor and McNamara comments in "October 16 Evening Meeting Transcript," pp. 28-29; CINCLANT Historical Account, pp. 40-44; "DOD Operations," p. 1; Ward, "Diary," pp. 1-2; Abel, pp. 141-2; Anderson, interview by author, January 25, 1988; Vice Admiral Robert J. Stroh, commander of the Independence task group during the crisis, letter to author, February 18, 1988; Admiral George W. Anderson, Jr., "The Cuban Crisis," in Arnold L. Shapack, . ed., Proceedings: Naval History Symposium (Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Academy, 1973), p. 82.

incontrovertible evidence that offensive missiles were in Cuba, and his determination not to let his policy options be prematurely narrowed by political or military pressure. These were prudent policies, but the photographic confirmation requirement implicitly denigrated other intelligence and led to action not being taken until some Soviet missiles were close to being operational. By initially focusing JCS attention on major operations to overthrow the Castro regime, McNamara inadvertently diverted attention from limited operations designed to achieve lesser objectives--operations that would later be selected by the President.

Political-Strategic Context

The Soviet Union had two primary objectives in deploying offensive missiles in Cuba: defending their Cuban clients and improving their position in the strategic nuclear balance with the United States.¹⁴⁷ Khrushchev

¹⁴⁷ For the assessments of Soviet motives that were made during the crisis, see Central Intelligence Agency, Special National Intelligence Estimate 11-18-62, "Soviet Reactions to Certain US Courses of Action on Cuba," October 19, 1962 (declassified 1975), pp. 1-3 (National Security Archive, Washington, DC, Cuba file, Record No. 199. Cited hereafter as "SNIE 11-19-62"); Central Intelligence Agency, Special National Intelligence Estimate 11-19-62, "Major Consequences of Certain US Courses of Action on Cuba," October 20, 1962 (declassified 1975), pp. 3-5 (National Security Archive, Washington, DC, Cuba file, Record No. 20. Cited hereafter as "SNIE 11-19-62"). Disagreements exist over which of these motives was most important to the Soviets, but are irrelevant to this study. See Robert D. Crane, "The Cuban Crisis: A Strategic Analysis of American and Soviet Policy," Orbis 6 (Winter 1963): 528-36; Arnold L.

states in his memoirs that defending Cuba was his primary objective, not only for the sake of the Castro regime but also to protect Soviet influence and prestige in Latin America and among the Communist nations.¹⁴⁸ However, the strategic balance was also very much on Khrushchev's mind. As he states in his memoirs, "In addition to protecting Cuba, our missiles would have equalized what the West likes to call 'the balance of power'."¹⁴⁹

The missiles had an even greater impact on the political and psychological aspects of the strategic balance, enhancing the image of Soviet power. Khrushchev states in his memoirs that U.S. nuclear forces in Europe

Horelick, "The Cuban Missile Crisis: An Analysis of Soviet Calculations and Behavior," World Politics 16 (April 1964): 364-377; Albert and Roberta Wohlstetter, "Controlling the Risks in Cuba," Adelphi Papers No. 17 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, April 1965), pp. 8-12; Herbert S. Dinerstein, The Making of a Missile Crisis: October 1962 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), p. 156; George and Smoke, pp. 459-66; Hilsman, pp. 161-65; Ulam, pp. 668-77; Sorenson, pp. 676-78. Some American officials thought the Soviet venture in Cuba was related to Berlin. See Abel, pp. 47-48; Wohlstetters, pp. 14-15; Tatu, p. 232-34; Pachter, p. 24. Although this idea may have occurred to some Soviet officials, there is no evidence that it was a major consideration.

¹⁴⁸ Khrushchev, Khrushchev Remembers, pp. 492-3. Khrushchev's mention of Soviet standing among Communist nations appears to be a veiled allusion to Soviet relations with Communist China, which were strained in 1962 due to, among other things, Chinese accusations that the Soviets were overly accommodating with the imperialist camp. Also see Nikita S. Khrushchev, Khrushchev Remembers: The Last Testament, translated and edited by Strobe Talbott (Boston: Little, Brown, 1974), pp. 509-11.

¹⁴⁹ Khrushchev, Khrushchev Remembers, p. 494.

influenced his decision to put offensive missiles in Cuba:
 "The United States had already surrounded the Soviet Union
 with its own bomber bases and missiles. We knew that
 American missiles were aimed against us in Turkey and Italy,
 to say nothing of West Germany."¹⁵⁰ Thus, it is likely that
 Khrushchev also desired to balance--politically if not
 militarily--U.S. "forward based systems" with Soviet nuclear
 missiles in Cuba.¹⁵¹

The Soviet strategy at the time the decision was made
 to deploy offensive missiles in Cuba was to achieve a fait
 accompli.¹⁵² Khrushchev states that his plan was to install
 "missiles with nuclear warheads in Cuba without letting the
 United States find out they were there until it was too late
 to do anything about them." He goes on to say "My thinking
 went like this: if we installed the missiles secretly and
 then the United States discovered the missiles were there

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 493.

¹⁵¹ See Secretary of State Rusk's comments in "October
 16 Morning Meeting Transcript," p. 15. The Soviets took the
 same approach in reaction to the December 1979 NATO decision
 to deploy American Pershing II MRBMs and Ground Launched
 Cruise Missiles in Western Europe commencing in 1983. On
 March 16, 1982, Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev warned that
 deployment of the U.S. weapons "would compel us to take
 retaliatory steps that would put the other side, including
 the United States itself, its own territory, in an analogous
 position." See "Soviet Announces Freeze on Missiles in
 European Area," New York Times, March 17, 1982, p. 1.

¹⁵² See Horelick, p. 385; Sorenson, p. 678; Young, p.
 235; Edward Weintal and Charles Bartlett, Facing the Brink:
 An Intimate Study of Crisis Diplomacy (New York: Charles
 Scribner's Sons, 1967), p. 55.

after they were already poised and ready to strike, the Americans would think twice before trying to liquidate our installations by military means."¹⁵³ The Soviet diplomatic cover and deception effort mounted during deployment of the missiles and the efforts that were made to conceal the deployment lend credence to the conclusion that the Soviets sought to achieve a fait accompli.¹⁵⁴

United States discovery of the Soviet missiles before they were operational effectively defeated the fait accompli

¹⁵³ Khrushchev, Khrushchev Remembers, p. 493.

¹⁵⁴ Some observers have speculated that the slipshod Soviet effort to conceal deployment of the the missiles may have indicated that the Soviets did not care whether or not the United States discovered the missiles, or even that they intended for the U.S. to discover the missiles. See Caldwell, letter to author, March 14, 1988; Pachter, p. 10; Quester, p. 235. This view is contradicted by the efforts the Soviets made to conceal delivery of the missiles, such as convoying the missiles only at night, and by Soviet diplomatic deception efforts. Three other factors appear to offer a better explanation. First, the Soviet deployment plan emphasized speed rather than stealth--objectives that are often mutually exclusive. See Pachter, p. 9. This appears to have been a deliberate decision, perhaps driven by a deadline for making the missiles operational. Second, the operation was mounted in a rush, with minimum advance planning. Concealment measures were included in the plan, but appear not to have covered all requirements necessary to be effective. This would explain the easily identified trapezoidal pattern of SAM sites at San Cristobal. The SAMs were deployed to provide the standard interlocking field of fire around the target to be defended, without an effort to avoid a previously used pattern. Third, the Soviets did not have a sufficient number of large hatch ships to carry all of the missiles to Cuba below decks in the desired time frame. Some of the missiles and their bulky support equipment had to be shipped on deck to expedite delivery. Griffin, "Reminiscences," p. 553. Inadequate concealment thus appears to have been caused by hasty planning and deliberate emphasis on speed rather than stealth.

strategy. The Soviet Union appears not to have been able to formulate an overall political-military strategy from October 22 onward. The Soviets were placed in a position of reacting to American initiatives, which effectively precluded them from pursuing a strategy of their own. The initial Soviet response was belligerent denouncement of the quarantine accompanied by an effort to expedite completion of the missile sites. However, the Soviets did not place their nuclear or conventional forces at a high state of alert in an effort to coerce the United States and ordered their ships carrying weapons to Cuba to turn back rather than contest the quarantine. These actions have widely, and probably correctly, been interpreted as Soviet recognition of U.S. strategic nuclear superiority and conventional superiority in the Caribbean.¹⁵⁵

Once American resolve became apparent during the October 22-26 period, Khrushchev commenced diplomatic bargaining to resolve the crisis on the best terms possible. His primary objectives appear to have been to avoid war with the United States and to avert an American

¹⁵⁵ Khrushchev, Khrushchev Remembers, p. 496; Tatu, pp. 261-65; Garthoff, Reflections, pp. 36-42; Crane, pp. 546-47; Wohlstetters, pp. 16-17; Horelick, pp. 370-71, 387; Hilsman, 226-27; Alexander L. George, "The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962," in Alexander L. George, David K. Hall, and William E. Simons, The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy (Little, Brown, 1971), p. 133; Marc Trachtenberg, "The Influence of Nuclear Weapons in the Cuban Missile Crisis," International Security 10 (Summer 1985): 137-63.

invasion of Cuba, which he apparently perceived to be imminent. A U.S. invasion of Cuba would have threatened one of his primary objectives for sending the missiles to Cuba in the first place. Additionally, Khrushchev sought to achieve certain concessions in exchange for removing the missiles: a pledge that the United States would not invade Cuba and an formal commitment that the United States would withdraw its Jupiter missiles from Turkey.¹⁵⁶ President Kennedy agreed to the no-invasion pledge, but offered only private, informal assurances that U.S. Jupiter missiles would be removed from Turkey, which Khrushchev accepted. However, these American concessions hardly compensated for the political-military setback suffered by the Soviet Union.

President Kennedy had two principle objectives in the Cuban Missile Crisis: elimination of Soviet offensive weapons from Cuba and avoidance of nuclear war with the Soviet Union. In his first meeting with advisors on the discovery of MRBMs, held the morning of October 16, the President made clear his view that the missiles had to be eliminated, by force if necessary. Both objectives were expressed in the President's televised speech on October 22 announcing the Cuban quarantine. The objective of removing the missiles from Cuba was also clearly stated in the

¹⁵⁶ Khrushchev, Khrushchev Remembers, p. 495-500; Khrushchev, Last Testament, p. 512; George, "Cuban Missile Crisis," pp. 118-29; Tatu, pp. 265-73; Crane, pp. 546-48; Garthoff, Reflections, pp. 57-58.

October 23 quarantine proclamation and the President's October 27 letter to Khrushchev.¹⁵⁷

The Kennedy Administration limited the political objectives it sought to achieve in order to facilitate peaceful resolution of the crisis. Other objectives, such as removal of all Soviet forces from Cuba or overthrow of the Castro regime, were weighed by the President and his advisors, but quickly rejected in order to limit the scope of the crisis and avoid provoking escalation by the Soviets.¹⁵⁸ On the other hand, the option of doing nothing about the missiles--living with the new threat rather than trying to eliminate it--was also considered, but quickly

¹⁵⁷ "October 16 Morning Meeting Transcript," p. 27; Robert S. McNamara, "Background Briefing on the Cuban Situation," transcript, October 22, 1962, p. 2; Robert Kennedy, p. 33; Hilsman, p. 202; Schlesinger, A Thousand Days, pp. 801-2; Sorenson, p. 683; Pachter, p. 13. For the texts of the President's October 22 speech and October 23 quarantine proclamation, see "The Soviet Threat to the Americas," Department of State Bulletin 47 (November 12, 1962): 715-20. For the text of the President's October 27 letter, see "U.S. and Soviet Union Agree on Formula for Ending Cuban Crisis," Department of State Bulletin 47 (November 12, 1962): 743.

¹⁵⁸ Schlesinger, A Thousand Days, p. 804; Hilsman, p. 202, 228; Sorenson, pp. 680-83; George, "Cuban Missile Crisis," p. 94. Later in the crisis, when advisors would express support for additional objectives, such as removing Castro from power, the President remained firm that the U.S. objective was removing the Soviet missiles from Cuba. For example, see the exchange between CIA Director McCone, Secretary of State Rusk, and the President in Bromley Smith, "Summary Record of NSC Executive Committee Meeting No. 6, October 26, 1962, 10:00 AM," p. 5 (declassified 1978. National Security Archive, Washington, DC, Cuban Missile Crisis file. Cited hereafter as "October 26 EXCOMM Meeting Summary Record.").

rejected. Although McNamara believed that the missiles had little impact on the strategic nuclear balance, other advisors perceived a serious military threat from the missiles. Additionally, there was a consensus that the missiles would have a political and psychological impact that posed a grave threat to U.S. interests.¹⁵⁹ American leaders thus perceived that vital national interests were at stake and that those interests had to be protected, but they also perceived that U.S. objectives in the crisis had to be limited in order to avoid war with the Soviet Union.

President Kennedy's second major objective was to limit the use of force in order to avoid war with the Soviet Union.¹⁶⁰ Some of the President's advisors--Dean Acheson, John McCone, Paul Nitze, and Douglas Dillon--as well as many

¹⁵⁹For McNamara's views, see his comments in "October 16 Evening Meeting Transcript," p. 12. Also see Abel, pp. 51, 60; Hilsman, p. 195; Sorenson, p. 683; Schlesinger, A Thousand Days, p. 803. For the opposing view, see SNIE 11-18-62, pp. 2-3, Annex B; SNIE 11-19-62, pp. 3-5; comments made by the President, Robert Kennedy, General Taylor, and Douglas Dillon in "October 16 Evening Meeting Transcript," pp. 12-15. Also see Sorenson, p. 678; Hilsman, p. 201; Abel, pp. 50-52; Wohlstetters, pp. 12-14; George, "Cuban Missile Crisis," pp. 89-94; Raymond L. Garthoff, Intelligence Assessment and Policymaking: A Decision Point in the Kennedy Administration (Washington, DC: Brookings, 1984), pp. 27-53.

¹⁶⁰This is readily apparent in the President's remarks during the October 27 meeting of the Executive Committee. See "October 27, 1962: Transcripts of the Meetings of the ExComm," transcribed by McGeorge Bundy and edited by James G. Blight, International Security 12 (Winter 1987/88): 50-58, 83, 87-91 (Cited hereafter as "October 27 Meetings Transcript.").

military men, including General Taylor, felt that American conventional superiority in the Caribbean and overall strategic nuclear superiority meant that there was little likelihood the Soviets would launch a war. On the other hand, the President, Secretary McNamara, McGeorge Bundy, and others were deeply concerned that an armed clash with the Soviet Union could escalate to war. Their concerns were over the unpredictability of Soviet reactions and the danger of a military clash getting out of control.¹⁶¹ Additionally, the Soviet Union on September 11 had accused the U.S. of "preparing for aggression against Cuba" and warned that "if the aggressors unleash war our armed forces must be ready to strike a crushing retaliatory blow at the aggressor."¹⁶²

¹⁶¹ On the view that American military superiority made war unlikely, see Burchinal, oral history, p. 116; Vice Admiral Turner F. Caldwell, letter to author, March 14, 1988; Rear Admiral Paul E. Hartmann, Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations at CINCLANT during the crisis, letter to author, February 22, 1988; James G. Blight, Joseph S. Nye, Jr., and David A. Welch, "The Cuban Missile Crisis Revisited," Foreign Affairs 66 (Fall 1987): 174-75; Eliot A. Cohen, "Why We Should Stop Studying the Cuban Missile Crisis," The National Interest No. 2 (Winter 1985/6): 5. On the President's and McNamara's escalation concerns, see "October 16 Evening Meeting Transcript," pp. 10, 22-23; "October 27 Meetings Transcript," pp. 52, 58, 74-75. Also see Robert Kennedy, pp. 98-99; Sorenson, pp. 680-81; Schlesinger, A Thousand Days, p. 804; Hilsman, p. 204; Williams, pp. 116-17; Weintal and Bartlett, p. 67; Blight, et al., "Cuban Missile Crisis Revisited," pp. 173, 176.

¹⁶² "Soviet Says A U.S. Attack on Cuba Would Mean War," New York Times, September 12, 1962, p. 1. The President's advisors were aware of this warning and apparently considered it in formulating a course of action. See Sorenson, p. 680; Schlesinger, A Thousand Days, p. 799; Hilsman, p. 165-6.

Thus, although military options entailing greater force than the quarantine, such as air strikes and invasion, were seriously considered, they were deferred in order to avoid an armed confrontation with the Soviets for as long as possible.¹⁶³

The Kennedy Administration intuitively employed the "coercive diplomacy" strategy in the Cuban Missile Crisis.¹⁶⁴ The strategy evolved in an ad hoc manner, rather than having been articulated at the outset. Alexander George has described the President as following a "try and see" approach, in which improvisation was the key feature, from October 22 to October 26.¹⁶⁵ The diplomatic communications and limited military actions initiated during this period were based on certain principles in the minds of U.S. policymakers, which will be described below, an informal crisis management strategy.

President Kennedy's intuitive strategy for managing the crisis was based on four considerations, which would

¹⁶³ See "October 16 Morning Meeting Transcript," pp. 8-13; "October 16 Evening Meeting Transcript," pp. 6-10, 22-25; "October 27 Meetings Transcript," pp. 65-66, 88-90. Also see Sorenson, pp. 682-83; Hilsman, pp. 202-4; Schlesinger, A Thousand Days, pp. 803-4; Abel, pp. 60-63; George, "Cuban Missile Crisis," p. 95.

¹⁶⁴ George, "Cuban Missile Crisis," pp. 88-89. Also see Alexander L. George, "The Development of Doctrine and Strategy," in Alexander L. George, David K. Hall, and William E. Simons, The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy (Little, Brown, 1971), pp. 18-19.

¹⁶⁵ George, "Cuban Missile Crisis," pp. 95-96, 104.

later be described as principles of crisis management. The first consideration was that the U.S. had to seize the initiative by keeping U.S. knowledge of the Soviet missiles secret until ready to announce a course of action. The effort apparently succeeded: by all accounts Khrushchev was taken by surprise when President Kennedy suddenly announced the quarantine. This precluded Soviet diplomatic efforts to forestall an American attempt to force removal of the missiles and enabled the United States, rather than the Soviet Union, to define the political context and significance of the crisis. President Kennedy thus was able to portray the Soviet missile deployment as an unprecedented threat to the Western Hemisphere and to draw a sharp distinction between Soviet missiles in Cuba and U.S. missiles in Turkey.¹⁶⁶

What was missing was a plan, or even a concept, of action for exploiting the initiative after it had been seized. After initial success--unanimous OAS support for the quarantine and a tentative Soviet decision not to challenge it--the United States started losing momentum. The Kennedy Administration knew that the passage of time would make it more difficult to get the missiles out of

¹⁶⁶"October 16 Morning Meeting Transcript," pp. 16-19, 28-29; "October 16 Evening Meeting Transcript," pp. 10-11, 16-17; Schlesinger, A Thousand Days, p. 810; Hilsman, pp. 198-200, 207; Sorenson, p. 676. Also see Pachter, p. 15; George, "Cuban Missile Crisis," p. 99.

Cuba, but initially did not have a plan for maintaining initiative by increasing pressure on the Soviets.¹⁶⁷

The second consideration on which the President's approach was based was that of preserving military and diplomatic options, dividing military options into discrete increments, and applying military force in a graduated response. By starting with the quarantine--the least violent and provocative of his military options--the President avoided taking action that might have irreversibly committed the United States to an armed confrontation with the Soviet Union. Similarly, by deliberately not issuing an ultimatum on October 22, the President avoided an irreversible political commitment to an armed confrontation.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁷George, "Cuban Missile Crisis," pp. 95-98, 100-1, 115; Sorenson, pp. 687-88; Pachter, p. 47; Garthoff, Reflections, p. 44; David A. Welch and James G. Blight, "The Eleventh Hour of the Cuban Missile Crisis: An Introduction to the ExComm Transcripts," International Security 12 (Winter 1987/88): 26.

¹⁶⁸See comments by Rusk in "October 16 Morning Meeting Transcript," pp. 8-10; comments by the President and McNamara in "October 16 Evening Meeting Transcript," pp. 17, 23, 49-50; comment by McNamara on "applying force gradually" in Bromley Smith, "Summary Record of NSC Executive Committee Meeting No. 5, October 25, 1962, 5:00 PM," pp. 2-3 (declassified 1978. National Security Archive, Washington, DC, Cuban Missile Crisis file. Cited hereafter as "October 25 Evening EXCOMM Meeting Summary Record."); "October 26 EXCOMM Meeting Summary Record," p. 2; comments by the President in "October 27 Meetings Transcript," p. 88; Robert Kennedy, p. 83; Schlesinger, A Thousand Days, p. 806; Hilsman, pp. 213-16, 228; Sorenson, pp. 694, 708, 711. Also see George, "Cuban Missile Crisis," pp. 104-5, 116-17; Abel, pp. 81, 173; Wohlstetters, pp. 19-20; Young, pp. 236-40; Williams, pp. 119-20; Ole R. Holsti, Crisis Escalation War (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1972), p. 185.

Military operations were extensively subdivided in Executive Committee (EXCOMM) deliberations during the crisis. The blockade option was subdivided into the initial quarantine on offensive arms, an expanded quarantine that would include POL (petroleum, oil, and lubricants) and perhaps other strategic commodities, and a total blockade of shipping in and out of Cuba. The President had additional naval options: a plan for destruction of Soviet submarines should they threaten an expanded blockade, and a plan for mining Cuban harbors as a form of blockade. The air strike option was conceptually subdivided into small-scale, "tit-for-tat" attacks on SAM sites or anti-aircraft guns that fired on U.S. planes, large-scale air strikes against the Cuban air defense system, and full-scale strikes against the Soviet offensive missile sites and Cuban defenses. The next level of military response was invasion of Cuba.¹⁶⁹ The President could execute these options incrementally in order to progressively increase coercion in support of diplomatic bargaining.

¹⁶⁹ See comments by the President, Robert Kennedy, McNamara, and Bundy in "October 16 Morning Meeting Transcript," pp. 17-18, 20-21, 25-27; comments by the President, McNamara, Bundy, and General Taylor in "October 16 Evening Meeting Transcript," pp. 7-9, 17-18, 21, 49-50; comments by McNamara in Bromley Smith, "Executive Committee Minutes, October 23, 1962, 10:00 AM," p. 2 (declassified 1978. National Security Archive, Washington, DC, Cuban Missile Crisis file. Cited hereafter as "October 23 EXCOMM Minutes."); "October 25 Evening EXCOMM Meeting Summary Record," p. 3; "October 27 Meetings Transcript," pp. 52, 56, 58, 64-65, 68-69, 88.

The problem with the graduated response approach was that although President Kennedy had carefully preserved his military and diplomatic options, he did not devise a scheme for employing those options in an integrated strategy of coercive bargaining. This is shown by the uncertainty over what the President's next step would have been had Khrushchev not agreed on October 28 to dismantle the missiles in Cuba. Practical operational problems with employing some of the military options (such as the small-scale air strike option, which was hard to keep small), as well as uncertainty over the Soviet response to any of the options, were probably the major reasons for the lack of even a tentative plan for using the options. However, at least part of the problem was that the EXCOMM was distracted by operational details. Records of EXCOMM deliberations reveal military options being dissected in incredible detail, while attempts to formulate future courses of action rarely went beyond the next immediate step that would be taken.¹⁷⁰

¹⁷⁰ See comments by the President, and McNamara in "October 16 Evening Meeting Transcript," pp. 22-23; Bromley Smith, "Summary Record of NSC Executive Committee Meeting No. 4, October 25, 1962, 10:00 AM," p. 1 (declassified 1980. National Security Archive, Washington, DC, Cuban Missile Crisis file. Cited hereafter as "October 25 Morning EXCOMM Meeting Summary Record."); "October 25 Evening EXCOMM Meeting Summary Record," pp. 1-6; "October 26 EXCOMM Meeting Summary Record," pp. 1-7; comments by the President, McNamara and Taylor in "October 27 Meetings Transcript," pp. 52, 64, 68; Robert Kennedy, p. 96.

The third consideration was maintaining control of events, paying close attention to the details of military operations, and pacing events to allow time for communication and decisionmaking. The EXCOMM discussed military operations in great detail and certain military operations, such as the intercept and boarding of Soviet ships and low-level photographic reconnaissance flights, were closely controlled. On October 23 the President gave some sort of order for the quarantine force to delay its initial boardings of Soviet ships specifically for the purpose of giving Khrushchev more time to react to the quarantine. Later, on October 27, the President directed that air strikes on Soviet SAMs and Cuban air defenses, which had already shot down a U-2 and fired on low-level flights, be postponed until the Soviets had a chance to react to his latest diplomatic proposals.¹⁷¹ As will be discussed later, EXCOMM attention to military operations was uneven and focused on a few specific areas.

¹⁷¹ See the discussion on whether or not to intercept an East German passenger ship in "October 25 Evening EXCOMM Meeting Summary Record," pp. 4-6; and the decision to delay night reconnaissance flights and blockade of POL in "October 26 EXCOMM Meeting Summary Record," p. 2. On the decision to delay retaliatory strikes on Cuban air defenses, see "October 27 Meetings Transcript," pp. 66, 74, 78, 88-90. On EXCOMM attention to the details of military operations, see Robert Kennedy, pp. 37, 76; Hilsman, 198, 213, 215, 221; Sorenson, pp. 708-9, 713; Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, pp. 818, 822, 827-28. Also see George, "Cuban Missile Crisis," pp. 109, 115; Abel, p. 32; Wohlstetters, p. 15; Young, p. 238; Williams, p. 116.

President Kennedy was probably the ultimate source of the emphasis on maintaining close control of military operations. The President had read Barbara W. Tuchman's The Guns of August and was heavily influenced by her description of Europe's leaders losing control of events as the crisis in the summer of 1914 spiraled to war. According to Rear Admiral Tazewell T. Shepard, Jr., Naval Aide to President Kennedy, prior to the crisis the President had suggested to the Joint Chiefs that they should read The Guns of August because he wanted them to "think, not just plow ahead."¹⁷² The President's bitter experience in the Bay of Pigs fiasco reinforced his determination to carefully consider and closely control military moves, rather than risk being dragged along by events beyond his control.¹⁷³

What was missing was detailed consideration of how to effectively control military operations. No thought was given to the practical operational problems that would arise from attempting to control large-scale military operations directly from the White House. McNamara and his assistants did not understand the military command system and had little respect for it. The optimism (military men called it

¹⁷² Rear Admiral Tazewell T. Shepard, Jr., interview by author, February 10, 1988. Also see Robert Kennedy, pp. 62, 127; Schlesinger, A Thousand Days, p. 832; Abel, pp. 207-8.

¹⁷³ Anderson, "As I Recall," p. 44; Hilsman, pp. 33-34, 575; Sorenson, p. 708; Schlesinger, A Thousand Days, pp. 295-97, 426, 818; Abel, p. 40; Jack Raymond, Power at the Pentagon (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), p. 284.

arrogance) and energy that marked the Kennedy Administration's style greatly influenced the approach it took to military operations. McNamara and his assistants appeared to believe that they could run a better military operation the same way they could write a better defense budget. However, their approach to military command and control was intuitive and impulsive, rather than reasoned and planned. They had not worked with the military prior to the crisis to develop and refine methods and procedures for direct control that both sides would understand, with the result that the military was caught off-guard by their sudden intrusion into operational matters. McNamara and his assistants apparently did not stop to consider that matters as minor as not knowing military jargon or how to talk properly on radio nets could seriously impede communications and even defeat their well-intentioned efforts to control military operations.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷⁴The most striking indication of the lack of preparation for exercising direct control was the havoc it created in the military communications system. Admiral Robert L. Dennison, Commander in Chief Atlantic during the crisis, states in his oral history that when the White House tried to get on the radio it would "gum up" his command circuits: "It happens all the time, I guess. But I had to tell all these Washington stations to get off my circuits and stay off because they were interfering with operations." Admiral Robert L. Dennison, "The Reminiscences of Admiral Robert Lee Dennison, U.S. Navy (Retired)," (Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, Oral History Program, August 1975), p. 421. The lack of attention to the organizational, procedural, and operational requirements for effectively exercising direct control is discussed in detail in the following section on command and control.

The fourth consideration was Soviet leaders must not be confronted with a choice between war and surrender, and that they must be left a way out of the crisis other than in total humiliation. This consideration derived from the objective of avoiding war with the Soviet Union, discussed above. The implication of this consideration was that, if the Soviet Union could not be compelled to remove the missiles by coercive pressure alone, the United States would have to offer concessions in diplomatic bargaining. President Kennedy and some of his advisors recognized from the start that concessions might have to be made. The President seems to have been willing, as a last resort, to offer to remove U.S. Jupiter missiles in Turkey in exchange for removal of Soviet missiles from Cuba in order to avoid taking military action against Cuba. However, the President did not formulate a negotiating strategy other than his insistence that no concession would be offered until after American resolve had been impressed upon the Soviets. Nor was an effort made to identify a list of possible concessions. The obvious offers, a Turkey-Cuba deal or withdrawal of U.S. forces from Guantanamo, were quickly rejected. The key concession that produced the settlement--an American pledge not to invade Cuba--was proposed by Khrushchev in his October 26 letter. The President also sought initially to avoid the appearance of delivering an ultimatum to the Soviets and specifically avoided setting a

deadline for removal of the missiles. However, when it became apparent on October 27 that the vague threat of further action at some future date was not having a sufficiently coercive effect, the President delivered an ultimatum to the Soviets via his brother Bobby--threatening that military action would be taken against Cuba unless a commitment to remove the missiles was received the next day.¹⁷⁵ Thus, although the Kennedy Administration was aware of the consideration that the Soviets must be left with a way out of the crisis other than war or humiliation, it did not formulate an overall negotiating strategy for resolving the crisis.

¹⁷⁵The option of delivering an ultimatum to the Soviets was mentioned by the President (who contemplated delivering an ultimatum when he met with Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko on October 18) and discussed by his advisors in their second meeting of the crisis. See "October 16 Evening Meeting Transcript," pp. 17, 31, 46-47. On the October 27 ultimatum, see Robert Kennedy, pp. 108-9; Schlesinger, A Thousand Days, p. 829; Sorenson, p. 715; Abel, p. 199; George, "Cuban Missile Crisis," p. 125. On not humiliating the Soviets, see Sorenson, p. 694, 717; George, "Cuban Missile Crisis," pp. 88-89; Weintal and Bartlett, p. 68. On leaving the Soviets a way out of the crisis, see Sorenson, p. 682, 691; Schlesinger, A Thousand Days, p. 821; George, "Cuban Missile Crisis," pp. 88-89; Pachter, p. 54; Young, p. 238; Williams, p. 120; Holsti, p. 186. On not bargaining until after resolve had been demonstrated, see George, "Cuban Missile Crisis," pp. 98-100; Schlesinger, A Thousand Days, p. 810. On the lack of a negotiating strategy, see George, "Cuban Missile Crisis," pp. 100-103, 117-18; Sorenson, p. 695. On the Cuba-Turkey deal, see "October 27 Meetings Transcript," pp. 35-61, 75-77, 81-83; Abel, pp. 195-95; Welch and Blight, pp. 12-18; George, "Cuban Missile Crisis," p. 101. Adlai Stevenson had proposed offering Guantanamo as a bargaining chip, which the President quickly rejected. See Robert Kennedy, p. 49; Schlesinger, A Thousand Days, p. 810; Abel, p. 95.

Command and Control

The Cuban Missile Crisis marked the first major employment of U.S. forces under the command structure established by the 1958 defense reorganization. However, the command procedures actually used did not adhere to the chain of command established by that reorganization. Under the 1958 reorganization the chain of command ran from the President, to the Secretary of Defense, and then to the appropriate unified or specified commander. The JCS was to function as an advisory body to the President and as an executive agent for the Secretary of Defense, rather than as a separate level in the chain of command. The National Military Command Center (NMCC) should have been the Secretary of Defense's operational control center.

In actuality, the chain of command was structured essentially as it had been prior to the 1958 reorganization. McNamara passed orders to General Taylor, rather than to the Commander in Chief Atlantic (CINCLANT).¹⁷⁶ This was probably unavoidable given to the immense scale of military operations conducted during the crisis, which involved several commands in addition to CINCLANT.

¹⁷⁶General Maxwell D. Taylor, Transcript of Recorded Interview by Elspeth Rostow (Boston, MA: John F. Kennedy Library, Oral History Program, 1964), p. 8; Vice Admiral John L. Chew, Deputy Director for Operations (J-3), Joint Staff during the crisis, "The Reminiscences of Vice Admiral John L. Chew, U.S. Navy (Retired)," (Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, Oral History Program, February 1979), pp. 316-17; Anderson, interview by author, January 25, 1988.

Reverting to pre-1958 procedures, the JCS on October 19 designated the CNO, Admiral Anderson, as its executive agent for CINCLANT's Cuban operations.¹⁷⁷ This had three primary implications. First, it placed the CNO in the chain of command between the Secretary of Defense and CINCLANT. General Taylor passed orders he received from McNamara to Admiral Anderson, who in turn issued orders to CINCLANT. It is important to note that Admiral Anderson was not just a conduit for orders from the President, he was deeply involved in planning and execution of the operations.¹⁷⁸ Second, it shifted responsibility for planning and preparing orders from the Joint Staff to the the CNO's staff, known as OPNAV (Office of the Chief of Naval Operations). The Joint Staff was largely on the sidelines during the crisis.¹⁷⁹ Third, it caused Flag Plot, which was

¹⁷⁷ Admiral U.S.G. Sharp, Deputy CNO for Plans and Policy during the crisis, letter to author, February 24, 1988; Captain John H. Carmichael, Assistant Director, Fleet Operations Division, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations (OPNAV), and Director of Flag Plot during the crisis, letter to author, March 8, 1988; Houser, interview by author, February 11, 1988; Shepard, interview by author, February 10, 1988; Griffin, "Reminiscences," p. 552.

¹⁷⁸ Anderson, interview by author, January 25, 1988; Griffin, "Reminiscences," p. 552. Admiral Dennison, CINCLANT during the crisis, states that "I never got a call from the White House during the entire operation." Dennison, "Reminiscences," p. 421.

¹⁷⁹ Shepard, interview by author, February 10, 1988; Houser, interview by author, February 11, 1988. Vice Admiral Chew states that McNamara "paid very little attention" to the Joint Staff during the crisis. Chew, "Reminiscences," p. 331.

(and still is) the CNO's operations control (OPCON) center, rather than NMCC, to be the OPCON center for all CINCLANT naval and military operations during the crisis.¹⁸⁰ Admiral Anderson insisted on this at the time, remarking to then-Captain Houser that "this is a Navy show, we're going to show them how it's done."¹⁸¹ However, after the crisis he admitted in retrospect that it would have been better to run the extensive joint operations from NMCC rather than from Flag Plot.¹⁸² Thus, the manner in which the military chain of command actually functioned during the crisis was much

¹⁸⁰ Flag Plot thus was the OPCON center for all Army and Air Force preparations for invasion and air strikes against Cuba, as well as Navy quarantine operations and preparations for air strikes and invasion. This is because all Army and Air Force units assigned to operations against Cuba were placed under the command of CINCLANT, who reported to the CNO (as executive agent for the JCS). There were only three areas for which Flag Plot was not the OPCON center: aerial surveillance of Cuba (high-altitude, low-altitude, and peripheral), which was controlled directly by JCS through the Joint Reconnaissance Center; air defense of the United States, controlled by the Continental Air Defense Command (working closely with CINCLANT); and Strategic Air Command alert operations, also controlled directly by JCS.

¹⁸¹ Houser, interview by author, February 11, 1988.

¹⁸² Admiral Anderson makes a revealing remark in his oral history: "It was also apparent to me, and this is a lesson that I had from the operation, that to control the naval operation through Flag Plot up in the Navy Department Section was not a satisfactory way of handling it. It would have been better to have those things handled by the JCS command post in the JCS area, rather than decentralization like my doing the quarantining from up above [in Flag Plot]." Admiral George W. Anderson, Jr., "The Reminiscences of Admiral George W. Anderson, Jr., U.S. Navy (Retired)," Volume II (Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, Oral History Program, 1983), p. 551.

different than had been envisioned when the 1958 reorganization was enacted.

The significance of all this is that these pre-1958 command arrangements were designed to support a command philosophy emphasizing substantial delegation of control, rather than highly centralized control. The JCS executive agent system presupposed that commanders in the field or at sea had substantial autonomy and need only be given an objective and overall guidelines for their operations. It was not a system for facilitating close control of operations by the White House. There is no evidence that McNamara attempted to modify JCS command procedures prior to the crisis. This stands in stark contrast to the revolutionary changes he made in the Defense Department's administrative organization and management procedures--changes that emphasized centralization of decisionmaking authority. During the crisis, McNamara's interventions in the command system were impulsive and lacked planning or prior coordination with the military, producing hurried, ad hoc changes in support of the President's desire to maintain control of events. In effect, the President and McNamara were attempting to exercise centralized control through a command system designed for decentralized control.

The White House Situation Room and the CNO's Flag Plot played a prominent role in the Cuban Missile Crisis. The White House Situation Room was established in 1961 at the

suggestion of Captain Shepard, the President's Naval Aide, in order to provide the President with better communications and related facilities for managing crises. The Situation Room contained regular and secure telephones ("scrambled" to prevent interception), teletype and voice radio equipment, and a collection of maps and charts.¹⁸³ During the crisis the location and status of U.S. forces and all available intelligence on Soviet and Cuban forces was assembled there for twice-daily Presidential briefings. The President had complete and timely information on all Navy units participating in the quarantine and all related operations in the Atlantic and Caribbean. Soviet bloc merchant ships en route to Cuba and Soviet submarines discovered by the Navy were tracked in the Situation Room.¹⁸⁴ Because it was established in a rush on limited funds, the Situation Room did not have the extensive command and control capabilities of NMCC or Flag Plot, but it was far superior to the facilities any previous President had in the White House.

¹⁸³ Tazewell T. Shepard, Jr., John F. Kennedy: Man of the Sea (New York: William Morrow, 1965), p. 96; Commander Gerry M. McCabe, Assistant Naval Aide to the President and Director of the White House Situation Room during the crisis, interview by author, February 22, 1988. Responsibility for the Situation Room was later transferred to the National Security Council Staff.

¹⁸⁴ Shepard, John F. Kennedy, pp. 104-4; Shepard, interview by author, February 10, 1988; McCabe, interview by author, February 22, 1988; Anderson, interview by author, January 25, 1988; Schlesinger, A Thousand Days, p. 818; Sorenson, pp. 709-10.

Flag Plot, on the fourth floor of the "D" ring in Navy section of the Pentagon, had been established by Admiral Arleigh Burke during his tenure as CNO. It contained extensive communications equipment, large wall charts of the world's oceans, and separate conference and briefing rooms. When the CNO was designated the JCS executive agent on October 19, the Flag Plot staff was placed on alert and augmented with specialists from other sections of OPNAV. All of Flag Plot was declared a Top Secret area and additional Marine guards were posted. Captain Carmichael, Director of Flag Plot during the crisis, has described the information available there:

Since the CNO was running the show, Flag Plot kept track of all forces--Army, Navy and Air Force--assigned to the operation. . . . Flag Plot maintained a ship locator for all U.S. Navy ships or any special interest ship. Pertinent ones were plotted on the world charts mounted on the walls. Records were kept of all ship movements and other information necessary for keeping the Navy picture world-wide. . . . As complete a picture of forces location as possible was kept and displayed, so that Admiral Anderson could exercise command.¹⁸⁵

Every evening during the crisis McNamara was briefed at 10:00 p.m. in Flag Plot on the status of the quarantine and CINCLANT forces alerted for Cuban contingencies.¹⁸⁶ He was thus exposed daily to all of the information available to the CNO on the status of CINCLANT operations and Soviet

¹⁸⁵ Carmichael, letter to author, March 8, 1988.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid; Houser, interview by author, February 11, 1988.

forces in Cuba, the Caribbean, and the Atlantic. The detailed knowledge of the movements of U.S. and Soviet ships that McNamara showed in EXCOMM meetings and his quizzing of Admiral Anderson on the positions of Navy ships show that McNamara paid close attention to the Flag Plot briefings.¹⁸⁷

The next level in the Chain of Command was CINCLANT, Admiral Dennison, headquartered in Norfolk, Virginia. In mid-1961 CINCLANT was tasked by JCS to prepare contingency plans for military operations against Cuba. CINCLANT created Joint Task Force 122 (JTF-122), a contingency task force with forces designated but not actually assigned, for Cuban contingency operations. Commander Second Fleet was designated Commander JTF-122; Army, Air Force, and Navy component commanders were also designated. On October 18 JCS designated CINCLANT overall commander for operations against Cuba, including blockade and contingency operations. In response, CINCLANT on October 20 disestablished JTF-122 and assumed command of all Cuban contingency operations. Army Lieutenant General Louis W. Truman was designated CINCLANT Chief of Staff for Cuban Contingency Operations, in charge of a separate CINCLANT Contingency Staff responsible for air strike and invasion planning.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁷ Anderson, "Reminiscences," p. 558; Chew, "Reminiscences," pp. 332-33; Carmichael, letter to author, March 8, 1988; Abel, pp. 154-55.

¹⁸⁸ "CINCLANT Historical Account," pp. 17, 22, 39-40; "DOD Operations," p. 1; Ward, "Diary," p. 2.

CINCLANT had three component commanders during the Cuban Missile Crisis. The Navy component commander, Commander in Chief U.S. Naval Forces Atlantic (CINCNVAVLANT), was Commander in Chief Atlantic Fleet (CINCLANTFLT). Admiral Dennison was CINCLANTFLT as well as CINCLANT, and the CINCLANTFLT staff was integrated into the CINCLANT unified command staff. Vice Admiral Wallace M. Beakley, Deputy Commander in Chief Atlantic, was in charge of CINCLANTFLT functions in the CINCLANT staff. Additionally, to facilitate CINCLANTFLT control of quarantine operations a separate Quarantine Plot headed by Rear Admiral Reynold D. Hogle was established in the CINCLANT OPCON Center. The CINCLANT Quarantine Plot maintained the tactical picture at sea for Admiral Dennison and Vice Admiral Beakley. The Air Force component commander, Commander in Chief Air Force Atlantic (CINCAFLANT), was Commander Tactical Air Command (TAC), General Walter C. Sweeney, Jr., headquartered at Langley Air Force Base, Virginia. The Army component commander, Commander in Chief Army Atlantic (CINCARLANT), was Commanding General Continental Army Command (USCONARC), General Herbert B. Powell, headquartered at Fort Monroe, Virginia. CINCARLANT and CINCAFLANT set up a Forward Command Post at Homestead Air Force Base, Florida. Prior to the crisis, the only forces assigned to CINCLANT were Navy and Marine Corps forces under CINCLANTFLT. Army (USCONARC) and Air Force (TAC) units designated for CINCLANT

contingency operations were under the command of Commander in Chief Strike Command (CINCSTRIKE). On October 22 CINCSTRIKE transferred command of Army and Air Force units designated for Cuban operations to CINCLANT. On that date CINCLANT gained command of all component forces that would participate in Cuban contingency operations.¹⁸⁹

Under the CINCLANT component commanders were several Task Forces. The Navy and Marine Corps Task Forces under CINCLANTFLT are listed in Table 2. Two of these (TF 81 and TF 83) were standing Task Forces operational prior to the crisis, while the others were contingency Task Forces activated for the crisis. In addition to these Task Forces, the Subordinate Unified Commander for the Caribbean, Commander Antilles Defense Command (COMANTDEFCON), reported directly to CINCLANT. COMANTDEFCON was important primarily because Commander Naval Base Guantanamo reported to him via Commander Caribbean Sea Frontier (COMCARSEAFRON, the Navy component commander for COMANTDEFCON).¹⁷⁶ Under the Task Forces listed in Table 2 were a large number of Task Groups, the number and composition of which changed frequently

¹⁸⁹ "CINCLANT Historical Account," pp. 22-24, 49-50; Dennison, "Reminiscences," p. 415, 425. The Army and Air Force component commanders were designated on October 20. Prior to that date, lower-ranking Army and Air Force commanders had been component commanders for JTF-122.

¹⁹⁰ COMANTDEFCON forces also included Navy and Marine Corps units on various Caribbean islands and the Puerto Rico Air National Guard.

Table 2
Navy Task Force Organization

Task Force	Task Force Title and Commander
TF 135	Carrier Strike Force Rear Admiral Robert J. Stroh, Commander Carrier Division Six, relieved by Rear Admiral John T. Hayward, Commander Carrier Division Two
TF 136	Blockade Force Vice Admiral Alfred G. Ward, Commander Second Fleet, relieved by Rear Admiral John W. Ailes, III, Commander Cruiser Destroyer Flotilla Six
TF 137	Combined Quarantine Force (Latin American/U.S.) Rear Admiral John A. Tyree, Commander South Atlantic Force
TF 128	Amphibious Force Rear Admiral Horacio Rivero, Jr., Commander Amphibious Force Atlantic
TF 129	Landing Force Lieutenant General Robert B. Luckey, USMC, Commanding General Fleet Marine Force Atlantic and Commanding General Second Marine Expeditionary Force
TF 81/83	Anti-Submarine Warfare Force Atlantic Vice Admiral Edmund B. Taylor

Source: "CINCLANT Historical Account," passim.

during the crisis. The command structure for the Navy forces assigned to Cuban contingencies was thus highly complex due to the size and scope of the forces involved.

The Army and Air Force had two primary Task Forces for Cuban contingency operations. Under the Army component commander, CINCARLANT, was the Army Task Force (TF 125) for the invasion of Cuba, commanded by Commanding General Eighteenth Airborne Corps. Under the Air Force component

commander, CINCAFLANT, was the Air Task Force for air strikes against Cuba, commanded by Commander Nineteenth Air Force. CINCARLANT and CINCAFLANT had additional Task Forces for other operations related to Cuba. The final Task Force under CINCLANT was the Joint Unconventional Warfare Task Force Atlantic (JUWTF), consisting of Army Special Forces, Navy SEALs, and Air Force Air Commando units.¹⁹¹ This brief review of the basic command organization of the forces committed to Cuban contingencies suggests the magnitude of the task faced by the White House in attempting to exercise close control over U.S. military operations.

United States communications capabilities had made significant advances since 1958, allowing a greater degree of direct control over naval operations than had ever been possible before. CINCLANT, Flag Plot, NMCC, and the White House Situation Room all had the ability to communicate directly with ships at sea over voice radio, if they so desired. Three advances in communications technology were particularly important: First, secure (voice encryption, commonly called "scrambled") telephone lines connected the White House, Flag Plot, NMCC, and CINCLANT. This allowed discussion of classified information without risk of Soviet interception. Second, high frequency (HF), single sideband (SSB) clear (unencrypted) and secure (encrypted) voice radio

¹⁹¹"CINCLANT Historical Account," pp. 22-23.

equipment was just coming into widespread use. Prior to this, long-range radio communication had been limited to radioteletype and radiotelegraph (manual Morse). HF/SSB radio allowed commanders ashore to speak directly with forces afloat, a crucial capability for exercising direct control of naval operations. The CNO had established a Composite Fleet SSB Command Net and CINCLANT had two SSB nets of his own. Third, the Navy had long-range HF Fleet Radioteletype Broad-casts with on-line encryption for message communications between shore stations and ships at sea. This system greatly expedited the flow of information by eliminating slow manual encryption and transmission of messages.¹⁹²

In addition to these communications systems, telephone and telegraph lines were also used extensively for communications among shore commands. Three types of lines were available: military-owned lines, leased commercial lines, and engineered military circuits (commercial lines with a preplanned standby military capability). The Defense Communications Agency, created only the year before, managed this overall system. The number of commercial lines leased by CINCLANT and its component commands increased from 106

¹⁹²"CINCLANT Historical Account," pp. 24-26, 28, 32. Only a few ships--primarily carriers and other large ships commonly used as flagships--had the secure voice capability and several older vessels did not have any HF/SSB equipment at all.

prior to the crisis to 511 at the height of the crisis.¹⁹³ Microwave communications were not yet in widespread use. The first U.S. radio-relay communications satellite, Samos II, had been launched in January 1961, but satellite communications were still essentially experimental.

Modern communications equipment, especially HF/SSB voice communications with ships at sea, were perceived by civilian leaders as providing the capabilities they needed to exercise close control of naval operations during the crisis. Vice Admiral Houser, who worked closely with McNamara and Gilpatric, noted this: "Modern communications also affected the civilians. There was a fascination with this. They had an attitude of 'I'm in charge,' and that they had the tools to be in charge."¹⁹⁴ This attitude was a natural corollary to their desire to maintain control of events in the crisis. In describing the quarantine, CINCLANT noted that centralized control of the operation determined the manner in which communications capabilities were utilized:

. . . this operation was directed in great part from the seat of government in Washington. In this connection, there was a steady flow of instructions from Washington to CINCLANT which required rapid dissemination to the operating forces. Also, there was a pressing requirement for a prompt, accurate and complete flow of the current status and results of

¹⁹³ Ibid, pp. 25-27. Also see Carter, pp. 233-57; Blair, pp. 51-65.

¹⁹⁴ Houser, interview by author, February 11, 1988.

operations. Although the CW [radioteletype and radiotelegraph] communications were generally fast and good, the requirement for expediting matters required extensive use of the single sideband voice radio.¹⁹⁵

Thus, the President's determination to maintain control of events in the crisis led to highly centralized control of naval operations, which in turn generated the demands placed on the communications system.

On the other hand, although the President had HF/SSB voice radio available in the White House Situation Room, there is no evidence that he ever spoke with any Navy ships or commanders at sea.¹⁹⁶ It is certain, however, that he

¹⁹⁵ "CINCLANT Historical Account," p. 108.

¹⁹⁶ Admiral Dennison states in his oral history that officials in Washington, apparently including officials in the White House, occasionally tried to contact commanders at sea, but that he told them to "get off my circuits." He makes no suggestion, however, that the President was ever on the radio or that any of the President's advisors ever issued orders to ships at sea over voice radio. Dennison, "Reminiscences," p. 421. Admiral Anderson, Admiral Griffin, Admiral Rivero, Vice Admiral Hayward, Vice Admiral Stroh, Rear Admiral Wylie, and Captain Robert J. Wissman (Operations Officer on the staff of Commander Carrier Division 18, commander of the USS Essex HUK Group, which was part of the quarantine force) all state that there were no such communications. Anderson, interview by author, January 25, 1988; Griffin, letter to author, April 6, 1988; Rivero, letter to author, March 10, 1988; Vice Admiral John T. Hayward, letter to author, February 17, 1988; Stroh, letter to author, February 18, 1988; Wylie, letter to author, April 13, 1988; Captain Robert J. Wissman, letter to author, March 4, 1988. Admiral Chew, Admiral Sharp, and Admiral Ward make no mention of such communications in their oral histories. Chew, "Reminiscences," pp. 315-41; Sharp, "Reminiscences," pp. 164-69; Ward, "Reminiscences," p. 199. Additionally, some three dozen Commanding Officers of ships that participated in the Cuban Missile Crisis all stated in letters to the author or in interviews by the author that they had not heard the President or McNamara on the HF/SSB net.

listened to reports coming in from the quarantine line over HF/SSB voice radio nets. Admiral Ward states that Flag Plot and the White House were monitoring his HF/SSB communications with CINCLANT.¹⁹⁷ It is possible, even likely, that during high interest operations at sea the President's advisors got on the HF/SSB net to request further details (perhaps identifying their station as the White House). This would account for Admiral Dennison's remarks about telling Washington stations to get off his net as well as the recollection of many Navy officers that the President never talked on the HF/SSB net. If this interpretation is accurate, it means that the President voluntarily denied himself a powerful communications tool that was literally at his fingertips--perhaps because he realized the disruption and animosity it would cause in the chain of command.

Direct HF/SSB communications from ships at sea to Washington--NMCC, Flag Plot, and the White House Situation Room monitoring the net--appear to have been used only in two situations. The first situation was during intercepts of Soviet merchant ships. Admiral Ward states that U.S. Navy ships were directed to report the name, description and visible deck cargo of ships they intercepted to CINCLANTFLT

¹⁹⁷ Ward, "Reminiscences," p. 199; Ward, "Sea Power in the Cuban Crisis," Address by Vice Admiral Alfred G. Ward, February 5, 1963 (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, Office of Public Affairs, News Release No. 151-63), p. 6.

(Quarantine Plot) and to the CNO (Flag Plot). Captain James W. Foust, Commanding Officer of USS John R. Pierce (DD 753) during the crisis, states that a "running account" of the boarding of the Lebanese freighter Marucla was provided to Commander Second Fleet and CINCLANTFLT on the HF/SSB net.¹⁹⁸ This net was also monitored in the CNO's Flag Plot and the White House Situation Room). The second situation was during the trailing of known Soviet submarines. Captain George L. Dickey, Jr., Commanding Officer of USS Lawe (DD 763) during the crisis, states that while trailing a Soviet submarine he was directed to come up on the voice net for direct communications with Flag Plot. Captain Robert J. Wissman, Operations Officer for Commander Carrier Division Eighteen, states that USS Essex (CVS 9) did the same thing, but carried it one step further. When ASW helicopters or aircraft from Essex were trailing a Soviet submarine, their reports would be relayed "real time" to Norfolk (CINCLANT Quarantine Plot) and Washington (Flag Plot).¹⁹⁹ Although all of these ASW reports could have been monitored in the White House Situation Room--at least by the Situation Room staff, which could immediately notify the President and his advisors of urgent developments--there is no conclusive

¹⁹⁸Ward, "Diary," p. 11; Captain James W. Foust, letter to author, March 10, 1988.

¹⁹⁹Captain George L. Dickey, Jr., letter to author, April 20, 1988; Wissman, letter to author, March 4, 1988.

evidence that the President or his advisors ever monitored the progress of ASW operations "real time." Given that President Kennedy did not attempt to control other operations while they were actually in progress, it is unlikely that he would have monitored ASW operations, which can (and did) drag on for days. On the other hand, the Situation Room staff had the capability of using reports coming over HF/SSB voice radio to keep their charts updated with the latest information on Soviet submarines.²⁰⁰

Opinions as to how well the Defense Communications System and Navy communications system performed during the crisis vary widely. The CINCLANT history of the crisis concludes that overall the Defense system performed well, demonstrating tremendous flexibility and rapid expansion of capability, but that it did experience problems. Problems included lack of telephone and telegraph lines in the Southeastern United States to accommodate the build-up of forces there, insufficient portable communications equipment, lack of compatibility between the communications equipment of the three services, insufficient secure voice and on-line encryption equipment, lack of frequency coordination, and heavily overloaded circuits with attendant

²⁰⁰ Participants could not recall specifically if this was done, but did recall that information on Soviet submarines was kept as up to date as possible. It appears that message situation reports, rather than voice radio reports, were the principle source of information.



backlogs of messages.²⁰¹ All of these problems would have degraded the President's ability to exercise close control of military operations.

CINCLANT provides a similarly mixed view of how well the Navy communications system performed. The CINCLANT conclusion would appear to be favorable: "Ship/shore communications with the commands afloat and tactical communications between the task force units were excellent throughout most of the period of the crisis. Radio propagation phenomena and other factors affecting reliability caused less than 10% outage on radio circuits."²⁰² However, this statement only addresses the technical ability to complete radio circuits, which is just one aspect of communications performance.

The CINCLANT report also contains a long list of problems. The Fleet Radioteletype Broadcast system was in the midst of converting to faster teletypes, which created traffic backlogs as messages had to be transmitted on separate broadcasts for old and new teletypes. There was an overwhelming number of messages--the number of messages per month during the crisis was more than three times greater than the pre-crisis average--and a large number of excessively long messages, which were difficult to transmit

²⁰¹"CINCLANT Historical Account," pp. 25-30.

²⁰²Ibid, p. 33.

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that every entry should be supported by a valid receipt or invoice. This ensures transparency and allows for easy verification of the data. The second part of the document provides a detailed breakdown of the financial data for the quarter. It includes a table showing the revenue generated from various sources, as well as the associated costs and expenses. The final part of the document concludes with a summary of the overall financial performance and provides recommendations for future actions to improve efficiency and profitability.

and often had to be sent repeatedly. The total volume of traffic exceeded the capacity of the Fleet Radioteletype Broadcast, requiring that an additional broadcast be initiated for broadcasting to major afloat commands. An inordinate proportion of messages were given high transmission precedence--an attempt to expedite time-critical orders that backfired, creating a backlog of high precedence messages. An unusually high proportion of messages were classified Secret or Top Secret, which created backlogs due the requirement for on-line encryption of such traffic. The incredible volume of message traffic created a shortage of radiomen that could only be partially alleviated by borrowing personnel from other commands.²⁰³ All of these problems are generated by centralized control of large-scale naval operations.

Participants in the crisis recount instances of operational problems caused by difficulties with message communications, confirming that the problems reported by CINCLANT had an impact on the crisis. On at least one occasion a commander afloat did not receive a crucial message. At the start of the crisis Rear Admiral Ernest E. Christiansen, Commander Carrier Division 18, was embarked in the ASW carrier USS Essex (CVS 9), which was conducting air operations training at sea off Guantanamo. On October 23

²⁰³ Ibid, pp. 32-35. These problems persisted until late November, when U.S. forces began standing down.

Rear Admiral Christiansen did not receive a CINCLANTFLT message directing Essex to join the Blockade Force east of the Bahamas--important because Essex was designated to intercept a Soviet ship the next morning.²⁰⁴ Captain Donald L. Lassell, Commander Destroyer Division 601 and Commander of the Florida Strait Protection of Shipping Patrol during the crisis, has also described severe problems with message communications. When the quarantine was announced, Captain Lassell, who was headquartered ashore at Key West, had to recall his ships from a contingency holding area northeast of Key West in order to send them to patrol sectors in the Florida Strait:

...all I had to do is call my ships back. Simple: I wrote an OPIMMEDIATE [Operational Immediate transmission precedence, second only to Flash] message to my Flagship, telling them to come back. You never heard of the Air Force, though. Every one of their messages is OPIMMEDIATE. The backlog was impossible. . . . It took 38 hours for my first OPIMMEDIATE message to get through to Saufley [the Flagship], no more than 150 miles away.²⁰⁵

Had Captain Lassell not been able to get a message to Saufley via helicopter, there would have been no ships on patrol between Cuba and the United States for the first day

²⁰⁴ Rear Admiral Ernest E. Christiansen, interview by author, February 3, 1988; Wissman, letter to author, March 4, 1988. Essex was able to make the commitment because Rear Admiral Christiansen on his own authority had moved the carrier toward the Windward Passage in anticipation of some sort of tasking.

²⁰⁵ Captain Donald L. Lassell, letter to author, May 11, 1988. Emphasis is his.

and a half of the crisis. Captain Carmichael described the scene in Washington: "Communications were chaotic. . . . extremely wordy messages, including operations orders, hit the air in numbers you would not believe. The highest priority traffic was taking up to 48 hours to go from originator to addressees."²⁰⁶ These are the type of communications problems that give rise to decoupling and degrade crisis management.

The HF/SSB voice radio net also experienced problems. Not all of the ships had received the new HF/SSB equipment when the crisis erupted. CINCLANT reported a shortfall of 45 HF/SSB units that could not be alleviated during the crisis. Flag Plot and the Situation Room could not monitor every merchant ship intercept and submarine prosecution "real-time" because not every Navy ship had HF/SSB equipment and a few ships suffered casualties to their HF/SSB equipment. Participants in the crisis recall great difficulties with the HF/SSB voice circuits. The three HF/SSB nets in use during the crisis were often overloaded due to too many stations attempting to use a circuit, excessively long and detailed reporting requirements, and excessively long transmissions by higher authorities. Voice HF communications (even HF/SSB) are much more vulnerable to radio propagation problems than are radioteletype or

²⁰⁶ Carmichael, letter to author, March 8, 1988.

radiotelegraph HF communications. At times USS Essex had to relay HF/SSB voice transmissions between CINCLANT and Admiral Ward due to HF propagation problems. Admiral Ward noted that "Communications within the [quarantine] line and on other circuits were not good due to poor radio frequency propagation in the atmosphere."²⁰⁷ Thus, the key technological innovation that made direct control possible--HF/SSB voice radio--was degraded by a number of factors, among them excessive use of the capability.

There is an irony in the communications problems experienced during the Cuban Missile Crisis: the more communications circuits are used, the less they support the needs of their users. Military men understand this irony through their operational experience. Military communications procedures emphasize brevity of transmissions and military command procedures emphasize delegation of control. Sending a brief message executing a plan already held by recipients or simply stating the objective to be achieved is much more efficient than sending detailed plans specifying every aspect of an operation. The need for direct control must be balanced against the harmful effects of overloading communications channels.

²⁰⁷Ward, "Diary," p. 12; Christiansen, interview by author, February 3, 1988; Wissman, letter to author, March 4, 1988; Captain Charles H. Morrison, Commander Destroyer Squadron 24, interview by author, February 3, 1988; Dennison, "Reminiscences," p. 421.

Soon after the quarantine of Cuba was announced on October 22 the President and his advisors became aware that they did not have sufficient communications capabilities to manage the crisis in the manner they desired. During the first EXCOMM meeting on October 23, the "problem of effective communications" was discussed and the President's Science Advisor, Jerome B. Weisner, was appointed to head an inter-departmental review of the problem. Dr. Weisner presented an initial briefing on the communications situation at the October 24 morning EXCOMM meeting and the President "directed that most urgent action be taken by State, Defense and CIA to improve communications worldwide, but particularly in the Caribbean area."²⁰⁸ Thus, rather than adapt its crisis management approach to existing communications capabilities, the Kennedy Administration sought to expand those capabilities to support its approach. As the previous discussion of communications problems revealed, that effort was unsuccessful--the problems did not abate until after the crisis peaked and U.S. forces began to stand down.

In summary, although significant advances had been made in communications capabilities, U.S. leaders and the

²⁰⁸"October 23 EXCOMM Minutes," p. 3; McGeorge Bundy, "Executive Committee Record of Action, October 24, 1962, 10:00 A.M., Meeting No. 3," pp. 1-2 (declassified 1978. National Security Archive, Washington, DC, Cuban Missile Crisis file. Cited hereafter as "October 24 Morning EXCOMM Meeting Record of Action.").



military chain of command experienced serious communications problems in the Cuban Missile Crisis. In some instances it took longer to transmit messages to commanders off the coast of the United States in 1962 than it took to transmit messages to commanders in the Taiwan Strait in 1958. This demonstrates conclusively that command and control capabilities are not directly, or even primarily, a function of technology. Variance in crisis outcomes--in terms of the degree to which national leaders maintain control of events and prevent inadvertent escalation--is not accounted for by variation in command and control technology. In other words, better radios do not guarantee better crisis management. There are additional variables that affect how effectively military operations are controlled in a crisis.

In the Cuban Missile Crisis the primary determinant was the emphasis on exercising close, detailed, direct control of military operations. Emphasis on direct control was not accompanied by consideration of the implications this might have for the effective conduct of military operations. There was a lack of appreciation for the organizational, procedural, and operational requirements for effectively exercising direct control. As has been shown, impulsive efforts to exercise direct control generated communications problems that degraded the effectiveness of direct control. The President's civilian advisors appear not to have appreciated that communications capabilities



need to be jealously guarded rather than ruthlessly exploited.

President Kennedy's desire to maintain control of events was implemented impulsively during the crisis, reflecting the novelty and complexity of the situation and the need for improvisation to meet the President's crisis management objectives. No attempt was made to formulate a comprehensive command and control doctrine that designated methods of control for specific operations, what decision-making authority would be delegated and what would be reserved for the President, and procedures for shifting control of operations up and down the chain of command. These issues were addressed on an ad hoc basis in response to concerns over the implications of particular operations.

The implicit objective was to exercise direct control over all military and naval operations. This, of course, was not feasible. The President and his top advisors were forced by the immense scale of operations being conducted to focus their attention on particular operations. Seven areas appear to have been singled out for close attention. Navy quarantine operations, particularly the intercept and boarding of Soviet bloc ships, received first priority for White House attention and control. Vice Admiral Houser has pointed out additional areas of attention: "The big concerns were reconnaissance flights over Cuba, the [SAC] airborne alert, civil defense, the Marines, and air

strikes."²⁰⁹ The Marines, he clarified, meant invasion plans and preparations. Records from EXCOMM meetings reveal that all of these topics except civil defense were discussed at length. The records of the EXCOMM meetings held October 23 and 26 indicate that civil defense, particularly measures for the southeastern United States, was a concern, but was generally discussed in separate meetings.²¹⁰ The final area that received close attention was operations by Navy ships close to Cuban waters. Whenever Navy ships trailing Soviet vessels or conducting other surveillance approached the coast of Cuba, their movements were closely monitored. To summarize, the areas that received close attention were quarantine operations, reconnaissance flights over Cuba, the SAC DEFCON 2 alert, civil defense, invasion and air strike preparations, and operations near Cuba.

What is striking is that this focusing of attention appears to have occurred without a deliberate decision as to which military operations warranted the President's direct attention. None of the available records show this topic being discussed with the President or among his advisors during the many meetings held in the week prior to the

²⁰⁹Houser, interview by author, February 11, 1988.

²¹⁰McGeorge Bundy, "Executive Committee Record of Action, October 23, 1962, 6 PM, Meeting No. 2," p. 1 (Declassified 1978. National Security Archive, Washington, DC, Cuban Missile Crisis file. Cited Hereafter as "October 23 Evening EXCOMM Meeting Record of Action."); "October 26 EXCOMM Meeting Summary Record," pp. 1-2.

crisis or during the crisis. The President apparently desired to control the operations with greatest likelihood of involving U.S. forces in an incident with Soviet or Cuban forces. Several observers have noted that the President was concerned that an incident might occur, particularly between Navy ships on the quarantine line and Soviet merchant ships.²¹¹ This accounts for attention to quarantine operations, reconnaissance flights over Cuba, and surveillance operations near Cuba. Concern for incidents also should have led to close control of Navy ASW operations, which generated the most intense interactions with Soviet forces during the crisis. However, although the President was aware of the danger of a confrontation with Soviet submarines and had the ability to monitor ASW operations "real time," he made no effort to exercise direct control while submarines were being trailed.²¹² Thus, selection of particular operations for close attention and control to appears to have been spontaneous and intuitive, rather than planned and carefully considered.

²¹¹ Shepard, interview by author, February 10, 1988; Chew, "Reminiscences," p. 318; Hilsman, p. 213; Sorenson, p. 708. Also see Abel, p. 153; Pachter, pp. 42-43.

²¹² On the President's concern over an incident with Soviet submarines, see Robert Kennedy, p. 70; Sorenson, pp. 705, 710; Schlesinger, Robert Kennedy, p. 514. Despite this concern, ASW was not a focus of attention. Vice Admiral Houser told the author, referring to McNamara, Gilpatric and the EXCOMM, that "ASW was viewed as part of support operations, it wasn't one of the major concerns." Houser, interview by author, February 11, 1988.

There was little consistency in the manner that operations were controlled. The White House would pay little attention to a particular operation, tacitly delegating control of it, then suddenly intervene and attempt to exercise close control over it. Just as suddenly, the White House would move on to other problems, leaving the chain of command in the dark as to the extent of their authority. This inconsistency--impulsively seizing control of tactical operations--appears to have been what annoyed military commanders the most.

A fundamental principle of military command, often called "unity of command," is that a commander must always know from whom he is receiving orders. The U.S. armed forces use formal procedures to designate commanders and transfer control of operations among them in order to avoid ambiguity and conflicts over who is authorized to give orders. For example, the Navy uses formal "CHOP" (Change of Operational Commander) procedures to designate the precise time at which control over a unit shifts from one commander to another. Although these procedures for transferring control are formal, they are also flexible and rapid. Transferring control of a unit or operation can be done by written message or instantaneously over voice radio. There are also standard procedures for automatically transferring control, intended for emergency situations in which a commander has to issue urgent orders without formally

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that every entry should be supported by a valid receipt or invoice. This not only helps in tracking expenses but also ensures compliance with tax regulations.

In the second section, the author outlines the various methods used to collect and analyze data. These include surveys, interviews, and focus groups. Each method has its own strengths and weaknesses, and the choice depends on the specific research objectives.

The third section delves into the statistical analysis of the collected data. It covers topics such as descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, and regression analysis. The goal is to identify patterns and trends in the data that can inform decision-making.

Finally, the document concludes with a summary of the findings and recommendations. It highlights the key insights gained from the research and provides practical advice for implementing these findings in a business context.

assuming control. But even in this situation, military standing orders specify procedures to avoid ambiguity of control. Thus, the military had concepts and procedures for shifting operational control that could have been adapted to meet the needs of the President.

The White House did not implement formal procedures for designating which operations the President wished to control or for transferring control of specific operations up and down the chain of command. Navy commanders never knew when the White House might suddenly intervene in their operations or countermand orders they had given. Simple, rapid procedures for designating when the White House was exercising direct control would have enhanced the President's ability to control military operations while avoiding ambiguity of command. There is no evidence that the need for such procedures was even considered.

This was a failure not only of the President's civilian advisors, who had the excuse of having virtually no experience with military operations, but also of the Joint Chiefs--particularly the Chairman. During the crisis General Taylor was the only JCS member who routinely met with the President, attended EXCOMM meetings, and received orders from the Secretary of Defense. He was in the perfect position to address the command and control implications of the President's approach to managing the crisis, but apparently never made an effort to do so.

Senior Navy leaders, particularly Admiral Anderson and Admiral Dennison, also could have devised procedures for facilitating White House control, but instead made a concerted effort to protect the chain of command from what they viewed as White House interference. Admiral Anderson discusses this frankly in his oral history: "I was determined, as far as the Navy was concerned, that we had two principle considerations. . . . Second, that there was to be a firm impediment by the higher authorities of the Navy for any direct control or interference by our civilian authorities to our operating forces. [sic] We did not want, and I had it pretty well set up, to prevent any intrusion by McNamara or anybody else in the direct operations of any ship or squadron or anything of the sort."²¹³ Admirals Anderson and Dennison reacted as they did not only because direct White House control of operations affronted their professional sensibilities, but also because of the manner in which the White House sought to exercise direct control. Rather than work with the military to devise command procedures appropriate for the President's desire to control events, McNamara implemented on an ad hoc basis what was in effect a major change in U.S. command and control doctrine.

²¹³ Anderson, "Reminiscences," p. 550. He made the same point to the author: "I particularly took the position that control of the ships at sea had to go by the chain of command." Anderson, interview by author, January 25, 1988. Also see Dennison, "Reminiscences," p. 421.

To place this discussion in the analytical framework introduced in Chapter IV, the Kennedy Administration sought to employ methods of control at the tight end of the "tightness of control" spectrum. The objective was to exercise positive direct control, in which communications links with operational forces are used to control their movements and actions on a real-time basis. The White House was not able to effectively exercise positive direct control over all military operations due to limitations in communications systems and the vast scale of the operations being conducted. The President and his advisors focused their attention on specific operations and made de facto delegations of authority in other operational areas, tacitly relying on methods of delegated control. Employing a combination of direct and delegated control is not unusual, the Eisenhower Administration did the same thing in the 1958 Taiwan Strait Crisis. What was unusual was the Kennedy Administration's reluctance to admit that it could not possibly exercise positive direct control over all the military operations in progress and its reliance on de facto rather than formal delegation of authority.

As part of their effort to maintain control over military operations, the President and his advisors paid close attention to the mechanisms of indirect control. The manner in which the quarantine was conducted illustrates this. Rather than allow the Navy to carry out the



quarantine in accordance with its standing orders, McNamara and the President had the CNO prepare mission orders specifying how the operation was to be conducted, then carefully reviewed and approved them. The procedures contained in the mission orders were changed very little from those contained in Navy standing orders, but the President had ascertained that the quarantine would be conducted in a manner that supported his political objectives.²¹⁴

The manner in which contingency plans were used during the crisis is particularly interesting. In mid-1961, not long after the Bay of Pigs affair, the President directed the Joint Chiefs to commence contingency planning for

²¹⁴The original plans for a limited blockade were drawn up by Admiral Dennison and Vice Admiral Ward on October 20. The CNO briefed the President on Navy quarantine plans the afternoon of October 21 and McNamara approved the quarantine orders that evening. See "DOD Operations," p. 2; Ward, "Diary," pp. 4-6; Abel, p. 107. Admiral Anderson and Admiral Griffin state the procedures were basically the same as those in Navy tactical publications. Anderson, interview by author, January 25, 1988; Griffin, letter to author, April 6, 1988. Vice Admiral Caldwell, who drafted the instructions for the quarantine, states that the only change made to them was to delete POL from the initial list of prohibited items. Caldwell, letter to author, March 14, 1988. One of the most important innovations, to put Russian-speaking officers on the quarantine line ships, originated with CINCLANT. Dennison, "Reminiscences," pp. 428. Captain Nicholas S. Mikhalevsky, Commanding Officer of USS Joseph P. Kennedy (DD 850), one of two ships that boarded the Marucla, states that he followed the procedure for intercept and boarding "as described in the pertinent NWP [Naval Warfare Publication]." Captain Nicholas S. Mikhalevsky, letter to author, March 23, 1988.

military action against Cuba. JCS assigned responsibility for these plans to CINCLANT because Cuba was in his area of responsibility. Initially two contingency plans were produced: Operation Plan [OPLAN] 312-61 (later renumbered 312-62) for air strikes against Cuba and OPLAN 314-61 for invasion of Cuba. These plans were tentatively approved by JCS in the fall of 1961. Later in the year JCS directed CINCLANT to prepare an alternative invasion contingency plan, which was ready by early 1962 and designated OPLAN 316-62. All three CINCLANT OPLANs were reviewed and updated continuously through October 1962.²¹⁵

OPLAN 312-61 was a contingency plan for quick reaction air strikes against Cuban air defenses in preparation for the Army airborne assault contained in OPLAN 314-61. Prior to September 1962 Cuba had only rudimentary air defenses, so OPLAN 312-61 contained relatively small-scale air strikes covering a four-hour period. As the Soviets modernized and expanded Cuba's air defenses it became apparent that this plan would not be adequate. On September 7, 1962, the Tactical Air Command began working on an entirely new plan. This plan, code named "Rockpile," was approved by the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, General Curtis E. Lemay, on

²¹⁵"CINCLANT Historical Account," pp. 17-22; Vice Admiral Wallace M. Beakley, "Presentation to the Naval War College," December 11, 1962 (Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC, Personal Papers of Vice Admiral Wallace M. Beakley, Box 6, Book 4), p. 15; Ward, "Diary," pp. 2-3; Dennison, "Reminiscences," pp. 415-17.

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In addition, the document highlights the role of technology in modern accounting. The use of accounting software can significantly reduce the risk of human error and streamline the data entry process. It also provides real-time access to financial data, allowing managers to make informed decisions quickly. However, it is crucial to ensure that the software used is secure and compliant with relevant regulations. Proper training for staff is also essential to maximize the benefits of these technological tools.

Finally, the document concludes by stating that a strong internal control system is the foundation of reliable financial reporting. This includes implementing clear policies and procedures, separating duties, and conducting regular internal audits. By adhering to these principles, organizations can minimize the risk of fraud and ensure the accuracy of their financial information.

September 27. The next day it was approved by CINCLANT and adopted as OPLAN 312-62. When he approved the plan, General Lemay set October 20 as the target date for readiness to execute OPLAN 312-62. Throughout October the Air Force carried out preparations to launch air strikes against Cuba, including relocating aircraft, prepositioning fuel and ammunition, setting up communications channels, and flying training combat missions against simulated Cuban targets (such as mock Soviet SAM sites).²¹⁶

OPLAN 312-62 contained three air strike options. The first, code named "Fire Hose," provided for "the selective destruction of a surface-to-air missile site or sites as directed by CINCLANT." It provided the option of small-scale air strikes for retaliatory or demonstrative purposes. Fire Hose could be launched on two hours notice. The second option, code named "Shoe Black," provided for larger air strikes against a wider range of targets, but limited as prescribed by CINCLANT. Targets included airfields, SAM sites, and missile complexes. Shoe Black also could be launched on two hours notice. The third option, code named "Scabbards 312," provided for destruction of all Cuban defenses (air, naval and ground) in preparation for invasion. Scabbards 312 could be launched on twelve hours notice. During the crisis, two additional options

²¹⁶"CINCLANT Historical Account," pp. 27, 162-63.



were added to OPLAN 312-63: "Full House," for destruction of all surface-to-air missile sites in Cuba, and "Royal Flush," for destruction of the entire Cuban air defense system. These two options could be launched on two hours notice. As the CINCLANT report notes, discovery of Soviet MRBMs in Cuba shifted the purpose of OPLAN 312-62: "The newly discovered ballistic missile sites had altered the purpose of the plan from the original objective of defeating Cuban air to one of defeating Cuban air and preventing destructive missile attacks on the United States." Thus, after October 16 Soviet offensive missile sites in Cuba were added to OPLAN 312-62²¹⁷

Most OPLAN 312-62 air strikes were to be carried out by the Air Force. The Navy role was limited to defense of Guantanamo and pre-landing air strikes in amphibious objective areas. Additionally, however, a large number of Navy and Marine shore-based fighter and attack aircraft were placed under Air Force command to augment the Tactical Air

²¹⁷ "CINCLANT Historical Account," pp. 17-20, 163; Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff, Memorandum JSCM-821-62, "Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense: Timing Factors," October 25, 1962 (Declassified 1984. Reproduced in Johns, "Naval Quarantine," p. 90. Cited hereafter as "JSCM-821-62). The code name "Scabbards" originally designated the operations that were to be carried out under OPLAN 316-62, which included the third option in OPLAN 312-62. On October 23 JCS directed that the code name "Scabbards" be used to cover all operations related to Soviet deployment of offensive weapons in Cuba, thus covering the quarantine as well. However, the quarantine was not designated or referred to as "Operation Scabbards."

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Item ID	Description	Quantity	Unit Price	Total Value
001	Office Supplies	100	5.00	500.00
002	Printing Services	500	1.00	500.00
003	IT Support	200	2.50	500.00
004	Travel Expenses	10	50.00	500.00
005	Professional Fees	50	10.00	500.00

Command for execution of the Air Force portion of OPLAN 312-62.²¹⁸

OPLAN 314-61 was for invasion of Cuba and overthrow of the Castro government. CINCLANT states that "The plan called for a simultaneous amphibious and airborne assault in the Havana area by a Joint Task Force within eighteen days after the receipt of the order to execute." The Joint Task Force, JTF-122, consisted of the Eighteenth Airborne Corps, Nineteenth Air Force, Second Marine Expeditionary Force, Amphibious Force Atlantic, Joint Unconventional Warfare Task Force Atlantic, and other units. The plan contained an option, designated "314 Golf," for execution of the invasion on four days notice. This was to be achieved by executing OPLAN 314-61, then halting it at D-4, four days before invasion. On October 26 JCS cancelled OPLAN 314-61 and directed that OPLAN 316-62 be used, allowing commanders to focus on a single contingency invasion plan.²¹⁹

²¹⁸ "CINCLANT Historical Account," pp. 17-20. The Navy had two attack carrier air groups afloat (about fourteen fighter and attack squadrons), one attack carrier air group ashore (six squadrons), and about six Navy and Marine squadrons ashore in Guantanamo and Puerto Rico designated for air strikes against Cuba. The Tactical Air Command was assigned two attack carrier air groups ashore (about twelve squadrons) and a Marine air group (three squadrons) for air strikes against Cuba. Additionally, the Continental Air Defense Command was assigned one Marine and two Navy fighter squadrons and several Navy shore-based airborne early warning aircraft to augment air defenses in Florida.

²¹⁹ Ibid, pp. 20-21. "D-4" is the military abbreviation designating four days prior to "D-Day," which in turn is the designated day for launching an assault.

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that every entry should be supported by a valid receipt or invoice. This ensures transparency and allows for easy verification of the data. The text also mentions that regular audits are necessary to identify any discrepancies or errors in the accounting process. It is noted that such audits help in maintaining the integrity of the financial statements and provide a clear picture of the company's financial health.

Furthermore, the document highlights the role of technology in modern accounting. It suggests that using accounting software can significantly reduce the risk of human error and streamline the data entry process. The text also touches upon the importance of staying updated with the latest tax laws and regulations to ensure full compliance. It is advised that companies should consult with a professional accountant or tax advisor to navigate the complex landscape of tax requirements.

In conclusion, the document stresses that a robust accounting system is essential for the long-term success of any business. It provides a clear framework for how to manage financial records effectively, from initial data collection to final reporting. The goal is to ensure that all financial activities are properly documented and reported, leading to informed decision-making and sustainable growth.

The second part of the document focuses on the practical aspects of implementing an accounting system. It provides a step-by-step guide for setting up the system, including the selection of appropriate software and the training of staff. It also discusses the importance of establishing clear policies and procedures for handling financial data. The text mentions that a well-defined chart of accounts is crucial for organizing the data and ensuring consistency in reporting.

Additionally, the document addresses the issue of data security. It advises that all financial information should be stored securely and protected from unauthorized access. Regular backups are recommended to prevent data loss in the event of a system failure or cyber attack. The text also notes that it is important to have a disaster recovery plan in place to ensure business continuity.

Finally, the document concludes by reiterating the importance of ongoing monitoring and review. It suggests that companies should regularly review their accounting processes to identify areas for improvement and ensure that they remain efficient and effective. The overall message is that a proactive approach to accounting management is key to achieving financial stability and success.

OPLAN 316-62 was originally drafted as a quick reaction joint airborne and amphibious assault against Cuba. It differed from OPLAN 314-61 primarily in that it used much smaller forces for the initial assault, allowing an invasion to be launched on shorter notice. OPLAN 316-62 originally called for the initial assault to be launched five days after the President ordered an invasion. The remainder of the invasion force was to be landed no later than eighteen days after the order was given. On October 17 the interval from decision to initial assault was increased to seven days, which allowed more forces to be landed in the initial assault and reduced the time between initial assault and landing of reinforcements. OPLAN 312-62 air strikes were to commence twelve hours after the invasion order was given and continue throughout the week prior to D-Day.²²⁰

As the full extent of the Cuban military build-up became known, the forces committed to OPLAN 316-62 the invasion were significantly increased. The Fifth Marine Expeditionary Brigade from Camp Pendleton was added to the initial assault and the Army's First Armored Division was added to the forces to be landed later. Total Marine Corps forces included a total of nine battalion landing teams, roughly 28,000 troops. Army forces to be landed in the initial assault included the 82nd and 101st Airborne

²²⁰ Ibid, pp. 21-23; JSCM-821-62, p.1.



Divisions, the First Infantry Division, two artillery battalions, a light tank company, and Special Forces units. Follow-on Army forces included the Second Infantry Division, the First Armored Division, three artillery battalions and two artillery groups, two tank battalions, and an array of support forces. Army tactical nuclear weapon units-- equipped with Honest John, Long John, and Davy Crockett rockets--were alerted, but placed in an "on-call" status in the United States rather than included in the invasion force. Total Army forces committed to the invasion of Cuba exceeded 100,000 troops.²²¹

In addition to these three contingency plans, the Navy had two additional contingency plans. CINCLANTFLT Operation Order (OPORD) 36-61 was for the evacuation and defense of Guantanamo. The evacuation and reinforcement portions of this OPORD were carried out during the crisis, but no Cuban threat to the base developed, so the combat operations contained in the OPORD were not executed. CINCLANTFLT OPORD 41-62, issued October 3, 1962, was for a total blockade of Cuba in support of OPLANS 314-61 or 316-62. When the President decided to impose a limited "search and seizure" blockade of offensive weapons to Cuba, OPORD 41-62 was superseded by CINCLANTFLT OPORD 43-62, issued October 20. From this point onward the President had decided to conduct

²²¹"CINCLANT Historical Account," pp. 58-85, 153-161.



a limited blockade and the OPORDs took on the character of mission orders rather than contingency plans. OPORD 43-62 was substantially revised to reflect additional Presidential guidance and re-issued as CINCLANTFLT OPORD 45-62 on October 21, 1962. This OPORD was used to conduct the quarantine, with minor revisions (primarily renaming the blockade a quarantine) issued on October 22 and 23. It was supplemented by Commander Second Fleet (COMSECONDFLT) OPORD 1-62, issued by Admiral Ward on October 22.²²²

Recollections vary as to how much the President and McNamara knew about the CINCLANT contingency plans prior to October. Admiral Dennison states in his oral history that "My plans were approved by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and, of course, were known to the President."²²³ Most senior Navy officers involved in the crisis state McNamara undoubtedly was briefed on the contingency plans given his attention to detail. Vice Admiral Houser states that while Deputy Secretary of Defense Gilpatric probably was aware of the plans, he probably was not briefed on them "until it was needed," which would have been in early October. The same may also be true for McNamara and President Kennedy: they probably were aware of the contingency plans but not briefed on them in detail until early October. The civilian

²²² Ibid, pp. 39, 103, 153.

²²³ Dennison, "Reminiscences," p. 416.

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official who appears to have known the most about the plans was Robert Kennedy due to his being Chairman of the Cuba Coordinating Committee, which reviewed all plans and preparations for action against Cuba. Vice Admiral Blouin, Secretary to the Joint Chiefs immediately prior to the crisis, suggested that Robert Kennedy probably reviewed the contingency plans.²²⁴

What is clear, however, is that McNamara and the President paid close attention to the Cuban contingency plans after October 1, when McNamara directed the Chiefs to commence general preparations to execute them. On October 4 McNamara sent the President a memorandum primarily assessing the Soviet SAM sites in Cuba, but also responding to a Presidential inquiry as to the impact of the SAMs on the Cuban contingency plans. McNamara reassured the President that "I have taken steps to insure that our contingency plans for Cuba are kept up to date."²²⁵ The Cuban contingency plans were discussed at length during the October 16 meetings with the President on the Soviet MRBMs discovered in Cuba. In those meetings McNamara demonstrates thorough knowledge of the plans and defends the Air Force

²²⁴Houser, interview by author, February 11, 1988; Blouin, letter to author, March 1, 1988.

²²⁵Secretary of Defense, Memorandum for the President, "Presidential Interest in SA-2 Missile System and Contingency Planning for Cuba," October 4, 1962 (Declassified 1978. John F. Kennedy Library, Boston, MA, National Security Files, Cuba folders).

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view that air strikes would have to cover a wide range of air defense targets rather than just the MRBM sites. By the October 27 EXCOMM meeting, when it appeared that air strikes and invasion might have to be ordered in the next few days, even the President was able to discuss the contingency plans in great detail, including the number of sorties that would be required to execute OPLAN 312-62.²²⁶

A striking feature of President Kennedy's management of the crisis is his ordering implementation of specific actions contained in the Cuban contingency plans without authorizing execution of the overall plans. The President was aware of the need to commence preparations for an invasion of Cuba, and during the first meeting of the crisis on October 16 directed that such preparations proceed.²²⁷ However, he appears to have refused to actually execute the Cuban contingency plans--even the preparatory phases. Instead, the President approved specific invasion and air strike preparations individually, which required that operational commanders write separate orders for those actions, rather than simply implementing the guidance contained in the contingency plans. By October 16 the President should have known, given his attention to the

²²⁶ See "October 16 Morning Meeting Transcript," pp. 11-17, 21-26; "October 16 Evening Meeting Transcript," pp. 9-10, 17-23; "October 27 Meetings Transcript," pp. 52, 63-65, 74, 86-88.

²²⁷ "October 16 Morning Meeting Transcript," p. 27.



contingency planning, that just the preparatory phases of the two invasion plans could be executed so as to be prepared for invasion later.²²⁸ Nevertheless, he refused to be bound by the timetables and courses of action in the two plans. He was not alone. Assistant Secretary of Defense Paul Nitze has stated that he and Secretary of State Rusk agreed when they first heard about the Soviet missiles that "the United States must move with deliberation, not merely proceed with existing contingency plans."²²⁹

The President recalled the lessons from Barbara Tuchman's The Guns of August. He appears to have been deeply concerned that he would become trapped by execution of the contingency plans, just as Europe's leaders had been trapped by execution of their war plans in 1914. President Kennedy seemed to fear that execution of the preparatory phase of OPLAN 316-62 would build momentum and pressure to carry out the rest of the plan.

Rather than executing OPLAN 316-62, the President incrementally authorized specific preparatory actions

²²⁸OPLAN 314-61 contained an option, designated "314 Golf," for execution of the invasion on four days notice--achieved by executing the plan, then halting it at D-4. OPLAN 316-62 consisted of four phases--alert, prepositioning and initial deployment, final deployment and pre-assault, and assault--and could be executed in phases. See "CINCLANT Historical Account," pp. 20-21, 87-89.

²²⁹Quoted in Abel, p. 33. Nitze's comments on his October 15 conversation with Rusk also shows that they knew about the air strike and invasion contingency plans.

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contained in the plan. This is revealed by a comment in the CINCLANT report on the October 22 JCS order sending the Fifth Marine Expeditionary Brigade from Camp Pendleton to the Caribbean: "This step appeared to be another incremental execution of actions outlined in the Contingency Plan without execution of the plan itself."²³⁰ The President would eventually authorize a wider range of preparations than were originally included in OPLAN 316-62, indicating that it was not his intent to constrain the ability of the military to carry out the plan if he so ordered. His objective was maintaining control of events.

Incremental authorization of the preparatory actions called for in OPLAN 316-62 does not appear to have seriously hindered the ability of the military to carry out those preparations. Serious logistical problems were encountered during the invasion preparations, particularly by the Army, but they were primarily the result of inadequate transportation resources. There were not sufficient numbers of transport planes, amphibious ships, or railroad cars to move all the men and equipment called for in the plan in the allotted time. The decks of one ship designated to carry the First Armored Division to Cuba were not far enough apart to carry tanks. Port, airfield, and rail capacity in the southeastern United States was saturated by the movement of

²³⁰"CINCLANT Historical Account," p. 144.

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forces into the area.²³¹ None of these problems were caused by the manner in which the President managed the crisis.

On the other hand, incremental authorization of the preparatory actions called for in OPLAN 316-62 and the decision to impose a quarantine on offensive arms rather than execute the existing contingency plan for a total blockade of Cuba were the causes of the overloading experienced by U.S. communications systems. As was discussed above, rather being able to send a short message stating "Execute OPLAN 312-62, OPLAN 316-62, and OPORD 41-62," JCS was forced to transmit detailed instructions for ad hoc actions authorized by the President. The most severe crisis management problem encountered during the crisis--overloading of communications channels--was thus generated by the manner in which the President elected to manage the crisis. The President's objective of maintaining control of events was sound, but the means he employed to pursue that objective degraded his ability to control events. This is an example of a tension between political and military considerations in crisis management, one that was not anticipated by the President or his civilian advisors.

Rules of engagement were used to exercise indirect control over certain military operations during the Cuban Missile Crisis, particularly quarantine force operations.

²³¹Ibid, pp. 58-85, 153-67.



For the most part, however, naval operations were governed by standing peacetime rules of engagement issued by JCS, CINCLANT, CINCLANTFLT, and Commander Anti-Submarine Warfare Force Atlantic (COMASWFORLANT). When special rules of engagement were issued, they generally reiterated the guidance contained in standing peacetime rules.²³²

The rules of engagement for the quarantine of Cuba were drafted by Captain Turner F. Caldwell of OPNAV (the CNO's staff). Captain Caldwell commenced working on detailed blockade procedures, including rules of engagement, on Friday, October 19, after McNamara directed the CNO to prepare plans for a limited blockade on offensive arms to Cuba. Captain Caldwell completed them the next day and the CNO presented them to McNamara that afternoon. The CNO briefed the President and his advisors on Navy plans for the quarantine on Sunday, October 21, and McNamara approved the final plans--including the rules of engagement--that evening. The JCS directive for the quarantine was issued on Monday, October 22. It included the rules of engagement drafted by Captain Caldwell, with virtually no changes.²³³

²³²The one exception to this was protection of reconnaissance flights over Cuba. The right to use force in self defense was specifically denied to U.S. forces and the decision to use force was reserved for the President.

²³³"DOD Operations," pp. 2, 9; Caldwell, letters to author, March 14, 1988, and April 27, 1988. According to Vice Admiral Caldwell, the only change made to his rules for the quarantine was deletion of POL (petroleum, oil and lubricants) from the list of prohibited items.

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Although not a part of the quarantine rules of engagement per se, use of force against merchant vessels was addressed in the intercept and boarding procedures issued by CINCLANTFLT:

In stopping ships to be visited, use all/any available communications to signify intent, including such means as international code signals, flashing light, radio, or loud speakers. If these means fail, warning shots shall be fired across the bow, or, in the case of submarines, equivalent warning action. These means failing, minimum force may be used. Attempt, if possible, to damage only non-vital parts, such as the rudder, and attempt to avoid injuries or loss of life. . . . If destruction of ship is necessary, ample warning and intentions should be given to permit sufficient time for debarkation by passengers and crew. Assistance to maximum extent permitted by operational conditions should be furnished.²³³

This was essentially the same as guidance contained in Navy tactical publications. According to Vice Admiral Caldwell, "The chief difference was stress on caution. It was desired to accomplish the purpose with minimum use of force."²³⁴

Thus, other than emphasizing caution, the quarantine guidance served only to reiterate standard Navy procedures

The rules of engagement for the quarantine issued by CINCLANTFLT, based on JCS guidance, were as follows:

²³³ Commander in Chief U.S. Atlantic Fleet, CINCLANTFLT 231710Z OCT 62, Revised OPOD 45-62, naval message, October 23, 1962 (Declassified 1986. Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington DC. Cited hereafter as CINCLANTFLT 231710Z OCT 62.). Also see Robert Kennedy pp. 60-61; Sorenson, p. 698; "Ships Must Stop," New York Times, October 23, 1962, p. 1; "Blockade Begins at 10 A.M. Today," New York Times, October 24, 1962, p. 1.

²³⁴ Caldwell, letter to author, March 14, 1988.

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Any ships, including surface warships, armed merchant ships or submarines, or any aircraft, which interfere with or threaten to interfere with a U.S. ship engaged in visit and search will be treated as hostile and may be engaged to the extent required to terminate the interference. Any ships, including surface warships, armed merchant ships or submarines, or any aircraft, which take actions which can reasonably be considered as threatening a U.S. ship engaged in visit and search may be subjected to attack to the extent required to terminate the threat.²³⁵

These rules are not a change from standing peacetime naval rules of engagement, which always allow a ship to use force in self defense. The rules invoke the principle of anticipatory self defense upon detection of "actions which can reasonably be considered as threatening." This also is not different from peacetime rules of engagement: the Navy had adopted the principle of anticipatory self defense in 1958. The quarantine rules of engagement thus served to reiterate the guidance contained in standing peacetime rules.²³⁶

The basic guidance contained in the quarantine rules of engagement was revealed publicly by the Kennedy

²³⁵ CINCLANTFLT 231710Z OCT 62.

²³⁶ Senior naval officers that participated in the crisis emphasized this point to the author. The CNO, the CNO's deputy for fleet operations, both of the attack carrier group commanders, and two ASW HUK group commanders all stated that the rules of engagement were basically similar to standing peacetime rules. Anderson, interview by author, January 25, 1988; Griffin, letter to author, April 6, 1988; Hayward, letter to author, February 17, 1988; Stroh, letter to author, February 18, 1988; Christiansen, interview by author, February 3, 1988; Admiral Noel A.M. Gayler, Commander Carrier Division Twenty (an ASW HUK group) during the crisis, letter to author, March 22, 1988. Several ship commanding officers made similar comments, and no one offered comments to the contrary.

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Administration. The New York Times stated on October 24 that "The blockading ships can also use force if attacked."²³⁷ The Quarantine Proclamation signed by the President on October 23 addressed the conditions under which force would be used against merchant ships: "In carrying out this order, force shall not be used except in case of failure or refusal to comply with directions, or with regulations or directives the Secretary of Defense issued hereunder, after reasonable efforts have been made to communicate them to the vessel or craft, or in case of self-defense. In any case force shall be used only to the extent necessary."²³⁸ If the Soviets and Cubans paid attention to these statements, they were forewarned of the actions that would provoke use of force by the United States.

The interesting point about the quarantine rules of engagement is that they specifically authorized use of force against submarines in self-defense or anticipatory self-defense. Secretary of Defense McNamara and President Kennedy reviewed and approved the proposed rules of engagement drafted by Captain Caldwell before they were issued by the JCS on Monday, October 22, and therefore should have known that U.S. Navy ships had specifically been given such

²³⁷ "Blockade Begins at 10 A.M. Today," New York Times, October 24, 1962, p. 21.

²³⁸ "The Soviet Threat to the Americas," Department of State Bulletin 47 (November 12, 1962): 717, reproduced in Larson, p. 77.



authority. It cannot be demonstrated conclusively that the President fully understood the implications of the quarantine rules of engagement. However, the fact that McNamara and the President authorized these rules strongly suggests that they appreciated the Navy's concern for the Soviet submarine threat and did not want to unnecessarily endanger Navy ships. This could well explain the President's concern that a clash with a Soviet submarine might be imminent on October 24.²³⁹ He may have been concerned not only because he did not know what a Soviet submarine captain or a U.S. destroyer captain might do, but also because he knew that U.S. ships were authorized to use force against Soviet submarines in self-defense.

Rules of engagement were also issued for encounters with Cuban air and naval forces. The guidance promulgated by Commander Key West Force (COMKWESTFOR) to the forces operating near Cuba was that "Any ship or aircraft which attacks, or reasonably threatens to attack, a US flag ship will be treated as hostile and may be engaged to the extent required to terminate the threat."²⁴⁰ Although these rules authorized use of force in anticipatory self-defense, Navy operational commanders emphasized caution and restraint in

²³⁹ Robert Kennedy, p. 70. Also see Sorenson, p. 705.

²⁴⁰ CTG 81.6 261524Z OCT 62, OPORD 31-62 Change One, naval message, October 26, 1962 (Declassified 1986. Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington DC).



applying the rules. Captain Donald L. Lassell, Deputy Commander of the Key West Force and Commander of the Florida Strait Protection of Shipping Patrol, states that "my ships had orders to return fire if fired upon, but not to initiate an action without clearing it first with me. We had no intention of initiating hostilities."²⁴¹ This illustrates a tactical-level operational commander issuing guidance that is more restrictive than the guidance contained in rules of engagement issued by higher authority. Captain Lassell could do this effectively because he was near the scene of action and in direct communications with his ships.

Anticipatory self defense was authorized because Cuba had recently received Soviet-built Komar-class fast attack craft armed with SS-N-2 anti-ship cruise missiles. The Cuban Missile Crisis marked the first crisis in which U.S. naval forces had to cope with the threat of anti-ship cruise missiles. The rules of engagement issued by Commander Key West Force for the Komar missile boat threat stated "Permission is granted to immediately engage and destroy any Komar-class PGMG [guided missile fast patrol boat] which makes a hostile approach on U.S. naval forces or U.S. merchant ships."²⁴² Captain Robert E. Brady, Commanding

²⁴¹Lassell, letter to author, May 11, 1988.

²⁴²CTG 81.6 011603Z NOV 62, OPORD 33-62, naval message, November 1, 1962 (Declassified 1986. Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington DC).



Officer of USS John R. Perry (DE 1034), one of the ships on patrol in the Florida Strait during the crisis, states:

The rules of engagement were basically those of self-preservation--fire if fired upon. The exception was that we were to fire if it became obvious that we were about to be fired upon. This was apparently a concession to the missile threat, but it was not really carte blanche, because we were in constant communication with COMKWESTFOR, and CINCLANT or CINCLANTFLT would jump in quickly if there was any hint of trouble.²⁴³

Thus, although U.S. Navy ships were authorized to use force in anticipatory self-defense due to the Cuban Komar threat, operational commanders closely monitored the tactical situation in order to maintain control over engagements.

It is not known if President Kennedy personally approved anticipatory self-defense against Cuban Komar missile boats. The principle of anticipatory self-defense had been approved by the JCS and the President in 1953 and adopted by the the Navy in 1958, so Navy commanders could authorize anticipatory self-defense on their own authority. The President would have had to specifically deny this option to the Navy. The President may have been briefed on the threat from Cuban Komars and the proposed rules of engagement for dealing with them--this would be consistent with the detailed briefings he received on other military operations--but it is also possible that the issue was never raised at his level.

²⁴³ Captain Robert E. Brady, letter to author, April 21, 1988.



U.S. Navy forces other than those under Commander Key West Force would have been governed by standing peacetime rules of engagement in an encounter with Cuban forces. Vice Admiral John T. Hayward, commander of the USS Enterprise (CVAN 65) attack carrier group during the crisis, provided comments illustrating how the peacetime rules functioned:

They [the rules of engagement] were not significantly different [from peacetime rules], but I was prepared to engage any threat as I perceived it to the Task Force and instructed all hands to that effect. In that respect I guess they were different from the normal rules in existence at that time. My instructions from CINCLANTFLT, particularly Admiral Beakley, Chief of Staff, was to make sure no one had a chance to attack us. . . . I would have fired on any Cuban planes approaching the Task force and so instructed my people. For some reason people feel we did not have this authority. I can assure you we would have fired [on] and intercepted any plane inbound for the Task Force. One cannot afford to take any chances in such a situation. One must realize the speed of an engagement of that type and [that] one doesn't have a chance to do much but to make sure everyone in the Force knew not to hesitate or ask for any instructions on the matter. . . . The Komar patrol boats were the biggest danger at night and I couldn't let anyone get into missile range because of this. If a Komar had a Styx [SS-N-2] missile aboard, I certainly wasn't going to delay destroying it.²⁴⁴

Vice Admiral Hayward had ample authority under Navy peacetime rules of engagement to take all of the actions he describes. The primary difference from peacetime rules that he identifies is the emphasis on anticipatory self defense--firing before being fired on. Although this had been a part of Navy doctrine for four years, few Navy officers were

²⁴⁴ Hayward, letter to author, February 17, 1988.

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In addition, the document highlights the need for a clear and concise reporting structure. Management should be provided with timely and accurate financial statements that clearly show the company's performance over a specific period. This includes the income statement, balance sheet, and cash flow statement. The reports should be easy to understand and provide actionable insights into the company's financial health.

Furthermore, the document stresses the importance of maintaining up-to-date financial records. This involves regularly updating the accounting system with all new transactions and ensuring that the data is accurate and complete. It also suggests implementing strong internal controls to prevent fraud and ensure the integrity of the financial information. This includes separating duties and having a system of checks and balances.

The document also discusses the role of technology in modern accounting. It notes that using accounting software can significantly improve efficiency and accuracy. It allows for automated data entry, real-time reporting, and easier integration with other business systems. However, it also warns against relying solely on technology and emphasizes the need for proper training and oversight to ensure the system is used correctly and securely.

Finally, the document concludes by reiterating the importance of a strong financial foundation for the success of any business. It encourages business owners to take a proactive approach to their accounting, staying on top of their financial records and seeking professional advice when needed. By following these guidelines, businesses can ensure they have the financial information they need to make informed decisions and achieve their long-term goals.

familiar or experienced with the concept in 1962. Prior to that they had never been opposed by anti-ship cruise missiles. Vice Admiral Hayward's concern over the threat from Cuban Komar missile boats was typical of the concerns felt by Navy officers--concerns which generated the emphasis on anticipatory self defense.

As it had done with other aspects of the rules of engagement, the United States revealed the essence of its rules of engagement for Cuban forces. When asked during the background briefing he gave on October 22 if a Cuban attack on a U.S. ship would be considered an act of war, McNamara responded: "We will consider an attack by Cuban aircraft and/or ship against our aircraft or vessels warrants attack by us of the Cuban ship or aircraft. . . . The attack by a Cuban aircraft on one of our aircraft or on one of our ships warrants, I think, fire in return, directed to destroying that particular aircraft or ship."²⁴⁵ Cuba was thus forewarned against attacking U.S. vessels.

In addition to reviewing and authorizing the rules of engagement for the quarantine, the Kennedy Administration also launched a study of the rules of engagement that would be appropriate should fighting erupt at sea. On October 23

²³⁰ Robert S. McNamara, "Background Briefing on Cuban Situation," October 22, 1962, transcript prepared by the Office of the Secretary of Defense, pp. 39-40 (National Security Archive, Washington, DC, Cuban Missile Crisis file).



a Planning Subcommittee was formed to closely examine particular issues for the EXCOMM. One of the subjects of planning from October 24 onward was "rules of engagement for a protracted war at sea." The Department of Defense and JCS were tasked to study the issue, they in turn delegated the study to the Navy.²⁴⁶ It is not clear what prompted this study other than apprehension that the Soviets might try to break the blockade, provoking fighting at sea. The key point is that the EXCOMM was trying to anticipate the rules of engagement that would be needed for expanded hostilities.

The rules of engagement over which the White House exercised the closest control were those for engaging Cuban air defenses. The basic question was in what manner U.S. forces would respond to Soviet SA-2 SAMs firing on high altitude photographic reconnaissance flights, or Cuban anti-aircraft guns or Mig fighters firing on low altitude photographic reconnaissance flights. The U-2s that flew the high altitude flights and the Navy F8U-1P Corsairs and Air Force RF-101 Voodoos that flew the low altitude flights were all unarmed. Their only defense was evasive maneuvering and, for the Corsairs and Voodoos, speed. The initial .

²⁴⁶ See W.W. Rostow, Memorandum for McGeorge Bundy, "Report Number One of Planning Subcommittee," October 24, 1962 (Declassified 1975. National Security Archive, Washington, DC, Cuban Missile Crisis file.); W.W. Rostow, Memorandum for McGeorge Bundy, "Report Number Two of the Planning Subcommittee," October 25, 1962 (Declassified 1975. National Security Archive, Washington, DC, Cuban Missile Crisis file.).



policy decision was that military commanders would not be delegated authority to strike SAM or gun sites in Cuba that had fired on U.S. planes. On October 23 the President approved the following policy for retaliation against attacks on U-2 flights:

The President will be informed through SAC/DOD channels, and it is expected that if there is clear indication that the incident is the result of hostile action, the recommendation will be for immediate retaliation upon the most likely surface-to-air site involved in the action. The President delegated authority for decision on this point to the Secretary of Defense under the following conditions:

- (1) that the President himself should be unavailable
- (2) that ²⁴⁷evidence of hostile Cuban action should be very clear

The impact of this policy was to define strikes on Cuban air defenses as retaliation rather than self defense, and therefore beyond the scope of rules of engagement. It was, in effect, an order not to return fire when fired upon until the President, or at least the Secretary of Defense, ordered return fire. This policy was the most restrictive rules of engagement issued during the Cuban Missile Crisis.

The issue of defending high and low level photographic reconnaissance flights became critical on October 27, when a Soviet SAM downed a U-2 and Cuban guns fired on Navy Corsairs (none were hit). Although both incidents clearly met the criteria for retaliation, the President decided not

²⁴⁷"October 23 EXCOMM Minutes," pp. 1-2. Also see Sorenson, p. 713.



to authorize retaliation against Cuban air defenses. He and McNamara were clearly aware of the danger that this could result in more U.S. planes being shot down and more U.S. pilots being killed. The President's rationale in not ordering retaliation was to give Khrushchev an opportunity to respond to the letter the U.S. sent that day proposing a solution to the crisis.²⁴⁸ If Khrushchev's response was not satisfactory and if there were further attacks on U.S. reconnaissance planes, the President probably would have ordered limited air strikes on Cuban air defenses.²⁴⁹ In retrospect, the President's decision was a wise one-- probably one of the most important of the entire crisis. Khrushchev did accept the offer in the President's letter and there were no further attacks on U.S. planes.

²⁴⁸"October 27 Meetings Transcript," pp. 63-71. Also see Sorenson, p. 713.

²⁴⁹These retaliatory air strikes, rather than full-scale strikes against Soviet offensive missile sites, were probably the military action that Robert Kennedy had in mind when he told Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin on October 27 that "We had only a few more hours" and that the United States must have an answer by the next day. Robert Kennedy, pp. 108-9. The deadline is usually associated with his remark earlier in their conversation that "if they did not remove the bases we would remove them." However, if his account of the conversation is correct, he did not necessarily mean to imply that the United States would attack the offensive missile sites on Monday. Robert Kennedy had attended the EXCOMM meeting at which the President and McNamara had discussed retaliation against Cuban air defenses, so knew that this was imminent if there were further attacks on U.S. planes. Robert Kennedy also would have known that the President had not yet decided whether the next U.S. move would be a blockade of POL shipments to Cuba or full-scale air strikes against Soviet offensive missiles.

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The manner in which rules of engagement were used in the crisis illustrates the command and control problems that arose from the Kennedy Administration's approach to maintaining close control over military operations. Rules of engagement are intended to serve as a mechanism of indirect control, providing on-scene commanders with decisionmaking guidance for situations in which direct control is not feasible. Issuing rules of engagement presupposes that military commanders have been delegated authority to make tactical decisions based on those rules. If the President or other high-level commanders do not wish to delegate certain operational decisions, that should be spelled out in the guidance issued to on-scene commanders. This was only done formally in the case of retaliatory strikes on Cuban air defenses. In every other area of operations, mechanisms of indirect control were used in parallel with direct control over telephone lines and HF/SSB voice radio.

Using mechanisms of indirect control in parallel with methods direct control was not novel. The military chain of command does this routinely when it delegates certain operational decisions to subordinates while retaining other decisions for superiors. When the military chain of command does this, however, it is careful to specify exactly what authority has been delegated and what has not. Senior commanders refrain from intervening in areas of operational



decisionmaking delegated to subordinates except in emergencies. These principles avoid confusion over delegation of authority, but were not applied in the Cuban crisis.

On-scene commanders may have believed that they had authority that the President and McNamara did not intend to delegate to them. On the other hand, the President and McNamara may have believed that they had control over decisions that would not have been referred up the chain of command to them. Although the President and McNamara attempted to exercise direct control over certain naval operations, they still had to rely heavily on the prudence and judgement of on-scene commanders.

Naval Operations

The quarantine on shipments of offensive missiles to Cuba was the most important and visible naval operation conducted during the Cuban Missile Crisis, but it was far from being the only, or even the largest, naval operation of the crisis. Other operations conducted by the navy included anti-submarine warfare in the Atlantic and Caribbean, defense of Guantanamo Naval Base, low altitude photographic reconnaissance, surveillance and patrol around Cuba, preparations for air strikes against Cuba, preparations for amphibious invasion of Cuba, combined Latin America-United States quarantine force operations, air defense of the continental United States, and certain (still classified)

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special operations against Cuba. Of these various operations, only those that generated tactical-level interactions with Soviet vessels or submarines--the quarantine and anti-submarine warfare--will be discussed in detail.²⁵⁰

The option of blockading Cuba had been discussed within the Navy, JCS and Kennedy Administration for some time prior to the discovery of Soviet offensive missiles on October 14, 1962. After the Berlin Crisis in the fall of 1961, the President had directed the JCS to prepare contingency plans to blockade Cuba in retaliation for a Soviet blockade of Berlin--plans ranging from harassment

²⁵⁰For details on the operations not discussed in this study, see the following: On preparations for air strikes against Cuba, Attack Carrier Force operations, and Air Force operations, see "CINCLANT Historical Account," pp. 110-19, 162-67; Robert S. McNamara, "Notes on October 21, 1962 Meeting with the President," (Declassified 1985. National Security Archive, Washington, DC, Cuban Missile Crisis file); "Scenario for Airstrike Against Offensive Missile Bases and Bombers in Cuba," National Security Council, informal Cuba working group, final draft of internal memorandum, October 20, 1962 (Declassified 1985. National Security Archive, Washington, DC, Cuban Missile Crisis file). On preparations for invasion of Cuba, Amphibious Force operations, and Army operations, see "CINCLANT Historical Account," pp. 58-83, 141-52, 153-61; Admiral Horacio Rivero, Jr., "The Reminiscences of Admiral Horacio Rivero, Jr., U.S. Navy (Retired)," (Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, Oral History Program, 1975), pp. 411-447. On the reinforcement and defense of Guantanamo Naval Base, see "CINCLANT Historical Account," pp. 90-102, 153-61; "DOD Operations," pp. 9-11. On Combined Latin America-United States Quarantine Force (TF 137) operations, see "CINCLANT Historical Account," pp. 126-31; Commander Forrest R. Johns, "United We Stood," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 111 (January 1985): 78-84.

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of shipping and flights to total blockade--a form of what is now called the "lateral escalation" strategy. As the military build-up on Cuba gained momentum in the summer of 1962, Navy planners on the CNO's staff and at CINCLANTFLT began preparing plans for a total blockade of Cuba that were not contingent on prior Soviet action against Berlin. A blockade was called for in OPLANs 314-61 and 316-62, but contingency plans for it had not been prepared prior to the Cuban arms build-up. In late August Justice Department Counsel Norbert A. Schlei submitted a memorandum to the Attorney General suggesting that either a total blockade or a "visit and search" blockade, similar to that imposed by the United States on the eve of World War II, would be an appropriate response to Soviet introduction of offensive missiles in Cuba. On October 3 CINCLANTFLT issued a contingency plan (OPORD 41-62) for a total blockade of Cuba.²⁵¹ Thus, by early October the idea of a total or limited blockade of Cuba had been considered by civilian officials as well as by the military, and contingency plans existed for a total blockade of Cuba.

Given this prior consideration of plans to blockade Cuba, it is not surprising that blockading Cuba was discussed in the first meetings President Kennedy held with

²⁵¹Beakley, Naval War College Presentation, pp. 11-13; Caldwell, letter to author, March 14, 1988; Ward, "Diary," p. 1; Chayes, pp. 115-16; "CINCLANT Historical Account," p. 39.



his advisors on October 16 to discuss the the Soviet missiles in Cuba. Blockading Cuba was first mentioned by General Taylor that morning as an action to be taken in conjunction with air strikes against the Soviet missile sites.²⁵² In the afternoon meeting, McNamara proposed a "search and seizure" blockade as a separate option: "A second course of action we haven't discussed but lies in between the military course we began discussing a moment ago and the political course of action . . . would involve declaration of open surveillance; a statement that we would immediately impose . . . a blockade against offensive weapons entering Cuba in the future; . . ." ²⁵³

Initially, there was little support for a limited blockade: most EXCOMM members and the JCS preferred the air strike option and believed that a limited blockade would not be sufficient to force Khrushchev to remove the missiles already in Cuba. On Thursday, October 18, opinion in the EXCOMM began shifting in favor of a limited blockade. On the morning of October 20, the EXCOMM slightly favored the blockade option over the air strike option, but the Joint Chiefs still advocated large-scale air strikes. The President made an initial decision in favor of the limited blockade option Saturday afternoon (October 20) and, after

²⁵²"October 16 Morning Meeting Transcript," p. 12.

²⁵³"October 16 Evening Meeting Transcript," pp. 9, 46. Also see Robert Kennedy, pp. 33-34.



one last review of the air strike option with Air Force leaders Sunday morning, made a final decision to impose a search and seizure blockade on offensive arms to Cuba.²⁵⁴

Navy planning for a limited blockade of Cuba began Thursday evening, October 18, in response to a memorandum from Deputy Secretary of Defense Gilpatric to the JCS requesting information on the blockade option. Friday afternoon, 19 October, the JCS met with Gilpatric with the answers to his questions and designated Admiral Anderson its executive agent for CINCLANT operations against Cuba. That evening Secretary of Defense McNamara directed the CNO to prepare plans for a limited blockade on offensive arms to Cuba. The operational planning was delegated to Admiral Dennison and his staff in Norfolk, but certain policy issues, such as detailed intercept and boarding procedures and the rules of engagement, were handled by the CNO's staff. Saturday morning, October 20, McNamara directed the CNO to prepare "position and policy papers, scenario, and implementing instructions" for a limited blockade. Saturday

²⁵⁴ On the advantages and disadvantages of the blockade option and the considerations that led to its adoption, see "October 16 Morning Meeting Transcript," pp. 13-14; "October 16 Evening Meeting Transcript," p. 48; SNIE 11-19-62, pp. 4-6, Annex A; SNIE 11-20-62, pp. 6-7; Robert S. McNamara, "Notes on October 21, 1962 Meeting with the President," (Declassified 1985. National Security Archive, Washington, DC, Cuban Missile Crisis file); Robert Kennedy, pp. 33-39, 43-49; Hilsman, pp. 203, 206; Sorenson, pp. 682-92; Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, pp. 803-8. Also see George, "Cuban Missile Crisis," pp. 95-100; Abel, pp. 60-73, 79-82, 86-101; Pachter, pp. 15, 27.



afternoon Admiral Dennison and Vice Admiral Ward prepared a plan for blockade operations. The CNO, assisted by Admiral Dennison and Vice Admiral Ward, presented the detailed Navy plans for the blockade to McNamara and the JCS. McNamara and General Taylor took the plans to the White House for the Saturday afternoon meeting in which the President initially approved the limited blockade option. The CNO briefed the President and his advisors on Navy plans for the limited blockade on Sunday, October 21, and McNamara approved the final plans that evening. The only major change made in the Navy's plan for the limited blockade was to delete POL (petroleum, oil and lubricants) from the list of prohibited items. The JCS directive for the limited blockade was issued on Monday morning, October 22.²⁵⁵

The Blockade Force, Task Force 136 (TF 136), was commanded by Vice Admiral Ward, embarked in USS Newport News (CA 148). TF 136 was divided into three Task Groups. The Surface Group (TG 136.1) was commanded by Rear Admiral John W. Ailes, III, Commander Cruiser Destroyer Flotilla Six, embarked in the guided missile cruiser USS Canberra (CAG 2). TG 136.1 consisted of two cruisers escorted by four destroyers, and twelve destroyers on the quarantine line. The ASW Group (TG 136.2) was commanded by Rear Admiral

²⁵⁵"DOD Operations," pp. 2, 9; Caldwell, letter to author, April 27, 1988; Ward, "Diary," pp. 4-5; Ward, "Reminiscences," pp. 189-91; Dennison, "Reminiscences," p. 422; Sorenson, pp. 692, 698; Abel, pp. 81-82, 107, 141-43.

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Ernest E. Christiansen, Commander Carrier Division Eighteen, embarked in USS Essex (CVS 9). TG 136.2 originally consisted of USS Essex and six escorting destroyers. The Underway Replenishment Group (TG 136.3) was commanded by Captain W.O. Spears, Commanding Officer of USS Elokomin (AO 55), and consisted of three oilers and an ammunition ship, with four destroyers as escorts. As the quarantine progressed, other units relieved these ships so that they could be rotated into port for repairs and crew rest. As a result, a total of 62 ships eventually served in TF 136.²⁵⁶

In addition TF 136, Task Force 81 and Task Force 83, both under the command of Vice Admiral Edmund B. Taylor, Commander Anti-Submarine Warfare Force Atlantic, participated in the search for Soviet bloc ships en route to Cuba. The portion of Task Force 81 that participated in the quarantine consisted of twelve land-based patrol plane squadrons, about 140 aircraft (primarily P2Vs and P5Ms, but with some brand new P3Vs). Task Force 83 consisted of three ASW HUK Groups (three ASW carriers, about 120 planes and helicopters, and 20 destroyers) and approximately 24 destroyers and destroyer escorts in Atlantic and Caribbean picket stations.²⁵⁷ Although the primary function of TF 81

²⁵⁶"CINCLANT Historical Account," p. 103; Ward, "Diary," pp. 9-10.

²⁵⁷"CINCLANT Historical Account," pp. 120-25. Air Force RB-47 and RB-50 reconnaissance planes flying out of the Bahamas also participated in ocean surveillance.



and TF 83 was ASW, they played vital role in locating and tracking Soviet bloc shipping.

Some of the ships that would comprise TF 136 began leaving port over the weekend of October 20-21, some having to depart with only part of their crews on board due to the secrecy of the operation. This provided enough ships on station as of Monday, October 22, to guard the shipping lanes to Cuba. Most of the quarantine force ships left port on Monday, arriving on station by Wednesday morning (October

Table 3
Quarantine Line Walnut

Station Number	Latitude (North)	Longitude (West)	Ship Assigned (Initially)
1	19-00	65-10	USS <u>F.B. Royal</u> (DD 872)
2	20-00	65-00	USS <u>McDonough</u> (DLG 8)
3	21-00	65-10	USS <u>Dewey</u> (DLG 14)
4	22-00	65-20	USS <u>Steinaker</u> (DDR 863)
5	23-00	65-40	USS <u>J.R. Pierce</u> (DD 753)
6	23-50	66-00	USS <u>Leary</u> (DDR 879)
7	24-50	67-20	USS <u>Bigelow</u> (DD 942)
8	25-40	67-20	USS <u>McCaffrey</u> (DD 860)
9	26-30	68-10	USS <u>Sellers</u> (DDG 11)
10	27-10	69-06	USS <u>W.C. Lawe</u> (DD 763)
11	27-40	70-06	USS <u>Witek</u> (EDD 842)
12	28-00	70-50	USS <u>Gearing</u> (DD 710)

Source: "CNO Historical Narrative," pp. 44-46.

24) when the quarantine went into effect. The initial quarantine line was designated "Walnut" and was established on an arc 500 nautical miles from Cape Maisi, at the eastern tip of Cuba. Table 3 lists the initial twelve stations in

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quarantine line Walnut. The two cruisers operated independently of the quarantine line: USS Newport News, escorted by USS Keith (DD 775) and USS Lawrence (DDG 4), near the south end of the line (northeast of Puerto Rico), and USS Canberra, escorted by USS Borie (DD 704) and USS Soley (DD 707), near the north end of the line (northeast of Nassau). The USS Essex HUK group operated west of the center of the quarantine line.²⁵⁸

A controversy has persisted over exactly where the quarantine line was established and whether or not it was moved closer to Cuba on October 23-24. The evidence now available establishes conclusively that the quarantine line was established on October 24 on an arc 500 nautical miles from Cape Maisi and was not moved closer to Cuba until October 30.²⁵⁹ Robert Kennedy and others who recall the quarantine line as initially having been established at 800 nautical miles are mistaken.²⁶⁰

²⁵⁸Ward, "Diary," p. 10; "CINCLANT Historical Account," p. 103; "DOD Operations," p. 3. Also see Anderson, "Reminiscences," pp. 546-47.

²⁵⁹JCS message, JCS 250833Z OCT 62, no. 6968, "Situation Report 3-62 as of 250400Z October 1962, Operation Scabbards," p. 3 (Declassified 1988. Provided to author by Scott Sagan); "CNO Historical Narrative," pp. 44-46; "CINCLANT Historical Account," pp. 103-4; Ward, "Diary," pp. 10, 15.

²⁶⁰Robert Kennedy, p. 67; Dan Caldwell, "A Research Note on the Quarantine of Cuba, October 1962," International Studies Quarterly 22 (December 1978): 625-33. Caldwell made three errors in his analysis. First, only five of the eleven ships he examined were assigned stations on the

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that every entry should be supported by a valid receipt or invoice. This ensures transparency and allows for easy verification of the data.

The second section focuses on the classification of expenses. It provides a detailed breakdown of various categories, such as travel, entertainment, and office supplies. Each category is defined with specific criteria to ensure consistency in reporting.

The third part of the document addresses the timing of entries. It explains how to handle transactions that occur at the end of a reporting period or span across multiple periods. The goal is to ensure that all relevant activity is captured within the correct time frame.

The final section discusses the review and approval process. It outlines the steps for verifying the accuracy of the records and obtaining the necessary signatures from the responsible parties. This process is crucial for ensuring the integrity and reliability of the financial information.

The 500 nautical mile distance from Cuba was decided upon by October 20 and implemented October 24. The rationale for placing the blockade line that far out was to keep Navy ships outside the range of Cuban aircraft.²⁶¹ McNamara probably accepted a CNO or JCS recommendation to set the blockade line at 500 nautical miles the evening of October 19 or the morning of October 20. Admiral Ward states that the 500 nautical mile distance had already been decided upon by 11:00 A.M. on October 20, when he was first briefed on the blockade by CINCLANT. Admiral Ward and Admiral Dennison drew up their blockade plan based on the 500 nautical mile distance and presented it to the JCS. The blockade line distance was discussed at length during the evening October 20 JCS meeting. According to Admiral Ward, Admiral Anderson agreed that Cuban forces were not a serious threat outside of about 180 nautical miles and that the blockade line could be moved closer to Cuba.²⁶² Admiral Ward states that the

quarantine line. The others were operating independently of the quarantine line and one (USS Randolph) was not even in TF 136. Second, ship's locations prior to about 9:00 A.M. on October 24 are irrelevant because the ships were still en route to their stations from U.S. ports. Third, the positions from October 24 onward are suspect because quarantine line ships were routinely out of station for refueling, trailing Soviet ships, and other tasking. Quarantine line ships were not prohibited from going beyond 500 miles for these purposes. For a more detailed analysis, see Johns, "Naval Quarantine," pp. 107-115.

²⁶¹Ward, "Diary," pp. 4-6; Anderson, "Reminiscences," p. 546; Dennison, "Reminiscences," p. 424.

²⁶²Ward, "Diary," pp. 4-6. Also see Abel, p. 123.

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that every entry should be supported by a valid receipt or invoice. This not only helps in tracking expenses but also ensures compliance with tax regulations. The second section covers the process of reconciling bank statements with the company's ledger. It provides a step-by-step guide on how to identify and resolve discrepancies, such as missing entries or incorrect amounts. The third part of the document focuses on budgeting and financial forecasting. It explains how to set realistic goals and allocate resources effectively to achieve them. The final section discusses the role of internal controls in preventing fraud and ensuring the integrity of financial data. It highlights the need for a strong internal control system that includes segregation of duties, regular audits, and a clear reporting structure. Overall, the document provides a comprehensive overview of key financial management practices that are essential for the success of any business.

October 22 JCS directive for the blockade did not contain the 500 nautical miles requirement, but that CINCLANTFLT OPORD 45-62 for the quarantine of Cuba, promulgated October 21, retained the requirement that the blockade line be set at 500 nautical miles. Therefore, he decided on October 23, with CINCLANTFLT concurrence, to set the blockade line at 500 nautical miles.²⁶³

Robert Kennedy recounts in his memoir of the crisis that on the evening of October 23 President Kennedy directed McNamara to move the quarantine line closer to Cuba in order to give the Soviets more time to react before the first ships were intercepted. Robert Kennedy's account is erroneous in that he states the quarantine line was ordered moved in from 800 nautical miles to 500 nautical miles.²⁶⁴

Graham T. Allison, establishing correctly that the quarantine line was set at 500 nautical miles from Cuba at least through October 25, contends that "the blockade was not moved as the President ordered."²⁶⁵ Allison goes on to conclude, incorrectly, that "It seems probable, then, that the Navy's resistance to the President's order that the blockade be drawn in closer to Cuba forced the President to

²⁶³Ward, "Diary," pp. 6, 9.

²⁶⁴Robert Kennedy, p. 67. Also see Schlesinger, A Thousand Days, p. 818.

²⁶⁵Graham T. Allison, Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1971), pp. 129-30.

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allow one or several Soviet ships to pass through the blockade after it was officially operative."²⁶⁶ Allison portrays this incident as an example of the organizational process model constraining the President's ability to effectively control crisis military operations.²⁶⁷

Attention must focus on exactly what the President said to McNamara concerning the quarantine line on the evening of October 23. The first possibility is that the President gave McNamara a clear and specific order to immediately move the quarantine line closer to Cuba, as recounted by Robert Kennedy, but the CNO refused to carry out the order. It is inconceivable, however, that McNamara or the President would have tolerated such insubordination.

²⁶⁶ Ibid. Allison incorrectly contends that the Soviet tanker Vinnitsa and other Soviet ships were allowed through the quarantine line. However, the daily CIA report for October 25 states "Thus far no Soviet ships have entered the zone since it was established. Only two Soviet ships--one a tanker--have arrived in Cuba since 23 October and both of these were well within the zone prior to its establishment." Central Intelligence Agency, Memorandum, "The Crisis USSR/Cuba, Information as of 0600," October 25, 1962, p. II-1 (Declassified. National Security Archive, Washington, DC, Cuban Missile Crisis file. Cited hereafter as CIA, "Crisis USSR/Cuba," October 25, 1962).

²⁶⁷ Allison does not claim the President was unaware of the quarantine line not having been moved. The positions of the Navy ships were plotted on the charts in the White House Situation Room and closely monitored by the President. See Sorenson, p. 710. Additionally, McNamara visited Flag Plot at least once a day, sometimes morning and evening, for briefings on Navy operations and Soviet shipping. Charts in Flag Plot showed the locations of all Navy ships involved in Cuban operations. There is thus no possibility that the Navy could have covertly left the quarantine line at 500 nautical miles after having been ordered to move it in.



Admiral Anderson denies that there was any insubordination: "Certainly there was no disregard of the President's directives. After all, he is the commander in chief."²⁶⁸ According to Admiral Ward the CNO was willing to consider moving the quarantine line closer to Cuba on October 20, making it unlikely that Admiral Anderson would have defied the President three days later.²⁶⁹ It is thus highly unlikely that the CNO simply refused to carry out a clear and specific Presidential order to immediately move the quarantine line closer to Cuba

The second possibility is that the President erroneously thought that the quarantine line was set at 800 nautical miles, called the Secretary of Defense to move it in, and was reminded by McNamara that it was set at 500 nautical miles.²⁷⁰ The strength of this explanation is that it accounts for Robert Kennedy's recollection that the quarantine line was originally set at 800 nautical miles.²⁷¹

²⁶⁸ Admiral George W. Anderson, Jr., "The Cuban Blockade: An Admiral's Memoir," The Washington Quarterly, Autumn 1982, p. 86. Vice Admiral Houser, Naval Assistant to Roswell Gilpatric during the crisis, states "I know of no instances of the Navy deliberately disobeying an order." Houser, interview by author, February 11, 1988.

²⁶⁹ Ward, "Diary," p. 6.

²⁷⁰ Johns, "Naval Quarantine," p. 113.

²⁷¹ Other participants in the crisis, notably General Taylor and Arthur Schlesinger, also recall the quarantine line as originally having been set at 800 nautical miles. See Dan Caldwell, "Research Note," pp. 628-29.

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Admiral Anderson recalls discussing the quarantine line distance with McNamara the evening of October 23.²⁷² Thus, McNamara may have checked with the CNO to verify his facts before reminding the President of where the quarantine line was actually located.

The weakness in this scenario is trying to establish how the President came to think that the quarantine line was set at 800 nautical miles. The most likely source would have been a briefing prior to October 19 on the original contingency plan for a total blockade of Cuba, CINCLANTFLT OPORD 41-62, which had been issued October 3. Although unlikely, this OPORD may have specified a blockade line distance of 800 nautical miles.²⁷³ However, the plan that was actually used, CINCLANTFLT OPORD 45-62, issued October 21, specified a 500 nautical mile distance, and the President was briefed on this plan by the CNO Sunday afternoon. The President is thus unlikely to have thought that the quarantine line was set at 800 nautical miles.

²⁷² Anderson, interview by author, January 25, 1988.

²⁷³ The author was unable to locate CINCLANTFLT OPORD 41-62 in Navy archives. However, OPORD 41-62 probably would not have specified a distance as great as 800 nautical miles from Cuba, which would have put the blockade ships in the mid-Atlantic. That would have greatly complicated Navy logistics, particularly refueling the ships, and required a greater number of ships to cover a larger ocean area. Furthermore, the OPORD actually used for the quarantine (OPORD 45-62) was derived from OPORD 41-62 and specified only a 500 nautical mile distance, which suggests that OPORD 41-62 originally specified the same distance.

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The third possibility is that the President talked to McNamara about moving the quarantine line in from 500 nautical miles to 300 nautical miles, but then was persuaded to leave it at 500 nautical miles. However, there are grounds for suspecting that Robert Kennedy was wrong when he stated that the President gave an order to move the quarantine line in. Given that he erred on the distance of the quarantine line, Robert Kennedy also may not have understood exactly what the President wanted done with the quarantine line. Robert Kennedy made similar errors concerning other orders the President allegedly gave.²⁷⁴ The President may not have given McNamara an order, but rather a suggestion that the quarantine line be moved in or a request that McNamara investigate the feasibility of moving it in.²⁷⁵

²⁷⁴ Robert Kennedy erroneously claims elsewhere in his memoir of the crisis that the President gave an order when he had not. Robert Kennedy states that the President gave an order for the Jupiter missiles in Turkey to be removed. See Robert Kennedy, pp. 94-95. In fact, however, the President had only directed that the issue be studied. See The White House, Office of the Special Assistant for National Security Affairs, National Security Action Memorandum No. 181, August 23, 1962 (Declassified 1978. John F. Kennedy Library, Boston, MA, National Security Files, Box 338, "Cuba (4). 8/23/64" folder). Also see Donald L. Hafner, "Bureaucratic Politics and 'Those Frigging Missiles': JFK, Cuba and U.S. Missiles in Turkey," Orbis 21 (Summer 1977): 307-33; Barton J. Bernstein, "The Cuban Missile Crisis: Trading the Jupiters in Turkey?" Political Science Quarterly 95 (Spring 1980): 102-104. There are thus grounds for suspecting that Robert Kennedy misinterpreted a Presidential request or suggestion as an order.

²⁷⁵ Vice Admiral Houser suggested this to the author. Houser, interview by author, February 11, 1988.

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Furthermore, Admiral Anderson states that he did not attempt to persuade McNamara or the President to leave the quarantine line at 500 nautical miles.²⁷⁶ Thus, whatever the President passed to McNamara probably was not an order to move the quarantine line closer to Cuba. The President probably requested that McNamara find some way of delaying the initial boardings of Soviet ships--perhaps suggesting that moving the quarantine line as a way of doing it.

This raises the fourth possible explanation:

President Kennedy did not specifically order the quarantine line moved in, but directed McNamara to delay the initial boardings of Soviet ships and suggested that moving the quarantine line closer to Cuba would be a means of achieving that objective. McNamara consulted with the CNO, who recommended that the quarantine line be left at 500 nautical miles until the extent of the threat from Cuban aircraft could be determined.²⁷⁷ McNamara concurred with this recommendation, specifying that no Soviet bloc ships were to be boarded until they reached the 500 nautical mile arc, and the President approved this plan. This is the most likely explanation for what transpired the evening of October 23.

²⁷⁶ Anderson, interview by author, January 25, 1988.

²⁷⁷ Admiral Dennison states that the quarantine line was moved closer to Cuba after it was determined that there was little threat from Cuban planes. See Dennison, "Reminiscences," pp. 424-26. Also see "CINCLANT Historical Account," p. 104; Anderson, "Reminiscences," p. 546.



The key to this explanation is that the ships on the quarantine line were authorized to intercept Soviet ships outside the 500 mile arc on which their stations were established. Initially, that was the only significance of the 500 nautical mile arc: it imposed no restriction whatsoever on the movements of the quarantine ships.²⁷⁸

Scott D. Sagan suggests that the President was aware that Admiral Ward had authority to intercept ships outside the 500 nautical mile arc. Sagan concludes that "The result of Kennedy's order thus appears to have been only to ensure that the quarantine line was set at the point where it had originally been planned."²⁷⁹ Sagan is correct that Admiral Ward originally was not restricted to intercepting ships when they reached the 500 nautical mile arc. CINCLANTFLT OPOD 45-62 and COMSECONDFLT OPOD 1-62 did not specify the range at which ships were to be intercepted. Admiral Dennison states that "the line wasn't necessarily static. We didn't just sit there. We knew where these ships were

²⁷⁷ Dennison, "Reminiscences," pp. 424-25. Also see "CINCLANT Historical Account," p. 104; Anderson, "Reminiscences," p. 546.

²⁷⁸ In his October 22 background briefing, McNamara stated that there was not a boundary line drawn where the Navy would start patrolling in the Atlantic, which suggests that intercepts could occur outside the quarantine line. McNamara, "Background Briefing on the Cuban Situation," p. 19.

²⁷⁹ Scott D. Sagan, "Nuclear Alerts and Crisis Management," International Security 9 (Spring 1985): 110.



and went out to intercept them."²⁸⁰ Thus, President Kennedy had reason to believe that Soviet ships might be boarded well beyond the 500 nautical mile arc. This probably would have happened if he had not directed McNamara to delay the first boardings.

The one modification that must be made to Sagan's interpretation is to draw a distinction intercept and boarding. To the Navy, intercepting the Soviet ships meant coming close enough to positively identify them visually (depending on weather conditions, that could be anywhere from one to five miles), then trailing them visually or on radar (radar trailing kept the U.S. ship discretely out of sight over the horizon). When so specified by COMSECONDFLT, intercept also included hailing the Soviet ship and asking its cargo and destination. The key point is that intercept did not mean boarding. This was probably unclear to the President when he called McNamara the evening of October 23. McNamara appears not to have issued an order not to intercept Soviet ships outside the 500 nautical mile arc.²⁸¹

The orders that probably were given allowed Soviet ships to be intercepted and trailed outside quarantine line,

²⁸⁰Dennison, "Reminiscences," p. 426. Sorenson notes that "The Navy was eager to go far out into the ocean to intercept the key Soviet ships." Sorenson, p. 710.

²⁸¹Admiral Anderson states no such order was given. Anderson, interview by author, January 25, 1988. None of the many Navy officers contacted by the author could recall such an order.



but specified that Soviet ships were not to be stopped and boarded until they reached the 500 nautical mile arc. If this had been Admiral Ward's intention to begin with, no further orders would have been required. This explanation supports Sagan's interpretation of the overall effect of the President's October 23 order. It also complements the previous explanation--that the President approved a CNO recommendation not to move the quarantine line in until the Cuban air threat could be assessed. Given the President's concern with avoiding incidents with Soviet and Cuban forces, he was probably responsive to arguments for keeping the quarantine ships away from Cuba. Thus, the President may well have suggested to McNamara that the quarantine line be moved closer to Cuba, but then agreed that it would be better simply to not stop and board ships outside the 500 nautical mile arc. This met the President's objective of providing Khrushchev more time to react and the CNO's objective of keeping the quarantine ships beyond the range of Cuban planes.

The Navy had mounted intensive surveillance of Soviet bloc shipping to Cuba since early August. When the President announced the quarantine on October 22, the Navy already had a complete list of the Soviet bloc ships en route to Cuba, including those suspected of carrying offensive missiles. The Soviet bloc ships were being tracked by the Navy's Univac Sea Surveillance Computer



System, which projected their positions based on their last known course and speed. On October 23 there were tenty-five Soviet and two other Soviet bloc ships en route to Cuba, including nineteen Soviet freighters (dry cargo ships) and six Soviet tankers. Of the nineteen Soviet freighters, three (Okhotsk, Orenburg, and Poltava) were large hatch ships suspected of carrying offensive missiles, two were carrying suspected missiles or missile-related equipment on deck, and eleven others were suspected of carrying other military equipment (for a total of sixteen freighters suspected of carrying military cargoes). Additionally, there were eighteen Soviet bloc ships in Cuban ports when the quarantine was announced.²⁸²

²⁸²Of the nineteen Soviet freighters en route to Cuba when the quarantine was announced, all sixteen suspected of carrying military cargoes turned back, and the other three proceeded on to Cuba. The Soviet freighter Leninsky Komsomol, carrying IL-28 bombers, arrived in Cuba October 24. It was one of the two Soviet ships, along with the tanker Vinnitsa, that was well inside the quarantine line when it went into effect. The Soviet freighter Belovodsk stopped, transferred probable military cargo at night to a ship returning to the Soviet Union, then proceeded on to Cuba. The Soviet freighter Emelyan Pugachev, in the Pacific when the quarantine was announced, was boarded and searched by a U.S. Navy officer as it transited the Panama Canal on November 3 and allowed to proceed to Cuba. This was not a quarantine inspection per se, but the standard inspection of all Soviet ships that transit the canal. CIA, Memorandum, "Soviet Bloc Shipping To Cuba," October 23, 1962, p. 1 (Declassified. National Security Archive, Washington, DC, Cuban Missile Crisis file); CIA, Memorandum, "The Crisis USSR/Cuba," October 24, 1962, pp. II-1, II-2 (Declassified. National Security Archive, Washington, DC, Cuban Missile Crisis file); CIA, "Crisis USSR/Cuba," October 25, 1962, p. II-1; CIA, Memorandum, "The Crisis USSR/Cuba, Information as

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U.S. Navy ships on the quarantine line were at the highest condition of readiness they could sustain for an extended period, with at least half of their crews at battle stations and weapons manned and ready. Navy patrol planes searching for Soviet ships were armed with five-inch rockets and ASW torpedoes. Although CINCLANT had made an effort to provide Russian language interpreters for all the ships on the quarantine line, not every ship had one.²⁸³ As dawn broke on Wednesday morning, October 24, the Navy ships moved into position to halt the flow of offensive arms to Cuba.

The basic operational procedures for the quarantine were specified in CINCLANTFLT OPORD 45-62. The following excerpts from OPORD 45-62 were the central guidance for intercept and boarding of ships:

of 0600," October 26, 1962, pp. I-1, II-1 (Declassified. National Security Archive, Washington, DC, Cuban Missile Crisis file); "CINCLANT Historical Account," p. 12; Ward, "Diary," p. 9.

²⁸³On the readiness of the ships, see Ward, "Reminiscences," p. 198. On patrol plane weapons, see Captain Sidney Edelman, Commanding Officer of VP-24, letter to author, March 25, 1988. Two Commanding Officers of ships on the quarantine line stated they did not have interpreters embarked. Dickey, letter to author, April 20, 1988; Foust, letter to author, March 10, 1988. The Commanding Officer of USS Canberra (CAG 2) stated that seven Russian interpreters reported aboard his ship on October 22 for distribution to the rest of the quarantine force. Captain Robert K. Irvine, letter to author, April 6, 1988. Since Canberra was the only ship in the quarantine force with helicopters for transferring personnel (other than USS Essex, at sea off Guantanamo), there is reason to believe that these seven interpreters were the only ones available for the nineteen ships that could have been tasked to board a Soviet ship the first day of the quarantine.

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All ships, including combatant, surface and sub-surface, Soviet and non-Soviet, designated by CINCLANTFLT on [the] basis of available information will be intercepted. Ships not so designated are not to be interfered with. If CINCLANTFLT believes the intercepted ship may be carrying prohibited material to Cuba, CINCLANTFLT will order a visit and search to be made to verify the belief. . . .

Ships which after being intercepted signal their intention to proceed to non-Cuban ports may be released without visit or search. The Commander of the intercepting ship may prescribe courses for the intercepted ship to follow. Surveillance will be maintained over such intercepted ships. Any ship which fails to proceed as elected or directed, or which attempts to proceed to a Cuban port, will be stopped and boarded. If a satisfactory explanation is not forthcoming, the ship will be diverted to Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, or to a port designated by CINCLANTFLT.

Any ship which is determined by the Commander of the intercepting ship to be carrying no prohibited material shall be permitted to proceed to Cuba.

Visit and search of a stopped ship shall consist of examining the manifest and inspecting the cargo. In the event visit is refused, the ship may be taken into custody. A boarding party shall be placed on board. Forceful boarding and control of the ship's operation may be necessary. If boarding meets with organized resistance, the ship will be destroyed.

Ships believed to be carrying prohibited material shall be directed to proceed to such non-Cuban port as her owners or master may elect. The commander of the intercepting ship may designate courses to be followed. Surveillance shall be maintained over the intercepted ships. Any ship which fails to proceed to a non-Cuban port will be handled IAW para 2 above.

If a ship is visited but search is refused, the Commander of the intercepting ship will take the intercepted ship into custody if he has reasonable grounds for suspecting that it is carrying prohibited material. It will be diverted to a U.S. port for disposition. ²⁸⁴

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The first Soviet ships were to be stopped and boarded as soon as the quarantine went into effect at 10:00 a.m. Wednesday, October 24. USS Essex was assigned to stop and board Gagarin, a suspected arms carrier. USS Newport News and her escorts were assigned to intercept Poltava, a large hatch ship suspected of carrying missiles. Kimovsk, another suspected arms carrier, was also targeted for intercept and boarding. CINCLANT had recommended, and the White House had approved, that these ships be boarded because they would be the first suspected arms carriers to reach the quarantine line. But the three Soviet ships did not reach the quarantine line at their estimated arrival times and as of early afternoon none of them had been intercepted.²⁸⁵

As of Tuesday, October 23, nine Soviet merchant ships had been close enough to the quarantine line that they might

²⁸⁵"CINCLANT Historical Account," p. 105; Ward, "Diary," pp. 10-11; Christiansen, interview by author, February 3, 1988. Robert Kennedy's account of the situation at sea that Wednesday morning is erroneous. See Robert Kennedy, p. 69. There was no Soviet ship named Komiles, he is probably referring to Kimovsk. Rear Admiral Christiansen has stated USS Essex was not informed of or tasked to prosecute any Soviet submarines in the vicinity of Gagarin. Interestingly, the quarantine ships were told when to stop and board the Soviet ships (at 10:00 A.M.), not where to stop and board them (at the 500 nautical mile arc). The President apparently knew that the first Soviet ships were to be boarded as soon as the quarantine went into effect Wednesday morning--he had, in fact, personally authorized the initial boardings. Presumably, Navy calculations showed that Kimovsk and Gagarin would reach the 500 nautical mile arc by 10:00 A.M. Wednesday. However, this cannot be proven because the two Soviet ships turned back well before they were intercepted.

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have been stopped and boarded the first day of the quarantine. By Wednesday morning, however, all of the Soviet ships en route to Cuba, including tankers and freighters carrying non-military cargoes, had already either stopped or turned back. Moscow had HF radio links with its merchant fleet and used them to control the ships en route to Cuba. There appears to have been a pattern to the movements of the Soviet ships. All of the freighters that the U.S. suspected of carrying weapons or equipment on the prohibited list were ordered to immediately reverse course and return to the Soviet Union. According to the October 25 daily CIA report, "The course changes of those ships which have turned back were executed around noon EDT [Eastern Daylight Time] on 23 October. . . . The ships turned around well before President Kennedy signed the proclamation establishing a quarantine zone around Cuba."²⁸⁶ The Soviets had thus made a decision not to challenge the quarantine even while publicly declaring their refusal to recognize it. Soviet ships

²⁸⁶CIA, "Crisis USSR/Cuba," October 25, 1962, p. II-1. The Welch and Blight interpretation of the Soviet decision not to challenge the quarantine is misleading in this regard. They claim that it was U.N. Secretary General U Thant's October 25 public request that Khrushchev keep his ships clear of the quarantine area that provided the Soviet leader with "a face-saving way of ordering his ships to stop short of the quarantine line." Welch and Blight, p. 9. It is clear, however, that by October 23--two days before U Thant's request--Khrushchev had already ordered his ships not to enter the quarantine zone. Thus, what U Thant's request provided was a face-saving way for Khrushchev to publicly acknowledge that he would not challenge the quarantine--not an insignificant contribution.

suspected of carrying military cargo other than offensive weapons initially halted, apparently awaiting further instructions, then turned back as Moscow decided not to let any military cargo be inspected by the Americans. Soviet ships carrying non-military cargo, including tankers, initially halted--some of them sitting motionless for two days--then proceeded on to Cuba.²⁸⁷ This delay resulted in no Soviet ships passing through the quarantine line until October 25.

Late Tuesday and early Wednesday the United States began receiving indications that Soviet shipping to Cuba had been ordered to halt. By mid-morning Wednesday the information was solid enough to pass on to the President. He received the report at about 10:00 a.m. during an EXCOMM meeting. Initial estimates of how many Soviet ships had halted or turned back varied widely. During the day Navy and Air Force reconnaissance planes were able to verify that the Soviet ships had halted or turned back. By midafternoon the President could clearly see that Khrushchev was not going to challenge the quarantine.²⁸⁸

²⁸⁷ Admiral Dennison observed that "this demonstrates pretty good control by the Soviets, that they could get through to these merchant ships and with not very much time elapsed either." Dennison, "Reminiscences," p. 427.

²⁸⁸ "October 24 Morning EXCOMM Meeting Record of Action," p. 1; CIA, "Crisis USSR/Cuba," October 25, 1962, p. II-1; Robert Kennedy, p. 71; Ward, "Diary," p. 11; Sorenson, pp. 710-11.



When the President received the initial report that the Soviet ships appeared to have halted, he ordered that no Soviet ships were to be boarded for at least an hour while further information on their movements was collected.²⁸⁹ Later, when it was confirmed that the Soviet ships had halted or turned back, the order went out to the quarantine force: "Do not stop and board. Keep under surveillance. Make continuous reports."²⁹⁰ This marked a significant change in the manner the White House controlled the quarantine. Prior to midday Wednesday, the President had approved a list of ships to be boarded, specified when the boardings would commence (10:00 a.m. Wednesday), and waited for the boardings to take place. From midday Wednesday onward, the White House closely controlled which ships were to be stopped and boarded. Lengthy discussions were held on the merits and dangers of boarding every Soviet bloc ship that approached the quarantine line. Navy commanders were not permitted to order a ship of any nationality boarded on their own authority.²⁹¹

²⁸⁹"October 24 Morning EXCOMM Meeting Record of Action," p. 1.

²⁹⁰Ward, "Diary," p. 11. Also see Anderson, "Cuban Crisis," p. 84; Robert Kennedy, pp. 71-72.

²⁹¹Dennison, "Reminiscences," p. 426; Ward, "Reminiscences," p. 200; Christiansen, interview by author, February 3, 1988; Wissman, letter to author, March 4, 1988; Irvine, letter to author, April 6, 1988; Foust, letter to author, March 10, 1988; Dickey, letter to author, April 20, 1988.



A misconception has arisen in the literature on the Cuban Missile Crisis concerning the manner in which the quarantine was controlled. Allison, for example, claims that the White House circumvented the chain of command and that "local commanders received repeated orders about the details of their military operations directly from political leaders."²⁹² This greatly exaggerates the degree of control exercised by the White House.

Neither the President nor the Secretary of Defense ever gave orders directly to Navy commanders at sea. Presidential orders were relayed via McNamara to General Taylor or Admiral Anderson, then from the CNO to CINCLANT, and finally from CINCLANT (in his guise as CINCLANTFLT) to Admiral Ward.²⁹³ The White House closely monitored quarantine operations on the HF/SSB radios in the Situation Room, but never used those radios to give orders directly to ships at sea. None of the quarantine force participants contacted by the author, including the Commanding Officers of the two destroyers that boarded Marucla, could recall hearing the President, Secretary of Defense, or CNO on the HF/SSB radio circuit. The only transmissions from the White

²⁹²Allison, p. 128. Also see Sorenson, p. 708.

²⁹³Anderson, interview by author, January 25, 1988; Anderson, "Reminiscences," p. 550; General Taylor, Oral History Transcript, p. 8; Chew, "Reminiscences," pp. 316-17; Dennison, "Reminiscences," p. 421.

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that every entry should be supported by a valid receipt or invoice. This ensures transparency and allows for easy verification of the data.

In addition, the document outlines the procedures for handling discrepancies. If there is a difference between the recorded amount and the actual amount received or paid, it is crucial to investigate the cause immediately. This could be due to a clerical error, a missing receipt, or a fraudulent transaction.

The document also provides guidelines for the storage and security of financial records. All records should be stored in a secure location, protected from fire, theft, and unauthorized access. Regular backups should be taken to prevent data loss.

Furthermore, it is recommended to review the records periodically to ensure their accuracy and to identify any trends or anomalies. This proactive approach can help in detecting potential issues before they become major problems.

Finally, the document stresses the importance of confidentiality. Financial information is sensitive and should only be shared with authorized personnel. Strict access controls should be implemented to protect this information.

Date	Description	Amount	Balance
2023-01-01	Opening Balance	1000.00	1000.00
2023-01-05	Payment received from Client A	250.00	1250.00
2023-01-10	Payment received from Client B	150.00	1400.00
2023-01-15	Payment received from Client C	300.00	1700.00
2023-01-20	Payment received from Client D	100.00	1800.00
2023-01-25	Payment received from Client E	200.00	2000.00
2023-01-30	Payment received from Client F	150.00	2150.00
2023-02-01	Payment received from Client G	250.00	2400.00
2023-02-05	Payment received from Client H	100.00	2500.00
2023-02-10	Payment received from Client I	300.00	2800.00
2023-02-15	Payment received from Client J	150.00	2950.00
2023-02-20	Payment received from Client K	200.00	3150.00
2023-02-25	Payment received from Client L	100.00	3250.00
2023-03-01	Payment received from Client M	250.00	3500.00
2023-03-05	Payment received from Client N	150.00	3650.00
2023-03-10	Payment received from Client O	300.00	3950.00
2023-03-15	Payment received from Client P	100.00	4050.00
2023-03-20	Payment received from Client Q	200.00	4250.00
2023-03-25	Payment received from Client R	150.00	4400.00
2023-03-30	Payment received from Client S	250.00	4650.00
2023-04-01	Payment received from Client T	100.00	4750.00
2023-04-05	Payment received from Client U	300.00	5050.00
2023-04-10	Payment received from Client V	150.00	5200.00
2023-04-15	Payment received from Client W	200.00	5400.00
2023-04-20	Payment received from Client X	100.00	5500.00
2023-04-25	Payment received from Client Y	250.00	5750.00
2023-04-30	Payment received from Client Z	150.00	5900.00

House to ships at sea appear to have been requests for amplifying information.²⁹⁴

The only aspect of quarantine operations controlled directly by the President was the decision as to which ships were to be stopped and boarded. Admiral Dennison and Vice Admiral Ward controlled the intercept and trailing of Soviet bloc ships and all routine movements of the quarantine force. Commanding Officers of quarantine force ships report that their operations were not closely controlled and that they had adequate authority to operate their ships as they felt best. Captain Irvine, Commanding Officer of USS Canberra, states that detailed control by Washington was only exercised when "contact occurred (or would be likely to occur) between U.S. and Soviet units (military or merchant)."²⁹⁵ Thus, contrary to Allison's assertion, the

²⁹⁴ Dennison, "Reminiscences," p. 421; Captain William R. Hunnicutt, Jr., Commander Destroyer Squadron Twenty-Six (embarked in USS Dewey on the quarantine line), letter to author, June 1, 1988; Christiansen, interview by author, February 3, 1988; Wissman, letter to author, March 4, 1988; Irvine, letter to author, April 6, 1988; Foust, letter to author, March 10, 1988; Dickey, letter to author, April 20, 1988; Mikhalevsky, letter to author, March 23, 1988.

²⁹⁵ Irvine, letter to author, April 6, 1988. Also, Ward, "Diary," pp. 11-12; Foust, letter to author, March 10, 1988; Dickey, letter to author, April 20, 1988; Mikhalevsky, letter to author, March 23, 1988. Captain Edelman, Commanding Officer of VP-24, a Navy patrol plane squadron, states that he had adequate authority to conduct ocean surveillance operations as he saw fit. Edelman, letter to author, March 25, 1988.

White House only controlled specific aspects of the quarantine operation and exercised that control through the chain of command.

Although the President personally controlled which ships would be boarded, neither he nor his advisors controlled how the boardings were to be conducted. CINCLANTFLT specified that the boarding procedures contained in the Navy publication Law of Naval Warfare (NWIP 10-2) would be used.²⁹⁶ OPOD 45-62 stated the following: "Procedures to be followed in the case of visit and search will be similar to those prescribed in Section 502(B) of NWIP 10-2 except that unless specifically authorized, Subsection 8 of Section 502(B) will not be applicable and log entries will not state that prize procedures have been invoked or are being

²⁹⁶ Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Naval Warfare Information Publication 10-2 (NWIP 10-2), Law of Naval Warfare (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, 1959). This would have been the publication that Admiral Anderson was trying to show McNamara during their infamous encounter in Flag Plot the evening of October 24. See Anderson, "Reminiscences," p. 559. Accounts that have the CNO waving the "Manual of Naval Regulations" are nonsensical. See Allison, p. 134; Abel, p. 156. United States Navy Regulations, 1948 contained no guidance at all on blockades, and mentions quarantines only in the sense U.S. navy ships complying with routine customs or medical quarantine. The interesting point about the October 23 McNamara-Anderson argument is that it was not over substantial policy issues. The two men were at odds primarily because each felt he was being treated contemptuously by the other. Their argument reveals very little about how organizations carry out Presidential orders, but much about how individuals perform under stress.

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followed."²⁹⁷ The subsection deleted by CINCPACFLT concerns procedures applicable only in wartime, which is when a blockade--an act of war under international law--normally would have been imposed. The Quarantine Force thus used standard Navy boarding procedures, modified for peacetime application, rather than special procedures drafted in the White House.

The boarding of the Soviet-chartered Lebanese freighter Marucla on October 26 shows how boarding operations were conducted. The decision to board Marucla was made by the President and passed down the chain of command to Admiral Ward, who ordered USS John R. Pierce and USS Joseph P. Kennedy to "Stop and board [at] first light tomorrow."²⁹⁸ Captain Mikhalevsky confirmed that the the visit and search procedure used was that contained in NWIP 10-2. USS John R. Pierce provided real-time reports on the progress of the boarding to Admiral Ward and CINCLANT on the HF/SSB voice radio net, which was also being monitored in Flag Plot and the White House Situation Room. Captain Foust states he received no guidance from higher authority on how to conduct the boarding while it was in progress. Admiral

²⁹⁷ CINCLANTFLT 231710Z OCT 62.

²⁹⁸ CTF 136 260212Z OCT 62, naval message, October 26, 1962 (Unclassified. Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC).

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Ward and CINCLANT occasionally asked questions over the HF/SSB voice radio net, but Flag Plot and the Situation Room were silent.²⁹⁹ Thus, although the boarding of Marucla was closely monitored by the chain of command, the on-scene commanders were allowed to conduct it at their discretion in accordance with Navy standing orders (NWIP 10-2) and the mission orders for the quarantine (CINCLANTFLT OPORD 45-62).

The remainder of the operations conducted during the quarantine were uneventful. Several ships were intercepted and trailed, but no other ships were stopped and boarded at sea. When Khrushchev on October 28 agreed to remove Soviet offensive missiles from Cuba, the President suspended the boarding of Soviet ships. Accordingly, CINCLANTFLT sent the following order that day:

Direct no rpt [repeat] no forceful action against any shipping including boarding until further orders. All challenges will be made by visual means (blinking light, etc.). If any difficulties encountered report to me immediately info [notify for information purposes] JCS/CNO prior [to] taking any further action. Acknowledge.300

On October 30, after it was determined that there was little threat of Cuban air attack, the quarantine line was moved closer to Cuba. The new line, code named "Chestnut,"

²⁹⁹ Mikhalevsky, letter to author, March 23, 1988; Foust, letter to author, March 10, 1988.

³⁰⁰ CINCLANTFLT 281702Z OCT 62, naval message, October 26, 1962 (Declassified 1986. Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC).

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was located just outside the Bahamas Island Chain, about 280 nautical miles from Cuba at its closest point. The Chestnut line contained eight stations clustered at the sealanes through and around the Bahamas. It required ten destroyers, one cruiser, and a HUK Group (compared with 16 destroyers, two cruisers, and a HUK Group for the Walnut line). Ships were frequently detached from the Chestnut line to trail Soviet ships removing missiles from Cuba, but the line remained in effect until the quarantine was lifted on November 21.³⁰¹

Although the boarding of Soviet bloc ships en route to Cuba had been suspended, intercept and trailing continued in November. CINCLANTFLT used the code name "Scotch Tape" to designate high-interest Soviet bloc shipping. The most important operation was the inspection of Soviet ships removing MRBMs from Cuba. The United States had insisted upon inspections to verify removal of the missiles, but Castro refused to allow inspections on Cuban soil. A compromise was reached on November 7 when the United States agreed to inspect the missiles on the decks of Soviet ships. The Soviet Government provided a list of the ships that would be carrying the missiles, the number of missiles

³⁰¹Ward, "Diary," p. 15; "CINCLANT Historical Account," p. 104; "CNO Historical Narrative," pp. 83-84; Dennison, "Reminiscences," pp. 424-25. Also see Johns, "Naval Quarantine," pp. 116-18.

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each would carry, and the course that they would all take from Cuba out into the Atlantic. However, the Soviet ships did not adhere to this plan--taking different courses and not carrying the designated number of missiles--requiring an intensive Navy search effort to locate them and count the missiles. The nine Soviet ships carrying the missiles from Cuba were inspected between November 8 and 11, and all 42 missiles known to be in Cuba were counted. Finally, in early December Navy ships and planes verified the removal of Soviet IL-28 bombers from Cuba, counting all 42 bombers on the decks of three Soviet ships.³⁰²

There were no incidents between Quarantine Force ships or planes and Soviet merchant ships. Relations at sea between the superpowers were proper--Soviet and American ship captains behaved as professional seamen--and usually amicable. Gifts were exchanged at least once. Some Soviet ship captains were reluctant to comply with the procedures for the MRBM inspections, but they all complied eventually. The Soviets twice filed protests against Navy actions: a Navy patrol plane's search light alarmed a Soviet captain

³⁰²"CNO Historical Narrative," pp. 100-103, 107-13, 137-40; "DOD Operations," pp. 5-6; "CINCLANT Historical Account," pp. 105-108; Dennison, "Reminiscences," pp. 427-430; Ward "Diary," pp. 18-19; National Indications Center, pp. 96-99; USS Vesole (DDR 878), Ship's History for 1962 (Ship's History Branch, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC); "Navy Intercepts 5 Soviet Vessels in Missile Check," New York Times, November 10, 1962, p. 1.



who thought he was he under attack, and the USS Blandy (DD 943) was accused of threatening the Soviet ship Dvinogorsk while inspecting the MRBMs on its deck.³⁰³ Thus, despite the intense level of interaction between U.S. Navy and Soviet ships, there were no incidents that had an impact on the President's ability to manage the crisis.

The second area of operations in which tactical-level interactions occurred during the Cuban Missile Crisis was U.S. Navy anti-submarine warfare operations against Soviet submarines. Senior Navy officers would later stress the scope and intensity of the ASW operations conducted during the crisis. Admiral Anderson stated that "The presence of Russian submarines in Caribbean and Atlantic waters provided perhaps the first opportunity since World War II for our anti-submarine warfare forces to exercise at their trade, to perfect their skills, and to manifest their capability to detect and follow submarines of another nation."³⁰⁴ This

³⁰³"CINCLANT Historical Narrative," pp. 108-9; Dennison, "Reminiscences," pp. 428-30; Ward, "Sea Power in the Cuban Crisis," pp. 3-4; Ward, "Reminiscences," pp. 197-98. The Navy investigated the charges against USS Blandy and concluded that the ship had not made any threats. It is possible, however, that if USS Blandy had its weapons manned, it could have upset the Soviet captain.

³⁰⁴"Admiral Confirms U.S. Navy Detected and Trailed Soviet Submarines," New York Times, November 10, 1962, p. 1; Abel, p. 155. Also see Admiral Anderson's testimony in Department of Defense Appropriations for 1964, pp. 256-57; Ward, "Sea Power in the Cuban Crisis," p. 4; Griffin, "Reminiscences," pp. 555-56.

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that every entry should be supported by a valid receipt or invoice. This ensures transparency and allows for easy verification of the data. The text also mentions that regular audits are necessary to identify any discrepancies or errors in the accounting process.

In addition, the document highlights the role of technology in modern accounting. The use of software can significantly reduce the risk of human error and streamline the workflow. It suggests that businesses should invest in reliable accounting software that can integrate with other systems, such as CRM and ERP, to provide a comprehensive view of the company's financial health.

Furthermore, the text discusses the importance of staying up-to-date with the latest accounting standards and regulations. This is particularly true for businesses operating in a global market, where different countries may have varying requirements. The document advises that accountants should regularly attend professional development courses and seminars to stay informed about any changes in the industry.

Finally, the document concludes by stating that effective accounting is essential for the long-term success of any business. It provides a clear overview of the key principles and practices that can help businesses manage their finances more effectively and make informed decisions based on accurate data.

suggests the enthusiasm with which the Navy approached its ASW mission during the crisis.

The Navy began detecting signs of increased Soviet submarine activity in the Atlantic as early as October 13 and began increasing the readiness of its ASW forces accordingly. On October 17 the Soviet submarine replenishment ship Terek was spotted in the North Atlantic headed southwest. Terek was placed under daily surveillance by Navy patrol planes. On October 22 a Soviet Zulu-class diesel-electric attack submarine (armed with only with torpedoes, no missiles), designated contact B-28 in the Navy ASW tracking system, was photographed on the surface refueling from Terek near the Azores. This Zulu submarine was at the end of its patrol and returned to the Soviet Union after refueling, thus playing no role in the crisis. On October 24 CINCLANTFLT advised Admiral Ward that at least three known Soviet submarines were operating in the Atlantic and could reach the quarantine zone in a few days.³⁰⁵ Thus, at the time the quarantine went into effect, there were no positive Soviet submarine contacts and no Soviet submarines were actively being prosecuted, but there were indications that three Soviet submarines were approaching the quarantine line.

³⁰⁵ "CINCLANT Historical Account," pp. 10, 120-22; Ward, "Diary," p. 11; Dennison, p. 434.



The Navy conducted intensive ASW operations during the crisis. The principle ASW forces were Task Force 81 and Task Force 83, both under the command of Vice Admiral Edmund B. Taylor, Commander Anti-Submarine Warfare Force Atlantic (COMASWFORLANT). Task Force 81 consisted of twelve land-based patrol plane squadrons, about 140 aircraft (P2Vs, P5Ms, and P3Vs). Task Force 83 consisted of four ASW HUK Groups (one of which was assigned to TF 136 at all times) and approximately 24 destroyers and destroyer escorts in Atlantic and Caribbean picket stations. On October 24 seventeen ASW patrol planes and ten submarines were tasked to establish the "Argentia Sub-Air Barrier" in the North Atlantic. This ASW barrier, which went into effect October 27 on a southeasterly bearing from Argentia, Newfoundland, remained in operation through November 13. No Soviet submarines were detected attempting to penetrate the barrier. Ships and aircraft of TF 136 (the Quarantine Force) and TF 135 (the Attack Carrier Force), Royal Canadian Navy ships and aircraft, and Air Force reconnaissance aircraft also participated in ASW operations during the crisis.³⁰⁶

³⁰⁶"CINCLANT Historical Account," pp. 120-25, 134; Anderson, "Cuban Crisis," p. 85; "DOD Operations," p. 12. For a description of HUK Group ASW operations in 1962, see Barrett Gallagher, "Searching for Subs in the Atlantic," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 88 (July 1962): 98-113. The Navy also considered activating the Greenland-Iceland-United Kingdom (GIUK Gap) ASW Barrier, but did not do so. "CINCLANT Historical Account," pp. 121-22, 132.



The Navy located and trailed five confirmed Soviet submarines, all identified as Foxtrot-class diesel-electric attack submarines, during the crisis. Information on these five contacts is summarized in Table 4. This number

Table 4
Confirmed Soviet Submarines

Contact Number	Submarine Class	Time of First Postive Contact	General Location
C-18	Foxtrot	3:29 p.m. 24 Oct	Atlantic
C-19	Foxtrot	6:11 p.m. 25 Oct	Atlantic
C-20/26	Foxtrot	6:48 a.m. 26 Oct	Atlantic
C-21	Foxtrot	5:05 p.m. 26 Oct	Caribbean
C-23	Foxtrot	3:08 p.m. 26 Oct	Caribbean

Source: Johns, "Naval Quarantine," p. 147; "CINCLANT Historical Account," pp. 120-25.

excludes the Zulu-class submarine sighted in the Atlantic on October 22, which did not play a role in the crisis. For a contact to be evaluated as confirmed, it either had to be photographed or sighted by several observers well-trained in submarine recognition. About 13 to 20 additional contacts, depending on who is making the judgement, were considered to be "probable" Soviet submarines, but could not meet the strict visual identification criteria to be confirmed (even though several of them were "sighted").³⁰⁷ For the Soviets

³⁰⁷Christiansen, interview by author, February 3, 1988; Admiral Anderson's testimony in Department of Defense Appropriations for 1964, p. 256.

to have had a total of 18 to 24 submarines in the Caribbean and Western Atlantic would have been an incredible and extremely unlikely feat. All but one or two of the probable contacts can be dismissed as additional detections of the confirmed submarines or very realistic false contacts. Only the five confirmed contacts will be discussed further.³⁰⁸

President Kennedy and his advisors were concerned about Soviet submarines from their first meetings after Soviet offensive missiles were discovered in Cuba. They appear to have had three concerns. First, they were concerned that submarines would be used to bring nuclear warheads into Cuba for the Soviet missiles. President Kennedy raised this issue during the October 16 morning meeting with his advisors. That afternoon Robert Kennedy

³⁰⁸ Past confusion over the number of confirmed Soviet submarine contacts detected during the crisis can now be cleared up. As can be seen in Table 4, one of the Soviet submarines originally had two contact designations, C-20 and C-26, and during the crisis was believed to be two different submarines. This gives a total of six confirmed contacts. For sources that state there were six Soviet submarines, see "CINCLANT Historical Account," p. 11; Abel, p. 155; Robert Kennedy, p. 77; Anderson, "Cuban Crisis," p. 85; and Dennison, "Reminiscences," p. 435. After almost a year of careful analysis, the Navy's ASW experts determined that C-20 and C-26 were the same submarine. During the crisis not all of these contacts were accepted as confirmed. One of them, C-21, was never photographed, and originally was classified as only being a "possible" Soviet submarine. For sources that state there were five Soviet submarines, see "DOD Operations," pp. 4-5; Ward, "Diary," p. 12. After the crisis contact C-21 was upgraded to confirmed. The best judgement of the Navy's ASW experts was thus that there were five confirmed contacts.

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cautioned that the United States might be forced to sink Soviet submarines to maintain a blockade of Cuba. The CIA estimate prepared October 20 also warned that submarines could bring nuclear warheads into Cuba.³⁰⁹ The second concern was that the Soviets would establish a submarine base in Cuba. There had been concerns about this well before the crisis, particularly that a fishing port being built by the Soviets at Mariel would be used as a submarine base. This was a major concern for the CNO. Admiral Anderson states in his oral history that "I had taken a particular determination that we were not going to let any Soviet submarines get in and start operating out of bases in Cuba."³¹⁰ The third concern was that Soviet submarines would attack Quarantine Force ships or ships standing by for air strikes and invasion of Cuba. Khrushchev exacerbated these concerns on October 24 when he warned American businessman William Knox that Soviet submarines would sink any American ship that forced a Soviet ship to stop. This was not just a Navy concern, the President and McNamara were

³⁰⁹"October 16 Morning Meeting Transcript," pp. 13-14; "October 16 Evening Meeting Transcript," p. 25; SNIE 11-19-62, p. 2.

³¹⁰Anderson, "Reminiscences," p. 557. Admiral Anderson reiterated this point to the author. Anderson, interview by author, January 25, 1988. Also see "CINCLANT Historical Account," p. 11; Dennison, "Reminiscences," p. 434; Hilsman, p. 166; Garthoff, Reflections, pp. 75-77.

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that every entry should be supported by a valid receipt or invoice. This ensures transparency and allows for easy verification of the data.

In addition, the document outlines the procedures for handling discrepancies. If there is a difference between the recorded amount and the actual amount received or paid, it is crucial to investigate the cause immediately. This could be due to a clerical error, a missing receipt, or a change in the terms of the agreement.

The document also provides guidelines for the frequency of reconciling the accounts. It is recommended to perform a reconciliation at the end of each month. This helps to identify any issues early on and prevents them from becoming more complex over time.

Finally, the document stresses the importance of security. All financial records should be stored in a secure location, either physically or electronically. Access should be restricted to authorized personnel only to prevent unauthorized access or tampering.

By following these guidelines, you can ensure that your financial records are accurate, secure, and easy to manage. This will help you maintain a clear and concise financial history for your business.

For more information on financial record keeping, please contact our accounting department at [phone number] or visit our website at [website URL].

also concerned about the Soviet submarine threat.³¹¹ Thus, the President and his advisors had several concerns related to Soviet submarines, concerns which were raised from October 16 onward.

In response to concerns that Soviet submarines would bring nuclear warheads into Cuba and that they would start operating out of Cuban bases, the Kennedy Administration included Soviet submarines in the quarantine. Although the President did not state this explicitly in his October 22 speech, he did state that the quarantine covered "all ships of any kind" and would be extended, if needed, to other types of carriers--implying aircraft and submarines. Similarly, the Quarantine Proclamation signed by the President October 23 stated that "any vessel or craft" could be stopped and searched.³¹² CINCLANTFLT OPOD 45-62, which was based on JCS guidance reviewed by the President and approved by McNamara, explicitly included submarines in the quarantine. CINCLANTFLT directed that "All ships, including

³¹¹On Khrushchev's threat, see William E. Knox, "Close-up of Khrushchev During a Crisis," New York Times Magazine, November 18, 1962, p. 3; Hilsman, p. 214; Sorenson, p. 710; Abel p. 151. Concerns of Task Force commanders were expressed to the author in Rivero, letter to author, March 10, 1988; Stroh, letter to author, February 18, 1988; Hayward, letter to author, February 17, 1988. On the President's concern, see Hilsman, p. 705; Robert Kennedy, pp. 61-62, 70.

³¹²"The Soviet Threat to the Americas," Department of State Bulletin 47 (November 12, 1962): 715-20.

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combatant, surface and sub-surface, Soviet and non-Soviet, designated by CINCLANTFLT on [the] basis of available information will be intercepted."³¹³ Thus, Soviet submarines were an explicit target of the quarantine, and could be stopped and searched if proceeding to Cuba.

The greatest difficulty in enforcing a quarantine against submarines is signalling them to surface for identification and search. The CINCLANTFLT operation order did not include specific signals for use with submarines, but did include procedures if a ship or submarine failed to stop after being signalled: "If these means fail, warning shots shall be fired across the bow, or, in case of submarines, equivalent warning action."³¹⁴ CINCLANTFLT did not, however, state what constituted an equivalent warning action for submarines.

The JCS, Secretary of Defense, and President had been briefed on Navy ASW operations and procedures prior to the quarantine going into effect.³¹⁵ During the evening EXCOMM meeting on October 23, President Kennedy was briefed on intelligence that Soviet submarines were moving toward the Caribbean. In response, according to Robert Kennedy, "The President ordered the Navy to give highest priority to

³¹³ CINCLANTFLT 231710Z OCT 62, emphasis added.

³¹⁴ Ibid, emphasis added.

³¹⁵ Anderson, interview by author, January 25, 1988; Griffin, letter to author, April 6, 1988.



tracking the submarines and to put into effect the greatest possible safety measures to protect our own aircraft carriers and other vessels."³¹⁶ An encounter between U.S. Navy ASW forces and Soviet submarines was now almost inevitable.

McNamara, knowing that the quarantine covered submarines and that the President had just directed a maximum ASW effort, was concerned that the lack of a standard means of signalling Soviet submarines to surface could lead to weapons unnecessarily being used against a Soviet submarine. After the evening EXCOMM meeting on October 23, he went to the CNO's office to discuss the problem. Admiral Anderson was in a JCS meeting, but his Deputy for fleet operations, Vice Admiral Griffin (one of three Admirals deputized by the CNO to act in his absence during the crisis), was available. McNamara asked Vice Admiral Griffin how Navy ships could signal a Soviet submarine to surface. McNamara knew from previous ASW briefings that this was not a normal peacetime procedure for the Navy. Vice Admiral Griffin consulted with the CINCLANTFLT staff on the problem and together they devised a unique set of signals that could be used to signal Soviet submarines to surface.³¹⁷ McNamara immediately approved the special signals.

³¹⁶ Robert Kennedy, pp. 61-62.

³¹⁷ "CNO Historical Narrative," pp. 93-94; Griffin, letter to author, April 6, 1988.

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The special "Submarine Surfacing and Identification Procedures" were transmitted to the fleet over the Fleet Radioteletype Broadcast five hours before the quarantine went into effect on October 24.³¹⁸ The next day they were broadcast to the world, including the Soviet Union, in a Notice to Mariners, the standard message used by all nations to send warnings of navigation hazards:

Pursuant to Proclamation of the President of Oct 23rd, 1962 on the "Interdiction of the Delivery of Offensive Weapons to Cuba" the Secretary of Defense has today issued the following submarine surfacing and identification procedures when in contact with U.S. quarantine forces in the general vicinity of Cuba. U.S. forces coming in contact with unidentified submerged submarines will make the following signals to inform the submarine that he may surface in order to identify himself: Signals follow--quarantine forces will drop 4 or 5 harmless explosive sound signals which may be accompanied by the international code signal "IDKCA" meaning "rise to surface." This sonar signal is normally made on underwater communications equipment in the 8 kc frequency range. Procedure on receipt of signal: Submerged submarines, on hearing this signal, should surface on easterly course.³¹⁹ Signals and procedures employed are harmless.

³¹⁸ COMCRUDES LANT 240900Z OCT 62, naval message, October 24, 1962 (Unclassified. Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC).

³¹⁹ Naval Oceanographic Office, "Notice to Mariners No. 45-62, Special Warnings Nos. 30-33," Paragraphs 5980-5983, October 24-25, 1962 (Naval Oceanographic Office, Washington, DC); NAVOCEANO WASHDC 252124Z OCT 62, "Special Warning Nr. 32," naval message, October 25, 1962 (Unclassified. Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC). These special signals may have been provided to Moscow on October 24, the day before the Notice to Mariners was broadcast. See "DOD Operations," p. 5. These are the signals described by Robert Kennedy, although he misconstrued how they were used. The sonar and explosive charge signals could be used interchangeably, rather than sequentially as described by Kennedy. See Robert Kennedy, p. 69.

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This signal is interesting for two reasons. First, these procedures were not a normal part of peacetime Navy ASW procedures, they were created specifically for the quarantine of Cuba. The Navy had procedures for signaling unidentified submerged submarines, but their only purpose was to determine if a contact was a U.S. submarine. McNamara thus tailored Navy ASW procedures to meet the President's political objectives. Second, the signal "IDKCA" did not come out of the International Code of Signals used by sea-going vessels, which does not contain a signal for submarines to surface.³²⁰ Soviet submarines would have no idea what it meant unless their Government informed them of it. The Soviet Union thus had to make a deliberate decision whether or not to inform its submarines of the signals.

To ensure that the Soviets understood the intent of this Notice, a "Defense Department spokesman" told the press that "should a submarine refuse to cooperate, it would be subject to the same orders applied to other vessels, calling for the 'minimum amount of force necessary'--sinking if necessary--to require the vessel to permit itself to be

³²⁰ See International Code of Signals, For Visual, Sound and Radio Communications, Adopted by the Intergovernmental Maritime Consultative Organization, United States Edition (Washington, DC: U.S. Navy Hydrographic Office, Publication No. 102, 1954). The code mentioned in the Notice to Mariners is the international Morse code, vice the maritime signal code.



searched."³²¹ This statement gives the essence of the guidance provided by CINCLANTFLT to the Quarantine Force, and is similar to other statements used to warn the Soviets about key provisions in U.S. rules of engagement. The statement was not a bluff: the President had in hand contingency orders for the Navy to destroy Soviet submarines if they attempted to interfere with the quarantine.³²² Thus, by October 25 the Kennedy Administration had publicly warned the Soviets that the quarantine applied to their submarines as well as their merchant ships, and had tailored U.S. Navy ASW procedures to support that policy.

There are indications--far from conclusive--that President Kennedy may have used Navy ASW operations as an additional means of demonstrating American resolve and applying coercive pressure on the Soviets. Robert Kennedy alludes to this, suggesting that the President "increased the pressure" on Khrushchev by ordering the Navy to harass Soviet submarines.³²³ Admiral Anderson has made statements that support Robert Kennedy. In 1973 he stated that ASW operations were "of immense psychological significance to emphasize to the USSR that any confrontation with the U.S.

³²¹"U.S. Sets Up a Warning System to Halt Submarines off Cuba," New York Times, October 26, 1962, p. 18.

³²²Sorenson, p. 709; Weintal and Bartlett, p. 66.

³²³Robert Kennedy, p. 77. Also see George, "Cuban Missile Crisis," pp. 112-13.

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was in an area where the U.S. had undoubted naval supremacy."³²⁴ In 1987 Admiral Anderson made a more explicit reference to the issue: "It did not particularly create any problems for the Navy that McNamara wanted to send political signals with antisubmarine warfare operations, carefully measured, with limitations on action and diplomatic intentions."³²⁵ However, none of the other participants in the crisis have reported deliberate use of ASW as a political signal and there are no discussions of this topic in available records of EXCOMM meetings.³²⁶ Robert Kennedy's recollection must therefore be tempered with the qualifications that political signalling was not the primary purpose of the ASW operations and that ASW operations were not among the primary means of signalling the Soviets. Rather, ASW operations were used to reinforce political signals being sent primarily by the quarantine, Strategic Air Command alert, and invasion preparations.

ASW was not one of President Kennedy's top priorities during the crisis. Available EXCOMM records do not reveal Navy ASW operations to be a frequent topic of conversation and Vice Admiral Houser indicates that ASW was primarily

³²⁴Anderson, "Cuban Crisis," p. 85.

³²⁵Anderson, "As I Recall," p. 45.

³²⁶Vice Admiral Houser and Rear Admiral Shepard state that ASW was not used as a political signal. Houser, letter to author, March 9, 1988; Shepard, letter to author, March 22, 1988.



regarded as a support operation for the quarantine.³²⁷ The President and McNamara did not attempt to modify Navy ASW procedures other than with the special surfacing signals. Navy Officers that participated in ASW operations during the crisis report that, other than the special signals, they used normal peacetime ASW procedures.³²⁸ This was not a

³²⁷ Houser, interview by author, February 11, 1988.

³²⁸ Twelve Navy Officers who trailed confirmed Soviet submarines during the crisis stated that they used normal peacetime ASW procedures (the contacts they prosecuted are given in parentheses): Christiansen (C-18 and C-19), Commander of the Essex HUK Group, interview by author, February 3, 1988; Wissman (C-18 and C-19), Operations Officer for the Essex HUK Group, letter to author, March 4, 1988; Morrison (C-18 and C-19), Commander of the destroyers in the Essex HUK Group, interview by author, February 3, 1988; Captain William H. Morgan (C-19), Commanding Officer of USS Cony (DD 508), letter to author, April 7, 1988; Captain Richard D. Faubion (C-19), Commanding Officer of USS Bache (DDR 470), letter to author, February 29, 1988; Commander Stephen F. Durbin (C-19), Commanding Officer of USS Eaton (DD 510), letter to author, March 15, 1988; Captain Charles P. Rozier (C-20/26), Commanding Officer of USS Charles P. Cecil (DDR 835), interview by author, January 30, 1988; Dickey (C-20/26), Commanding Officer of USS Lawe (DD 763), letter to author, April 20, 1988; Commander John R. Riediger (C-21), Commanding Officer of USS Basilone (DD 824), letter to author, April 11, 1988; Commander John M. Dinwiddie (C-21), Commanding Officer of USS Hank (DD 702), letter to author, April 28, 1988; Edelman (C-21), Commanding Officer of VP-24, letter to author, March 25, 1988; Commander Charles H. Hayden (C-21), Commanding Officer of USS Charles H. Roan (DD 853), letter to author, May 10, 1988. Five other Navy Officers who participated in ASW operations stated that they used normal peacetime ASW procedures: Gayler, letter to author, March 22, 1988; Foust, letter to author, March 10, 1988; Captain John L. Kent, Commanding Officer of VS-24, letter to author, March 25, 1988; Captain William K. Doty, Commanding Officer of USS Hawkins (DDR 973), letter to author, March 17, 1988; Captain Robert H. Small, Commanding Officer of USS Abbot (DD 629), letter to author, June 20, 1988.

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lapse on McNamara's part: the Navy's peacetime ASW procedures were relatively safe. In fact, the special surfacing signal was a more aggressive measure than Navy ships were normally allowed to take in peacetime. The one other difference from normal peacetime operations was that during the crisis shore-based and carrier-based ASW aircraft carried live MK-43 ASW homing torpedoes.³²⁹ This action was consistent with the level of DEFCON in effect during the crisis (DEFCON 3) and prevailing concerns over the Soviet submarine threat. It is not known if the President ordered ASW aircraft to carry live ASW ordnance, or even knew that they were doing so. Navy commanders had the authority to take this action on their own initiative, so there was no need for the President to have ordered it.

The White House did not attempt to exercise direct control over ASW operations. Navy Officers that participated in ASW operations during the crisis report that they did not experience close high-level control of their operations.³³⁰ On the other hand, because operational

³²⁹Christiansen, interview by author, February 3, 1988; Edelman, letter to author, March 25, 1988.

³³⁰Christiansen, interview by author, February 3, 1988; Wissman, letter to author, March 4, 1988; Morgan, letter to author, April 7, 1988; Faubion, letter to author, February 29, 1988; Durbin, letter to author, March 15, 1988; Rozier, interview by author, January 30, 1988; Dickey, letter to author, April 20, 1988; Dinwiddie, April 28, 1988; Hayden, letter to author, May 10, 1988; Gayler, letter to author, March 22, 1988; Small, letter to author, June 20, 1988.



reports were being made to CINCLANTFLT on the HF/SSB voice net, the White House could monitor the progress of ASW operations. In his oral history Admiral Ward describes a reporting a submarine contact to the White House, and being told not to take offensive action against it.³³¹ Thus, the CNO, Secretary of Defense, or President could have intervened if prosecution of a Soviet submarine started getting out of hand.

The special "Submarine Surfacing and Identification Procedures" were used several times during the crisis. Available information is incomplete, but the special signals apparently were used on at least two of the five confirmed Soviet submarines (C-19 and C-21), and may have been used on two others (C-18 and C-20/26).³³² Both the Morse code signal ("IDKCA") and the explosive charge signal (four or five charges) were used. Every time that the explosive charge signal was sent by ASW aircraft, they dropped practice depth charges (PDCs). PDCs were small explosive charges routinely used by the Navy in peacetime for an echo

³³¹Ward, "Reminiscences," p. 194. Captain Dickey described an ASW prosecution being monitored by Flag Plot on the HF/SSB net. Dickey, letter to author, April 20, 1988. Captain Wissman recalled the Navy chain of command paying close attention to ASW prosecution. Wissman, letter to author, March 4, 1988.

³³²Edelman, letter to author, March 25, 1988; Wissman, letter to author, March 4, 1988; Dinwiddie, letter to author, April 28, 1988; Dickey, letter to author, April 20, 1988. These are the signals referred to by Robert Kennedy. See Robert Kennedy, p. 69.



ranging technique known as "Julie" and for sending signals to U.S. submarines in ASW exercises. Navy patrol planes and HUK groups had been tracking Soviet submarines for years in the Atlantic, so the Soviet captains knew what PDCs sounded like.³³³ Every time that the explosive charge signal was sent by surface ships, they dropped hand grenades.³³⁴ Thus, contrary to what the organizational process model would predict, the Navy readily adapted to a civilian-inspired modification to its ASW procedures.³³⁵

The results achieved with the "Submarine Surfacing and Identification Procedures" were mixed. Submerged Soviet

³³³Edelman, letter to author, March 25, 1988; Kent, letter to author, March 25, 1988; Wissman, letter to author, March 4, 1988. The Navy had different types of PDCs, but ASW aircraft were restricted to using a particular type (MK 64) and requests to use other, larger charges were denied. The type of PDCs used by ASW aircraft are shown in a photograph in Gallagher, p. 103. The fact that MK 64 PDCs were routinely used in exercises with U.S. submarines indicates that the Navy believed they were a safe signaling method (MK 64 charges were phased out in about 1980 and replaced by MK 84 electronic signalling devices).

³³⁴Dinwiddie, letter to author, April 28, 1988; Rozier, interview by author, January 30, 1988. Ships normally did not carry PDCs: they had sonar and underwater telephone, so did not need PDCs. Hand grenades had about the same explosive charge as MK 64 PDCs.

³³⁵Although this observation illustrates a weakness in the organizational process model, it does not disprove the model. The Navy readily adopted the special signals because they provided an additional tactic to use against Soviet submarines--a means that otherwise would not have been available (such signals were not permitted in normal peacetime operations). Thus, in this case the organizational process model, properly applied, predicts that the Navy would support, rather than resist, a civilian intrusion into its operations.

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It is essential for the company to have a clear and concise record of all financial activities, including sales, purchases, and expenses. This information is crucial for the preparation of financial statements and for the identification of trends and patterns in the company's performance.

The second part of the document focuses on the role of the accounting department in the overall management of the company. The accounting department is responsible for providing accurate and timely financial information to management, which is essential for the formulation of business strategy and the monitoring of the company's progress. The accounting department also plays a key role in the identification and control of costs, which is essential for the achievement of the company's financial objectives.

The third part of the document discusses the importance of the internal control system in the company. The internal control system is designed to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the company's financial information, and to prevent and detect errors and fraud. The internal control system also plays a key role in the identification and control of risks, which is essential for the achievement of the company's financial objectives.

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submarines essentially ignored the sonar and explosive charge signals. There were no reported instances of a Soviet submarine immediately surfacing upon hearing the signals--the Navy did not literally "force" any Soviet submarines to surface. Soviet submarines surfaced because they needed to replenish air and batteries, or because they had some kind of mechanical problem that had to be repaired on the surface. The Navy can claim, however, that it forced Soviet submarines to surface in the presence of U.S. ships-- a humiliation for a submarine captain. On the other hand, the Soviet submarines did not react to the signals with other than their normal efforts at evasion. The Soviet submarines attempted to evade being tracked, sometimes successfully, but their efforts were sporadic. Captain Rozier faced one of the more determined opponents, but was able to maintain contact for over 35 hours despite the submarine's efforts to evade him.³³⁶

There are indications that the Soviet Government may have directed its submarines to comply with the U.S. "Submarine Surfacing and Identification Procedures." At least three of the contacts surfaced on an easterly heading, as specified in the U.S. Notice to Mariners. Although this suggests that the Soviet submarines were directed to comply

³³⁶"CINCLANT Historical Account," pp. 122-24; Rozier, interview by author, January 30, 1988; Anderson, interview by author, January 25, 1988; Christiansen, interview by author, February 3, 1988.



with the U.S. instructions, it is not conclusive: the three submarines had been on an easterly heading before surfacing anyway. There are no clear cases of Soviet submarines making a large course change specifically to surface on an easterly heading. What is more revealing is the fact that they surfaced at all. Normally, a submarine need only expose its snorkel to recharge its batteries and replenish its air. It was unusual, and striking to experienced ASW operators, that all five of the Soviet submarines fully surfaced, sometimes repeatedly, rather than just snorkeling. This led some Navy Officers to conclude that submarines were ordered to surface and identify themselves if challenged by the U.S. Navy.³³⁷ Thus, although the evidence is not conclusive, the Soviet Government does appear to have directed its submarines to comply with the U.S. instructions.

Soviet submarine operations during the Cuban Missile Crisis had a discernible pattern, but not the pattern commonly described in accounts of the crisis. It was unusual for there to be five Soviet submarines in or near the Caribbean--the normal number was two or three.³³⁸ During the crisis, two confirmed Soviet submarines (C-21 and

³³⁷ "CINCLANT Historical Account," pp. 122-24; "DOD Operations," p. 5; Edelman, letter to author, March 25, 1988; Gayler, letter to author, March 22, 1988; Rozier, interview by author, January 30, 1988.

³³⁸ Caldwell, letter to author, March 14, 1988.



C-23) operated in the Caribbean. These two Soviet submarines appear to have been on routine Caribbean patrols. One of them (C-21) was operating near Guantanamo in the Windward Passage--a strategic location for monitoring U.S. Navy movements--when first detected.

The other three confirmed Soviet submarines (C-18, C-19, and C-20/26) operated in the Atlantic east and northeast of the Bahamas. They were detected moving toward the quarantine zone shortly before the quarantine went into effect. Some accounts have described these three submarines as escorting the Soviet merchant ships carrying offensive arms to Cuba. In fact, their locations and movements were unrelated to those of the merchant ships. The Soviet freighters were scattered across the Atlantic, rather than being in a convoy or following a common track toward Cuba. Additionally, the Soviet submarines were scattered over a large area, rather than concentrated around a particular ship or group of ships.³³⁹

The interesting aspect of these three contacts was pointed out in the CINCLANT report: "Shortly after their discovery the submarines began a return to the Russian Northern Fleet bases."³⁴⁰ Navy Officers that prosecuted

³³⁹"CINCLANT Historical Account," pp. 120-25; Johns, "Naval Quarantine," p. 147.

³⁴⁰"CINCLANT Historical Account," p. 11. The detailed description of ASW operations during the crisis makes it clear that this statement applies only to the three Soviet



these three contacts confirm that the Soviet submarines were all headed away from the Caribbean, eastward or northeastward into the Atlantic.³⁴¹ Given that these submarines were all confirmed between October 24 and 26, it appears that the Soviet government ordered them to reverse course and return home on October 24 or 25. If this is correct, the Soviets could well have decided to recall their submarines as early as October 23--the same day they ordered their merchant ships to halt or return home. Greater time delays would have been experienced in getting the recall order out to submerged submarines, which had to expose a radio mast above the surface in order to receive messages.³⁴² The most likely scenario is that Soviets decided to recall their submarines on October 25, after the United States revealed its "Submarine Surfacing and Identification Procedures" and warned that force would be used against submarines that failed to comply. However, the possibility cannot be dismissed that the Soviets may have decided to recall their

submarines in the Atlantic. The two Soviet submarines in the Caribbean attempted, with little success, to maintain surveillance of the two U.S. attack carriers operating south of Cuba.

³⁴¹Christiansen, interview by author, February 3, 1988; Dickey letter to author, April 20, 1988.

³⁴²Ironically, aggressive Navy ASW operations may have inadvertently delayed receipt of the recall order by one or two of the Soviet submarines. However, there was probably no way that the United States could have known that Moscow was recalling its submarines until after their movements became apparent.



submarines on October 23 or 24, perhaps in response to a private warning from the United States, but before the special signals were published and the public warning was given.

There were no significant incidents between U.S. Navy ASW forces and Soviet submarines during the Cuban Missile Crisis. There were no near collisions with submerged or surfaced Soviet submarines. In accordance with peacetime Navy ASW procedures, when Soviet submarines surfaced they were politely asked in the international maritime code, "Do you require assistance?" Some of the submarines were also asked to identify themselves (two responded), but none were ordered to stop for boarding.³⁴³ Navy ships and planes practiced ASW tactics while tracking submerged Soviet submarines.³⁴⁴ This is routine in peacetime ASW operations, so the Soviet captains would have experienced it before while being hunted and tracked in the Atlantic. This posed little danger to the Soviet submarines (The greater danger was that Navy ships or aircraft might collide with each other during ASW maneuvers). Significantly, the Soviets,

³⁴³"CINCLANT Historical Account," pp. 120-25; Dennison, "Reminiscences," p. 435; Lassell, letter to author, May 11, 1988; Wissman, letter to author, March 4, 1988; Christiansen, interview by author, February 3, 1988; Morrison, interview by author, February 3, 1988; Riediger, letter to author, April 11, 1988; Durbin, letter to author, March 15, 1988.

³⁴⁴Morrison, interview by author, February 3, 1988; Dinwiddie, letter to author, April 28, 1988.



who were quick to protest U.S. actions that appeared to threaten their merchant ships, did not file any protests against U.S. ASW operations. It is extremely unlikely that the Soviets would have ignored and not protested a serious incident involving one of their submarines.

A search of available Navy records and questioning of Navy Officers involved in the ASW operations indicates that no torpedoes or full-size (lethal) depth charges were dropped on Soviet submarines.³⁴⁵ This confirms that Elie Abel was correct when he stated that "At no time were

³⁴⁵The two major Navy reports on the crisis do not mention any weapons incidents. See "CNO Historical Narrative;" CINCLANT Historical Account." The CNO contends there were no weapons incidents. Anderson, interview by author, January 25, 1988. Five of the Officers who prosecuted Soviet submarines stated there were no weapons incidents (the contacts they prosecuted are given in parentheses): Christiansen (C-18 and C-19), interview by author, February 3, 1988; Morrison (C-18 and C-19), interview by author, February 3, 1988; Morgan (C-19), letter to author, April 7, 1988; Rozier (C-20/26), interview by author, January 30, 1988; Edelman (C-21), letter to author, March 25, 1988. Three other Officers who prosecuted Soviet submarines stated that they did not know of any weapons incidents: Dickey (C-20/26), letter to author, April 20, 1988; Dinwiddie (C-21), letter to author, April 28, 1988; Hayden (C-21), letter to author, May 10, 1988 (Commander Hayden was in charge of prosecuting contact C-21 while it trailed the Enterprise carrier task group). These responses cover four of the five confirmed Soviet submarines (C-18, C-19, C-20/26, and C-21). The fifth confirmed contact (C-23) was prosecuted by ASW aircraft from VP-56 and VS-26. The commanders of those two squadrons could not be located, but Navy records indicate that no weapons were used in the prosecution of contact C-23. Five other Navy Officers who participated in ASW escort and patrol also stated that there were no weapons incidents: Gayler, letter to author, March 22, 1988; Foust, letter to author, March 10, 1988; Kent, March 25, 1988; Doty, letter to author, March 17, 1988; Small, letter to author, June 20, 1988.



weapons fired."³⁴⁶ Thus, there do not appear to have been any instances of Navy ships or ASW aircraft using live ordnance against Soviet submarines.

A possible source of confusion was that not all of the Navy commanders at sea received the message containing the "Submarine Surfacing and Identification Procedures."³⁴⁷ Because destroyers were frequently shifted among the various Task Groups, it would have been possible for a destroyer Commanding Officer to know about the special signals while his Task Group Commander did not.³⁴⁸ On one occasion during the prosecution of a confirmed contact (C-19), the Destroyer Division Commander in charge of the prosecution, apparently frustrated by the Soviet submarine's refusal to surface in response to the special signals, requested permission to

³⁴⁶ Abel, p. 155.

³⁴⁷ Rear Admiral Christiansen and Captain Morrison, who prosecuted contacts C-18 and C-19, and Captain Rozier, who prosecuted contact C-20/26, did not know about the special signals. Christiansen, interview by author, February 3, 1988; Morrison, interview by author, February 3, 1988; Rozier, interview by author, January 30, 1988.

³⁴⁸ This probably explains the incident related to Sagan by a senior Navy Officer, in which a zealous commander dropped depth charges on a contact. Sagan, p. 117. As Sagan suggests, the charges undoubtedly were hand grenades or PDCs, which were authorized, and were dropped in order to send the special signals approved by McNamara. Commanding Officers were authorized to use the special signals at their own discretion, there was no requirement to get permission from higher authority (Some HUK Group Commanders may have controlled use of the explosive signals themselves for coordination purposes--the explosive signals could interfere with "Julie" explosive echo ranging).

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drop full-size (lethal) depth charges (rather than PDCs) at a distance from the submarine as an even stronger signal to surface. This request was denied by the Task Group Commander (the Destroyer Division Commander's immediate superior).³⁴⁹ Thus, although available records do not establish conclusively that there were no deliberate or accidental weapons incidents, the preponderance of evidence--including the absence of Soviet protests--is that none occurred.

Although weapons were never employed against Soviet submarines, there was a remote possibility that the explosive charge signals could damage a submarine. Captain Lassell, the Destroyer Division Commander at Key West, Florida (then home of the Navy's leading ASW training and tactics development center), maintains that the explosive signals were safe: "A PDC could not damage a submarine even if it were in contact with the hull."³⁵⁰ This is a reasonable assessment, given that the Navy routinely used PDCs against its own submarines. Nevertheless, it is conceivable, even if unlikely, that a PDC detonating against an already weak point in a submarine's hull could exacerbate existing damage, causing a minor leak, or could damage the submarines's rudder or diving planes.

³⁴⁹Faubion, letter to author, February 29, 1988.

³⁵⁰Lassell, letter to author, May 11, 1988.

Two of the Soviet submarines that surfaced during the crisis (C-18 and C-20/26) remained on surface for an extended period. In both cases, crewmen were observed on deck apparently making repairs to hatches or the hull.³⁵¹ The explosive charge signal was never used in the prosecution of contact C-20/26, so that submarine's problem probably was not due to PDCs. Captain Rozier suggests that the submarine may have had a hatch that would not seal properly and that the crew apparently was able to repair the hatch.³⁵² The other Soviet submarine (C-18) suffered more serious damage: it was unable to submerge after it surfaced and eventually was taken in tow. Captain Wissman, one of the officers who prosecuted C-18, speculated that the submarine may have been damaged by a PDC. However, the Soviets never filed a protest and Admiral Dennison attributed the casualty to some sort of machinery failure (a PDC could not damage internal machinery).³⁵³ The problems experienced by C-18 probably were not caused by PDCs.

In summary, the Kennedy Administration included Soviet submarines in the quarantine of Cuba. The Navy was directed

³⁵¹"CINCLANT Historical Account," pp. 122-24; Dennison, "Reminiscences," p. 435; Christiansen, interview by author, February 3, 1988; Rozier, interview by author, January 30, 1988.

³⁵²Rozier, interview by author, January 30, 1988.

³⁵³Wissman, letter to author, March 4, 1988; Dennison, "Reminiscences," p. 435.



to surface, board, and inspect Soviet submarines that were discovered en route to Cuba. Standard Navy peacetime ASW procedures were modified specifically to support the President's political objectives. Secretary of Defense McNamara approved special signals devised by the Navy for signalling submarines to surface for identification. The rules of engagement issued for the quarantine specifically addressed when force could be used against submarines. When informed that Soviet submarines were moving into the quarantine area, the President directed the Navy to launch a maximum ASW effort. The Soviet Union was informed of the "Submarine Surfacing and Identification Procedures" and was warned that force would be used against submarines that failed to comply.

By themselves, these observations suggest an overly optimistic view of how the Kennedy Administration handled Navy ASW operations during the crisis. ASW was viewed in the EXCOMM as a supporting operation, rather than as one of the central operations in the crisis. ASW operations thus do not appear to have received as much attention as other areas, despite the fact that ASW operations generate the most intense interactions with Soviet forces. The President may not have fully understood the operational implications of Navy ASW operations--such as the fact that Navy ASW planes and helicopters were carrying live ordnance while they trailed Soviet submarines. Nevertheless, McNamara



attempted to ensure that Navy ASW operations supported the President's political objectives.

The President and McNamara chose not to exercise direct control over ASW operations, but were kept abreast of the operations. The Situation Room displayed all but the most sensitive information on the tactical situation at sea and McNamara was briefed in detail at least once daily in Flag Plot. The President had the capability to monitor the trailing of Soviet submarines real-time over HF/SSB voice radio--except when circuit overload or propagation problems interrupted voice communications (see the earlier discussion of these problems). Although the President apparently chose not to monitor ASW operations over voice radio, he or McNamara could have intervened if they felt that things were getting out of hand.

U.S. Navy ASW forces complied with their rules of engagement and the ASW procedures specified for the quarantine. They used the special signals and did not fire any weapons against Soviet submarines. The only potential incidents were the possibility that U.S. ASW operations may have delayed Soviet submarines from receiving a recall order, and the remote possibility that contact C-18 might have been damaged by a PDC. Other than this, there were no incidents between U.S. ASW forces and Soviet submarines despite the intense ASW operations that were conducted during the crisis.



These findings challenge the prevailing view of Navy ASW operations during the Cuban Missile Crisis. Commenting on Robert Kennedy's description of the Wednesday morning EXCOMM meeting in which the President was informed of a submarine near the quarantine line, Allison made the following assertion: "What neither the President nor his colleagues knew however, was that prior to the experience through which they were living, American destroyers had encountered Soviet submarines--according to the Navy's standard operating procedures. McNamara discovered this during the course of his Wednesday evening visit to the Flag Plot."³⁵⁴ This assertion contains several serious errors. First, the President had been informed the previous day (October 23) that Soviet submarines were moving into the area and had directed the Navy to launch a maximum ASW effort. Second, the President was told during the Wednesday morning EXCOMM meeting that USS Essex had been tasked to prosecute the Soviet submarine. Third, the first positive contact between Navy ASW units and a Soviet submarine did not occur until 3:29 p.m. Wednesday, well after the morning

³⁵⁴Allison, p. 138. Similarly, Nathan, citing Robert Kennedy's account of the October 24 morning EXCOMM meeting, contends that "the Navy began to force Soviet subs to the surface in order to defend its blockade--well before Kennedy had authorized contact with surface vessels." Nathan asserts, with no apparent evidence, that the President was "horrified" when he found out that the Navy intended to surface Soviet submarines. Nathan, pp. 261-2. Nathan's interpretation seriously distorts Robert Kennedy's account, and is proven false by the evidence in this study.

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EXCOMM meeting. Fourth, the Navy was not just following standard operating procedures--Soviet submarines had explicitly been included in the quarantine by guidance reviewed by the President and approved by McNamara. Finally, McNamara knew about Navy ASW operations before he visited Flag Plot Wednesday evening (October 24). What he learned during that visit was that a specific destroyer from the Essex HUK Group was trailing a Soviet submarine (contact C-18)--an action that McNamara authorized. Allison's interpretation of ASW operations during the crisis thus has no validity.

John Steinbruner alleges that Navy ASW operations threatened to upset the strategic balance and disrupt the President's political strategy for the crisis:

Until well into the crisis, however, it escaped their attention that the US Navy would pursue Soviet submarines in the North Atlantic as a normal operational measure in support of the large US naval deployment establishing the blockade. In fact, the naval commanders, with ample operational authority to do so (unless it was specifically denied), chose to pursue this mission very aggressively from the outset. Since Soviet submarines carrying cruise missiles with nuclear warheads were inevitably one of the targets of American anti-submarine warfare (ASW) operations, and since these submarines were one of the prime force elements the Soviet government would have to rely upon should they have to undertake retaliation for strategic attack, the actions of the US Navy constituted extremely strong coercion and violated the spirit of the Executive Committee policy.³⁵⁵

³⁵⁵ John Steinbruner, "An Assessment of Nuclear Crises," in Franklyn Griffiths and John C. Polanyi, eds., The Dangers of Nuclear War (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979), p. 38. Also see Desmond Ball, "Nuclear War at

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The only accurate statement in this analysis is that Navy commanders had ample operational authority (unless it was specifically denied) to conduct ASW in the North Atlantic. The rest is erroneous. First, the President and McNamara knew by at least October 21 that the Navy would be pursuing Soviet submarines in support of the quarantine. McNamara had explicitly included submarines among the vessels that the Navy was permitted to stop and board. The President and McNamara appear to have shared Navy concern that Soviet submarines might attack Navy quarantine ships and were generally supportive of Navy ASW objectives.

Second, McNamara undoubtedly and the President probably knew about Navy ASW operations in the Atlantic outside the quarantine area. The Argentinia ASW barrier, ordered on October 24 and established on October 27, was displayed on the charts in Flag Plot and thus would have been seen by McNamara during his daily briefings. The CNO would have had to make an extraordinary effort to prevent McNamara from learning about the barrier.³⁵⁶ However, the CNO had no motive for hiding the barrier from McNamara.

Sea," International Security 10 (Winter 1985-86): 19-20; Barry R. Posen "Inadvertent Nuclear War? Escalation and NATO's Northern flank," International Security 7 (Fall 1982): 31.

³⁵⁶The Canadian Government would have had to join the CNO's conspiracy: Royal Canadian Navy planes participated in the barrier and U.S. Navy planes operated out of bases in Canada. "CINCLANT Historical Account," p. 124.



Third, no Soviet missile submarines were trailed in the North Atlantic. McNamara stated during the October 27 EXCOMM meeting that there were three Soviet submarines off the U.S. coast, but that "as far as we know they don't carry missiles."³⁵⁷ Further, the CINCLANT report states that no Soviet submarines were detected by the Argentia ASW Barrier.³⁵⁸ The only submarines trailed by the Navy in the Atlantic during the crisis were the three Foxtrot-class torpedo-armed attack submarines that entered the quarantine area. The only Soviet submarine-launched cruise missile credited with a land attack capability in 1962 (the SS-N-3) was the size of a jet fighter and had to be carried in very large tubes outside the hull. The Soviets had no cruise missiles that could be launched from torpedo tubes, excluding the Foxtrots from the strategic nuclear deterrence role. Thus, Navy ASW operations did not constitute "extremely strong coercion," at least not for the reason given by Steinbruner.

Fourth, the Navy conducted its ASW operations essentially in the manner that the President desired. The special surfacing signals were used as specified by McNamara. Force was not used against Soviet submarines because they did not take actions that warranted use of

³⁵⁷ "October 27 Meetings Transcript," p. 53.

³⁵⁸ "CINCLANT Historical Account," p. 124.



force under the rules of engagement approved by McNamara. Soviet submarines were treated courteously when they surfaced. Thus, contrary to Steinbruner's assertion, Navy ASW operations did not violate "the spirit of Executive Committee policy."

The final step in this review of U.S. Navy operations during the Cuban Missile Crisis is to examine the interactions with Soviet and Cuban forces that could have occurred and the interactions with those forces that did occur. The following interactions conceivably could have occurred during the crisis: Soviet submarine, perhaps mistaking U.S. efforts to make it surface as indications of attack, fires a torpedo at a U.S. warship, prompting the U.S. ship to return fire; Soviet submarine ignores U.S. signals to surface and attempts to proceed to a Cuban port, prompting the President to order it destroyed; Soviet merchant ship does not receive recall order, attempts to pass through blockade line, refuses order to halt, and is fired on by a U.S. warship; Soviet merchant ship uses force against a U.S. Navy boarding party, prompting U.S. warships to destroy it; Soviet merchant ship resists being taken into custody, prompting the President to order it destroyed; Cuban aircraft attack a U.S. civilian merchant ship, Navy warship, or military aircraft in international waters or airspace, prompting U.S. ships or aircraft to return fire; Cuban naval vessels attack a U.S. merchant ship or warship



in international waters, prompting U.S. ships or aircraft to return fire; Cuban coastal defense anti-ship cruise missiles fire on a U.S. merchant ship or warship in international waters, prompting the President to order retaliatory strikes against Cuban coastal defense missile sites; Cuban fighters attack U.S. low-level photographic reconnaissance aircraft, causing an air battle with U.S. fighters waiting outside Cuban airspace; Cuban anti-aircraft guns shoot down a U.S. low-level photographic reconnaissance aircraft, prompting the President to order retaliatory strikes against Cuban air defenses. This list is not comprehensive, but does provide an indication of the many ways in which violent incidents could have occurred during the crisis.

Additionally, a wide range of accidents could have occurred, including U.S. Navy ships or planes accidentally firing a weapon near a Soviet submarine or merchant ship, a Soviet submarine accidentally firing a torpedo near a U.S. warship, collisions between U.S. warships and Soviet submarines or merchant ships, aircraft crashing over or near Cuba (causing speculation that the Cubans shot them down), and Cuban Komar missile boats or coastal defense missile sites accidentally firing an anti-ship cruise missile during testing or training. This list is representative, rather than comprehensive, and some of these accidents were more likely to occur than others (collisions were the greatest danger). The high tempo of U.S. Navy operations during the



crisis, particularly the intense quarantine and ASW operations, suggests that there was ample opportunity for inadvertent military incidents to occur. Given the high level of tensions between the United States and Soviet Union, any of these incidents could have triggered a clash between U.S. forces and Soviet or Cuban forces.

There were, in fact, significant tactical-level interactions during the crisis. Most important were the interactions between the U.S. Quarantine Force and Soviet merchant ships, and between U.S. ASW forces and Soviet submarines. There were also low-intensity interactions between U.S. low altitude reconnaissance planes and Cuban air defenses, in the form of Cuban anti-aircraft guns firing on the U.S. planes, and interactions between Cuban naval units and U.S. Navy ships and patrol planes in the Florida Strait. Cuban Komar missile boats were active in Cuban waters during the crisis and occasionally ventured out into the Florida Strait at night. They did not, however, take any threatening actions toward U.S. vessels and retreated to Cuban waters when illuminated by Navy patrol planes.³⁵⁹

³⁵⁹The CIA reported that Cuban naval units were deployed to defend Cuban harbors. CIA, "Crisis USSR/Cuba," October 24, 1962, p. I-1. Navy ships and patrol planes frequently spotted Cuban naval vessels and planes, but there were no close encounters even though U.S. Navy ships operated as close as three nautical miles from the Cuban coast on several occasions. Lassell, letter to author, May 11, 1988; Wissman, letter to author, March 4, 1988; Edelman, letter to author, March 25, 1988; Foust, letter to author, March 10, 1988; Dickey, letter to author, April 20, 1988;



None of these interactions were as intense as they could have been. Interactions with Soviet merchant ships and submarines were limited by Khrushchev's decision to recall the freighters carrying arms and the three submarines operating in the Atlantic. The only Soviet ships that entered the quarantine zone were those that the United States would have no reason to take into custody. The three Soviet submarines that were of greatest concern had all reversed course and were headed home by the time U.S. Navy ASW forces were able to locate and prosecute them. Had Khrushchev directed the freighters and submarines to continue toward Cuba, the intensity of tactical-level interactions at sea would have been much more severe.

Interactions with Cuban forces were constrained by an apparent decision by Castro not to provoke a confrontation with the United States. The CIA daily intelligence report for October 26 noted that "The armed forces remain under strict orders not to fire unless fired upon."³⁶⁰ The Cuban

Captain William C. Magee, Commanding Officer of USS Claud Jones (DE 1033), letter to author, May 12, 1988. Navy low-level photographic reconnaissance planes were fired on by Cuban anti-aircraft guns on October 27, but were not hit. On one occasion Navy reconnaissance jets, which had no armament, spotted two Cuban Migs while on a mission over Cuba. The U.S. pilots reacted with "Burner now!": they activated their afterburners for high speed evasion. The Cuban Migs did not attempt to pursue the fast Corsairs. Captain William B. Ecker, Commanding Officer of VFP-62, letter to author, March 19, 1988.

³⁶⁰ CIA, "Crisis USSR/Cuba," October 26, 1962, p. I-2.



air force was relatively inactive throughout the crisis and the Cuban navy avoided confrontations with the U.S. Navy. The anti-aircraft fire on October 27 was the only exception to this pattern of caution, but appears to have been an isolated incident--there was no further anti-aircraft fire against U.S. planes. If Castro had decided to demonstrate defiance of the United States--to back up his inflammatory rhetoric with military actions--there probably would have been a Caribbean version of the Tonkin Gulf Incident. Once an initial Cuban attack had taken place, U.S. forces would have been at hair trigger readiness for further attacks. Repeated Cuban provocations, particularly a successful Cuban attack on a U.S. ship, probably would have led the President to order destruction of the Cuban navy and air force.

Khrushchev's early decision not to challenge the U.S. quarantine meant that President Kennedy and the Navy commanders at sea were never confronted with a situation in which they had to decide whether or not to use force against Soviet ships or submarines. At the time, however, this was not clear to the President or the chain of command. Khrushchev did not announce his actions, the United States had to infer them from the movements of Soviet ships and submarines. As late as Saturday, October 27, it still was not clear to U.S. leaders that Khrushchev would refrain from challenging the quarantine, even though several Soviet ships suspected of carrying arms had turned back. Additionally,



U.S. leaders had to assess the meaning and implications of the downing of an Air Force U-2 over Cuba by a Soviet SA-2 missile on Saturday, October 27. The President and his advisors, particularly McNamara, fully expected that there would be further attacks on U.S. reconnaissance planes, which would have prompted air strikes against Cuban air defenses within a couple days.³⁶¹ The danger of an armed confrontation with Soviet or Cuban forces thus appeared to be much greater at the time than it does in retrospect.

U.S. Navy forces experienced a number of accidents during the Cuban Missile Crisis, but none of them cause a confrontation with soviet forces or otherwise interfered with the President's ability to manage the crisis. The USS Holder (DD 819) collided with USS Wasp (CVS 18) while refueling at sea on November 14, but damage to the ships was slight. The USS William C. Lawe (DD 763) was forced aground by heavy seas in the mouth of San Juan harbor, Puerto Rico, on November 17, suffering damage sufficient to keep it out of further quarantine operations. The Navy lost an F8U that crashed during a catapult launch and an A4D that caught fire in flight. USS Essex (CVS 9) lost two new SH-3 ASW helicopters due to an electrical malfunction, which prompted the Navy to ground all of its SH-3s until the problem was corrected. Rear Admiral Christiansen states that not having

³⁶¹"October 17 Meetings Transcript," pp. 66-71, 74, 78.

the SH-3s caused some difficulties in tracking Soviet submarines. An ASW torpedo was dropped on the flight deck of USS Essex while being loaded onto an aircraft, but did not explode. One of the Navy F8U-1P photographic reconnaissance planes was damaged when it struck an Albatross in flight. Navy F4H Phantoms intercepted (but did not fire on) an Air Force U-2 as it approached the USS Enterprise (CVAN 65) carrier group after flying over Cuba. Two Air Force planes supporting the Navy crashed during the crisis: on October 23 a C-135 loaded with ammunition crashed while landing at Guantanamo (causing a spectacular explosion and fire), and on October 27 an RB-47 crashed on takeoff from the Bahamas. Four Marines at Guantanamo were injured, two when they accidentally entered a U.S. minefield and two who were wounded when they failed to respond properly to a sentry's challenge. The accident that created the greatest danger of a confrontation with Cuban forces occurred on November 6, when two Marines accidentally crashed a pickup truck through the Guantanamo security fence and twenty feet into Cuban territory. The incident was witnessed by a Cuban military officer, but the Cubans did not interfere with recovery of the truck and did not file a protest.³⁶² These

³⁶²"CINCLANT Historical Account," pp. 99-100, 108, 118; Christiansen, interview by author, February 3, 1988; Dickey, letter to author, April 20, 1988; Hayward, letter to author, February 17, 1988; Ecker, letter to author, March 19, 1988; Vice Admiral Kent L. Lee, Commander Carrier Air Group Six aboard USS Enterprise (CVAN 65), interview by

incidents are not unusual and most are typical peacetime accidents. None of them complicated the crisis.

In summary, the U.S. Navy conducted extensive operations during the Cuban Missile Crisis. The operations that had the most immediate impact on resolution of the crisis were the quarantine and ASW operations. Both of these operations were conducted largely in accordance with standard Navy procedures, but with certain key modifications to ensure that they supported the President's political objectives. The White House and the chain of command closely monitored quarantine and ASW operations when they involved encounters with Soviet ships or submarines, but did not attempt to exercise direct real-time control over operations at sea. The Navy conducted these operations in the manner prescribed by the President and there were no incidents with Soviet ships or submarines.

Findings

This section will review the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis to answer the eight research questions. The first question is to what degree were interactions between the forces of the two sides at the scene of the crisis the result of actions taken in accordance with mechanisms of indirect

author, February 5, 1988; Rear Admiral Edward J. O'Donnell, Commander Naval Base Guantanamo, interview by author April 27, 1988.

control, rather than direct control by national leaders? The Kennedy Administration was clearly concerned about the danger of an incident with Soviet ships or submarines. The President and McNamara exercised a greater degree of control over U.S. Navy operations than had ever been attempted in the past. However, they primarily controlled naval operations through mechanisms of indirect control, particularly mission orders and rules of engagement, rather than through direct control. The President and McNamara retained authority certain crucial decisions, particularly retaliation against Cuban air defenses and the boarding of ships. Other than this, however, they exercised control by negation, rather than positive control, over Navy operations they felt were particularly sensitive.³⁶³ The President could monitor operations at sea on HF/SSB radio in the White House Situation Room, therefore could intervene if he felt an encounter was getting out of hand. Less sensitive

³⁶³ Researchers have in the past been misled about the manner in which the President exercised control over naval operations because they focused only on top-level deliberations and decisionmaking without examining the rest of the chain of command. The EXCOMM was an only an advisory body for the President--it was not in the chain of command. The EXCOMM and its study groups discussed military and naval operations in numbing detail, but the President and McNamara did not attempt to control all of those details in the actual conduct of operations. For example, the boarding party that searched Marucla was guided by the Navy tactical publication NWIP 10-2, not by procedures worked out in the EXCOMM. Similarly, the mission orders and rules of engagement for the quarantine were drafted by CINCLANT and the CNO's staff, and the President and McNamara made only a few key changes to those orders and rules.

operations were not closely controlled, with methods of delegated control being used. Presidential orders were passed via the chain of command and neither the President nor McNamara ever gave orders directly to ships at sea.

The second question is were the forces of the two sides at the scene of the crisis tightly coupled with each other? The overall answer is yes, but the coupling was not as tight as might be expected given the seriousness of the crisis. The tightest coupling was between U.S. Navy ASW forces and Soviet submarines, followed closely by coupling between the Quarantine force and Soviet merchant ships. In both cases, however, Khrushchev's decision not to challenge the quarantine dampened the interactions between the two sides. The Soviet submarines were not attempting to force their way through U.S. naval forces to get to Cuba, they were attempting to return home unmolested. The only Soviet ships that approached the quarantine line were those that the U.S. would have no reason to take into custody. As Admiral Dennison relates in his oral history, the quarantine was a success without ever having been tested.³⁶⁴ Interactions between U.S. and Cuban forces were also dampened by the efforts that leaders on both sides made to avoid provocations. In this regard the Cuban Missile Crisis was similar to the 1958 Taiwan Strait Crisis: although significant U.S.

³⁶⁴Dennison, "Reminiscences," p. 427.

forces were operating in close proximity to the adversary's forces, tactical-level interactions were dampened by the caution and restraint shown by both sides.

The third question is were the forces of the two sides being used by their national leaders as a political instrument in the crisis? President Kennedy clearly was using the U.S. armed forces to convey political signals to Khrushchev during the crisis. The President and McNamara actively sought out ways to reinforce the signals being sent to the Soviets, such as by modifying Navy ASW procedures to support the political objectives of the quarantine.

Khrushchev, on the other hand, may have used military forces for political signalling, but did not do so as clearly as President Kennedy. Khrushchev was probably avoiding signals of hostile intent by not placing Soviet forces at full alert, recalling freighters carrying arms, and recalling the three submarines in the Atlantic. However, there is insufficient evidence to establish this conclusively. Shooting down an American U-2 over Cuba on October 27 certainly sent the wrong signal to the United States, but this action may not have been authorized in the Kremlin. Cuba placed its armed forces on alert, but avoided provocative actions during the crisis. This was probably intended to avoid giving the United States a pretext for invading the island. Thus, all three of the participants in the crisis used their military forces for political signalling.

The answers to these first three questions suggest that conditions necessary for stratified interaction were present in the Cuban Missile Crisis. Although the President sought to maintain close control of military operations he relied heavily on methods of delegated control and communications problems constrained his ability to effectively exercise direct control. In certain operations there was tight coupling between the forces of the two sides. Both sides used their forces as a political instrument under conditions of acute crisis. Interactions occurred at the tactical level that were not directly controlled by American leaders. The President did not directly control any of the ASW prosecutions or the boarding of the Marucla (other than to order it to occur). Navy forces encountered Cuban air and naval forces on several occasions without the President or McNamara controlling the interactions. The President's attention was focused on a very small portion of the overall operations that were in progress. The stratified interaction model of international crises, in which interactions evolve in separate, semi-independent sequences at the political, strategic and tactical levels, offers a good description of Soviet-American interactions in the Cuban Missile Crisis.

The fourth question is did crisis interactions at the tactical level become decoupled from the strategy being pursued by national leaders? Despite the vast scale of

operations that were conducted and the intensity of the interactions that took place, decoupling was relatively rare during the Cuban Missile Crisis. There were no serious instances of decoupling involving naval forces.³⁶⁵ A review of the seven potential causes of decoupling reveals that there were relatively few opportunities for decoupling to occur. The potential cause of decoupling that was most prominent in the crisis was communications problems. Despite the advances that had been made in communications technology, the effort to exercise close control over large-scale operations seriously overloaded and degraded U.S. communications systems. These communications problems did not cause serious decoupling because only a very small portion of U.S. forces were in contact with adversary forces and because attention had been paid to the guidance contained mechanisms of indirect control, so that U.S. forces would act as the President desired when he could not control their actions.

The second potential cause of decoupling, a fast-paced tactical environment, was not a major problem during the

³⁶⁵ There was at least one instance of decoupling involving the Air Force. An Air Force U-2 strayed over the Soviet Union on October 27, prompting the Soviets and Americans to scramble fighters--an incident decoupled from Presidential control. If, as has been alleged, the Strategic Air Command transmitted its readiness reports for the DEFCON 2 alert in the clear without the President and McNamara knowing what they were doing, that would have been another instance of decoupling. See Sagan, p. 108.



crisis. There were no fast-paced engagements. ASW operations--the most dangerous Soviet-American tactical interactions during the crisis--are particularly slow and tedious, providing ample opportunity for disengagement. Similarly, the intercept and boarding of merchant ships takes place at a leisurely pace and is relatively easy to control. Fast-paced engagements, such as air combat and sea battles fought with tactical aircraft and cruise missiles, never arose. In retrospect this appears to have been a key factor in the success of the President's crisis management efforts--opening with operations that were inherently slow-paced. The President probably knew intuitively that this was an advantage of a blockade, but it was not an explicit consideration in the decision.

President Kennedy and Secretary of Defense McNamara also sought to avoid three of the other potential causes of decoupling: ambiguous or ambivalent orders, tactically inappropriate orders, and inappropriate guidance in mechanisms of indirect control. This is a striking contrast with the 1958 Taiwan Strait Crisis, when the Navy did not have clear guidance on whether or not it could defend the off-shore islands when the crisis erupted. By tailoring certain key guidance contained in mission orders (OPORDs) and rules of engagement to support the President's political objectives, the President and McNamara avoided the problem of inappropriate guidance in mechanisms of indirect control.

McNamara did not attempt to rewrite Navy tactical doctrine, but did impose certain requirements and limitations on the Navy. The most important innovation, the special submarine surfacing signals, were devised in conjunction with the Navy. By not attempting to exercise positive direct control of operations while they were in progress, the President and McNamara largely avoided the problem of tactically inappropriate orders. The method of control they used--control by negation--only required that orders be given if a Navy commander embarked on a course of action that they opposed.

The final potential cause of decoupling, unauthorized actions by military commanders, did not occur during the crisis. Contrary to the prevailing myth, Navy ASW operations were not conducted without the President's knowledge and authority, and did not violate the spirit of EXCOMM policy. No Soviet submarines were depth charged. The fact that no unauthorized actions occurred is even somewhat surprising. As will be discussed below, there was resentment among many Navy (and Air Force) Officers to the close attention that the President and McNamara paid to military operations. Thus, in summary, the various potential causes of decoupling either were not present during the crisis or did not have a serious adverse effect on the President's ability to manage the crisis.

The fifth question is did national leaders and on-scene commanders hold different perceptions of the

vulnerability of on-scene forces to pre-emption and the need to strike first in the event of an armed clash? Although the JCS remained committed to the air strike option as its preferred course of action until Khrushchev agreed on October 28 to remove Soviet offensive missiles from Cuba, this does not reflect differences in threat perceptions. Rather, it reflects differences of opinion over whether or not the quarantine would be sufficient to compel Khrushchev to remove the missiles that were already in Cuba. Even President Kennedy was skeptical that it would work, but decided to give it a try before resorting to force. The primary area in which there appear to have been stratified threat perceptions, that is, on-scene commanders at the tactical level holding threat perceptions different from those held by decisionmakers at the political level, was in the area of ASW. Navy commanders at sea were more concerned about the Soviet submarine threat than were senior military and civilian leaders in Washington. However, the differences were not extreme and the President and McNamara were also concerned about the Soviet submarine threat.³⁶⁶

³⁶⁶ Admiral Griffin, Vice Admiral Houser, Vice Admiral Caldwell, and Rear Admiral Shepard stated that there was not great concern for the Soviet submarine threat in Washington. However, Admiral Anderson, Admiral Sharp, and rear Admiral Wylie state that there were such concerns. Griffin, letter to author, April 6, 1988; Houser, interview by author, February 11, 1988; Shepard, interview by author, February 10, 1988; Anderson, interview by author, January 25, 1988; Sharp, letter to author, February 24, 1988; Wylie, letter to author, April 13, 1988. President Kennedy and McNamara were

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that every entry should be supported by a valid receipt or invoice. This not only helps in tracking expenses but also ensures compliance with tax regulations. The second part of the document provides a detailed breakdown of the company's financial performance over the last quarter. It includes a comparison of actual results against budgeted figures, highlighting areas of both strength and weakness. The third part of the document outlines the company's strategic goals for the upcoming year, focusing on increasing revenue and reducing operational costs. It also discusses the various initiatives and projects that will be implemented to achieve these goals. The final part of the document provides a summary of the key findings and recommendations. It concludes that while there have been some challenges, the company remains on a positive trajectory and is well-positioned to meet its long-term objectives.

There was recognition at all levels that for several reasons, including that fact that submarines were to be stopped and boarded under the quarantine, the Navy would have to conduct intense ASW operations.

The one other area in which threat perceptions were stratified was the Cuban air and naval threat to U.S. Navy ships. Navy commanders were particularly concerned about the threat from Cuban Komar missile boats.³⁶⁷ There is little mention of this threat in available EXCOMM records. Perceptions of the threat from Cuban aircraft were mixed, not following any pattern. Admiral Anderson and Admiral Dennison appear to have been most concerned about the Cuban air threat, Admiral Ward was not overly concerned about it. According to Admiral Ward, however, the CNO was flexible on this point during the October 20 JCS meeting.³⁶⁸ Among

concerned about the Soviet submarine threat. See Robert Kennedy, 61-62, 69-70; Sorenson, pp. 705, 710. Admiral Rivero, Vice Admiral Houser, Vice Admiral Caldwell, Vice Admiral Hayward, Vice Admiral Stroh and the CINCLANT report on the crisis state that Task Force and Task Group Commanders at sea were concerned about the Soviet submarine threat. Rivero, letter to author, March 10, 1988; Houser, interview by author, February 11, 1988; Caldwell, letter to author, March 14, 1988; Hayward, letter to author, February 17, 1988; Stroh, letter to author, February 18, 1988; "CINCLANT Historical Account," pp. 116, 121-22, 146.

³⁶⁷ Lassell, letter to author, May 11, 1988; Brady, letter to author, April 21, 1988; Magee, letter to author, May 12, 1988; Wissman, letter to author, March 4, 1988; "CINCLANT Historical Account," p. 112.

³⁶⁸ Anderson, interview by author, January 25, 1988; Dennison, "Reminiscences," p. 424; Ward, "Diary," pp. 4-6.



commanders at sea, only those patrolling near Cuba in the Florida Strait were particularly concerned about the Cuban air threat. Thus, while perceptions of the Cuban air and naval threat were mixed, they were not stratified.

The sixth question is, when tactical-level interactions become decoupled, what factors inhibit escalation dynamics from occurring at the tactical level and being transmitted upward to the strategic and political levels of interaction? The Cuban Missile Crisis does not help to answer this question because there were no instances of decoupled interaction sequences. The decoupling that did occur was minor and did not generate sustained interaction sequences beyond Presidential control. President Kennedy's decision to open with relatively slow-paced naval operations, Khrushchev's early decision not to challenge the quarantine, and Castro's decision not to provoke the United States were the factors that determined the nature of the tactical-level interactions. There was immediate disengagement in the one instance that weapons were fired at a U.S. Navy unit: When Cuban anti-aircraft guns fired at Navy reconnaissance jets on October 27, the unarmed Navy planes simply left the area. Navy ASW forces trailed Soviet submarines for days without escalation by either side. In effect, then, escalation was avoided by the tactical environment having been structured in such a manner as to prevent clashes from occurring in the first place. Although

this was what President Kennedy had in mind when he selected the quarantine over other military options, the outcome was due to decisions made in Moscow and Havana as well as in Washington.

The seventh question is did actions taken with military forces send inadvertent signals to either adversaries or friends, and did inadvertent military incidents occur that affected efforts to manage the crisis? There were two instances of U.S. naval forces sending inadvertent signals of hostility: the first was when a Soviet merchant ship captain mistook a Navy patrol plane's high-powered search light (flashed for photographs) for an attack on his ship, and the second was a Soviet merchant ship captain's complaint that he had been threatened by a Navy destroyer inspecting MRBMs on his deck. Although the Soviet Government filed protests over these incidents, it did not interpret them as deliberate indications of hostile intentions on the part of the United States.

There was only one inadvertent military incident serious enough to have affected the President's efforts to manage the crisis: the Air Force U-2 that strayed over the Soviet Union on October 27. This apparently annoyed Khrushchev, who complained about the incident to President Kennedy, but otherwise did not have a major impact on the crisis. There were no serious inadvertent military incidents involving naval forces. The most serious incident

was the Marine pickup truck that crashed through the fence at Guantanamo into Cuban territory. A Cuban officer watched patiently, and probably in amusement, as the wayward truck was dragged back into the American base. There is a remote possibility that a Navy PDC might have contributed to the problems that kept two of the Soviet submarines on the surface, but the Soviets never filed a protest claiming that such an incident had occurred. The lack of incidents is somewhat surprising, given the tremendous scope of United States military operations during the crisis, and may not be a reliable indicator of what to expect in future crises.

The U-2 incident and Soviet protests of incidents involving their merchant ships illustrate another feature of the Cuban Missile Crisis: communications between the two sides were used to prevent incidents from giving rise to misperceptions. Military moves were not the only means of signalling intentions available to President Kennedy, he had several other channels for delivering formal and informal messages to Khrushchev.³⁶⁹ Because Kennedy and Khrushchev were exchanging communications frequently during the crisis, they could wait, send a protest, and assess the implications of an isolated incident, rather than immediately reacting to it. But these communications were not perfect: The United States appears not to have asked for or received an

³⁶⁹Hilsman, pp. 216-17; Holsti, pp. 187-92.



explanation for the shooting down of a U-2 on October 27. This was an important incident that caused apprehensions concerning Khrushchev's motives and willingness to resolve the crisis peacefully. Yet its implications remained ambiguous. The incident probably would have had a greater impact on U.S. policy than it did were it not for Khrushchev's October 28 letter accepting President Kennedy's terms for ending the crisis. Nevertheless, the availability of formal and informal communications channels between the two superpowers appears to have moderated the use of military forces for political signaling by allowing diplomatic rather than military responses to military incidents.

The eighth question is did any of the three tensions between political and military considerations arise during the crisis? All three of the tensions arose, but only one was severe. Tensions between political considerations and military considerations primarily arose from the fundamental decision to impose a quarantine on offensive arms rather than immediately launch an air strike against the Soviet missiles sites or invade Cuba. The JCS never wavered from its advocacy of the air strike option. There was also concern that the President's strategy of applying military force in graduated increments would increase the difficulty of carrying out the air strike or invasion options by alerting the Cubans--losing the tactical and strategic



advantage of surprise.³⁷⁰ Further, tensions arose between the military consideration of protecting U.S. forces against a sudden attack by Cuban or Soviet forces, and the political consideration of avoiding military moves that appeared to threaten an immediate effort to achieve a military solution to the crisis. Captain Carmichael, who observed the crisis intimately from his post in Flag Plot, states that "friction was generated when the military considered it prudent to take precautionary measures, assuming that the Soviets would shoot if the point of no return was reached."³⁷¹ The tension that this generated has been explained by Eliot A. Cohen:

The events of October 1962 created considerable tension between military men seeking to protect those under their command, in the event of an outbreak of war, and politicians seeking to give the other side time to think and give in. Had men in fact died as a result, had ships sunk or airplanes fallen by the score, the crisis in civil-military relations would have taken a more dramatic turn, one in which, I suspect, civilian leaders would have accommodated commanders far more than they actually did.³⁷²

This captures the essence of the problem, but must be qualified by three observations. First, the military was concerned with protecting their men in the event of any outbreak of fighting, no matter how small, not just in the event of war.

³⁷⁰ Sharp, letter to author, February 24, 1988.

³⁷¹ Carmichael, letter to author, March 8, 1988.

³⁷² Cohen, p. 6.



Second, as this case study has shown, civilian leaders accommodated military commanders to a much greater degree than past accounts have acknowledged. The rules of engagement issued for the quarantine were not significantly different from normal peacetime rules and did not infringe upon a commander's right of self-defense. The only operational area in which the President deliberately denied the military any authority to take action in self defense was in the case of Cuban air defenses firing on U.S. reconnaissance aircraft. This was not a policy innovation created for the Cuban Missile Crisis. The distinction between self defense and retaliation was well-established in U.S. rules of engagement. President Kennedy simply defined attacks on Cuban air defenses to be an act of retaliation that he would control, rather than an act of self defense that the military could take on its own authority. President Eisenhower had done the same thing in the 1958 Taiwan Strait Crisis, allowing hot pursuit of Communist Chinese aircraft but not attacks on their mainland bases.

Third, records of EXCOMM meetings reveal that President Kennedy and Secretary McNamara were sympathetic to the military's concern with protecting its men. After a U-2 was shot down on October 27, the danger of further attacks and the loss of additional pilots was discussed. McNamara argued the military perspective forcefully, contending that further attacks on U.S. planes were likely and that it would



be necessary to destroy the Cuban air defense system if this happened.³⁷³ This is why tensions between political considerations and military considerations were not severe during the Cuban Missile Crisis: The President and McNamara tried to understand the implications of their interventions in military operations and attempted to weigh potential military costs against the political objectives they sought.

Tensions arose between performance of crisis missions and readiness to perform wartime missions. In mid-October, only days before Soviet offensive missiles were discovered in Cuba, a JCS study concluded that execution of CINCLANT contingency plans for the invasion of Cuba would have the following consequences:

- a. Preclude simultaneous, (D-5 to D+2), reinforcement of either CINCEUR [Commander in Chief U.S. Forces Europe] or CINCPAC using troop carrier or MATS [Military Air Transport Service] aircraft.
- b. Inhibit for 5 to 7 days capability for conduct of Berlin airlift contingency plans by withdrawing all C-130 aircraft from EUCOM [U.S. European Command].
- c. Make inadequate for reinforcement of CINCEUR the available logistic support units for filling the port package [equipment and supplies delivered by ship].
- d. Deplete critical logistic support units of ³⁷⁴Army forces remaining in CONUS [Continental U.S.].

During the crisis all the forces called for in the CINCLANT contingency plans for invasion of Cuba, plus additional

³⁷³ "October 27 Meetings Transcript," pp. 66-71, 74, 78.

³⁷⁴ "CINCLANT Historical Account," p. 45.

force added to the plans at the last moment, were mobilized and began logistic and training preparations for invasion. The problems described by JCS thus became a consideration during the crisis: Preparations for invasion of Cuba degraded the ability of the United States to respond to Soviet moves in Europe, particularly against Berlin. The only reason that this did not generate severe tensions was that the political-military situation in other theaters, including Europe was relatively quiet. Military men were not overly concerned about the negative consequences of the preparations for invasion of Cuba because there was no immediate need for the forces elsewhere.³⁷⁵ This situation would have changed drastically if the Soviets had moved against Berlin or Turkey in response to a U.S. move against Cuba, which justifies the President's concern for such a Soviet move.³⁷⁶

Tension arose between the need for top-level control of military operations and the need for on-scene flexibility and initiative. This was the most severe political-military

³⁷⁵ Sharp, letter to author, February 24, 1988; Caldwell, letter to author, March 14, 1988.

³⁷⁶ Rear Admiral Shepard related to the author a statement the President made to the Joint Chiefs after the crisis: "We had the upper hand in Cuba, but we did not have the upper hand in other theaters. The Russians might have taken action against Berlin or Turkey." Shepard, interview by author, February 10, 1988. Also see CIA, SNIE 11-19-62, p. 9; Robert Kennedy, pp. 58, 60, 98; "October 27 Meetings Transcript," pp. 54-55; Sagan, p. 111.

tension during the crisis. The Cuban Missile Crisis marked a turning point in American civil-military relations and in the evolution of U.S. command and control doctrine. Vice Admiral Houser described the significance of the crisis: "It was the major turning point from the World War II type of operations to modern operations. It was a watershed. During World War II and the Korean War there was military command only, no control. But after Cuba civilians would exercise both command and control."³⁷⁷ Vice Admiral Caldwell made the same point when asked the most important lesson of the crisis: "That in the nuclear age the civilian leadership will quickly and actively intervene in a military operation of any seriousness. We did not understand this prior to the crisis, but afterward began to structure the Command/Control system to accommodate this process."³⁷⁸ This was the fundamental origins of the tension: a sudden attempt to impose radically new methods of direct control on a command system set up for delegated methods of control, without prior planning, consideration of the implications, or even consultation with the military.

The Navy, with its tradition of granting autonomy to commanders at sea, reacted most strongly to the Kennedy Administration's efforts at closely controlling military

³⁷⁷ Houser, interview by author, February 11, 1988.

³⁷⁸ Caldwell, letter to author, March 14, 1988.

operations. Admiral Griffin has described the crux of the problem: "What we [the Navy] wanted was to get clear orders as to what was wanted [by civilian authorities]. Then we could carry out those orders. McNamara wanted to know in detail how each function was to be accomplished. It was not a very good situation."³⁷⁹ Admiral Anderson, at the interface between between civilian authorities and the Navy chain of command, took the lead in preventing what he perceived to be unreasonable civilian interference in naval operations. On October 23, the CNO, after learning that the White House rather than the Quarantine Force Commander would decide which ships were to be boarded, sent McNamara a memorandum stating that "from now on I do not intend to interfere with Dennison or either of the Admirals on the scene."³⁸⁰ This reflects Admiral Anderson's determination to "prevent any intrusion by McNamara or anybody else in the direct operations of any ship or squadron or anything of the sort."³⁸¹ This was the heart of the problem: a clash between the President's desire to maintain control over events and the Navy's desire to operate on the basis of its traditional philosophy of command, in which commanders at sea are delegated substantial authority.

³⁷⁹Griffin, letter to author, April 6, 1988. Also see Chew, "Reminiscences," pp. 317-18.

³⁸⁰"CNO Historical Narrative," pp. 39-40.

³⁸¹Anderson, "Reminiscences," p. 550.



Most senior Navy Officers deeply resented the new civilian attention to the details of naval operations, which they viewed as "micromanagement." McNamara would bear the brunt of their resentment. Admiral Anderson, whose relationship with McNamara was notoriously poor, stated "I just resent the involvement of these lower-level--well, some of them are high-level, the Secretary of Defense--civilian staff officers getting involved in military affairs."³⁸² When asked his most prominent memory of the crisis, Admiral Sharp replied, "Robert McNamara dashing into Flag Plot and demanding instant action that was often not possible. For example, wanting ships to be at certain places at a time when their max speed would not permit. He was unreasonable."³⁸³ Vice Admiral Riley, like many senior Navy Officers, questioned McNamara's competence for controlling military operations: "How could any civilian, no matter how successful he might have been in his line of business before he got appointed Secretary of Defense, have the competence to do this? The answer is that he didn't. He didn't have that competence."³⁸⁴ Only Vice Admiral Houser offered a comment on McNamara that was even faintly positive: "My own view of McNamara, which a lot of my friends didn't share,

³⁸² Anderson, "Reminiscences," p. 553.

³⁸³ Sharp, letter to author, February 24, 1988.

³⁸⁴ Riley, "Reminiscences," p. 754.

was that McNamara was the best Secretary of Defense we ever had, but the worst Secretary of War we ever had."³⁸⁵ The second half of this assessment reflects a widespread attitude toward McNamara, that he was incompetent at controlling military operations. McNamara, the admirals felt, was trying to run naval operations the way he would manage a Ford assembly line, but without the experience necessary to do so and with no respect for those who did have the requisite experience.

If McNamara was resented, his civilian aides were despised. Navy admirals commonly referred to them as "Junior Field Marshals" and a variety of less polite expressions. Even General Taylor was suspect because he had been brought out of retirement to serve as JCS Chairman. One admiral who worked closely with General Taylor described him as a "boot licking sycophant" and a "yes man" for the Kennedy Administration. The records of the EXCOMM meetings reveal that this is not a fair assessment, but it was their perceptions that mattered.

Although there was widespread resentment toward McNamara, the admirals who ran the quarantine did not feel unreasonably burdened by civilian authorities and understood the need for close control. Admiral Dennison, referring to President Kennedy, stated that "he was perfectly marvelous

³⁸⁵Houser, interview by author, February 11, 1988.



and I never got a call from the White House during the entire operation. He let me alone."³⁸⁶ The Admiral's only complaint was about officials in Washington attempting to use his already overloaded radio circuits. Admiral Ward describes well the reasons for close civilian control of the quarantine:

We were not there to sink ships or shoot anyone. Our mission was to accomplish a political objective. . . . Everything we did had political impact. If we had sunk a Soviet ship, we would have started World War III. We could have. Everything that we did we reported directly by voice telephone [HF/SSB radio], sometimes through a scrambler, to the Pentagon, which was monitored also in the White House war room. For the first time we asked instructions on whether or not we should stop a Soviet ship known to be headed our way and the decision was made at the political level because it was³⁸⁷ a political decision rather than a military one.

Similarly, Admiral Rivero, Amphibious Force Commander during the crisis, supported the close civilian control: "Very tight control of the Quarantine Force was probably appropriate since only the people in the White House and the ExComm knew the meaning of the signals being exchanged between Kennedy and Khrushchev. But this was an exceptional situation, more political than military in nature."³⁸⁸ The fact that Navy commanders who did not have to work directly with McNamara felt less resentment and better understood the

³⁸⁶ Dennison, "Reminiscences," p. 421.

³⁸⁷ Ward, "Reminiscences," p. 199.

³⁸⁸ Rivero, letter to author, March 10, 1988.



President's political objectives strongly suggests that much of the friction and anger visible in Washington was generated by the McNamara's personality, management style, and personal attitudes, rather than by the underlying policy conflicts. This largely explains the infamous argument between McNamara and Admiral Anderson the evening of October 24. Their clash arose over a policy issue: the question of how closely operations at sea were to be controlled. Admiral Anderson had thrown down the gauntlet the previous day with his memorandum to McNamara stating there would be no more interference with the commanders at sea. McNamara had spent the day in a tense EXCOMM meeting, and had been tasked by the President to closely monitor the quarantine operations. Under such circumstances, a clash between these two strong-willed men was to be expected. However, their argument reveals much more about personalities clashing under the stress of a crisis than it does about organizational processes. Admiral Anderson did not disobey or attempt to circumvent any orders from the President or McNamara during the crisis. The CNO objected strongly to some of their decisions and to what he viewed as unwarranted intrusion into naval matters, but did not defy their authority.

Because of the emphasis on direct civilian control of military operations, civilian authorities did not keep military leaders adequately informed of the overall U.S.



political-diplomatic strategy for resolving the crisis.

Admiral Anderson makes this point in his oral history:

Admittedly, from the Joint Chief's point of view, some of the sensitive negotiations, exchanges of information between President Kennedy and the White House and the Soviet Union, were not filtering down to the Chiefs. That was so tightly held--maybe they gave it to Taylor and he didn't pass it on down. Maybe he was told not to pass it on down. But there was an inadequacy, in ³⁸⁹my opinion, in that flow of information to the chiefs.

Other admirals share his opinion. Admiral Griffin, who attended JCS meetings with the CNO, states that "One of the difficulties in going into a great amount of detail about some of these things is the secrecy with which the White House held them. Even the Chiefs would be uninformed about certain things. I don't think that the Chiefs were being really kept up to date on the negotiations that were going on in New York, and from the White House to Moscow."³⁹⁰ The President could have had several reasons for not informing the Joint Chiefs about political efforts to resolve the crisis--particularly a desire to not compromise sensitive negotiations.

The important point is that by not informing the JCS of political-diplomatic efforts at resolving the crisis, the President risked defeating his efforts to ensure that military operations supported his political objectives. The

³⁸⁹ Anderson, "Reminiscences," p. 549.

³⁹⁰ Griffin, "Reminiscences," p. 555.



Chiefs did not need to know the details of sensitive communications with the Soviets to understand the President's diplomatic objectives. Vice Admiral Houser and Captain Carmichael both stated that the Chiefs did not appear to understand the President's political strategy or the escalation concerns of civilian leaders.³⁹¹ Such an understanding might have helped them to anticipate operational problems that could have interfered with the President's crisis management strategy.

In summary, the stratified interaction model accurately describes Soviet-American interaction during the Cuban Missile Crisis. Despite the scale of U.S. military and naval operations and the intensity of tactical-level interactions at sea, there were no serious instances of decoupled interactions involving naval forces. The pattern was one of parallel stratified interactions: tactical level interactions not directly controlled by political leaders, but generally supporting their strategy for resolving the crisis. Positive direct control was exercised only over the decision to board merchant ships and the decision to retaliate against Cuban air defenses. There were no serious incidents between U.S. naval forces and Soviet or Cuban forces. The most serious political-military tension was over centralized control of naval operations.

³⁹¹Houser, interview by author, February 11, 1988; Carmichael, letter to author, March 8, 1988.



The 1967 Arab-Israeli War

The Third Arab-Israeli War erupted in June 1967 when Israel, after weeks of increasing tensions and provocative Arab military moves, launched pre-emptive attacks on Egypt, Jordan, and Syria. The United States sought to remain officially neutral in the conflict and to avert Soviet intervention on behalf of the Arab nations. The war was over in only six days after a string of successful Israeli offensives. The United States Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean Sea was used to deter Soviet intervention in the conflict. The one major incident involving the U.S. Navy during the crisis--the Israeli attack on the USS Liberty (AGTR 5)--will be discussed in a separate case study in Chapter VIII.

Background

Tensions between Israel and neighboring Arab countries had been rising for years due to the Syrian-Jordanian effort to divert Jordan river water away from Israel, Palestinian terrorist attacks on Israel, Israeli reprisal raids into Jordan and Syria, and artillery duels along the Israeli-Syrian border. Three events in May 1967 escalated these tensions to the brink of war: The United Nations Secretary General, caving in to Egyptian demands, ordered withdrawal of the U.N. peacekeeping force on the Israeli-Egyptian border and Egyptian troops began pouring into the Sinai;



Egypt announced its intention to blockade the Strait of Tiran controlling access to the Israeli port of Eilat, an act of war under international law; and an Egyptian-Jordanian mutual defense pact was signed bringing Jordan into the Egyptian-Syrian joint military command. These moves appeared to confirm Israeli fears of imminent attack and Israel decided to pre-empt.³⁹²

Israel struck early on 5 June with devastating air strikes on Egyptian air fields, followed later in the day by attacks on Syrian, Jordanian and Iraqi air fields. Israeli army units invaded the Sinai the morning of 5 June, reaching the Suez canal three days later. Israel attacked Jordan on 5 June, occupying all of Jerusalem and the West Bank in two days. Although action on the Syrian front was limited to artillery duels and three small Syrian probes, Israel decided late on 7 June to attack the Golan Heights but then delayed the assault due to Arab acceptance of the U.N. ceasefire. By the morning of 8 June Egyptian defenses in the Sinai had collapsed and Jordan had been knocked out of the war. There had been only sporadic fighting on the Syrian front during the first four days of the war, primarily two Syrian probes that were easily repulsed by the Israelis. On June 9 Israel attacked Syria in the Golan

³⁹² See, for example, Theodore Draper, Israel and World Politics: Roots of the Third Arab-Israeli War (New York: Viking Press, 1967), pp. 85-115; Nadav Safran, Israel: The Embattled Ally (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1978), pp.



Heights despite Syrian acceptance of the U.N. ceasefire resolution. The next day, the sixth day of the war, Israel achieved the last of its military objectives against Syria and the fighting stopped.³⁹³

Political-Strategic Context

Preoccupied with the war in Vietnam, the Johnson Administration was slow to react to the rapidly increasing tensions in the Middle East. In late May and early June the United States had attempted to organize an international naval force to contest the Egyptian blockade of the Gulf of Aqaba, as part of its political efforts to avert an Israeli decision for war.³⁹⁴ A primary Johnson Administration

381-413; Michael Brecher, Decisions in Crisis: Israel, 1967 and 1973 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), pp. 51-76.

³⁹³ On the 1967 War, see Edgar O'Ballance, The Third Arab-Israeli War (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1972); Randolph S. Churchill and Winston S. Churchill, The Six Day War (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1967); Peter Young, The Israeli Campaign, 1967 (London: William Kimber, 1967); Safran, pp. 240-56; Brecher, pp. 91-170.

³⁹⁴ On U.S. policy immediately prior to the crisis, see "The Situation in the Middle East: Statement by President Johnson," May 23, 1967, U.S. Congress, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, A Select Chronology and Background Documents Relating to the Middle East, First Revised Edition (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1969. Cited hereafter as Foreign Relations Committee, Select Chronology), pp. 211-13; Lyndon B. Johnson, The Vantage Point: Perspectives on the Presidency, 1963-69 (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971), pp. 290-96. On efforts to break the Aqaba blockade, see "U.S. Seeks Backing on an Aqaba Test," New York Times, June 1, 1967, p. 1; "U.S. Drafts Plan to Assert Rights of Aqaba Passage," New York



concern was that the Soviet Union would exploit the crisis to increase its influence in the middle east at the expense of the United States. United States objectives in the crisis were to limit the scope the fighting in the Middle East and quickly bring it to a halt, prevent the Soviet Union from intervening militarily on behalf of the Arab nations, and avoid alienating the Arab world.³⁹⁵

The U.S. strategy during the Six Day War was to act through the U.N. Security Council to achieve an early ceasefire, pressure Israel to accept the ceasefire and limit its military objectives, and prevent Soviet military intervention through deterrent military moves and diplomacy. The United States attempted to portray a neutral stance without officially declaring itself to be neutral. This failed to placate the Arab nations, which declared an embargo on oil shipments to the United States. United States diplomatic efforts favored Israel, but were not a grant of unlimited support. The United States supported the U.N. ceasefire

Times, June 1, 1967, p. 1. Also see William B. Quandt, Decade of Decisions: American Policy Toward the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1967-1976 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), pp. 37-59; Steven L. Spiegel, "The U.S. Approach to Conflict Resolution in the Middle East," in Gabriel Ben-Dor and David B. Dewitt, eds., Conflict Management in the Middle East (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1987), pp. 166-67.

³⁹⁵ Johnson, pp. 288-300; "U.S. Seeks to Hold a Neutral Stance," New York Times, June 6, 1967, p. 1; "U.N. Impasse Ends," New York Times, June 7, 1967, p. 1. Also see Quandt, pp. 60-63; Howe, pp. 90-94.



resolution and called on Israel to adhere to it. The United States specifically tried to prevent the Israeli attack on Syria.³⁹⁶ President Johnson used the Soviet-American "hot line" to communicate with Soviet leaders during the crisis, the first use of the system for its intended purpose.³⁹⁷ American efforts were thus primarily political and diplomatic, and military forces had only a small active role.

Soviet objectives in the crisis were to prevent its clients in the Middle East from suffering catastrophic defeats and to expand its influence among Arab nations at the expense of the United States. As it became apparent that Israel was scoring a major triumph, the Soviet objective shifted to limiting the extent of Arab defeats and the reducing the potential erosion of Soviet prestige and influence in the Middle East.³⁹⁸

The Soviet strategy prior to the war was to support a rapid military build-up in Syria and Egypt and to encourage

³⁹⁶ Ibid; Secretary of State Dean Rusk, "News Briefing at the White House," Department of State Bulletin 56 (June 26, 1967): 950.

³⁹⁷ "Johnson Pleased by Gains on Truce," New York Times, June 9, 1967, p. 1; Hugh Sidey, "Over the hot line--the Middle East," Life, June 16, 1967, p. 24B; Johnson, pp. 298-302; Howe, pp. 91-92, 103.

³⁹⁸ Ulam, pp. 732-34; S. Niel MacFarlane, "The Soviet Union and Conflict Management in the Middle East," in Gabriel Ben-Dor and David B. Dewitt, eds., Conflict Management in the Middle East (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1987), pp. 187-207. For a critique of Soviet policy in 1967, see Khrushchev, Last Testament, pp. 344-46.

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Egypt and Syria to adopt a belligerent stance toward Israel. There are indications that the Soviets may even have helped provoke the war by spreading rumors of imminent Israeli attacks. The Soviet strategy during the war was to provide strong diplomatic support for the Arab nations. When war broke out the Soviet Government immediately condemned Israeli "aggression" and demanded that Israeli forces withdraw from Arab territory as a condition for a ceasefire. As the extent of the Arab losses became apparent, however, the Soviets dropped the withdrawal demand and supported an unconditional immediate ceasefire in order to forestall further Arab defeats. Soviet public pronouncements remained solidly pro-Arab throughout the crisis.³⁹⁹ Anthony R. Wells concludes the Soviets took four military actions in support of their crisis diplomacy: reinforcing their Mediterranean squadron; shadowing Western aircraft carriers; mounting a airlift and sealift to resupply the Arabs; and threatening direct military intervention in the Middle East, probably with airborne troops.⁴⁰⁰ On June 10, the day after Israel invaded Syria, the Soviets sent a threat over the hot line to take "necessary actions,

³⁹⁹ "Moscow Demands Israel Quit Egypt," New York Times, June 6, 1967, p. 1; "U.N. Impasse Ends," New York Times, June 7, 1967, p. 1; Howe, pp. 114-116.

⁴⁰⁰ Anthony R. Wells, "The June 1967 Arab-Israeli War," in Bradford Dismukes and James McConnell, eds., Soviet Naval Diplomacy (New York: Pergamon Press, 1979), p. 166.



including military" unless Israel unconditionally halted military action in the next few hours. The Soviets also sent a blunt warning to Israel, which they revealed in the U.N. Security Council. However, the threat was not backed by overt military moves signalling an intent to carry it out in the near future.⁴⁰¹ The Soviet role in the war thus consisted primarily of diplomatic activity, backed by low-level signalling with military forces.

In summary, the United States and the Soviet Union had limited objectives in the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, and both superpowers limited their roles primarily to political and diplomatic activities. However, both superpowers used their naval forces in the Mediterranean for political signalling, as will be discussed below. Unlike the Cuban Missile Crisis, which was a direct superpower crisis, the 1967 Arab-Israeli War was an indirect superpower crisis. In a direct superpower crisis the primary confrontation is between the United States and the Soviet Union. In an indirect superpower crisis the primary confrontation is between allies or clients of the United States and the Soviet Union. An indirect superpower crisis can be more difficult for the superpowers to manage because the outcome is heavily influenced by the decisions and actions of their clients.

⁴⁰¹ Johnson, p. 302; Howe, pp. 104-6, 122. Also see Francis Fukuyama, "Nuclear Shadowboxing: Soviet Intervention Threats in the Middle East," *Orbis* 25 (Fall 1981): 583-84.



The superpowers can be put in the role of restraining, as well as supporting, their clients.

Command and Control

By 1967 the defense reorganization of 1958 had taken firm hold and the military chain of command ran from the President, to the Secretary of Defense, to the unified and specified commanders. The JCS no longer used the executive agent system. The unified commander responsible for Europe and the Mediterranean was United States Commander in Chief Europe (USCINCEUR), General Lyman L. Lemnitzer, U.S. Army, commander of all U.S. forces in the European Command (EUCOM). USCINCEUR was also Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), commanding all NATO forces in and immediately around Europe.

The Navy component commander under USCINCEUR was Commander in Chief U.S. Naval Forces Europe (CINCUSNAVEUR), Admiral John S. McCain, Jr., headquartered in London. Because CINCUSNAVEUR was a Navy command as well as a component of the unified command, Admiral McCain reported administratively direct to the CNO, Admiral David L. McDonald, as well as operationally to General Lemnitzer.⁴⁰²

⁴⁰²This was not unique to CINCUSNAVEUR: component commands invariably are "dual-hatted" as administrative or geographic area commanders within their own services, as well as being operational commanders under a unified command. During the Cuban Missile Crisis, for example, CINCNAFLANT--CINCLANT's Air Force component commander--could



There were three naval commands under CINCUSNAVEUR concerned with operations in the Mediterranean and the Middle East. The most important was the Sixth Fleet, commanded by Vice Admiral William I. Martin (COMSIXTHFLT), embarked in USS Little Rock (CLG 4). The Sixth Fleet was also the NATO Striking Force Mediterranean. The other two commands were Commander Naval Forces Southern Europe (COMNAVSOUTH), headquartered in Naples, Italy, responsible for ASW operations in the Mediterranean, and Commander Middle East Force, responsible for U.S. naval forces in the Persian Gulf. Of these commands, the Sixth Fleet played the most important role in the 1967 Arab-Israeli War.

The United States had maintained a continuous naval presence in the Mediterranean since the end of World War II. Initially, this force was small, consisting only of two destroyer squadrons and some amphibious and support ships. In August 1946 the force was expanded and included the nearly constant presence of at least one attack carrier group. On February 12, 1950, U.S. Navy forces in the Mediterranean were designated the Sixth Fleet in recognition of the Mediterranean's strategic importance to NATO's southern flank.

report directly to the Air Force Chief of Staff as well as to CINCLANT. There is an important reason for this: the service chain of command provides essential support services, such as spare parts and replacement personnel, and thus needs to be kept informed of the component command's status and requirements.



The Sixth Fleet consisted of several Task Forces, the most important of which was the Carrier Strike Force (Task Force 60). In the spring of 1967 TF 60 was commanded by Rear Admiral Laurence R. Geis, embarked in USS America (CVA 66), and consisted of two Task Groups. Task Group 60.1 consisted of the USS America (CVA 66) and six escorting destroyers. Task Group 60.2 consisted of the USS Saratoga (CVA 60), the cruiser USS Galveston (CLG 3), and four destroyers. The other Sixth Fleet Task Force that had a role in the crisis was the Amphibious Force (Task Force 61), consisting of an amphibious ready group with an embarked Marine battalion landing team (BLT), some 1,800 troops.

United States communications capabilities in 1967 had improved over 1962, but still did not enable the President to directly control ships at sea. The primary communications links to the Sixth Fleet were the fleet HF radioteletype broadcast and other HF channels from communications stations around the Mediterranean. Satellite communications had been introduced into the fleet on an experimental basis in 1963 and various prototype systems were being tested (including limited operational use in the Vietnam war), but the Sixth Fleet was still relying on HF communications. The Sixth Fleet had HF/SSB voice radio communications with local communications stations and shore-based headquarters in southern Europe, but had no capability to speak directly with the Pentagon or the White House. Verbal orders from



the White House could be sent to USCINCEUR via phone lines, but were then relayed to the Sixth Fleet via radioteletype.⁴⁰³

Although the White House sought to control the movements of the Sixth Fleet for political signalling, the chain of command was used for transmitting orders to the Sixth Fleet. President Johnson and McNamara did not attempt to give orders directly to ships at sea.⁴⁰⁴ The White House Situation Room was unable to monitor Sixth Fleet operations real-time. The President and McNamara had to await verbal reports from USCINCEUR and CINCUSNAVEUR, or receipt of message operational reports (OPREPs), situation reports (SITREPs), and operational summaries (OPSUMs).

The only aspect of Sixth Fleet operations that was controlled by the White House was the general location of the Task Forces in the Mediterranean.⁴⁰⁵ In addition to the

⁴⁰³ On U.S. communications capabilities in 1973, see U.S. Congress, House Committee on Armed Services, Review of Department of Defense Worldwide Communications, Phase I, Hearings, 92nd Congress, 1st Session (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1971). Also see Blair, pp. 51-65; Carter, pp. 233-57; Richard G. Head, Frisco W. Short and Robert C. McFarlane, Crisis Resolution: Presidential Decision Making in the Mayaguez and Korean Confrontations (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1978), pp. 85-99.

⁴⁰⁴ Rear Admiral J.C. Wylie, Deputy Commander in Chief U.S. Naval Forces Europe during the crisis, letter to author, March 28, 1988.

⁴⁰⁵ Admiral Thomas H. Moorer, Commander in Chief Atlantic during the crisis, interview by author, February 9, 1988. Admiral Horacio Rivero, Vice CNO during the crisis, states there was close control "to the extent of the JCS



overall effort to signal the U.S. intention to stay out of the conflict, Sixth Fleet movements were used on at least three occasions (described below) to send specific political signals to the Soviet Union. However, Sixth Fleet movements generally were not under positive direct control. Rather, general geographic limits were placed on on the fleet's movements and control by negation was exercised--Vice Admiral Martin reported his actions up the chain of command, allowing the White House to alter politically inappropriate fleet movements.⁴⁰⁶ There appear to have been no instances in which the President countermanded an order given by Vice Admiral Martin.

The President and Secretary of Defense did not use the mechanisms of indirect control to issue detailed operational guidance to the Sixth Fleet. USCINCEUR had contingency plans for a wide range of emergencies and hostilities, but

directing COMSIXTHFLT to proceed to a certain latitude and longitude, or to operate not less than X miles from the coast." Rivero, letter to author, March 10, 1988. According to Vice Admiral Donald D. Engen, Commanding Officer of USS America (CVA 66) during the crisis, the movements and operations of the carriers were not closely controlled from Washington, other than a requirement that the carriers operate in the vicinity of specific points rather than being allowed to roam at will. Vice Admiral Donald D. Engen, letter to author, March 21, 1988. This restriction appears to have been imposed by the Navy chain of command in order to facilitate control of the carriers' movements in response to White House signalling efforts. It was a compromise between telling the carriers precisely what to do on a real-time basis and allowing them complete autonomy.

⁴⁰⁶Wylie, letter to author, March 28, 1988



no special contingency plans appear to have been issued specifically for the 1967 war.⁴⁰⁷ The U.S. Government had been preparing plans for an international naval force to challenge the Egyptian blockade of the Strait of Tiran, but the outbreak of war halted efforts to organize the force. No special mission orders were issued for the crisis. Likewise, no special rules of engagement were issued for the crisis. The only special guidance was restrictions on how closely U.S. ships and aircraft could approach the coasts of Israel, Egypt, and Syria.⁴⁰⁸ Other than this, the Sixth Fleet was governed by standing CINCUSNAVEUR peacetime rules of engagement.⁴⁰⁹ The lack of attention to mechanisms of indirect control is not surprising given the short duration of the crisis and the relatively limited scope and intensity of the naval operations that were conducted during the crisis.

⁴⁰⁷ See the suggestive comments by Vice Admiral Martin and Rear Admiral Geis in "Admirals Cite Options," New York Times, June 1, 1967, p. 18.

⁴⁰⁸ Admiral Moorer, interview by author, February 9, 1988; Wylie, letter to author, March 28, 1988; Engen, letter to author, March 21, 1988; "2nd Russian Ship Watches Carrier," New York Times, June 8, 1967, p. 14.

⁴⁰⁹ This is evident in the orders given by COMSIXTHFLT in response to the attack on the Liberty. The rules of engagement guidance refers to the standing CINCUSNAVEUR rules issued prior to the crisis. See COMSIXTHFLT 081320Z JUN 67, naval message, June 6, 1967 (Unclassified. Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC); COMSIXTHFLT 081339Z JUN 67, naval message, June 6, 1967 (Declassified 1988. Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC).

Naval Operations

Soviet naval operations during the 1967 Arab-Israeli War attracted a great deal of attention among Western naval analysts because it marked the first significant employment of the Soviet navy in a crisis. As Anthony Wells observed, "The 1967 June War was a watershed in the evolution of Soviet naval diplomacy. It was the first occasion on which the Soviets utilized significant naval power in Third World coercive diplomacy."⁴¹⁰ Similarly, Bradford Dismukes suggests, based on the composition and number of Soviet ships deployed to the Mediterranean during the crisis, that "for the first time Soviet decision makers regarded the Navy as an important tool of their diplomacy and a quasi-credible deterrent threat to the employment of U.S. naval power."⁴¹¹

The Soviet Union had embarked on a program of naval expansion after the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis and had greatly increased its naval operations on the high seas. From mid-1964 onward the Soviet navy maintained a continuous presence in the Mediterranean. The average daily force level rose from five ships in 1964 to fifteen ships in 1966. In the first part of 1967 the Soviets normally had

⁴¹⁰Wells, p. 168.

⁴¹¹Bradford Dismukes, "Soviet Employment of Naval Power for Political Purposes, 1967-75," in Michael MccGwire and John McDonnell, eds., Soviet Naval Influence: Domestic and Foreign Dimensions (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1977), p. 497.

five or six warships, a like number of submarines, and several support vessels in the Mediterranean. The Soviet Mediterranean Squadron (the Fifth Eskadra) was not unusually active, spending much time at anchor or in small-scale training exercises. However, the Soviet Mediterranean Squadron conducted close surveillance and aggressive intelligence collection against the Sixth Fleet, particularly its attack carriers, and conducted ASW exercises in which simulated U.S. Polaris submarines were hunted down. The Soviets also began using their navy more frequently for political purposes, making port visits to friendly countries and moving ships to the vicinity of hot spots.⁴¹²

In early May 1967 the Soviet Mediterranean Squadron was conducting routine operations and was at a normal

⁴¹²F.M. Murphy, "The Soviet Navy in the Mediterranean," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 93 (March 1967): 38-44; Robert W. Herrick, Soviet Naval Strategy: Fifty Years of Theory and Practice (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1968), pp. 93, 110, 154-55; Melvin D. Blixt, "Soviet Objectives in the Eastern Mediterranean," Naval War College Review 21 (March 1969): 16-21; Walter Laqueur, The Struggle for the Middle East: The Soviet Union in the Mediterranean, 1958-1968 (New York: Macmillan, 1969), pp. 145-57; Gary G. Sick, "Russia and the West in the Mediterranean: Perspectives for the 1970's," Naval War College Review 22 (June 1970): 49-69; C.B. Joynt and O.M. Smolansky, Soviet Naval Policy in the Mediterranean, Research Monograph No. 3 (Bethlehem, PA: Lehigh University, Department of International Relations, July 1972), pp. 6-7, 15-16, 25-27; Norman Polmar, Soviet Naval Power: Challenge for the 1970s (New York: Crane, Russak, 1974), pp. 65-66; Jesse W. Lewis, The Strategic Balance in the Mediterranean (Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute, 1976), pp. 59-72; Bruce W. Watson, Red Navy at Sea (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1982), pp. 85-87.

peacetime strength of some seven warships: a Kotlin-class destroyer (DDG) armed with SAM missiles, two Riga-class frigates, a Mirka-class corvette (or light frigate), a Petya-class corvette, and two minesweepers. On May 12 two Soviet ships entered the Mediterranean from the Black Sea: the Slava, an old Kirov-class cruiser whose main armament was nine 7.1-inch guns, and a Kashin-class DDG. This was probably a routine deployment, perhaps a training cruise for cadets or recruits. By May 22, however, Turkey had received notification from the Soviet Union that an additional ten ships would be passing through the Turkish Straits into the Mediterranean. Four Soviet warships passed through the Turkish Straits on June 3 and 4: a Krupnyy-class destroyer armed with two SS-N-1 anti-ship cruise missile launchers, a Kildin-class destroyer armed with one SS-N-1 anti-ship cruise missile launcher, a Kashin-class DDG, and a Kotlin-class destroyer. As of June 5, the Soviets had a total of thirteen surface combatants in the Mediterranean: one cruiser, two cruise missile-armed destroyers, two SAM-armed destroyers, two destroyers, four frigates and corvettes, and two minesweepers. No further surface combatants were added during the war. Two or three Soviet attack submarines were also thought to be in the Mediterranean.⁴¹³

⁴¹³"Soviet is Sending 10 More Warships to Middle East," New York Times, May 31, 1967, p. 1; "Soviet Ships Transit Straits," New York Times, June 1, 1967, p. 18; "Soviet Ships in Bosphorous," New York Times, June 4, 1967,

If the Soviets intended the deployment of these ships to serve as a political signal, they succeeded. The New York Times on May 31 quoted "Washington officials" as saying the Soviet ship movements were a "calculated show of force" and reported concern in Washington that the presence of the Soviet ships might encourage the Arab states to harden their Anti-Israeli stance.⁴¹⁴

As tensions mounted in the Middle East during May and early June of 1967, the Sixth Fleet was discretely readied for action and maneuvered in support of the President's diplomatic efforts to get Egypt to open the Strait of Tiran and thereby avert war.⁴¹⁵ On May 20 Saratoga was moved to the eastern Mediterranean. On May 25 America and the Sixth Fleet flagship, Little Rock, were ordered to join Saratoga in the eastern Mediterranean.⁴¹⁶ The two carriers

p. 4; "A Larger Soviet Vessel Follows U.S. Carrier in the Mediterranean," New York Times, June 4, 1967, p. 4. Also see Wells, pp. 160-62; Dismukes, p. 497. There is no information available on Soviet submarine deployments during the crisis. Dismukes argues that it is reasonable to assume that the number of Soviet submarines in the Mediterranean would have increased proportional to the increase in surface combatants, but there is no evidence that this in fact occurred.

⁴¹⁴"Soviet is Sending 10 More Warships to Middle East," New York Times, May 31, 1967, p. 1

⁴¹⁵Sick p. 57.

⁴¹⁶The western Mediterranean extends from the Strait of Gibraltar to the Strait of Sicily, including the Alboran, Tyrrhenian, and Ligurian Seas. The central Mediterranean extends from the Strait of Sicily to the southern tip of Greece, including the Ionian and Adriatic Seas. The eastern

rendezvoused north of Crete on May 29. The Sixth Fleet was directed to remain west of a line drawn from eastern Libya to the eastern end of Crete--over two hundred miles from western Egypt, over four hundred miles from the Suez Canal, and over six hundred miles from Syria. On May 25 the Sixth Fleet amphibious group (TF 61) was sailed from Naples to Malta for a port visit. The amphibious group was standing by primarily to evacuate U.S. citizens from the Middle East if the need arose, but was also capable of landing the Marines it carried. On May 27 the JCS directed the Sixth Fleet readied for a non-combat deterrence role in the event of war in the Middle East.⁴¹⁷

The Navy's Middle East Force normally consisted of two destroyers and the flagship, a seaplane tender. In mid-May the Navy had used the normal rotation of ships to reinforce the Middle East Force by delaying the departure of the destroyer being replaced. On May 23 Commander Middle East Force was directed to move his four ships into the Red Sea.

Mediterranean extends from the southern tip of Greece eastward, including the Sea of Crete and the Aegean Sea. This reflects common U.S. Navy and Government usage.

⁴¹⁷ "Johnson Calls on Cairo to Abandon Blockade Moves," New York Times, May 24, 1967, p. 1; "Soviet Watching U.S. Fleet," New York Times, May 31, 1967, p. 16; "Soviet Destroyer off Malta," New York Times, June 3, 1967, p. 31; "Two U.S. Carriers Staying in Place," New York Times, June 6, 1967, p. 18; J.C. Wylie, "The Sixth Fleet and American Diplomacy," in J.C. Hurewitz, ed., Soviet-American Rivalry in the Middle East (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1969), p. 58; Wylie, letter to author, March 28, 1988. Also see Dismukes, p. 497; Howe p. 69; Sick, p. 56; Wells, p. 164.

On June 1 Middle East Force established two patrols in the Red Sea. On June 3 the destroyer USS Dyess (DD 880) transited the Suez canal into the Red Sea. This was a routine rotation of ships, but resulted in further reinforcement of the Middle East Force.⁴¹⁸ There were no interactions between U.S. and Soviet naval units in the Red Sea during the Six Day war.

The Soviet navy closely monitored Sixth Fleet movements on the eve of the crisis. On about May 23 a Soviet intelligence collection ship (AGI) began shadowing Saratoga. On May 28 a Riga-class frigate began trailing America as she moved into the eastern Mediterranean. On June 4 a Kashin-class DDG took over trailing America and remained with the carrier through the start of the war. Two Soviet minesweepers were monitoring the British carrier HMS Victorious at Malta. They were joined by a Kotlin-class destroyer on June 2. The Soviet ships shadowing American carriers were "tattletales," assigned to monitor the carriers' operations and provide targeting data for Soviet anti-carrier forces, particularly strike aircraft.⁴¹⁹

⁴¹⁸"Canal Reprisal Hinted by Egypt," New York Times, June 3, 1967, p. 8; Wylie, "Sixth Fleet," p. 60; Wylie, letter to author, March 28, 1988.

⁴¹⁹"Soviet Watching U.S. Fleet," New York Times, May 31, 1967, p. 16; "Soviet Destroyer off Malta," New York Times, June 3, 1967, p. 31; "A Larger Soviet Vessel Follows U.S. Carrier in Mediterranean," New York Times, June 4, 1967, p. 4. Also see Wells 162-4; Dismukes, p. 497.

Rear Admiral J.C. Wylie, Deputy Commander in Chief of U.S. Naval Forces Europe during the Six Day War, pointed out that Navy commanders, recognizing that Sixth Fleet movements would send important political signals, placed limitations on the fleet's actions during May and early June: "Thus the move to readiness in the Arab-Israeli mobilization period had three careful signals built into it: no premature departures from scheduled port visits; the deliberate and visible retention of the amphibious forces in the central Mediterranean; and the purposeful retention of American forces south of Crete and well clear of the prospective scene of action."⁴²⁰ Additionally, in order to avoid giving the impression that the Sixth Fleet was being reinforced, the attack carrier USS Intrepid (CVA 11), en route from the U.S. east coast to Vietnam, was not placed under the command of COMSIXTHFLT and was kept away from the rest of the Sixth Fleet. Intrepid was ordered on May 29 to transit the Suez Canal and made the transit on May 31.⁴²¹

⁴²⁰Wylie, "Sixth Fleet." p. 59. Rear Admiral Wylie, who participated in the crisis at CINCUSNAVEUR, emphasizes that these restrictions were originally imposed by the Navy chain of command, rather than the White House: "The naval command estimated, correctly as it turned out, that the United States policy would be to stand aloof from military involvement if possible, to play the United States military role in as low a key as possible in order to give the greatest scope for diplomatic maneuver, but to be ready and on hand." Ibid.

⁴²¹Wylie, "Sixth Fleet," p.59; Wells, p. 164. The actions taken to avoid the appearance that Intrepid was reinforcing the Sixth Fleet may have been too subtle to be

On May 31 the carriers of TF 60, which had been operating together since May 25, were split into two task groups operating independently. That night America, accompanied by Little Rock, moved to a position south of Crete, leaving Saratoga north of the island. The two carriers remained in these areas through June 6.⁴²² On June 4, the day before war broke out, most of the Soviet Mediterranean Squadron (eleven ships, including Slava) was anchored at the Kithira anchorage south of Greece and west of Crete.⁴²³ These were the dispositions of U.S. and Soviet naval forces in the Mediterranean when war erupted on June 5.

When war broke out on June 5 the two U.S. carriers were operating (in their separate groups) in the vicinity of Crete. The Sixth Fleet remained in the Eastern Mediterranean to deter Soviet intervention, but was kept

readily discerned. The U.S. press reported on May 31 that Intrepid had been ordered to remain in the Mediterranean to reinforce the Sixth Fleet. See "Soviet Watching U.S. Fleet," New York Times, May 31, 1967, p. 16; "Admiral Says Soviet Shadowing Often Imperils Ships in 6th Fleet," New York Times, June 1, 1967, p. 18. The fact that Intrepid loitered in the central Mediterranean for six days before transiting the Suez Canal appears to have been the origin of such erroneous reports (the delay was caused by Egyptian reluctance to let the carrier make the transit).

⁴²²"2 U.S. Carriers Continue Air Exercises Near Crete," New York Times, June 3, 1967, p. 12; "Two U.S. Carriers Staying in Place," New York Times, June 6, 1967, p. 18.

⁴²³"Two U.S. Carriers Staying in Place," New York Times, June 6, 1967, p. 18. Also see Wells, p. 162; Dismukes, p. 498; Howe p. 117.

well clear of the fighting. The U.S. Navy unit closest to the fighting on June 5 was a lone Navy carrier-based reconnaissance plane on a routine flight one hundred nautical miles off the coast of Egypt. The Sixth Fleet initially was ordered to remain at least one hundred nautical miles from the Syrian coast, but in fact did not approach closer than about four hundred nautical miles. Carrier aircraft were ordered to remain at least two hundred nautical miles from the Egyptian and Israeli coasts. The U.S. carriers were placed at an increased condition of readiness, which included doubling the number of aircraft ready for immediate launch and arming strike aircraft with conventional bombs and missiles.⁴²⁴

The political caution that had marked Sixth fleet operations prior to the crisis continued after the war broke out.⁴²⁵ Ship movements were announced and routine port

⁴²⁴"Navy Says One Plane Flew Near War Zone," New York Times, June 10, 1967, p. 22; "6th Fleet Ships in State of Alert," New York Times, June 7, 1967, p. 17; "2nd Russian Ship Watches Carrier," New York Times, June 8, 1967, p. 14; Howe, p. 93. The ships of the Sixth Fleet were ordered to readiness condition three, an internal Navy readiness designation unrelated to the JCS worldwide DEFCON system. Navy ships were normally at "Condition IV," defined as normal peacetime steaming. At "Condition III" the ships would put additional crewmen on watch and man certain weapons and combat systems normally left unmanned.

⁴²⁵Wells observes that "The U.S. and U.K. went to considerable pains to show that they did not intend to use their naval forces offensively." Wells, p. 164. Similarly, Howe noted that "The posture of the Sixth Fleet reflected American interest in avoiding involvement." Howe, p. 93.

visits and shore liberty continued.⁴²⁶ Significantly, seventeen civilian reporters embarked America beginning on May 29. Vice Admiral Engen, Commanding Officer of America during the crisis, stated that "We used the embarked press corps to provide safety from misrepresentation. That was a U.S. tactic."⁴²⁷ Thus, the emphasis in Sixth Fleet operations was on demonstrating the U.S. intention to avoid involvement in the fighting.

On June 5 and 6 the two U.S. carrier groups steamed to the southeast. Although the press would correctly report this movement as a deliberate signal to the Soviets, it was, as Howe reports, ordered by the Task Force Commander without prior knowledge of the White House:

As it happened, the Sixth Fleet carrier task forces had begun speeding at twenty knots in a southeasterly direction in order to vary their "position while still maintaining a neutral posture with respect to the Arab-Israeli war." The ships were under orders to remain at least 200 miles from the area of conflict, and proceeded to a position 100 miles southeast of Crete. Although this change of position was ordered on the initiative of local commanders, the movement

⁴²⁶Wylie, "Sixth Fleet," p. 58-59; Engen, letter to author, March 21, 1988; Wells, p. 164. The only exception to the policy of continuing routine ports visits was that the JCS on May 27 cancelled all port visits for the two U.S. aircraft carriers. As a result of this action, America remained at sea from May 22 to June 21--the longest the carrier had been at sea continuously since commissioning. USS America (CVA 67), Ship's History, 1967 (Ships History Branch, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC).

⁴²⁷Engen, letter to author, March 21, 1988. Also see USS America (CVA 67), Ship's History, 1967 (Ships History Branch, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC); Wylie, "Sixth Fleet," p. 59; Wells, p. 164.

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represented a timely underlining of American determination. The White House took advantage of the repositioning as a means of showing the Russians, who were tailing the task forces, that the United States would not be intimidated although it earnestly sought a U.N. solution.⁴²⁸

This episode illustrates that the White House was not exercising positive direct control over the movements of the carriers. Had the President felt that the movement of the carrier force would send too threatening a signal, he could have ordered it to reverse course and move away from the fighting (thus exercising control by negation). Instead, because the movement supported the President's political objectives, it was publicized and allowed to continue.

On June 6 Egypt claimed that U.S. and British carrier aircraft had assisted Israel in its initial air strikes on Egyptian airfields. The Soviets, whose ships were closely monitoring the Sixth Fleet carriers, knew that U.S. carrier planes could not have participated in the attacks.⁴²⁹ In response to the Arab charge, the two U.S. carriers, then

⁴²⁸ Howe, p. 95. He quotes Rear Admiral Guise, commander of the carrier task force. For how the press reported the movement, see "6th Fleet Ships in State of Alert," New York Times, June 7, 1967, p. 17.

⁴²⁹ "U.S. Denies Charges By Cairo It Helps Foe," New York Times, June 7, 1967, p. 1; "2nd Russian Ship Watches Carrier," New York Times, June 8, 1967, p. 14; Johnson, p. 302; Wylie, "Sixth Fleet," p. 59. Also see Trevor N. Dupuy, Elusive Victory: The Arab-Israeli Wars, 1947-1974 (New York: Harper and Row, 1978), p. 269; Howe, pp. 99-102; Sick p. 56; Wells, p. 165; Laqueur, p. 155. Egyptian President Nasser would later admit that no U.S. planes had attacked Egypt. "Envoys Say Nasser Now Concedes U.S. Didn't Help Israel," New York Times, September 16, 1967, p. 3; Howe, p. 119.

southeast of Crete, were ordered on June 6 to move westward. The U.S. carriers continued moving westward through June 8, reaching a position southwest of Crete.

On June 7 a suspected Soviet submarine was detected in the vicinity of the America task group and was tracked by U.S. destroyers, ASW helicopters, and patrol planes.⁴³⁰ This appears to have sparked the most severe Soviet harassment of the Sixth Fleet during the crisis. On June 7 a Soviet Kashin-class DDG trailing the America task group threatened to collide with the destroyer USS Lawe (DD 763) in a nautical version of the game "chicken." This incident could well have been sparked by the U.S. prosecution of a suspected Soviet submarine near the America task group. In response to the incident, Vice Admiral Martin sent a message to the Soviet destroyer, warning it to clear the U.S. formation. The Soviet ship withdrew, but returned the next morning. On June 8 the America task group experienced the most severe Soviet harassment of the crisis. The Kashin-class DDG and a Mirka-class corvette maneuvered dangerously close to America, attempting to force the carrier to change course while it was conducting flight operations. The harassment on June 8 appears to have been a defiant response

⁴³⁰ The Navy objective was to "trail to exhaustion," that is, to track the submarine until it had to surface or snorkel in the presence of U.S. ASW forces in order to recharge its batteries--a symbolic victory in peacetime ASW operations (with the subtle message that the submarine could have been hunted to destruction in wartime).



to Vice Admiral Martin's warning to the Soviet destroyer the previous day.⁴³¹

The Sixth Fleet had previously experienced serious problems with Soviet surveillance vessels and had sent them warnings to keep clear of U.S. formations. There was great concern among Navy commanders in the Mediterranean that there would be further incidents because the Soviet ships had adopted aggressive shadowing tactics, maneuvering dangerously close to U.S. ships.⁴³² Vice Admiral Engen, then the Commanding Officer of America, has described the U.S. Navy attitude toward Soviet harassment:

We telegraphed intentions to maneuver and then held firm to [the] Rules of the Road. . . . COMSIXTHFLT and CTF 60 [Rear Admiral Geis] were strongly supportive of U.S. C.O.'s in order to keep [the] Soviets from achieving [success with] what were then harassing tactics. . . . [I experienced] frequent Soviet attempts to embarrass USS America by maneuvering to

⁴³¹"Russians Continue to Harass 6th Fleet," New York Times, June 9, 1967, p. 1. Also see Howe, p. 177n; Wells, p. 215n. The Soviets have been known to harass U.S. ships prosecuting their submarines on other occasions as well. For a description of a similar incident in 1972, see Rear Admiral Robert P. Hilton, "The US-Soviet Incidents at Sea treaty," Naval Forces 6 (1/1985): 30-31.

⁴³²Engen, letter to author, March 21, 1988; "Admiral Says Soviet Shadowing Often Imperils Ships in 6th Fleet," New York Times, June 1, 1967, p. 18. There had also been two serious incidents in the Sea of Japan on May 10 and 11, when two Soviet destroyers collided with the destroyer USS Walker (DD 517) while maneuvering in the midst of an ASW carrier formation. This incident received front page headlines in the United States and was on the minds of Navy commanders in the Mediterranean. On the Walker, see "A U.S. Destroyer In Far East Bumped By Soviet warship," New York Times, May 11, 1967, p. 1; "Soviet Warship Bumps U.S. Vessel 2nd Time in 2 Days," New York Times, May 12, 1967, p. 1.



use [the] Rules of the Road to interfere with flight operations. I held firm, and would have run down a Soviet ship if I was right.⁴³³

Soviet harassment thus was more than an annoyance, it could well have led to a serious collision with an American warship.⁴³⁴ A serious collision would have increased tensions in the Mediterranean and might also have interfered with Washington's and Moscow's efforts to manage the crisis.

On June 8 the U.S. amphibious group with its embarked Marines departed Malta and steamed eastward toward the war zone. Also on June 8, America and Little Rock moved eastward to provide assistance to USS Liberty, under attack off the Sinai coast. On June 9, when America rendezvoused with Liberty, the carriers made their closest approach to the fighting, reaching a position about one hundred nautical miles north of Alexandria, Egypt. After taking aboard the dead and wounded from Liberty the carriers moved westward, reaching a position north of Darnah, Libya, by June 10.⁴³⁵

On June 10, in response to the Soviet threat to take military action against Israel, President Johnson ordered

⁴³³ Engen, letter to author, March 21, 1988.

⁴³⁴ There was a serious collision between the British aircraft carrier HMS Ark Royal and a Soviet destroyer in the Mediterranean on November 9, 1970. "Soviet and British Warships Collide," New York Times, November 11, 1970, p. 2. Soviet maneuvering in this incident was very similar to that conducted near America in 1967.

⁴³⁵ USS America (CVA 67), Ship's History, 1967; Howe, p. 96, 103-4.



the Sixth Fleet moved closer to Syria. The U.S. carriers steamed to the northeast at full speed. The President also reduced the fleet's minimum distance to the Syrian coast from one hundred to fifty nautical miles.⁴³⁶ In his memoir President Johnson makes it clear that this was done as a political signal:

We knew that Soviet intelligence ships were electronically monitoring the fleet's every movement. Any change in course or speed would be signalled instantly to Moscow. . . . We all knew the Russians would get the message as soon as their monitors observed the change in the fleet's pattern. That message, which no translator would need to interpret to the Kremlin leadership, was that the United States was prepared to resist Soviet intrusion into the Middle East.⁴³⁷

This was the most important instance of the Sixth Fleet being used to send a specific political signal. It is not clear, however, that the signal had a major impact on the crisis: Israel apparently had no intention of seizing Damascus and soon stopped its advance into Syria, and the Soviets made no military overt moves to carry out the threat.⁴³⁸

The most important Soviet naval activity during the crisis was trailing the U.S. carriers in the Mediterranean. America was shadowed by one or more Soviet warships continuously from May 28 to June 14, but neither of the

⁴³⁶ Johnson, p. 302; Howe, pp. 106-8; Wells, p. 165-6.

⁴³⁷ Johnson, p. 302.

⁴³⁸ Howe, pp. 106-8; Wells, p. 165-6.



Soviet cruise missile-armed destroyers participated in this shadowing. Saratoga was not shadowed by Soviet warships other than during the May 29-31 period, when she was operating with America. Saratoga was probably trailed by a Soviet intelligence ship (AGI) from May 23 to June 13. The Soviet navy also kept a Kotlin-class destroyer and two type T-43 minesweepers off Malta throughout the war.⁴³⁹ Although this close surveillance of the Sixth Fleet was conducted primarily for military purposes, it helped to avert misperceptions of the fleet's role in the crisis (such as the claim that U.S. carrier planes had attacked Egypt) and greatly increased the value of the U.S. fleet as a political instrument by ensuring that Soviet leaders would quickly detect changes in its operations.

Armed surface warships were frequently used as tattletales during the crisis because they had a higher top speed than the intelligence ships (AGIs) and therefore were better able to keep up with U.S. carriers. The Soviet destroyers and frigates that were used as tattletales were not heavily armed, so they did not present a serious immediate threat to the carriers. In fact, the Soviet combatants that served as tattletales appear to have been selected precisely because they were expendable (the only

⁴³⁹ "6th Fleet Ships in State of Alert," New York Times, June 7, 1967, p. 17; "2nd Russian Ship Watches Carrier," New York Times, June 8, 1967, p. 14. Also see Wells, p. 164; Dismukes, p. 497.



exceptions were the fast new Kashin-class destroyers, selected because of their speed). On the other hand, as Anthony Wells points out, use of combatants rather than AGIs as tattletales "expresses increased Soviet interest, both military and political, in the force being shadowed."⁴⁴⁰ The Soviet tattletales thus served as political signal to the United States, as well as being means of conveying U.S. political signals to the Soviet Union.

Anthony Wells has suggested that the Soviet ships in the Mediterranean comprised two anti-carrier groups.⁴⁴¹ If this were the case, the Soviet ships would have been organized into two distinct groups, one group within missile range of each carrier, with a cruise missile-armed ship in each group. This pattern was never observed during the crisis. Although the two Soviet cruise missile-armed ships occasionally moved to within missile range of the U.S. carriers, it is clear that they did not make a concerted effort to keep the carriers in their sights. The Soviet Mediterranean Squadron carried out operations at a very low tempo.⁴⁴²

As tensions subsided after the ceasefire took effect on June 11, the U.S. and Soviet navies gradually reduced the

⁴⁴⁰Wells, p. 164.

⁴⁴¹Ibid, p. 160.

⁴⁴²Dismukes, p. 498.



tempo of their operations and reduced their forces in the eastern Mediterranean. From June 12 to June 16 six of the Soviet warships were located near Cyprus, apparently to protect Soviet shipping to Syria.⁴⁴³ This was the last significant Soviet naval operation of the crisis. U.S. naval forces left the eastern Mediterranean after the ceasefire: Saratoga departed on June 13, America departed on June 14, and the amphibious group departed on June 15.

In summary, tactical-level interactions between U.S. and Soviet naval forces were intense during the crisis. Soviet tattletales closely monitored the Sixth Fleet and U.S. aircraft closely monitored the Soviet Mediterranean Squadron. Tensions at sea were acute on June 7 and 8 during U.S. prosecution of a Soviet submarine and Soviet harassment of the America carrier group. Because U.S. and Soviet naval forces were in close proximity throughout the crisis, there were ample opportunities for inadvertent military incidents to occur between them.

The final step in this review of U.S. naval operations during the 1967 Arab-Israeli War is to examine the tactical-level interactions that could have occurred with Soviet or Arab forces and the interactions that did occur with those forces. The following interactions conceivably could have occurred during the the crisis: collisions at sea between

⁴⁴³Wells, p. 165. The Soviets also conducted an airlift of supplies to Syria and Egypt from June 8 to July 2.



U.S. and Soviet vessels, U.S. ships or aircraft firing on Soviet or Arab planes approaching the fleet in a potentially hostile manner, U.S. ships or aircraft firing on Arab naval vessels approaching the fleet in a potentially hostile manner, Soviet naval vessels firing on U.S. planes approaching them in a potentially hostile manner, Arab or Israeli aircraft firing on U.S. planes flying reconnaissance missions off their coasts, and Arab or Israeli aircraft or ships firing on U.S. ships patrolling off their coasts.

Despite the intense tactical-level interaction between U.S. and Soviet Naval forces, there were no incidents like those described above. There were no collisions despite Soviet harassment of the Sixth Fleet. No Soviet aircraft were encountered during the crisis, which is unusual for the Mediterranean. No Egyptian or Syrian vessels or aircraft were encountered during the crisis because the sixth Fleet was kept well clear of their coasts.⁴²³ There were very few accidents involving U.S. naval forces, and none serious enough to have an impact on Washington's ability to manage the crisis. The only incident of the crisis was the Israeli attack on the Liberty. Thus, ironically, the only mishap of the crisis was perpetrated by the nation that the U.S. supported in the war.

⁴⁴⁴Engen, letter to author March 21, 1988; Wylie, letter to author, March 28, 1988; Wells, p. 165.



Findings

This section will review the 1967 Arab-Israeli War to answer the eight research questions. The first question is to what degree were interactions between the forces of the two sides at the scene of the crisis the result of actions taken in accordance with mechanisms of indirect control, rather than direct control by national leaders? The Johnson Administration did not attempt to exercise direct control over the operations of the Sixth Fleet other than its movements in the Mediterranean. Nor did the President or McNamara make an effort to provide specialized guidance in mechanisms of indirect control, other than limitations on how close the fleet and its aircraft could approach the coasts of the belligerents. When the America carrier group experienced severe Soviet harassment on June 8 the on-scene commanders were guided by standing Navy policies for handling such situations, rather than by special instructions from the White House. There was thus significant delegation of authority to on-scene commanders and the guidance contained in Navy standing orders and standing rules of engagement played a crucial role in determining the nature of the tactical-level interactions that occurred.

The second question is were the forces of the two sides at the scene of the crisis tightly coupled with each other? Soviet tattletales closely monitored the Sixth



Fleet, U.S. aircraft closely monitored the Soviet Mediterranean Squadron, and U.S. ships and planes hunted Soviet submarines.⁴⁴⁵ As Anthony Wells points out, "Each navy devoted considerable effort to tracking the other through radar, sonar, electronic intercept, and visual observation."⁴⁴⁶ Each side reacted to actions taken by the other side. Thus, Soviet and American naval forces were tightly coupled during the crisis.

The third question is were the forces of the two sides being used by their national leaders as a political instrument in the crisis? The answer clearly is yes. The Johnson Administration used the Sixth Fleet to signal the U.S. intention not to intervene in the crisis, but also used the fleet to warn the Soviets against direct military intervention in the conflict. The Soviet Union also conveyed political signals by rapidly building up its Mediterranean squadron, shadowing the Sixth Fleet, and keeping the bulk of the squadron well clear of the fighting and the Sixth Fleet. The 1967 Arab-Israeli War was the first crisis in which both superpowers actively used their navies for political signalling.

The answers to these first three questions suggest that conditions necessary for stratified interaction existed

⁴⁴⁵"6th Fleet Ships in State of Alert," New York Times, June 7, 1967, p. 17; Wylie, "Sixth Fleet," p. 59.

⁴⁴⁶Wells, p. 167.



in the 1967 Arab-Israeli War: the United States relied on methods of delegated control, U.S. and Soviet naval forces in the Mediterranean were tightly coupled, and both sides used their forces as a political instrument under conditions of conditions of acute crisis. Interactions occurred at the tactical level that were not directly controlled by American leaders. For example, President Johnson had no control over whether or not the Soviet harassment of America on June 8 would produce a clash between the U.S. and Soviet navies. The stratified interaction model of international crises, in which interactions evolve in separate, semi-independent sequences at the political, strategic, and tactical levels, offers a good description of Soviet-American interactions in the 1967 Arab-Israeli War.

The fourth question is did crisis interactions at the tactical level become decoupled from the strategy being pursued by national leaders? One of the potential causes of decoupling was prominent in the crisis: the U.S. communications system did not permit the President to exercise real-time direct control over the Sixth Fleet. President Johnson's ability to control the Sixth Fleet in 1967 was less than President Kennedy's ability to control the Second Fleet during the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis. President Johnson had to rely more on command by negation and delegated command than did President Kennedy. Another potential cause of decoupling--a fast-paced tactical



environment--was also present during some periods of the crisis. The Sixth Fleet reacted to the attack on Liberty hours before it received instructions from the Washington. Similarly, the President could not tell Rear Admiral Geis or Captain Engen how to handle the Soviet ships harassing America and her escorts. The other potential causes of decoupling--impairment of political decisionmaking, ambiguous or ambivalent orders, tactically inappropriate orders, inappropriate guidance in mechanisms of indirect control, and deliberate unauthorized actions by military commanders--did not have an observable impact on the crisis.

The second requirement for establishing that inter-actions became decoupled during a crisis is that the operational decisions made by tactical-level decisionmakers differed from the decisions that political-level decisionmakers would have made in order to coordinate military operations with their political-diplomatic strategy for resolving the crisis. Divergence between tactical-level military operations and political-level objectives was not a serious problem during the crisis. Although on-scene commanders were often making operational decisions on their own authority, their decisions generally supported the President's political objectives. For example, Sixth Fleet movements on June 6, taken on the initiative of Rear Admiral Geis, sent the political signal the President wanted to send at that moment even though he had not ordered the movement.

Thus, the overall pattern was that of parallel stratified interactions: interactions the President did not control, but which supported his political objectives.

There may have been one instance of tactical-level military operations diverging from political-level objectives: the response of Navy on-scene commanders to Soviet harassment on June 8. Navy commanders were determined not to be intimidated by the dangerous maneuvering of the Soviet ships, even at the risk of a collision. The stern warning Vice Admiral Martin sent to the Soviet destroyer and the ensuing game of chicken may not have been the types of actions President Johnson desired for managing tensions with the Soviet Union. However, there is no evidence that he disapproved of how the the Navy commanders handled the situation--there were no collisions or shots fired--so even this incident is not a clear case of decoupling.

The fifth question is did national leaders and on-scene commanders hold different perceptions of the vulnerability of on-scene forces to pre-emption and the need to strike first in the event of an armed clash? Threat perceptions were not acute at any level of the chain of command and there is evidence that officials in Washington were more concerned about the Soviet Navy than were the on-scene commanders. For example, when Liberty was attacked McNamara and others in Washington thought that the Soviets might have been responsible, while Navy commanders in the

Mediterranean, who were closely monitoring Soviet movements, knew that Soviet forces could not have conducted the attack.⁴⁴⁷ If anything, Navy on-scene commanders perceived the Soviet threat to the Sixth Fleet to be less dangerous than did civilian officials in Washington. Threat perceptions and the security dilemma thus were not stratified during the crisis.

The sixth question is, when tactical-level interactions become decoupled, what factors inhibit escalation dynamics from occurring at the tactical level and being transmitted upward to the strategic and political levels of interaction? Although there were intense tactical-level interactions during the crisis, there were no cases of such interactions generating an escalation sequence the President could not control. The most dangerous interactions took place on June 7 and 8 during Soviet harassment of America and her escorts. This interaction sequence did escalate, in the sense that a second Soviet ship joined the harassment on the second day, but did not escalate to violence. There

⁴⁴⁷ McNamara has stated that he initially thought the Soviets had attacked Liberty. "Secretary Rusk and Secretary of Defense McNamara Discuss Viet-Nam and Korea on 'Meet the Press'," Department of State Bulletin 58 (February 26, 1968): 271. Also see Howe, p. 102. Navy commanders knew that there were no Soviet tactical aircraft or torpedo boats in the Mediterranean and therefore did not suspect the Soviets of the attack. Rivero, letter to author, March 10, 1988; Wylie, letter to author, March 28, 1988; Engen, letter to author, March 21, 1988. Also see Howe, p. 103; Wells, p. 167; Williams, p. 118.

were no collisions and no shots were fired. Although naval commanders on both sides were determined not to be intimidated, they were cautious to avoid collisions. Their caution arose not so much from concern over the political repercussions of an incident, but from the prudence any good seaman would show under the circumstances. Collisions at sea are extremely dangerous, so that even deliberate collisions for signaling purposes are performed with great caution. Thus, the first factor inhibiting escalation was caution on the part of U.S. leaders in the restrictions they placed on Sixth Fleet movements and caution on the part of U.S. naval commanders in the Mediterranean when potentially serious incidents did occur.

The June 7-8 harassment incident stands out because it was entirely different from the behavior of the Soviet navy during the rest of the crisis. On one other occasion a Riga-class frigate trailing America approached the carrier as close as 700 to 1,000 yards. Both this frigate and a Soviet AGI following Saratoga frequently maneuvered inside the U.S. formations, a dangerous practice when the carrier groups maneuver to conduct flight operations. When a larger Kashin-class destroyer was trailing America, the Soviet vessel maneuvered with greater caution, generally remaining three to four miles behind the carrier.⁴⁴⁸ But none of these

⁴⁴⁸ "Soviet Watching U.S. Fleet," New York Times, May 31, 1967, p. 16; "Admiral Says Soviet Shadowing Often

trailing operations constituted deliberate harassment of the U.S. carriers. Overall, as Anthony Wells points out, "The style of Soviet tattletale operations in this situation was conservative. . . . Soviet units in the Mediterranean generally avoided any action that could be construed as systematic harassment." 449

The second factor inhibiting escalation was that the Soviet Mediterranean Squadron generally behaved in a cautious and circumspect manner.⁴⁵⁰ It did not practice anti-carrier strikes on the U.S. carriers. In fact, the two Soviet destroyers armed with anti-ship cruise missiles rarely were in the vicinity of the U.S. carriers. Soviet submarines also appear to have maintained a low profile, rather than aggressively pursuing the U.S. carriers, and no Soviet long-range strike aircraft were detected during the crisis. This Soviet caution was an important factor in the lack of escalation during particularly intense interactions at sea. U.S. Navy commanders could tolerate a certain amount of indiscretion by individual Soviet ships because it clearly was not part of a pattern of harassment and did not appear to presage a Soviet pre-emptive attack. Thus, while

Imperils Ships of 6th Fleet," New York Times, June 1, 1967, p. 18; "A Larger Soviet Vessel Follows U.S. Carrier in Mediterranean," New York Times, June 4, 1967, p. 4

⁴⁴⁹Wells, p. 165.

⁴⁵⁰A conclusion shared by Dismukes, p. 498; Fukuyama, pp. 595-97; Wells, pp. 166-67.

Soviet efforts to show caution around the Sixth Fleet were not entirely successful in preventing tensions from arising, they did help to prevent serious incidents from occurring.

The third factor inhibiting escalation was the tight coupling between U.S. and Soviet naval forces in the Mediterranean. Sixth Fleet carrier aircraft and patrol planes kept Vice Admiral Martin and the chain of command up to the President informed of the Soviet Mediterranean Squadron's operations and movements. Soviet tattletales probably kept Moscow informed of Sixth Fleet operations and movements on a near real-time basis. Overall, this was beneficial for crisis management because the signal the United States and Soviets were sending with their fleets was one of non-involvement in the hostilities. When Soviet ships harassed America, Vice Admiral Martin knew it was an isolated act and that the rest of the Soviet squadron was operating normally. When Israel attacked Liberty, Vice Admiral Martin knew that the Soviets probably were not responsible because he knew where their ships were and that they did not have any tactical aircraft over the Mediterranean. Thus, although tight coupling is generally perceived as increasing the danger of escalation in crises, it can also reduce the likelihood of escalation when both sides are attempting to avoid involvement in a local conflict.

The fourth factor inhibiting escalation was use of the Soviet-American hot line. Both sides used the hot line to

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express concerns, give warnings, and avoid misperceptions. Of particular importance was President Johnson's use of the hot line to warn the Soviets of the U.S. response to the attack on Liberty, which ensured that Soviet leaders would not misperceive the purpose of the sudden launch of carrier aircraft and America's sprint toward the Sinai. The hot line was thus used to dampen the potential negative effects of tight coupling between U.S. and Soviet naval forces in the Mediterranean. Ironically, while tight coupling of the naval forces in the Mediterranean increased the need for the hot line, it also increased the effectiveness of the hot line as a means for conveying political messages. Soviet and American leaders could verify the veracity of statements made by the other side by comparing them with reports on the other side's naval operations. The essential requirement for this synergistic relationship to exist was careful coordination of naval operations with political objectives and diplomatic initiatives. The United States and the Soviet Union were largely successful in achieving such coordination.

The seventh question is did actions taken with military forces send inadvertent signals to either adversaries or friends, and did inadvertent military incidents occur that affected efforts to manage the crisis? There do not appear to have been any instances of the Soviets seriously misperceiving the intent of Sixth Fleet

operations, largely due to close Soviet monitoring of the fleet and United States use of the hot line. However, Lieutenant Commander Gary L. Sick, a naval intelligence officer stationed at the American embassy in Cairo in 1967, has suggested that Sixth Fleet movements in May--before the war broke out--were misperceived by Arab leaders:

American policy was designed to use a military show of force to convince Nasser that he should reopen the Strait of Tiran and defuse the mounting tension in the area. This was to be accomplished by a series of careful moves and "signals" to the Egyptian Government. The moves were indeed observed by the Arab governments, but the signals were misinterpreted in the atmosphere of tension and distrust. As shown by the Syrian statement early in the crisis [May 15] and by President Nasser's reference to the 6th Fleet [May 29], the Arabs strongly suspected an attack by U.S. forces and tended to disregard relatively subtle evidence to the contrary. Thus, the American policy did not succeed and, in fact, provided the grounds for making the United States the scapegoat for a situation it had tried desperately to prevent.⁴⁵¹

To review, in May the Sixth Fleet was concentrated in the eastern Mediterranean: Saratoga on May 20, and America and Little Rock on May 25. Although the carriers were directed to remain over 400 miles from the Suez Canal, they easily could have moved to within air strike range in less than a day. Also in May, the U.S. Middle East Force was reinforced and concentrated near Egypt: In mid-May a third destroyer was added to the force, on May 23 the force was ordered into the Red Sea, and on June 3 a fourth destroyer was added to the force in the Red Sea. By June 3, then, the United

⁴⁵¹Sick p. 57.

States had four destroyers available to challenge the Egyptian blockade of the Strait of Tiran, and two carriers in the Mediterranean ready to retaliate against Egypt if the U.S. destroyers were attacked. The credibility of these U.S. naval moves can be questioned, given President Johnson's reluctance to act unilaterally in the Strait of Tiran, but it is certainly plausible that Egyptian President Nasser and other Arab leaders would view the moves as threatening.

Given such Egyptian and Syrian suspicions of U.S. intentions on the eve of the war, it is not surprising that Egypt would later claim--either thinking it was true or knowing it was false--that U.S. carrier aircraft had attacked Egypt. Sixth Fleet and Middle East Force movements in May, intended to support the President's efforts to pressure Nasser into reopening the Strait of Tiran, thus sent an inadvertent signal of hostility to the Arab nations. The inadvertent hostile signal would lead Arab leaders to assume U.S. hostility after war broke out. It thus complicated U.S. efforts to manage the crisis by lending credibility to Arab claims of American complicity in the Israeli attacks--claims that contributed to serious deterioration in U.S. relations with the Arab nations.

There were no inadvertent military incidents that seriously affected United States efforts to manage the crisis. The most serious incident of the crisis was the attack on the Liberty, but Israel quickly notified the

United States that it had conducted the attack, thus defusing tensions over the incident. The second most serious incident of the crisis was the harassment of America by two Soviet ships on June 7 and 8. But there were no collisions and no shots were fired. The absence of serious inadvertent incidents was largely due to the cautious manner in which the two superpowers conducted naval operations in the Mediterranean. Although there were relatively intense interactions between the two sides, the interactions could have been much more intense and dangerous than they actually were. The most important factor in avoiding incidents that could complicate crisis management, then, was decisions made by national leaders on the two sides that structured the tactical environment in such a manner as to moderate the intensity of tactical-level interactions and limit the tensions that would arise from those interactions.

The eighth question is did any of the three tensions between political and military considerations arise during the crisis? None of the three tensions was serious during the crisis. There was moderate tension between political considerations and the needs of diplomatic bargaining, on the one hand, and military considerations and the needs of military operations, on the other. This arose primarily from the restrictions placed on movements of the Sixth Fleet carriers and the efforts to use their movements for political signalling. The carrier force commanders objected

to restrictions on their mobility, which denied them one of the greatest advantages of carrier air power, and the publicity surrounding their movements, which made it easier for the Soviets to target the carriers.⁴⁵² On the other hand, the restrictions on the carriers did not impose unreasonable limitations on their ability to carry out their immediate mission. Further, the restrictions were disregarded by the on-scene commander when it was necessary to respond to the attack on the Liberty. Vice Admiral Martin, on his own authority, launched aircraft to defend the ship and ordered America to close the scene at best speed. Both actions required violation of the geographic restrictions placed on the Sixth Fleet. However, the President soon authorized the actions Vice Admiral Martin had already initiated. Thus, the tension between political and military considerations was not serious.

There was also only moderate tension between the need for top-level control of military operations and the need for tactical flexibility and initiative at the scene of the crisis. The Johnson Administration handled the military chain of command much better than the Kennedy Administration had handled it in the Cuban Missile Crisis (Which is interesting given that McNamara was still Secretary of Defense).

⁴⁴² Engen, letter to author, March 21, 1988; Wylie, letter to author, March 28, 1988; Rivero, letter to author, March 10, 1988.



Orders to the Sixth Fleet were passed via the chain of command and only essential aspects of Sixth Fleet operations--the general movements of the fleet in the Mediterranean--were closely controlled. The carrier force commanders were not happy about this control of their operations, but it did not seriously interfere with their ability to carry out their mission. The intense resentment against civilian interference that arose during the Cuban Missile Crisis was absent in 1967 Arab-Israeli War.

There was very little tension between performance of crisis political missions and readiness to perform wartime combat missions. Sixth Fleet operations during the crisis did not seriously detract from the fleet's readiness for wartime contingencies.⁴⁵³ The only feature of the crisis operations that the on-scene commanders did not like, even though they understood its purpose and importance, was the publicizing of the fleet's movements. The carrier force commanders would have preferred to make Soviet efforts to track and target the carriers as difficult as possible. This is a crucial consideration in wartime operations, but one that directly conflicts with political crisis management considerations. Other than this, however, there was little tension between performance of crisis missions and readiness for wartime contingencies.

⁴⁵³ Ibid.

In summary, the stratified interaction model accurately describes Soviet-American interaction during the 1967 Arab-Israeli War. Although there were intense interactions between U.S. and Soviet naval forces in the Mediterranean, there were few instances of decoupled interactions. The overall pattern was one of parallel stratified interactions with occasional momentary decoupling. The only aspect of naval operations that was closely controlled was the movement of the Sixth fleet in the Mediterranean. Control by negation was exercised over other aspects of Sixth Fleet operations, but there were no instances of orders issued by the on-scene commander being countermanded by the White House. U.S. and Soviet naval forces were tightly coupled during the crisis, but there were no serious incidents between them. There were no serious political-military tensions during the crisis.

The 1973 Arab-Israeli War

The Fourth Arab-Israeli War erupted in October 1973 when Egypt launched a surprise attack on Israeli positions on the east bank of the Suez Canal and Syria attacked Israeli positions on the Golan Heights. After initial setbacks, Israel launched devastating counterattacks, ultimately crossing the Suez Canal and trapping the Egyptian Third Army. This precipitated a Soviet threat to intervene in the war, backed by mobilization of airborne forces. The

United States strongly backed Israel during the war, initiating (after a delay) a massive airlift of supplies and replacement aircraft. In response to the Soviet intervention threat, the United States declared worldwide Defense Condition three (DEFCON 3). The Sixth Fleet played an important role in U.S. foreign policy, supporting the airlift and countering Soviet military threats. The Soviet Mediterranean Squadron also played an active role in the crisis, demonstrating Soviet concerns and politically countering the Sixth Fleet.

Background

The 1973 Arab-Israeli War was the first major crisis in the era of Soviet-American detente. Detente had been inaugurated ceremonially at the May 1972 Nixon-Brezhnev summit in Moscow. During that summit the two leaders signed the ABM Treaty, the Interim Agreement on Limitation of Strategic Arms (the SALT I agreement), and the Basic Principles Agreement. The Basic Principles Agreement sought to codify the principles of detente and, among other things, called for restraint in seeking unilateral gain at the expense of the other party.⁴⁵⁴ Arms control and regulation of superpower competition were thus the cornerstones of

⁴⁵⁴ See Alexander L. George, "The Basic Principles Agreement of 1972: Origins and Expectations," in Alexander L. George, Managing U.S.-Soviet Rivalry: Problems of Crisis Prevention (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1983), pp. 107-117.

detente. Round one of the SALT II negotiations opened in November 1972. American involvement in the Indochina War, long a source of tension in Soviet-American relations, began winding down early the next year. On January 27, 1973 the U.S.-North Vietnamese peace treaty was signed and in February 1973 the last U.S. troops left South Vietnam. The second Nixon-Brezhnev summit was held in Washington and San Clemente in June 1973. During that summit the two leaders signed the Agreement on Prevention of Nuclear War, which, among other provisions, called for consultations between the superpowers in the event of nuclear accidents or third party nuclear threats. Soviet-American relations in 1973 were thus much better than they had been in the three previous crises examined in this study.

Another significant development in Soviet-American relations was the Incidents at Sea Agreement, signed May 25, 1972, during the first Nixon-Brezhnev summit. This agreement committed both sides to respect the international rules of the road for preventing collisions at sea and provided guidance for situations unique to naval forces (such as formations of ships) that were not adequately covered by the international rules. Beginning in 1960, there had been a long series of incidents between U.S. and Soviet naval vessels, including several collisions. The Incidents at Sea Agreement was intended to prevent such incidents in the future. In addition to specifying behavior for naval

vessels at sea, the agreement set up a standard channel for reporting violations to the other side and called for annual review of the agreement. At the first annual review, held May 1973, a protocol to the agreement was signed that expanded its provisions. As of October 1973, there had been no high-intensity superpower naval operations that seriously tested the Incidents at Sea Agreement.⁴⁵⁵

Immediately after the 1967 Arab-Israeli War the Soviet Union began supplying large quantities of modern arms to Egypt and Syria in order to rebuild their shattered forces and restore Soviet influence among the Arab nations. From 1969 to late 1970, Egypt engaged Israel in a war of attrition along the Suez Canal. Both sides suffered heavy losses with no gains. In early 1970 the Soviets took over the air

⁴⁵⁵ "Agreement Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Prevention of Incidents On and Over the High Seas," Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, World Armaments and Disarmament: SIPRI Yearbook, 1973 (New York: Humanities Press, 1972), pp. 36-39. "Protocol to the Agreement Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Prevention of Incidents On and Over the High Seas," signed May 25, 1973, U.S. Department of State, United States Treaties and Other International Agreements, Vol. 24, Part 1, 1973 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1974), pp. 1063-64. Also see Anthony F. Wolf, "Agreement at Sea: The United States-USSR Agreement on Incidents at Sea," Korean Journal of International Studies 9 (3/1978): 57-80; Rear Admiral Robert P. Hilton, "The U.S.-Soviet Incidents at Sea treaty," Naval Forces 6 (1/1985): 30-37; Sean M. Lynn-Jones, "The Incidents at Sea Agreement," in Alexander L. George, Philip J. Farley, and Alexander Dallin, eds., U.S.-Soviet Security Cooperation: Achievements, Failures, Lessons (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), pp. 482-509.

defense of Egypt. Egyptian President Nasser's death in September 1970 did not lessen tensions with Israel. His successor, Anwar Sadat, committed himself to war with Israel if there was no progress toward a political solution. Sadat expelled almost all Soviet military advisors from Egypt in July 1972, a move apparently prompted by Soviet efforts to restrain Egypt from resorting to force against Israel and increasing Soviet domination of the Egyptian military. In October 1972 Sadat replaced the top military leadership and ordered the army to begin planning an offensive to seize the east bank of the Suez Canal. In early 1973, frustrated over lack of progress in the diplomatic arena, Sadat asked the Soviet Union to resume arms shipments to Egypt. The Soviets agreed, and the final Egyptian military build-up for war commenced.⁴⁵⁶

⁴⁵⁶ Mohamed Heikal, The Road to Ramadan (New York: Quadrangle, 1975), pp. 29-35, 46-206; Chaim Herzog, The War of Atonement (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1975), 1-68; Henry Kissinger, White House Years (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1979), pp. 1298-1300; Henry Kissinger, Years of Upheaval (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1982), pp. 205-27. Also see John Bulloch, The Making of a War: The Middle East from 1967 to 1973 (London: Longman, 1974), pp. 166-87; The Insight Team of the London Sunday Times, The Yom Kippur War (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1974), pp. 63-129 (Cited hereafter as Insight Team); Lawrence L. Whetten, The Canal War (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1974), pp. 36-232; Jon D. Glassman, Arms for the Arabs: The Soviet Union and War in the Middle East (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975), pp. 65-124; Galia Golan, Yom Kippur and After: The Soviet Union and the Middle East Crisis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), pp. 21-73; Alvin Z. Rubinstein, Red Star on the Nile (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1977), pp. 249-62; Shlomo Aronson, Conflict and Bargaining in the Middle East: An Israeli

The United States had offered a series of Middle East peace proposals, all of which were rejected. United States policy in 1972 and 1973 was designed to maintain a prolonged stalemate between Israel and her Arab neighbors, which Henry Kissinger believed would erode Soviet influence and perhaps move the Arab nations to seek improved relations with the United States. U.S. policy during this period assumed that Israeli military supremacy was the key to avoiding war in the Middle East, but this U.S. policy served only to exacerbate Arab-Israeli tensions. Tentative U.S.-Egyptian talks in early 1973 on an interim Israeli-Egyptian agreement made no progress, and Egypt decided to attempt a military solution to the stalemate.⁴⁵⁷

Perspective (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), pp. 135-54; Amnon Sella, Soviet Political and Military Conduct in the Middle East (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981), pp. 72-83; George W. Breslauer, "Soviet Policy in the Middle East, 1967-1972: Unalterable Antagonism or Collaborative Competition?" in Alexander L. George, Managing U.S.-Soviet Rivalry: Problems of Crisis Prevention (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1983), pp. 65-105; Galia Golan, "Soviet Decisionmaking in the Yom Kippur War, 1973," in Jiri Valenta and William C. Potter, eds., Soviet Decisionmaking for National Security (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1984), pp. 186-88, 192-98; Brecher, pp. 51-76.

⁴⁵⁷ Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, pp. 205-27; William B. Quandt, Decade of Decisions: American Policy Toward the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1967-1976 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), pp. 128-129. Also see George, "Arab-Israeli War of October 1973," pp. 141-45; Bulloch, pp. 166-87; Aronson, pp. 154-59; Heikal, pp. 170-184; Harold H. Saunders, "Regulating Soviet-U.S. Competition and Cooperation in the Arab-Israeli Arena, 1967-86," in Alexander L. George, Philip J. Farley, and Alexander Dallin, eds., U.S.-Soviet Security Cooperation: Achievements, Failures, Lessons (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), pp. 554-564.

The Egyptian-Syrian strategy in the war was to inflict a decisive defeat on the Israeli standing army before Israel could mobilize its reserves, quickly seize strategic positions on the east bank of the Suez Canal and the Golan Heights, and prepare defensive positions for the inevitable Israeli counterattacks. Initial heavy attrition of Israeli forces and a quick U.N. ceasefire backed by the superpowers were expected to move the conflict to the bargaining table before Israel would be able to dislodge Egyptian and Syrian forces. Success in achieving these limited objectives would destroy Israel's image of military invulnerability, restore Arab confidence and pride, and increase Arab credibility and influence with the superpowers. These psychological and political victories, and possession of strategic positions in the Sinai and Golan Heights, would allow Egypt and Syria to negotiate from strength and force Israel to withdraw from the occupied territories on Arab terms.⁴⁵⁸

At 2:00 P.M. on October 6, 1973, Egypt attacked across the Suez Canal and Syria attacked the Golan Heights. They succeeded in achieving surprise and gaining ground on both fronts, inflicting heavy losses on Israeli ground and air forces. Beginning October 8 Israel counterattacked on both fronts, driving Syrian forces from the Golan Heights by October 10, but suffering a defeat in the Sinai. On

⁴⁵⁸Safran, pp. 279-282; Dupuy, pp. 387-405; Insight Team, pp. 46-62; Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, p. 460, 482.

October 11 Israel launched a counteroffensive against Syria and advanced into Syrian territory. Israeli forces met stiff resistance from Syrian forces (reinforced with Iraqi and Jordanian units), and on October 13 halted the offensive and consolidated defensive positions. There was only sporadic fighting on the Syrian front thereafter and on October 23 Syria agreed to the U.N. ceasefire.

On October 14, Egypt launched a major offensive in the Sinai in order to relieve Israeli pressure on Syria. Israel quickly halted the Egyptian offensive and launched a counter-offensive on October 15. Israeli armored units crossed the Suez Canal in small numbers on October 15 and 16, and in strength on October 17, threatening to cutoff Egyptian forces on the east bank of the canal. A U.N.-sponsored ceasefire was supposed to go into effect at 6:50 P.M. on October 22, but the fighting did not stop and Israeli forces continued advancing in Egypt. A second UN-sponsored ceasefire was set for 7:00 A.M. on October 24, but again the fighting failed to stop and Israel continued its offensive, surrounding the Egyptian Third Army. Each side blamed the other for the initial failure of these two ceasefires to take hold. On October 25 Israeli-Egyptian fighting tapered off and a fragile cease-fire held.⁴⁵⁹

⁴⁵⁹ Moshe Dayan, Story of My Life (New York: William Morrow, 1976), pp. 459-539; Herzog, pp. 68-250. Also see Zeev Schiff, October Earthquake: Yom Kippur 1973 (Tel Aviv:

Political-Strategic Context

Using the categories of crises presented in Chapter II, which distinguished between direct and indirect crises, the 1973 Arab-Israeli War was an indirect superpower crisis. The United States was brought into the confrontation through its support of Israel and the Soviet Union was brought into the confrontation through its support of Egypt and Syria. This meant that, in addition to controlling the actions of their own forces, the superpowers had to be concerned about the behavior of their clients. The period of greatest superpower tension in the crisis (October 24-25), resulted from actions taken by the local participants (primarily Israel) that contradicted arrangements made by the superpowers to resolve the crisis.

The United States had several objectives in the crisis: (a) to ensure the survival of Israel; (b) to preserve and strengthen U.S. credibility as a reliable ally in Israeli eyes, which was perceived to be important for gaining Israeli participation in post-war diplomacy; (c) to increase U.S. influence among the Arab nations--particularly Egypt--or at least reduce to a minimum the erosion of U.S. influence among moderate Arab nations that would result from

University Publishing Project, 1974); Heikal, pp. 207-43; Safran, pp. 282-311; Dupuy, pp. 411-546; Brecher, pp. 171-229; Insight Team, pp. 133-246, 289-346, 383-98; Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, pp. 450-611; Whetten, pp. 233-84; Glassman, pp. 125-38.

U.S. support for Israel (and, if possible, avert an Arab oil embargo); (d) to reduce Soviet influence in the Middle East, or at least prevent an expansion of Soviet influence; (e) to terminate the war under circumstances conducive to negotiations leading toward at least a partial Middle East peace settlement, rather than just a ceasefire; (f) to avoid a direct confrontation with the Soviet Union that might escalate to a military clash; (g) to avoid unilateral actions that would unnecessarily erode detente while achieving only marginal advantages over the Soviets; and (h) to reduce to a minimum divisions between the U.S. and its allies (Western Europe and Japan) arising from the Middle East war. The priorities of these objectives shifted during the crisis as circumstances in the Middle East changed. Additionally, several of the goals tended to be contradictory, requiring extreme fine tuning of U.S. diplomatic initiatives and use of subtle signals that were easily missed or misinterpreted in the heat of the crisis.⁴⁶⁰

⁴⁶⁰ Henry Kissinger, "Secretary Kissinger's News Conference of October 12," Department of State Bulletin 69 (October 29, 1973): 534-35; Henry Kissinger, "Secretary Kissinger's News Conference of October 25," Department of State Bulletin 69 (November 12, 1973): 585-86; Richard M. Nixon, The Memoirs of Richard Nixon (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1978), p. 921-22; Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, pp. 467-68, 475, 478, 531; Quandt, Decade of Decisions, pp. 171-73, 184. Also see Safran, p. 478; Alan Dowty, Middle East Crisis: U.S. Decision-Making in 1958, 1970, and 1973 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), pp. 221-26, 231, 247, 274; Edward R.F. Sheehan, The Arabs, Israelis, and Kissinger: A Secret History of American Diplomacy in the Middle East (New York: Reader's Digest Press, 1976), pp.

The basic United States strategy was to achieve a ceasefire after Israel had repulsed the Egyptian and Syrian assaults, but before Israel could inflict a decisive, humiliating defeat on her neighbors (particularly Egypt). President Nixon and Secretary Kissinger believed this would create the most conducive circumstances for post-war diplomacy. The other major aspect of the U.S. strategy was to avoid a confrontation with the Soviet Union and to work in conjunction with the Soviets to resolve the crisis--at least to appear to be working with the Soviets while attempting to limit their role in the Middle East. This strategy remained consistent throughout the crisis, although the tactics used to pursue it changed significantly as U.S. perceptions of Israel's military situation changed.⁴⁶¹

The primary Soviet objectives in the crisis were (a) to increase Soviet prestige and influence among Arab nations, particularly Egypt, and to reduce U.S. influence in the region; (b) to avert a catastrophic defeat of Syria and

32-33, 53-55. Some observers also claim that U.S. leaders were concerned that Israel would use its nuclear weapons capability if threatened with a catastrophic defeat, and that the U.S. therefore had the objective of averting this possibility. See Dowty, pp. 244-45; Safran, p. 483; Aronson, pp. 178-79; Insight Team, pp. 282-84.

⁴⁶¹Nixon, Memoirs, pp. 921-22; Kissinger, "News Conference of October 12," 535; Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, pp. 478, 490; Quandt, Decade of Decisions, pp. 171-173; Safran, p. 478; Dowty, pp. 216-17, 226-27, 294-96; Insight Team, p. 254; Edward N. Luttwak and Walter Laqueur, "Kissinger and the Yom Kippur War," Commentary 50 (September 1974): 38-39.

Egypt by Israel; (c) to avoid a direct confrontation with the United States that might escalate to a military clash; and (d) to avoid serious erosion of detente with the United States. Additional Soviet objectives, derived from those listed above, were to be able to take credit for Arab victories or for averting catastrophic defeat of Syria and Egypt, and to terminate the war under circumstances that would give the Soviet Union a central (or at least a more important) role in post-war negotiations. The Soviet Union, like the United States, had complex and contradictory objectives. Attempting to maintain detente with the United States while increasing Soviet influence in the Middle East at the expense of the United States was a particularly difficult combination of objectives. It does not appear that the Soviet leaders believed, prior to the outbreak of the war, that another Arab-Israeli war would necessarily serve their interests in the Middle East. Rather, the Soviets appear to have sought what gains they could accrue from a conflict they could not avert without serious erosion of their influence among Arab nations.⁴⁶²

The Soviet strategy in the crisis had three basic elements. The first was to press for an early ceasefire

⁴⁶²William B. Quandt, Soviet Policy in the October 1973 War, R-1864 (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 1976), pp. 7-12; Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, p. 469; Safran, p. 479; Galia Golan, "Soviet Decisionmaking," pp. 198-99, 202; Galia Golan, Yom Kippur and After, p. 74; Aronson, p. 183.

before the tide of battle turned against Egypt and Syria. At this point the Arab nations would have their greatest bargaining leverage against Israel. To curry favor with the Arab nations, the initial Soviet ceasefire proposal called for Israel to return to pre-1967 boundaries. The second element was to work in conjunction with the United States, rather than unilaterally, to gain a UN ceasefire resolution, to maintain at least an image of upholding the principles of detente, and to avoid excessive friction with the United States by not waging an intense anti-American propaganda campaign in the Middle East (as it had in past conflicts). The third element was to resupply Egypt and Syria with sufficient military equipment to maintain an image of solidarity with the Arab cause and to forestall a decisive Israeli victory. An additional, minor element in the Soviet strategy was to encourage other Arab nations to assist Egypt and Syria in the war against Israel. Jordan and Iraq sent troops to the Syrian front during the war, demonstrating at least some Arab solidarity.⁴⁶³ The Soviet strategy was precarious and somewhat risky in that its three major elements could easily become mutually incompatible if events in the Middle East took an unexpected turn, which is exactly what happened.

⁴⁶³ Safran, p. 479; Galia Golan, Yom Kippur and After, pp. 126-27; Galia Golan, "Soviet Decision-making," pp. 199-202; Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, p. 469; Rubinstein, pp. 262-63; Glassman, pp. 171-73.

Israel notified Washington that it had received warning of the impending attack about two hours before the Egyptians and Syrians struck. Kissinger warned the Israelis not to pre-empt and attempted to forestall the Arab attack. Israel did not preempt, but Egypt and Syria carried out their attacks. Initially, the United States was slow in pursuing a ceasefire in the UN Security Council, believing that Israel would soon turn the tide of battle. The United States maintained a low profile, evenhanded approach so as not to alienate the Arab nations. The United States also sought to act in conjunction with the Soviet Union, rather than unilaterally, in the UN Security Council. The initial U.S. proposal was to be for a ceasefire based on the status quo ante, timed to go into effect after Israel had repulsed the invading armies. The Soviets reportedly sought Egyptian agreement for a ceasefire in place as early as October 6, a proposal the Egyptians rejected. On October 7 the United States and the Soviet Union agreed in principle to a ceasefire and the Soviets reassured the United States that they would not unilaterally introduce a ceasefire resolution in the Security Council. Israel initially requested resupply of military equipment and munitions on October 7, a request approved by the United States later in the day.⁴⁶⁴ Israel

⁴⁶⁴ "U.N. Calls for Middle East Cease-Fire and Negotiations and Establishes Emergency Force," Department of State Bulletin 69 (November 12, 1973): 598-99; Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, pp. 471-91; Dayan, p. 511; Quandt, Decade of

was to pick up the American supplies in the United States using unmarked El Al planes. Through October 8 U.S. leaders believed, based on Israeli reports, that Israel would soon prevail over Egypt and Syria and that low-profile resupply of Israel and evenhanded diplomacy were all the actions the U.S. needed to take.

Soviet-American tensions started rising during the October 9-12 period. Israel's resupply requests became more urgent on October 9 and Israel revealed that it had suffered massive losses of tanks and aircraft in the first three days of battle. On October 9 President Nixon approved Israel's requests for increased immediate resupply and post-war replacement of all Israeli battlefield losses, but for the next three days U.S. supplies were carried only in Israeli planes. The Soviet Union, which had been delivering military supplies to Syria by sealift from the start of the war, commenced an airlift to Syria on October 10 and commenced an airlift to Egypt the next day. Additionally, the Soviets made it clear that they would only support a

Decisions, pp. 173-75. Also see Safran, pp. 479-80; Dowty, pp. 224-30; Heikal, p. 244; Galia Golan, Yom Kippur and After, pp. 74-86; Galia Golan, "Soviet Decision-making," pp. 199-201; Insight Team, pp. 268-74; Aronson, pp. 183-84; Marvin Kalb and Bernard Kalb, Kissinger (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1974), pp. 459-66; Matti Golan, The Secret Conversations of Henry Kissinger: Step-by-Step Diplomacy in the Middle East (New York: Bantam, 1976), pp. 33-48, 63-64; Robert O. Freedman, Soviet Policy Toward the Middle East Since 1970, Revised Edition (New York: Praeger, 1978), pp. 141-42; Rubinstein, pp. 262-67; Glassman, pp. 142-44.

ceasefire based on the Arab position, that is, a ceasefire in place linked with Israeli withdrawal to pre-1967 lines. The United States rejected this proposal and sought to delay UN action on a ceasefire until Israel gained the upper hand on the battlefield. On October 10 or 11, in response to Israeli advances into Syrian territory, the Soviet Union placed three airborne divisions on alert. The United States learned of this Soviet move on October 12. That same day Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin warned Kissinger that the Soviet Union might intervene if Israel continued advancing on Damascus. Kissinger, in turn, warned Dobrynin that the United States would resist Soviet intervention with force. Israel informed the United States on October 12 that it would accept a ceasefire in place, but preferred that the UN resolution not be voted on for another day. Israel also made an urgent plea for immediate resupply. In response, President Nixon ordered an airlift using U.S. military transport aircraft flying all the way to Israel.⁴⁶⁵ October 12 thus marked the last day of the low key, evenhanded U.S. approach to the crisis.

⁴⁶⁵Nixon, Memoirs, pp. 922-28; Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, pp. 491-515; Quandt, Decade of Decisions, pp. 176-82. Also see Safran, pp. 301, 480-83; Heikal, p. 245; Galia Golan, Yom Kippur and After, pp. 87-94; Galia Golan, "Soviet Decisionmaking," pp. 201-203; Quandt, Soviet Policy pp. 18-27; Kalb and Kalb, pp. 467-78; Sheehan, pp. 32-34, 56-57; Dowty, pp. 230-40, 264-66; Insight Team, pp. 274-81; Matti Golan, Secret Conversations, pp. 49-61, 65-67; Aronson, pp. 184-85; Rubinstein, pp. 267-70; Glassman, pp. 144-48.

The U.S. airlift to Israel commenced October 13 and the President directed that it be operated at maximum capacity. The United States also proposed to the Soviet Union a ceasefire in place linked to reaffirmation of UN Security Council Resolution 242, rather to Israeli withdrawal from all occupied territories. On October 14 Egypt launched a major offensive in the Sinai in order to relieve pressure on Syria. Israel quickly halted the offensive, launched a counter-offensive on October 15, and sent troops across the Suez Canal in small numbers on October 16. Soviet Premier Alexei Kosygin visited Egypt October 16 and urged Sadat to agree to a ceasefire in place. The next day the Soviet Union expressed to the United States its support for a ceasefire in place. The Arab oil exporting nations announced on October 17 a production cutback and price increase, to be followed by additional cutbacks until Israel withdrew from the occupied territories. Israeli armored units crossed the Suez Canal in strength on October 17. In response, the Soviet Union on October 18 began pressing for a ceasefire in place. Thus, as of October 18 the conditions that the United States had originally thought appropriate for a ceasefire were emerging.⁴⁶⁶

⁴⁶⁶Nixon, p. 930; James Schlesinger, "Secretary of Defense Schlesinger's News Conference of October 26," Department of State Bulletin 69 (November 19, 1973): 624; Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, pp. 515-41; Quandt, Decade of Decisions, pp. 183-90. Also see Aronson, pp. 185-86; Galia Golan, Yom Kippur and After, pp. 94-112; Galia Golan,

On October 19 Brezhnev sent a message to Nixon inviting Kissinger to Moscow to discuss a Middle East ceasefire. Kissinger flew to Moscow early the next morning and held initial discussions with Brezhnev late on October 20. Meanwhile, the Nixon Administration on October 19 submitted a \$2.2 billion dollar aid package for Israel to Congress. In response, Saudi Arabia announced on October 20 that it was joining the embargo on oil shipments to the United States--a serious setback for U.S. foreign policy. On October 21 Kissinger reached a ceasefire agreement with the Soviets, which was to be presented to the UN Security Council that evening. The Soviet-American ceasefire proposal, Resolution 338, was passed by the Security Council at 12:50 A.M. on October 22. Kissinger left Moscow that morning for Israel to explain the Soviet-American agreement to Israeli leaders. The ceasefire was supposed to go into effect at 6:50 P.M. on October 22, but Israeli forces in Egypt continued advancing, allegedly after Egyptian violations of the ceasefire. On October 23 Israeli forces cut the final supply line to the Egyptian Third Army, totally surrounding it. In response, the Soviet Union placed four more airborne divisions on alert (a total of

"Soviet Decisionmaking," pp. 203-206; Heikal, pp. 245-46; Safran, pp. 483-85; Insight Team, pp. 281-85, 367-72; Kalb and Kalb, pp. 479-83; Sheehan, pp. 34-35; Matti Golan, Secret Conversations, pp. 61-62, 67-73; Dowty, pp. 242-53, 266-68; Freedman, pp. 142-44; Rubinstein, pp. 270-74; Glassman, pp. 148-53.

seven alerted). A second UN-sponsored ceasefire was set for 7:00 A.M. on October 24, but Israel again continued its offensive, seizing key positions in Suez City and setting the stage for a superpower confrontation.⁴⁶⁷

Egypt requested U.S. and Soviet troops to enforce the ceasefire on October 24 after Israel surrounded the Egyptian Third Army. In response, Brezhnev sent a letter to Nixon threatening unilateral intervention if the U.S. refused to participate and the Soviet Union began assembling its seven alerted airborne divisions at airfields for immediate deployment. The United States rejected the Egyptian proposal and warned the Soviets against unilateral intervention. At 12:25 A.M. on October 25, the United States set DEFCON 3 worldwide and readied the 82nd Airborne Division for immediate deployment to the Middle East. Within hours the U.S. alert had been detected by the American press, which speculated on whether the move was warranted or motivated by domestic politics. On October 25 Israeli-Egyptian fighting tapered off and a fragile

⁴⁶⁷ Nixon, Memoirs, pp. 931-36; Kissinger, "News Conference of October 25," pp. 586-87; "U.N. Calls for Middle East Cease-Fire," Department of State Bulletin 69 (November 12, 1973): 599-602; Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, pp. 542-75; Quandt, Decade of Decisions, pp. 190-95. Also see Safron, pp. 310, 485-93; Heikal, pp. 247-54; Galia Golan, Yom Kippur and After, pp. 112-20; Galia Golan, "Soviet Decisionmaking," pp. 207-209; Insight Team, pp. 362-63, 372-74, 377-88; Kalb and Kalb, pp. 484-89; Sheehan, pp. 69-70; Matti Golan, Secret Conversations, pp. 74-89; Aronson, pp. 187-91; Freedman, pp. 144-45; Rubinstein, pp. 274-75; Glassman, pp. 153-59.

ceasefire held despite Israeli efforts to force surrender of the Egyptian Third Army by delaying passage of relief convoys. The Soviet Union dropped its threat of military intervention and proposed that Soviet and American representatives observe implementation of the ceasefire (a proposal that quietly died when Egypt decided it did not want superpower observers, even though the Soviets had sent a team of observers on October 24). U.S. forces quickly began standing down from DEFCON 3 and returning to normal peacetime DEFCON: the Southern Command and Alaskan Command at midnight on October 25, the Strategic Air Command and North American Air Defense Command on October 26, the Pacific Command and Readiness Command on October 27, and the Atlantic Command and U.S. European Command on October 30. Meanwhile, as of October 31 it appeared that the Soviet airborne divisions had also returned to normal peacetime readiness, thus greatly reducing the possibility of a superpower confrontation. The Sixth Fleet--the last U.S. command to stand down--returned to peacetime readiness on November 18.⁴⁶⁸

⁴⁶⁸Richard M. Nixon, "President Nixon's News Conference of October 26," Department of State Bulletin 69 (November 12, 1973): 581, 583-84; Nixon, Memoirs, pp. 937-42; Kissinger, "News Conference of October 25," pp. 587-88, 592-93; Schlesinger, "News Conference of October 26," pp. 617-22; Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, pp. 575-99; "U.N. Calls for Middle East Cease-Fire," Department of State Bulletin 69 (November 12, 1973): 602-605; Quandt, Decade of Decisions, pp. 195-200; "Trapped Egyptian Force Held Key Factor in Crisis," New York Times, October 26, 1973, p. 1;

Command and Control

The military and naval chain of command in 1973 was the same as it had been in 1967: from the President, to the Secretary of Defense (James Schlesinger), to the unified commander (USCINCEUR), to the component commander (CINCUSNAVEUR), to the fleet commander (Commander Sixth Fleet), to the appropriate Task Force Commander (TF 60 for the attack carriers), to the appropriate Task Group Commander, and finally to individual ships. Admiral Thomas H. Moorer was Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr., was Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Worth H. Bagley was CINCUSNAVEUR, and Vice Admiral Daniel J. Murphy was Commander Sixth Fleet.

The principle advisory body during the crisis was the Washington Special Action Group (WSAG), a panel created by Kissinger within the National Security Council framework. The WSAG, formed in April 1969, was the Nixon Administration's principle crisis management body, serving a role

"U.S. Forces Put on Worldwide Alert Lest Soviet Send Troops to Mideast," New York Times, October 26, 1973, p. 1; "U.S. Is Easing the Alert, But Links Step to Soviet," New York Times, October 27, 1973, p. 10; "Most Units Off Alert, Which May End Today," New York Times, October 28, 1973, p. 27; "Pentagon Declares Its Worldwide Alert of Military Is Over," New York Times, November 1, 1973, p. 19. Also see Safran, pp. 493-95; Heikal, pp. 254-61; Galia Golan, Yom Kippur and After, pp. 120-26; Galia Golan, "Soviet Decisionmaking," pp. 210-11; Kalb and Kalb, pp. 490-99; Insight Team, pp. 399-420; Matti Golan, Secret Conversations, pp. 90-107; Aronson, pp. 193-98; Dowty, pp. 255-60, 273-77; Rubinstein, pp. 275-77; Glassman, pp. 159-67.

similar to that of the EXCOMM in October 1962.⁴⁶⁹ Kissinger was the principle link to the President, directly and through White House Chief of Staff Alexander Haig.

United States communications capabilities had improved significantly since 1967. The two major developments were automated message processing at communications centers ashore and satellite communications. Manual message processing, rather than radio propagation problems, typically caused the bulk of message transmission delays. Automated message processing and routing was being achieved through integration of Navy communications stations into the Naval Communications Processing and Routing System (NAVCOMPARS) and installation of the Common User Digital Information Exchange System (CUDIIXS) at NAVCOMPARS master stations, which provided an automatic on-line interface with the Department of Defense's Automatic Digital Network (AUTODIN) message communications system.

The Navy satellite communications system was operational in 1973, but satellite communication terminals had been

⁴⁶⁹ WSAG membership varied, but generally included Henry Kissinger, Secretary of State and Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, James Schlesinger, Secretary of Defense, William Colby, CAI Director, Admiral Thomas H. Moorer, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Brent Scowcroft, Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, William Clements, Deputy Secretary of Defense, Kenneth Rush, Deputy Secretary of State, and, for meetings on the Middle East, Joseph Sisco, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs. Quandt, Decade of Decisions, p. 173.

installed in only a small number of key ships. In October 1973 the Sixth Fleet flagship, USS Little Rock (CLG 4), the aircraft carriers USS Franklin D. Roosevelt (CVA 42), USS Independence (CVA 62), and USS John F. Kennedy (CVA 67), and the amphibious command ship USS Mount Whitney (LCC 20) had satellite communications terminals. Satellite communications provided rapid, reliable encrypted teletype and secure (covered) voice channels to Navy NAVCOMPARS stations ashore and to the Department of Defense AUTODIN message system and Automatic Secure Voice Communications (AUTOSEVOCOM) system. If he chose to do so, the President in the White House had the capability to speak directly with Navy commanders embarked in ships equipped with satellite communications terminals. The remainder of the ships in the Sixth Fleet still relied on high frequency (HF) communications for long-range voice and radioteletype communications.⁴⁷⁰

President Nixon and his advisors used a combination of direct and delegated control over the Sixth Fleet during the

⁴⁷⁰ Commander Sixth Fleet, "Command History 1973," pp. V-1, V-5 (Declassified 1982. Command history files, Operational Archives, Naval Historical center, Washington, DC. Cited hereafter as Sixth Fleet, "Command History 1973."). Also see U.S. Congress, House Committee on Armed Services, Review of Department of Defense Worldwide Communications, Phase II, Hearings, 92nd Congress, 2nd Session (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1972), pp. 16490-95, 16499-502. Also see Blair, pp. 51-65; Carter, pp. 233-57; Head, Short and McFarlane, pp. 85-99; Lieutenant D.J. Marshall, "Communications and Command Prerogative," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 100 (January 1974): 31; Peter A. Mitchell, "The Navy's Mission in Space," Oceanus 28 (Summer 1985): 25.

1973 Arab-Israeli War. The only aspect of Sixth Fleet operations that was were under positive direct control by the White House was the location of the fleet in the Mediterranean. According to Admiral Moorer, JCS Chairman, "We only gave the Fleet general instructions as to the area to stay in."⁴⁷¹ However, most participants in the crisis recall White House control as being much closer than that. Admiral Zumwalt, CNO, states that there was extremely tight White House control of the fleet's location and movements in the Mediterranean: "The JCS felt they had to closely control the fleet because the Nixon-Kissinger political-military strategy closely controlled military operations. They used the fleet for their 'shadow boxing' with the Soviet Union. And there was close control of the Sixth Fleet by the JCS."⁴⁷² Vice Admiral Donald D. Engen, Deputy Commander in Chief of U.S. Naval Forces Europe, states that Washington's control of Sixth Fleet movements was "very restrictive" and that the Commander of the Sixth Fleet had to get JCS permission prior to ordering changes in the fleet's operations.⁴⁷³ In addition to the overall effort to

⁴⁷¹ Admiral Thomas H. Moorer, interview by author, February 9, 1988.

⁴⁷² Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt, interview by author, February 16, 1988. Also see Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr., On Watch: A Memoir (New York: Quadrangle, 1976), p. 436.

⁴⁷³ Vice Admiral Donald D. Engen, letter to author, April 25, 1988. Also see Zumwalt, On Watch, p. 436.

signal the U.S. intention to stay out of the conflict, Sixth Fleet movements were used on October 25 to send a specific political signal to the Soviet Union--warning the Soviets not to intervene militarily on behalf of Egypt (This signal is discussed in greater detail below).

Other than movements of the fleet in the Mediterranean, control of Sixth Fleet operations was delegated to the chain of command. Admiral Moorer states that Washington did not try to micromanage Sixth Fleet operations and that he personally "tried to avoid nitpicking the commanders."⁴⁷⁴ Admiral Zumwalt concurs: "In that aspect Nixon and Kissinger were quite rational. They let the chain of command handle operations."⁴⁷⁵ Rear Admiral James B. Morin, Commanding Officer of USS Franklin D. Roosevelt (CVA 42), and Rear Admiral John C. Dixon, Commanding Officer of USS John F. Kennedy (CVA 67), both state that they did not feel the movements and operations of their carriers were micromanaged from Washington.⁴⁷⁶ The overall pattern, then, was one of close control of Sixth Fleet movements in the Mediterranean and delegated control of all other aspects of Sixth Fleet operations.

⁴⁷⁴T.H. Moorer, interview by author, February 9, 1988.

⁴⁷⁵Zumwalt, interview by author, February 16, 1988.

⁴⁷⁶Rear Admiral James B. Morin, letter to author, April 14, 1988; Rear Admiral John C. Dixon, letter to author, April 18, 1988.

Although the White House sought to control the movements of the Sixth Fleet for political signalling, the chain of command was used for transmitting orders to the Sixth Fleet. Nixon and Schlesinger did not attempt to give orders directly to CINCUSNAVEUR, COMSIXTHFLT, or ships at sea.⁴⁷⁷ The White House Situation Room was unable to monitor Sixth Fleet operations real-time. As in 1967, the President and Secretary of Defense had to await verbal reports from USCINCEUR and CINCUSNAVEUR, or receipt of message operational reports (OPREPs), situation reports (SITREPs), and operational summaries (OPSUMs). The primary difference from 1967 was that these reports generally could reach the White House much faster than in 1973 (though still not fast enough for effective real-time control of fleet operations).

Nixon, Schlesinger, and Kissinger paid little attention to the guidance contained in mechanisms of delegated control, and did not use those mechanisms to issue detailed operational guidance to the Sixth Fleet. No special rules of engagement were issued during the crisis: the Sixth Fleet used standing CINCUSNAVEUR and COMSIXTHFLT rules.⁴⁷⁸

⁴⁷⁷ Zumwalt, interview by author, February 16, 1988; Engen, letter to author, April 25, 1988.

⁴⁷⁸ T.H. Moorer, interview by author, February 9, 1988; Engen, letter to author, April 25, 1988; Vice Admiral Joe P. Moorer, Commander Carrier Group Six and commander of the Kennedy carrier task group, letter to author, April 18, 1988; Morin, letter to author, April 14, 1988; Dixon, letter to author, April 18, 1988.

Admiral Zumwalt states, "Nixon and Kissinger did not get into that level of detail with military operations. General rules of engagement were spelled out in the JCS, with overall approval coming from Kissinger. From time-to-time we received injunctions on things we couldn't do."⁴⁷⁹

Similarly, it does not appear that any special mission orders (OPLANs or OPORDs) were issued for the crisis, other than for support of the U.S. airlift to Israel.

Contingency plans did not play a major role in the execution of U.S. naval operations during the crisis. Kissinger states that on May 15, 1973, he requested a contingency plan covering "the kinds of things the Egyptians might do, the various ways in which the Israelis might react and the diplomatic issues that might ensue," but that this contingency study was not completed before the war broke out.⁴⁸⁰ The United States did not have contingency plans for emergency resupply of Israel while a war was in progress: American planners expected any future Arab-Israeli war to be short and end in a decisive Israeli victory, thus limiting the U.S. role to replacement of Israeli battlefield losses after the war.⁴⁸¹ William

⁴⁷⁹ Zumwalt, interview by author, February 16, 1988. The injunctions were restrictions on the Sixth Fleet's movements, described in greater detail below.

⁴⁸⁰ Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, p. 462; Quandt, Decade of Decisions, p. 167.

⁴⁸¹ Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, pp. 492-97.

B. Quandt states that on October 25, "The president ordered Kissinger to develop a plan for sending United States troops to the Middle East in case the Soviets did intervene."⁴⁸²

This plan was never executed because the Soviets backed down from a confrontation later that day. The United States also had contingency plans for various types of military operations in the Middle East, such as evacuation of American citizens, but none were executed.

The most important mechanism of delegated control during the crisis was the U.S. alert system. In response to the Soviet threat to intervene militarily on behalf of Egypt, the United States set DEFCON 3 worldwide early on October 25.⁴⁸³ Admiral Moorer promptly informed the unified

⁴⁸² Quandt, Decade of Decisions, pp. 198-99.

⁴⁸³ There is disagreement as to the exact time of the alert. Schlesinger states that the decision on "enhanced readiness status" was made at 11:30 P.M. on October 24 during a WSAG meeting. The London Sunday Times Insight Team states that Admiral Moorer issued the DEFCON 3 order at 11:35 P.M. Kissinger states that DEFCON 3 was set at 11:41 P.M. on October 24. Admiral Moorer states that he arrived at the White House at about midnight and DEFCON 3 was set shortly thereafter. Admiral Zumwalt states that DEFCON 3 was set worldwide at 12:25 A.M. on October 25. Nixon stated in his October 26 press conference that the alert was ordered "shortly after midnight Thursday morning [October 25]". Quandt states that the first orders for the alert were issued at about midnight and that the scope of the alert was widened at 1:30 A.M. on October 25. See Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, pp. 587-91; Moorer, interview by author, February 9, 1988; Zumwalt, On Watch, p. 443; Quandt, Decade of Decisions, pp. 196-98; Insight Team, p. 413. The most likely sequence of events was that the decision to set DEFCON 3 was made at about 11:30 P.M. on October 24 during the WSAG meeting. Secretary of Defense Schlesinger issued an initial order for the alert at 11:41

and specified commanders of the limited (primarily political) purpose of the alert. Setting DEFCON 3 had little effect on the Sixth Fleet, which was already at a high condition of readiness. The threat of Soviet military intervention soon subsided and U.S. forces quickly returned to normal peacetime readiness.⁴⁸⁴

Naval Operations

The Soviet Mediterranean Squadron had steadily increased in size since the 1967 Middle East War, and in 1972 and 1973 usually numbered between 43 and 61 ships. The

P.M. He may have issued verbal alert orders to specific commands. More likely, however, is that he gave NMCC a warning that DEFCON 3 orders would soon be issued (which would have placed NMCC and WWMCCS at increased readiness for the impending alert). Schlesinger then waited until he could consult with Admiral Moorer before issuing alert orders. The message order setting DEFCON 3 worldwide was sent at 12:25 a.m. on October 25. At 1:25 A.M., specific orders were issued to the Sixth Fleet (described below) and the 82nd airborne division was alerted for immediate deployment to the Middle East.

⁴⁸⁴ Moorer, interview by author, February 9, 1988; Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, pp. 587-91; Quandt, Decade of Decisions, pp. 196-98; "U.S. Forces Put on Worldwide Alert Lest Soviet Send Troops to Mideast," New York Times, October 26, 1973, p. 1; "Kissinger Says Action is Expression of Policy," New York Times, October 26, 1973, p. 20; "Nixon's Motives in alert Questioned and Defended," New York Times, October 26, 1973, p. 20. Also see Scott D. Sagan, "Lessons of the Yom Kippur Alert," Foreign Policy No. 36 (Fall 1979): 160-77; Sagan, "Nuclear Alerts," pp. 122-28; Bruce Hurwitz, "Threat Perception, Linkage Politics and Decision Making: The October 1973 Worldwide Alert of US Military Forces," Jerusalem Journal of International Relations 7 (1985): 135-44; Dowty, pp. 256-58, 274-77; Steinbruner, "An Assessment of Nuclear Crises," p. 43.

Soviet squadron typically consisted of 8-10 torpedo-armed attack submarines (some nuclear-powered); 2-3 anti-ship cruise missile-armed submarines (some nuclear-powered); 2-4 cruisers, some armed with anti-ship cruise missiles; 9-12 destroyers, frigates, and corvettes, some armed with AAW guided missiles or anti-ship cruise missiles; 2-3 mine-sweepers (used for patrol and surveillance); 1-3 amphibious ships, normally carrying naval infantry; 18-20 auxiliary ships, including oilers, supply ships, and tenders; and 5-6 research vessels and intelligence collection ships (AGIs). The Soviets routinely deployed their most modern vessels to the Mediterranean Squadron, making it the most capable Soviet naval force outside Soviet home waters.⁴⁸⁵

Between 1967 and 1973 the Soviet Mediterranean Squadron increased the scope and tempo of its operations, conducting larger and more sophisticated naval exercises, but Soviet ships still spent well over half their time at anchor. Most of the Soviet squadron was kept in the eastern Mediterranean, with surveillance patrols monitoring the Strait of Gibraltar (including the U.S. naval base at Rota, Spain) and the Strait of Sicily. The Soviets relied heavily

⁴⁸⁵ Commander Sixth Fleet, "Command History 1973," pp. VI-1 to VI-7; Admiral Isaac C. Kidd, Jr., "View From the Bridge of the Sixth Fleet Flagship," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 98 (February 1972): 18-29; Milan Vego, "Moscow's Quest for Naval Facilities in the Mediterranean," Defense and Foreign Affairs Digest, December 1979, pp. 10-15; Weinland, p. 76; Watson, pp. 90-99.

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on ports in Egypt and Syria for logistic support of the Mediterranean Squadron. Soviet ships began using the Egyptian port of Alexandria as a base in October 1967 and Soviet naval aircraft began using Egyptian airfields in May 1968. In 1969 the Soviet navy began developing a naval base at Mersa Matruh, Egypt, and by 1970 was using a total of six Egyptian airfields for its naval aircraft. The Soviet navy began routinely using the Syrian ports of Latakia and Tartus in March 1968, and in May 1972 the Syrians agreed to Soviet construction of naval facilities in those ports. Beginning in March 1970 Soviet naval aircraft flying out of Egypt were allowed to refuel in Algeria, extending their range to the western Mediterranean. Egyptian expulsion of Soviet military advisors in July 1972 had no effect on Soviet use of Egyptian ports, but caused Soviet naval aircraft to be transferred from Egypt to Syria. The Soviets also used several anchorages in international waters. Most important were the Kithira anchorage off the southern tip of Greece, an anchorage off the eastern tip of Crete, and the Sollum anchorage off the coast of Egypt. Also frequently used were an anchorage northeast of Cyprus, the Hammamet anchorage off the coast of Algeria (for the Strait of Sicily patrol), and the Alboran Island anchorage just east of the Strait of Gibraltar (for the Gibraltar patrol).⁴⁸⁶

⁴⁸⁶ Ibid; A.J. Baker, The Yom Kippur War (New York: Random House, 1974), pp. 23-25.

Soviet-American naval interactions became much less tense and dangerous in the Mediterranean between 1967 and 1973. Dangerous Soviet maneuvers near U.S. warships and formations had been a growing problem since 1960, reaching severe intensity in the Mediterranean and the Sea of Japan in 1967. The Soviet navy policy of harassing U.S. naval formations continued to be a serious problem through 1969. From 1970 onward, reflecting the improvement in Soviet-American relations under the Nixon Administration, the frequency and severity of naval incidents at sea declined somewhat. During the Jordanian crisis in September 1970, the Soviet navy slightly reinforced its Mediterranean Squadron (which rose from 52 to 72 ships) and closely monitored U.S. naval operations, but did not provoke any incidents with U.S. ships. In the words of Admiral Isaac C. Kidd, Commander Sixth Fleet during the crisis: "The two fleets gave no evidence of undue stress. Both sides operated in a normal and restrained manner. There was none of the nonsense of their ships running in and around our men-of-war at close range."⁴⁸⁷ Nevertheless, incidents at sea continued to occur and remained a cause for concern in the U.S. Navy. The Incidents at Sea Agreement, signed in 1972,

⁴⁸⁷Kidd, p. 27. On U.S. and Soviet naval operations in the Jordanian crisis, see Zumwalt, On Watch, pp. 292-301; Kidd, pp. 25-28; Watson, pp. 97-99; Thomas A. Bryson, "The Projection of U.S. Naval Power in the 1970 Jordan Crisis," in Craig L. Symonds, ed., New Aspects of Naval History (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1981), pp. 313-21.

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further lessened tensions at sea. Although incidents were not entirely eliminated, both navies largely complied with the agreement and there was a significant drop in the most dangerous Soviet maneuvering practices.⁴⁸⁸ By 1973, according to Vice Admiral Engen, the U.S. and Soviet navies had grown accustomed to operating close to one another.⁴⁸⁹ Admiral Worth Bagley, CINCUSNAVEUR, provided this assessment after the crisis: "In fact the Soviets weren't overtly aggressive. It looked as though they were taking some care not to cause an incident. On the whole, their overt posture was restrained and considerate."⁴⁹⁰ This improvement in Soviet-American relations at sea was an important reason for the lack of naval incidents in October 1973.

Soviet naval involvement in the 1973 Arab-Israeli War began with sealifts of Moroccan troops to Syria in April and July. Two Soviet tank landing ships (LSTs) and a freighter arrived in Oran, Morocco, on April 13. The LSTs departed on April 15 escorted by a Kashin-class guided missile destroyer, and the freighter departed April 18. In the eastern Mediterranean the three ships were escorted by a Kynda-class

⁴⁸⁸ Vice Admiral Gerald E. Miller, "As I Recall . . . Sailing with the Soviets in the Med," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 111 (January 1985): 60-61; Morin, letter to author, April 14, 1988; Hilton, pp. 30-31.

⁴⁸⁹ Engen, letter to author, April 25, 1988.

⁴⁹⁰ Quoted in Galia Golan, Yom Kippur and After, p. 109. Also see Glassman, p. 162.

cruiser and a Riga-class destroyer. The three ships arrived in the Syrian port of Tartus on April 25. Two more LSTs arrived in Oran on July 7, loaded Moroccan troops and tanks, departed on July 9, and arrived in Tartus on July 15.⁴⁹¹ These two sealifts were symbolic Soviet support for pan-Arab unity against Israel.

The Soviets took several naval actions on October 5. A Polnocny-class medium landing ship (LSM) and Riga-class frigate evacuated civilians from Port Said, Egypt (The Soviets had begun evacuating civilians from Egypt and Syria by air on October 3). Two intelligence collection ships (AGIs) and two minesweepers were moved into the eastern Mediterranean to augment the single AGI on patrol there. Five Foxtrot-class conventional attack submarines arrived in the Mediterranean for routine rotation of the submarines on patrol, but the five submarines that were supposed to return home were kept on station to augment the submarine force. A new Kara-class ASW cruiser, carrying the Commander of the Black Sea Fleet on a port visit to Split, Yugoslavia, departed the Mediterranean for the Black Sea on October 5.⁴⁹²

⁴⁹¹ Commander Sixth Fleet, "Command History 1973," pp. VI-4, VI-6; Dismukes, pp. 491-93; Robert G. Weinland, "Superpower Naval Diplomacy in the October 1973 Arab-Israeli War: A Case Study," The Washington Papers, Vol. VI (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1979), p. 61.

⁴⁹² Commander Sixth Fleet, "Command History 1973," pp. VI-7, VI-8; Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, p. 469, 475; "U.S. Aides See Eventual Israeli Victory," New York Times, October 10, 1973, p. 1; Quandt, p. 173; Weinland, pp. 63-64, 78-79;

When war broke out on October 6, the Soviet "Fifth Eskadra" (Mediterranean Squadron) consisted of about 57 ships, including eleven submarines (two armed with anti-ship cruise missiles), one Kynda-class cruiser (armed with SS-N-3 anti-ship cruise missiles), one Sverdlov-class cruiser (guns only), three Kashin-class and two Kotlin-class guided missile destroyers (armed with AAW missiles), two Kotlin-class destroyers (guns only), nine frigates and corvettes (Petya, Mirka, and Riga classes, armed only with guns), two Polnocny-class medium landing ships (LSMs), two minesweepers, and several auxiliary vessels. The ships and submarines armed with anti-ship cruise missiles could launch a total of about twenty missiles in their first salvo (a rough measure of the threat to the U.S. carriers). Most of the Soviet ships were conducting routine peacetime operations, with the majority of them anchored at normal Soviet anchorages in the vicinity of Crete or in Egyptian ports.⁴⁹³

On October 6 there was a total of 48 U.S. Navy ships in the Mediterranean. Task Force 60, the carrier strike force, consisted of two attack carrier Task Groups: Task Group 60.1, the USS Independence (CVA 62) attack carrier

Watson, p. 103; Stephen S. Roberts, "The October 1973 Arab-Israeli War," in Bradford Dismukes and James McConnell, eds., Soviet Naval Diplomacy (New York: Pergamon Press, 1979), p. 198.

⁴⁹³ Commander Sixth Fleet, "Command History 1973," p. VI-7; Weinland, 79; Watson, p. 103; Roberts, pp. 193-94.

group, was at anchor at Athens, Greece. Task Group 60.2, the USS Franklin D. Roosevelt (CVA 42) attack carrier group, was in various Spanish ports. Most of Task Force 61, an amphibious task force consisting of the helicopter carrier USS Guadalcanal (LPH 7) and nine other amphibious ships, was in various Greek ports. A Marine battalion landing team, augmented with additional troops for an exercise (a total of about 3,000 Marines), was embarked in the amphibious group. The Sixth Fleet flagship, USS Little Rock (CLG 4), was at sea south of Crete. Four nuclear-powered attack submarines (SSNs) were on patrol in the Mediterranean. In the Atlantic, the attack carrier USS John F. Kennedy (CVA 67) and her escorts were visiting Edinburgh, Scotland, after participating in a NATO exercise in the Norwegian Sea.⁴⁹⁴

Egypt and Syria declared substantial areas of the eastern Mediterranean off their coasts to be war zones on October 6. The United States kept the Sixth Fleet well clear of these war zones throughout the war. The Soviet Union, on the other hand, conducted significant naval operations in these war zones. During the war the Soviets concentrated amphibious ships and combatants off the coasts of Syria and Egypt despite the battles the Egyptian and

⁴⁹⁴ Commander Sixth Fleet, "Command History 1973," p. III-5, III-10; Zumwalt, On Watch, pp. 436-37; J.P. Moorer, letter to author, April 18, 1988; Weinland, pp. 69-70; Roberts, p. 197; F.C. Miller, "Those Storm-beaten Ships, Upon Which the Arab Armies Never Looked," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 101 (March 1975): 22-23; Glassman, p. 162.

Syrian navies were fighting with the Israeli Navy, which created a danger of Soviet naval vessels being attacked inadvertently in the heat of battle (Almost all of the engagements were fought at night).⁴⁹⁵

The only significant Soviet naval activity during the first two days of the war was the evacuation of Soviet personnel from Egypt and Syria. A Soviet Polnocny-class LSM evacuated civilians from Port Said on October 6, proceeded to Alexandria, and left there with more Soviet citizens on October 7. Meanwhile, the Soviet LSM and frigate that departed Port Said on October 5 visited the Syrian port of Latakia on October 6, probably to pick up Soviets evacuating Syria. Interestingly, Soviet Navy auxiliary vessels (tenders and supply ships) remained in Alexandria throughout the war. Additionally, Soviet minesweepers and AGIs in the eastern Mediterranean commenced surveillance patrols on October 6: an AGI escorted by a minesweeper off the coast of Israel, and an AGI escorted by a minesweeper off the coast of Syria. Soviet Tu-16 Badger reconnaissance bombers closely monitored the Sixth Fleet. The bulk of the Soviet Mediterranean Squadron continued routine peacetime operations during the first two days of the war.⁴⁹⁶

⁴⁹⁵Weinland, p. 81; Dupuy, p. 562.

⁴⁹⁶Commander Sixth Fleet, "Command History 1973," pp. VI-7, VI-8; Zumwalt, On Watch, p. 437; Weinland, pp. 80-81; Roberts, p. 198; Glassman, p. 162.

The first United States military response to the war was to deploy an attack carrier task group at sea in the eastern Mediterranean. At 9:00 A.M. on October 6, Kissinger asked Scowcroft to obtain a plan to move the U.S. Sixth Fleet into the eastern Mediterranean and plans to reinforce the Sixth Fleet if necessary. The decision to move a carrier into the eastern Mediterranean was made during an evening WSAG meeting and at 9:46 P.M. the JCS ordered Independence and her escorts to get underway from Athens and proceed to an operating area south of Crete. Independence and her three escorts got underway from Athens on October 7 and proceeded to an area south of Crete. On October 8 Task Force 61, the Sixth Fleet amphibious force, was ordered to proceed to Souda Bay Crete and anchor there. The amphibious force remained anchored at Souda Bay through October 25. Independence arrived in the operating area south of Crete on October 8, joining Little Rock, the Sixth Fleet flagship.⁴⁹⁷

These Sixth Fleet movements were made primarily for purposes of political signaling. President Nixon reportedly wanted the Sixth Fleet moved into the eastern Mediterranean "as a visible sign of American power."⁴⁹⁸ Kissinger

⁴⁹⁷ Commander Sixth Fleet, "Command History 1973," p. III-9; Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, pp. 455, 475; Quandt, Decade of Decisions, p. 171; "Ships of Sixth Fleet Sail Under Alert," New York Times, October 8, 1973, p. 16; "US Warships Sail from Greece Unexpectedly," The Times (London), October 8, 1973, p. 6; Roberts, p. 196; Weinland, p. 69.

⁴⁹⁸ Quandt, Decade of Decisions, p. 171.

describes the signals being sent with the Sixth Fleet as more subtle and complex. The designated holding area south of Crete was "a position that the Soviets would read as indicating that the United States was preparing for any contingency--close enough for us to act in an emergency, far enough to bespeak no aggressive intent. The rest of our fleet lay farther west; we would be able to indicate heightened concern by moving it off Cyprus."⁴⁹⁹ The low key, evenhanded approach being pursued by the Nixon Administration, was reflected in the operational guidance provided to the Sixth Fleet. According to Vice Admiral Daniel Murphy, Commander of the Sixth Fleet: "To project this attitude, the Sixth Fleet was directed to continue routine, scheduled operations and to avoid overt moves which might be construed as indicating the United States was preparing to take an active part in the conflict."⁵⁰⁰ The Sixth Fleet was thus being used as a political instrument from the first day of the crisis.

The Soviet Mediterranean Squadron generally continued normal peacetime operations during the October 6-13 period. A Soviet AGI monitored the U.S. naval base at Rota, Spain, a combatant patrolled just inside the Straits of Gibraltar, and two frigates patrolled the Straits of Sicily and

⁴⁹⁹ Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, p. 475. Also see Weinland, p. 72; Quandt, Decade of Decisions, p. 171.

⁵⁰⁰ Quoted in Zumwalt, On Watch, p. 435.

Messina. Most Soviet surface combatants were at anchorages near Crete and most Soviet attack submarines remained in the western Mediterranean. On October 7 a Kashin-class destroyer began trailing Independence as it left Athens, a routine form of Soviet peacetime surveillance.⁵⁰¹ Vice Admiral Murphy reported that there was little threat to the Sixth Fleet during October 6-13:

Soviet units in the vicinity of the [U.S.] Task Group holding area south of Crete during the period neither represented a severe threat nor gave indications of an increased state of readiness. One conventional attack submarine and two cruise missile firing submarines were in the general area but coordination with Soviet surface units was infrequent and sporadic. Therefore, COMSIXTHFLT did not perceive SOVMEDFLT [Soviet Mediterranean Fleet] a threat to successful completion of any of the perceived missions during Phase I [October 6-13].⁵⁰²

Soviet-American tactical-level naval interaction in the Mediterranean began increasing on October 9. That day a Soviet Kynda-class cruiser and an Ugra-class submarine tender, serving as the flagship for the commander of the Soviet Mediterranean Squadron, joined the Kashin trailing the Independence and Little Rock, forming an anti-carrier group. Also on October 9 a Soviet AGI began monitoring the U.S. amphibious group at Souda Bay, remaining with it through October 25. Soviet Tu-16 Badger reconnaissance bombers continued to be active over the Mediterranean, but

⁵⁰¹ Ibid, pp. 437, 447; Commander Sixth Fleet, "Command History 1973," pp. VI-7, VI-8; Roberts, p. 196.

⁵⁰² Quoted in Zumwalt, On Watch, p. 437.

still did not harass the Sixth Fleet.⁵⁰³ Stephen S. Roberts has suggested that the increase in Soviet ships trailing Independence may have been "a symbolic warning against possible Sixth Fleet interference with the airlift and sealift the Soviets were about to undertake to Syria."⁵⁰⁴ If so, it was the first political signal sent by the Soviet Mediterranean Squadron related to how the United States might employ the Sixth Fleet in the crisis.

Soviet tattletales do more than just monitor the movements and operations of the U.S. warships they trail, they provide near real-time targeting data to Soviet ships, aircraft, and submarines armed with anti-ship cruise missiles. The presence of a Soviet tattletale warns a U.S. Navy commander that his ships are constantly targeted for preemptive attack should the Soviets elect to launch one. Soviet tattletales are even more dangerous when they are themselves armed with anti-ship missiles. This provides the Soviets with the option of a preemptive strike that provides virtually no warning time for the U.S. fleet to defend itself.⁵⁰⁵

⁵⁰³ Ibid; Watson, p. 106; Roberts, p. 196; Glassman, p. 162.

⁵⁰⁴ Roberts, p. 196. Also see Galia Golan, "Soviet Decisionmaking," p. 202.

⁵⁰⁵ For a discussion of the tattletale problem, see William H. Gregory, "Their Tattletales (Our Problem)," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 110 (February 1984): 97-99.

The Sixth Fleet had experienced Soviet tattletales in the 1967 Arab-Israeli War and anti-ship missile-armed Soviet tattletales in the 1970 Jordanian Crisis. In the 1970 crisis Soviet ships armed with anti-ship missiles trailed the three U.S. carriers in the Mediterranean around the clock. To counter this threat, the Sixth Fleet assigned ships armed with rapid fire guns to trail Soviet warships armed with anti-ship missiles. Admiral Zumwalt has explained why both sides ended up closely trailing each other's warships:

All this trailing is an effort to compensate for tactical asymmetries. A carrier outside the range of the cruise missiles on Soviet ships can clearly sink them easily with her aircraft. Therefore, the Russians trail us closely in order to be able to destroy most of a carrier's planes or disable the carrier herself before aircraft can take off. We adopted the retaliatory technique of trailing the trailer so as to prevent them from preventing us from launching our planes by knocking out most of their cruise missiles before many of them took off.⁵⁰⁶

This U.S. tactic was used again in 1973. Each of the U.S. carriers would assign a destroyer or cruiser (what were then called frigates) to each of the Soviet tattletales that had weapons capable of threatening the carrier. The U.S. ship would attempt to maintain a blocking position between the Soviet warship and the U.S. carrier, keeping the Soviet warship within range of its guns or missiles (the U.S. Navy did not have anti-ship missiles in 1973, but certain AAW

⁵⁰⁶ Zumwalt, On Watch, pp. 300-301.

missiles could be used against surface ships). To cover Soviet ships armed with long range anti-ship missiles, which usually trailed at greater ranges, the U.S. carriers used the "anti-surface combat air patrol" (SUCAP) tactic. The U.S. carriers launched aircraft armed with conventional air-to-surface bombs and missiles to monitor the Soviet warships. The objective of the U.S. ships and planes shadowing Soviet warships was to prevent them from launching their anti-ship missiles against the U.S. carriers, which obviously would have required taking the Soviet ships under fire before they had launched their weapons.⁵⁰⁷ Thus, the ships of the Sixth Fleet and Soviet Mediterranean Squadron were constantly maneuvering for tactical advantage against each other, attempting to be in a favorable position to instantly strike the first blow in the event of hostilities.

The Roosevelt carrier task group got underway from Barcelona on October 10 and remained at sea in the western Mediterranean.⁵⁰⁸ The same day three Soviet ships--a Sverdlov-class cruiser, a Kotlin-class DDG, and a Kashin-class DDG--entered the Mediterranean for a port visit to

⁵⁰⁷ Commander Sixth Fleet, "Command History 1973," p. III-4; Dixon, letter to author, April 18, 1988; Watson, p. 116; Miller, "Storm-beaten Ships," p. 24; Zumwalt, On Watch, pp. 300-301. Very little information is available on U.S. and Soviet submarine operations during the 1973 crisis, but it is safe to assume that tactical maneuvering similar to that on the surface was also taking place under the seas.

⁵⁰⁸ Commander Sixth Fleet, "Command History 1973," p. III-5; Weinland, p. 69; Roberts, p. 196.

Taranto, Italy. Interestingly, these three Soviet ships apparently did not participate in Soviet naval activities directed against the Sixth Fleet until after their port visit.⁵⁰⁹ On October 10 the Soviet Union commenced an airlift to Syria and the next day commenced an airlift to Egypt. Meanwhile, Soviet cargo ships had been carrying supplies to Syria and Egypt from the beginning of the war. Five Soviet cargo ships delivered supplies during the October 7-12 period. Three Soviet cargo ships entered the Mediterranean from the Black Sea on October 13, and during October 14-19 up to two Soviet cargo ships a day passed through the Turkish Straits en route to Egyptian and Syrian ports. A total of nine Soviet ships proceeded to Egypt and Syria during the October 20-22 period. The total tonnage delivered by the Soviet sealift between October 7 and October 23 is estimated to have been about 63,000 tons. Although the Soviet sealift tapered off after October 23, it continued through about November 1.⁵¹⁰

On October 11 the JCS ordered the Kennedy group to depart Scotland on October 13 and proceed to a point in the Atlantic west of Gibraltar to support the U.S. airlift to Israel. This diverted the Kennedy group from an expected

⁵⁰⁹Weinland, pp. 81, 83; Roberts, p. 193.

⁵¹⁰Commander Sixth Fleet, "Command History 1973," pp. VI-7, VI-8; Glassman, pp. 130-31; Roberts, p. 200. On the Soviet airlift, see Quandt, Soviet Policy, pp. 23-26; Galia Golan, Yom Kippur and After, pp. 85-89.

return voyage to the United States. The same day, the JCS ordered the helicopter carrier USS Iwo Jima (LPH 2), with Battalion Landing Team 3/8 embarked (approximately 2,000 troops), deployed to the Mediterranean. On October 12 Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin delivered a note from the Soviet Government protesting the deployment of the Sixth Fleet to the eastern Mediterranean. Later that day Kissinger told the Israeli ambassador that the United States would move a third carrier into the Mediterranean, probably referring to the Kennedy. The Soviet protest note and Kissinger's promise of a third U.S. carrier both illustrate the political role of naval forces in the crisis.⁵¹¹

The night of October 10-11 Israeli missile boats attacked several targets on the Syrian coast, including the ports of Latakia and Tartus, and a battle was fought with Syrian missile boats at Latakia. Israeli Saar-class fast patrol boats fired Gabriel anti-ship missiles at Syrian missile boats maneuvering among civilian merchant ships, sinking a Japanese freighter and a Greek freighter as well as two Syrian missile boats. Israeli missile boats raided the Syrian port of Tartus again the night of October 11-12. Two more Syrian missile boats were sunk, but so was the Soviet merchant ship Ilya Mechnikov. Israel expressed

⁵¹¹Commander Sixth Fleet, "Command History 1973," p. III-5; Zumwalt, On Watch, p. 436; "Another U.S. Ship Sent," New York Times, October 12, 1973, p. 18; Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, pp. 509-10; Weinland, p. 70.

regret for sinking the Soviet ship and claimed its forces had orders not to attack civilian vessels.⁵¹² Bruce Watson noted suspicions that the Israeli attacks on Soviet vessels may not have been accidental:

Israel's survival depended on persuading the United States to replace the Israeli losses of equipment and consumables, perhaps even by independent action against the Soviet supply line, which would threaten to precipitate a major clash between the United States and the Soviet Union. Whether this was the Israeli intent on the night⁵¹³ of October 11-12 is still shrouded in controversy.

In a message delivered to the U.S. on October 12, the Soviet Union protested the Israeli sinking of its merchant ship and warned that "The Soviet Union will of course take measures

⁵¹²"Israel Is Accused in U.N. of Sinking a Soviet Ship," New York Times, October 13, 1973, p. 1; "3 Freighters Sunk," New York Times, October 13, 1973, p. 1; Galia Golan, "Soviet Decisionmaking," p. 203; Schiff, p. 167; Dupuy, p. 559; Weinland, p. 81; Watson, p. 106; Roberts, p. 201. Israel apparently was not alone in sinking civilian ships during the war: Egyptian submarines allegedly sank two Greek freighters in the Mediterranean. See Herzog, pp. 263-64. On Arab-Israeli naval battles in the 1973 war, see Rear Admiral Shlomo Erell, "Israeli Saar FPBs Pass Combat Test In Yom Kippur War," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 100 (September 1974): 115-18; Martin J. Miller, Jr., "The Israeli Navy: 26 Years of Non-Peace," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 101 (February 1975): 49-54; Dupuy, pp. 557-65; Herzog, pp. 261-69.

⁵¹³Watson, p. 106. Israel also destroyed several Soviet transport aircraft on Syrian airfields during raids on October 10 and 11. Weinland, p. 81; Glassman, p. 130. Although the destruction of the Soviet transport planes and the sinking of the Soviet merchant ship could well have been accidents, the attacks on the Syrian airfields and ports being used for the Soviet airlift and sealift were certainly deliberate. This does not necessarily indicate an Israeli effort to disrupt the the Soviet airlift and sealift--the airfields and ports were important targets for other reasons as well.

which it will deem necessary to defend its ships and other means of transportation."⁵¹⁴

The Soviets placed two LSMs off Syria on October 12, probably on standby in the event it became necessary to evacuate Soviet personnel and sensitive equipment. One of the LSMs remained there through 17 October, the other through 25 October. On October 13, probably in response to Israeli attacks on Soviet merchant ships, the Soviets placed a Kashin-class DDG off the Syrian coast. Two Soviet LSTs entered the Mediterranean from the Black Sea on October 14 and proceeded to Syria on a resupply mission. A Soviet Kotlin-class DDG joined the Kashin-class DDG off the Syrian coast on October 15 to provide increased protection for Soviet ships and aircraft resupplying Syria.⁵¹⁵

On October 13 the Kennedy carrier group departed Edinburgh, Scotland and proceeded to a position just west of the Straits of Gibraltar. The Kennedy group attempted to avoid Soviet surveillance by transiting west of the British Isles rather than through the English Channel and by turning off radars and radios that would identify the carrier.⁵¹⁶

⁵¹⁴Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, p. 510.

⁵¹⁵Commander Sixth Fleet, "Command History 1973," p. VI-8; Galia Golan, "Soviet Decisionmaking," p. 203; Weinland, pp. 81-82; Roberts, pp. 193, 201.

⁵¹⁶"Third US carrier is diverted suddenly," The Times (London), October 17, 1973, p. 8; J.P. Moorer, letter to author, April 18, 1988; Dixon, letter to author, April 18, 1988; Zumwalt, On Watch, p. 436; Weinland, p. 70.

The U.S. airlift to Israel commenced on October 13. On October 14 the Sixth Fleet was ordered to provide assistance for the airlift. In response, ships that been escorting the carriers were placed in a chain of picket stations stretching across the Mediterranean. The Sixth Fleet provided two forms of support for the airlift. First, the fleet provided navigation, surveillance, air defense, and standby search and rescue support for the U.S. Air Force C-5 and C-141 transports flying to Israel. Second, the Sixth Fleet carriers provided refueling services for F-4 and A-4 jets being ferried to Israel. The F-4s landed at the Azores to refuel and were refueled again in flight over the Mediterranean by Air Force KC-135 tankers. The A-4s landed at the Azores to refuel, were refueled a second time in flight by tankers from the Kennedy, then landed on Roosevelt in the central Mediterranean and remained overnight for refueling, servicing and pilot rest. The next day the A-4s were refueled in flight by tankers from the Independence during the final leg of their flight to Israel. Immediate delivery of the F-4s and A-4s would not have been possible without this Navy support because none of America's European allies would allow the U.S. jets to land in their countries (other than Portugal, which reluctantly allowed the U.S. to use the Azores).⁵¹⁷

⁵¹⁷ Commander Sixth Fleet, "Command History 1973," p. III-5; Morin, letter to author, April 14, 1988; J.P. Moorer,

The requirement to support the U.S. airlift to Israel created operational problems for the Sixth Fleet. The two carriers in the Mediterranean were forced to operate without some of their most valuable escorts at a time when they needed them to counter the Soviet anti-ship missile threat. Supporting the airlift left the Sixth fleet "widely dispersed and vulnerable."⁵¹⁸ This vulnerability was obvious to the Soviet navy. Robert Weinland contends that "as long as it remained dispersed, the Sixth Fleet was giving a clear--although unintentional--signal to all concerned that it was not about to undertake any offensive actions."⁵¹⁹ Sixth Fleet support for the airlift thus may have sent an inadvertent political signal to the Soviets.

On October 15 The Roosevelt began moving eastward to the central Mediterranean to support the U.S. airlift. A Soviet Petya-class corvette patrolling the Strait of Sicily began shadowing Roosevelt as it passed through the strait on October 16. It was replaced the next day by a Kashin-class destroyer, which remained with Roosevelt through October

letter to author, April 18, 1988; Dixon, letter to author, April 18, 1988; Miller, "Storm-beaten Ships," pp. 20-22; Weinland, pp. 69-70. Defense of the U.S. transports was a serious consideration. In addition to the threat of Egyptian or Syrian attacks, there was a threat of Libyan attacks: on March 21, 1973, Libyan jets had fired on a U.S. Air Force C-130 eighty-three miles off the coast.

⁵¹⁸ Zumwalt, On Watch, p. 436.

⁵¹⁹ Weinland, p. 73.

22. Roosevelt arrived on station east of Malta on October 17 and remained there until October 25.⁵²⁰

On October 16 a Sverdlov-class cruiser and Kotlin-class destroyer joined the Kynda, Ugra, and Kashin trailing the Independence group and Little Rock south of Crete.⁵²¹ According to Vice Admiral Murphy, "The object of this presence may simply be to let us know that they are aware of our activities and to make us aware of theirs. They show no sign of being more alert than normally."⁵²² Admiral Zumwalt, on the other hand, felt the increased Soviet anti-carrier activities were "a specific reaction to the shifting of the fortunes of war in favor of Israel" made possible by the U.S. resupply airlift.⁵²³ As it turned out, the Sverdlov and Kotlin replaced the Kynda and Kashin trailing Independence. Although considered to be an anti-carrier group, the replacement Soviet ships were much less of a threat to the U.S. carrier than the ships they replaced.⁵²⁴

⁵²⁰ Ibid, pp. 69, 83; Roberts, p. 198.

⁵²¹ Roberts, p. 196; Zumwalt, On Watch, p. 437.

⁵²² Quoted in Zumwalt, On Watch, p. 437.

⁵²³ Ibid, pp. 437-38.

⁵²⁴ Roberts speculates that this may have been "reciprocity" for the detachment of two of Independence's escorts to support the U.S. airlift to Israel. See Roberts, p. 196. In all likelihood, however, the rotation of ships on October 16 was not motivated by political or strategic concerns, but by logistics. Soviet Navy underway replenishment techniques were not well developed in 1973. The Soviets would have had great difficulty refueling and

Several changes in U.S. and Soviet naval dispositions in or related to the Mediterranean occurred from October 16 to October 21. USS Iwo Jima with 2,000 Marines embarked departed Moorehead, North Carolina, on October 16, for the Mediterranean, arriving October 25. Soviet Tu-95 Bear reconnaissance bombers periodically monitored Iwo Jima during her transit of the Atlantic.⁵²⁵ A second Soviet resupply convoy, consisting of one LST and three LSMs, entered the Mediterranean on October 17 and proceeded to Syria.⁵²⁶ The Kennedy group arrived west of Gibraltar on October 18 and remained there through October 25. While west of Gibraltar Kennedy remained a part of the Second Fleet, rather than joining the Sixth Fleet. A Soviet destroyer took up trail of the Kennedy group when it arrived west of Gibraltar on October 18 and remained with the carrier for the next two days. It was not replaced it departed, probably because Kennedy remained in the Atlantic rather than entering the Mediterranean. From October 18 to

resupplying their ships while they trailed the fast U.S. carrier groups. Instead, they had to periodically relieve their ships so that they could be refueled at one of the anchorages where the Soviets kept their replenishment ships (the Kynda and Sverdlov rotated at precise seven-day intervals, switching again on October 24).

⁵²⁵ "2,000 Marines to Go to Bolster Sixth Fleet," New York Times, October 16, 1973, p. 16; Zumwalt, On Watch, p. 443; Roberts, p. 198.

⁵²⁶ Galia Golan, Yom Kippur and After, p. 108; Weinland, p. 82; Watson, p. 108; Roberts, p. 201.

24, Kennedy provided support for the U.S. airlift, refueling jet fighters being ferried to Israel.⁵²⁷ A Mod Kildin-class destroyer armed with SS-N-2 anti-ship cruise missiles and a Kashin-class DDG entered the Mediterranean from the Black Sea on October 19, further reinforcing the Soviet Mediterranean Squadron. On October 20 a Soviet Kashin joined the Kotlin and Kashin already off Syria (for a total of 3 DDGs), increasing the defenses for Soviet ships and aircraft resupplying Syria. The three Soviet DDGs remained on station until the ceasefire went into effect, departing between October 24 and 26.⁵²⁸

The Mediterranean was relatively quiet on October 22 and 23. After passage of the U.N. ceasefire resolution on October 22, the Sixth Fleet was directed to begin planning to return to normal peacetime operations. Through October 24 Vice Admiral Murphy expected that the Sixth Fleet would return to normal operations in the near future.⁵²⁹ The only noteworthy U.S. naval operation took place on October 22, when fighters from Independence escorted Kissinger's plane into and out of Israel.⁵³⁰ The Soviet Mediterranean

⁵²⁷ J.P. Moorer, letter to author, April 18, 1988; Dixon, letter to author, April 18, 1988; Zumwalt, On Watch, p. 436; Weinland, p. 70.

⁵²⁸ Roberts, pp. 194, 201.

⁵²⁹ Zumwalt, On Watch, p. 439.

⁵³⁰ Ibid; Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, pp. 559-60.

Squadron's operations remained essentially unchanged. Surveillance of Mediterranean chokepoints and trailing of Independence and Roosevelt continued. The Kashin-class DDG trailing Roosevelt was replaced by a Petya-class frigate on October 22 in a routine rotation. Most of the Soviet combatants were concentrated in the vicinity of Crete, with a smaller concentration off Syria. Soviet ships armed with anti-ship missiles remained within range of the Independence task group south of Crete. Soviet Tu-16 Badgers continued flying surveillance missions over the Mediterranean, but did not harass the Sixth Fleet.⁵³¹

On October 22 a Soviet merchant ship passed through the Bosphorus emitting radiation, which was detected by Western sensors. The White House received a report on this event on October 25, well after the decision to set DEFCON 3. Detection of radiation created suspicions that the Soviets had sent nuclear warheads to Egypt for the Soviet-manned SCUD tactical rockets delivered to Egypt before the war--perhaps as a political signal to the United States of the Soviet commitment to enforce the ceasefire. However, the evidence for this was sketchy and U.S. officials later expressed doubts that the Soviets had deployed nuclear warheads in Egypt.⁵³² Some observers have speculated that

⁵³¹Glassman, p. 162; Weinland, p. 83.

⁵³²Quandt, Soviet Policy, pp. 30-31; Quandt, Decade of Decisions, p. 198; Galia Golan, "Soviet Decisionmaking," p.

the nuclear material was destined for the Soviet Mediterranean Squadron.⁵³³ Although mysterious, this event did not have a significant impact on the course of the crisis.

The Soviet Mediterranean Squadron numbered 80 vessels as of 24 October, including 31 surface combatants (two armed with anti-ship cruise missiles) and 16 submarines (four or five armed with anti-ship cruise missiles). The surface combatants included three cruisers, twelve destroyers, about nine frigates and corvettes, three amphibious ships, and two minesweepers. At least five of the Soviet conventional attack submarines were in the eastern Mediterranean on October 24. Additionally, five more Soviet submarines were known to be en route to the Mediterranean. The ships and

209; Galia Golan, Yom Kippur and After, p. 123; Insight Team, p. 411; Kalb and Kalb, p. 557; Aronson, pp. 192-93; Weinland, p. 85; Dowty, pp. 258-59; Rubinstein, p. 276; Glassman, p. 163; "Officials Suspect Russians Sent Atom Arms to Egypt," New York Times, November 22, 1973, p. 1.

⁵³³Weinland, p. 85; Galia Golan, "Soviet Decision-making," p. 209. That the Soviet ship carried warheads for the fleet is possible, but unlikely. At the time, the Soviet nuclear-capable units in the Mediterranean consisted of two Kynda-class cruisers and four or five guided missile submarines. The submarines could not change the warheads on their missiles, which were mounted outside the pressure hull. The Kyndas had internal magazines, but probably could not rebuild missiles with nuclear warheads. The submarines and Kyndas would have had to tie up alongside a pier or tender to reload entire missiles. It is possible that Soviet tenders in the Mediterranean had the capability to reload the submarines and cruisers, and may even have been able to rebuild missiles with nuclear warheads (a complex task). The Soviet ship that had emitted the radiation proceeded to Alexandria, where several Soviet naval auxiliaries were located, but there is no evidence that the warheads were transferred to the tenders.

submarines armed with anti-ship cruise missiles could launch a total of forty missiles in their first salvo (up from about 20 on October 6). This was a formidable threat to the Sixth Fleet carriers.⁵³⁴ The Soviet Mediterranean Squadron began moving into position on October 24 to support the possibility of Soviet military intervention on behalf of Egypt. According to Robert Weinland, "The Soviets apparently anticipated strong U.S. opposition to what they felt they might have to do--intervene directly in the conflict to protect Egypt--and they moved quickly as possible to be in an advantageous position to deal with that opposition."⁵³⁵ The Soviets would take two naval actions over the next two days: increasing its coverage of the U.S. carrier and amphibious groups, and deploying an amphibious and combatant force off Egypt.

The Sverdlov and Kotlin trailing Independence were joined by an anti-carrier group composed of a Kynda-class cruiser, Kashin-class DDG, and Kotlin-class destroyer on October 24.⁵³⁶ Although this rotation was probably due

⁵³⁴ Zumwalt, On Watch, p. 439, 447; Watson, p. 106; Roberts, p. 194; Glassman, pp. 161-62.

⁵³⁵ Weinland, p. 83. Also see Glassman, pp. 162-63.

⁵³⁶ Zumwalt, On Watch, p. 447; Roberts, p. 203. Galia Golan states that a Moskva-class helicopter cruiser, rather than a Kynda-class cruiser joined Independence on October 24. Rubinstein states that both of the Soviet Moskva-class helicopter cruisers were in the Mediterranean during the crisis. See Galia Golan, "Soviet Decisionmaking," p. 209; Rubinstein, p. 272. Golan and Rubinstein are wrong: both of

primarily to logistic factors, it would also have served to protect the Soviet airlift if the Soviet Union had intervened militarily in Egypt. Independence was sitting astride Soviet air routes to Egypt, and the Soviets had every reason to expect that the Sixth Fleet would attempt to counter Soviet military intervention. The Soviet *Kynda*, carrying anti-ship cruise missiles with a range of about 250 nautical miles, did not need to trail the carrier in order to target it. Placing the *Kynda* group close to Independence sent a clear warning that the Sixth Fleet would not be permitted to interfere in Soviet military operations.⁵³⁷

Five Soviet ships--a *Kashin*, a *Kotlin*, an LST, and two LSMs--were deployed off the coast of Egypt on October 24. This force, and a group of combatants that joined it the next day, probably had four missions: first, to support the airlift to Egypt if the Soviets decided to intervene in Egypt; second, to deter and defend against Israeli attacks on Egyptian ports and airfields that would be used for the Soviet airlift and sealift; third to evacuate remaining Soviet noncombatant personnel if the Israelis continued advancing into Egypt; and, fourth, to land embarked naval

the Soviet *Moskva*-class helicopter carriers remained in the Black Sea during the crisis. See Weinland, p. 78; Watson, pp. 106, 111; Roberts, p. 195.

⁵³⁷Weinland, p. 83; Watson, p. 114; Roberts, p. 203; Galia Golan, "Soviet Decisionmaking," pp. 209-10; Miller, "Storm-beaten Ships," p. 24.

infantry in Egypt in conjunction with the landing of airborne troops. The Soviet amphibious ships could carry a maximum of about 1,800 troops, and probably carried much less than that--a force inadequate to seriously threaten Israel or effectively defend Egypt without the Soviet airborne divisions that had been placed on alert.⁵³⁸ The likely objective for Soviet naval infantry would have been to prevent Israel from seizing Port Said--important for logistical support of Soviet troops in Egypt.

When DEFCON 3 was set, the Sixth Fleet was allowed to carry out the measures that Vice Admiral Murphy had been requesting since early in the crisis to improve the fleet's readiness for action. Kissinger makes it clear, however, that Sixth Fleet movements were being used to send a political signal to the Soviet Union, one the Soviets would detect long before they detected the U.S. alert.⁵³⁹ At 1:25 A.M. on October 25, the JCS ordered the Roosevelt carrier group to proceed at best speed to the eastern Mediterranean and ordered the Kennedy carrier group, still west of

⁵³⁸Weinland, pp. 84-85, 88; Quandt, p. 198; Roberts, p. 204; Galia Golan, Yom Kippur and After, pp. 109, 122-23; Galia Golan, "Soviet Decisionmaking," p. 209; Glassman, pp. 162-63. Press reports, quoting U.S. officials, put the number of Soviet naval infantry in the Mediterranean as high as 6,000 troops. See "Kissinger Says Action is Expression of Policy," New York Times, October 26, 1973, p. 20. That number is undoubtedly high: the Soviet amphibious ships in the Mediterranean could not carry that many troops.

⁵³⁹Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, pp. 589. Also see Weinland, p. 90.

Gibraltar, to join Independence and Roosevelt in the eastern Mediterranean at best speed. The three attack carriers were concentrating astride Soviet sealanes and airlanes to Egypt, in position to forcibly prevent the Soviet Union from intervening militarily in the conflict. An hour later the JCS suspended the heavy Navy support for the airlift to Israel and allowed all but two of the escorts to return to the Independence and Roosevelt groups. This left USS Harry E. Yarnell (DLG 17) in the western Mediterranean and USS Belknap (DLG 31) in the eastern Mediterranean as picket ships for the airlift. At 3:00 P.M. on October 25, the JCS ordered four U.S. Navy destroyers in the Baltic (previously detached from the Kennedy group) to proceed to the Mediterranean to reinforce the Sixth Fleet. Meanwhile, the helicopter carrier Iwo Jima and its embarked Marines entered the Mediterranean, for a total of over 5,000 Marines assigned to the Sixth Fleet. The ships of the Sixth Fleet were already operating at Condition III, a heightened condition of readiness in which the ships were prepared to immediately defend against enemy attacks (an internal Navy readiness system separate from the DEFCON system).⁵⁴⁰

Secretary of Defense Schlesinger stated in a news conference on the day after the alert was declared that the

⁵⁴⁰ Commander Sixth Fleet, "Command History 1973," pp. III-5, III-6; Zumwalt, On Watch, p. 443, 447; Miller, "Storm-beaten Ships," pp. 23-24; Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, p. 589; Weinland, pp. 70-71, 74; Roberts, p. 204.

Soviet naval buildup in the Mediterranean had been a factor in the U.S. decision to set DEFCON 3: "The Soviet buildup of naval forces in the Mediterranean, associated with the possibility of actions taking place than might have involved U.S. naval forces, leads one to take precautionary steps involved in putting all U.S. forces that could be involved in a higher state of readiness."⁵⁴¹ On October 25 three Soviet combatants--a Sverdlov, a Mod-Kildin class destroyer (armed with SS-N-2 anti-ship cruise missiles), and a Kotlin-class DDG--joined other Soviet ships trailing the Independence group. Late on October 25 these three ships and two other Kashin-class DDGs proceeded toward Egypt, joining the five-ship amphibious group already there on October 26. The Sverdlov and its two escorts soon departed, and on October 27 intercepted the U.S. amphibious group south of Crete.⁵⁴² As additional Sixth Fleet task groups rendezvoused in the operating area south of Crete over the next few days, each U.S. task group was covered by a separate group of Soviet surface combatants, composed of ships armed with anti-ship missiles escorted by additional ships armed with AAW missiles.⁵⁴³

⁵⁴¹Schlesinger, "News Conference of October 26," p. 620.

⁵⁴²Weinland, p. 84; Roberts, p. 204; Rubinstein, p. 281.

⁵⁴³Commander Sixth Fleet, "Command History 1973," p. VI-8; Zumwalt, On Watch, p. 447; Roberts, p. 206.

The Soviet navy commenced intensive anti-carrier exercises against the Independence group on October 26. Soviet submarines armed with anti-ship cruise missiles participated in the exercise, which continued through November 3.⁵⁴⁴ A Sverdlov-class cruiser and a Kashin-class DDG began shadowing the Roosevelt group on October 26, and soon joined the anti-carrier exercise. The Soviet anti-carrier exercise was probably intended as a signal that the Soviet navy was prepared to counter the Sixth Fleet in the eastern Mediterranean. As Charles Petersen notes,

the Soviets routinely carry out anticarrier exercises in full view of U.S. Navy observers--often using U.S. carriers themselves as simulated targets. Through this exercise activity, the Soviet Navy has made the U.S. aware of some of the tactics its ACW [anti-carrier warfare] forces might be expected to employ. In effect, therefore, the Soviets have transmitted to the U.S. an "action language" vocabulary that can be⁵⁴⁵ and has been--employed for signaling during crises.

This is exactly what took place in the October 1973 crisis.

⁵⁴⁴ Schlesinger, "News Conference of October 26," p. 621; Zumwalt, On Watch, p. 447; Weinland, p. 74; Roberts, pp. 195, 204, 206. It is not clear how quickly the Navy discerned that the Soviet anti-carrier activities were an exercise rather than an actual attack. The navy could well have had warning of the exercise from intelligence sources, although there is no evidence of this. Since Sixth Fleet ships and planes were closely monitoring all the major Soviet warships, final preparations for missile launch--such as fire control radar lock-on and opening of missile tube doors--or actual missile launches would have been detected immediately. Lack of such indicators of an actual attack may well have been the first, and only, evidence that the Soviets were conducting an exercise.

⁵⁴⁵ Charles C. Petersen, "Showing the Flag," in Bradford Dismukes and James McConnell, eds., Soviet Naval Diplomacy (New York: Pergamon Press, 1979), p. 105.

Stephen Roberts described the anti-carrier exercise as "the most intense signal the Soviets had ever transmitted with their naval forces in a crisis."⁵⁴⁶ The signal was received loud and clear by the Sixth Fleet.

The U.S. carriers, denied freedom to maneuver by White House orders placing them in small, fixed operating areas, were extremely vulnerable to a Soviet preemptive strike.⁵⁴⁷ Soviet ships and submarines armed with anti-ship cruise missiles were constantly within range of the U.S. carriers while they were in the eastern Mediterranean.⁵⁴⁸ Vice Admiral Murphy, Commander of the Sixth Fleet, has described the climate in the Mediterranean during the Soviet anti-carrier exercise:

The U.S. Sixth Fleet and the Soviet Mediterranean Fleet were, in effect, sitting in a pond in close proximity and the stage for the hitherto unlikely "war at sea" scenario was set. This situation prevailed for several days. Both fleets were obviously in a high readiness posture for whatever might come next, although it appeared that neither fleet knew exactly what to expect.⁵⁴⁹

Admiral Zumwalt has described the period of the soviet anti-carrier exercise in strong terms: "I doubt that major units of the U.S. Navy were ever in a tenser situation since World

⁵⁴⁶ Roberts, p. 210.

⁵⁴⁷ Zumwalt, On Watch, p. 436; Weinland, p. 74.

⁵⁴⁸ Morin, letter to author, April 14, 1988; Dixon, letter to author, April 18, 1988; Glassman, p. 162.

⁵⁴⁹ Quoted in Zumwalt, On Watch, p. 447.

War II ended than the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean was for the week after the alert was declared."⁵⁵⁰ This tense situation lasted through October 30, well after the cease-fire took hold and tensions in the Middle East had eased.

On October 27 a Sverdlov-class cruiser, Mod-Kildin class destroyer (armed with SS-N-2 anti-ship cruise missiles), and Kotlin-class DDG began trailing the U.S. amphibious group. The three Soviet combatants represented a formidable threat to the lightly armed U.S. amphibious ships. As Soviet combatants rendezvoused with the U.S. task groups, they joined the war at sea exercises that started on October 26. A Soviet Kresta II-class ASW cruiser entered the Mediterranean from the Atlantic on October 27--the only Soviet surface combatant to do so during the crisis. This Kresta II remained in the western Mediterranean, well clear of the action to the east. Three Soviet combatants entered the Mediterranean from the Black Sea on October 29: a Kynda-class cruiser armed with anti-ship cruise missiles, a Kashin-class DDG, and and a Kotlin-class DDG.⁵⁵¹

On October 30 the JCS authorized the three U.S. attack carriers to move to the west and maneuver freely in order to counter intense Soviet anti-carrier activities. As Robert Weinland notes, "This gave the Soviets yet another clear--

⁵⁵⁰Ibid, p. 446.

⁵⁵¹Ibid; Roberts, pp. 195, 204, 206.

and unintentional, but in the end not unwelcome--signal: the United States was relaxing."⁵⁵² The three carriers remained southwest of Crete through November 13. The Soviet anti-carrier group that had entered the Mediterranean on October 29 began trailing the Kennedy carrier group on October 31 and joined in the anti-carrier exercise. The Soviet navy now had an anti-carrier group trailing each of the three U.S. carrier task groups, and additional combatants trailing the U.S. amphibious group. Also on October 31 two Nanuchka-class corvettes armed with anti-ship cruise missiles and a Skoryy-class destroyer entered the Mediterranean from the Black Sea.⁵⁵³ The Nanuchkas further increased the Soviet squadron's anti-ship missile strength. As of October 31 there were 95 Soviet naval vessels in the Mediterranean, including 40 surface combatants (five armed with anti-ship cruise missiles), 23 submarines (about seven armed with anti-ship cruise missiles), four AGIs, and 28 auxiliaries. The 40 Soviet surface combatants consisted of five cruisers, fifteen destroyers, six frigates and corvettes, two guided missile corvettes, eight amphibious ships, and four mine-sweepers. The ships and submarines armed with anti-ship cruise missiles could launch a total of 88 missiles in their first salvo (up from about twenty on October 6 and forty on

⁵⁵²Weinland, p. 75.

⁵⁵³Zumwalt, On Watch, p. 447; Weinland, pp. 71, 86; Roberts, pp. 194, 206.

October 24). The Sixth Fleet numbered about 60 ships, including three attack carriers, two amphibious assault helicopter carriers, and nine attack submarines (SSNs).⁵⁵⁴

U.S. and Soviet naval operations began to return to normal upon completion of the Soviet war at sea exercise against the Sixth Fleet. On November 3 Independence and her escorts were ordered to Athens for a port visit and the amphibious group was ordered to proceed to Souda Bay and anchor. Also on November 3, Soviet surveillance of the Sixth Fleet began to decline and Soviet combatants ceased trailing Roosevelt and the U.S. amphibious groups. Over the next few days Soviet combatants ceased trailing other U.S. Navy units as they left the eastern Mediterranean. The Soviet Mediterranean Squadron began reducing its strength to peacetime levels on November 7 when three combatants entered the Black Sea. The three U.S. carriers interrupted their cycle of port visits and remained at sea November 9-14 while Rissinger was in the Middle East conducting negotiations. This was the final U.S. naval activity in the Mediterranean related to the crisis. On November 18 the Sixth Fleet was

⁵⁵⁴ Commander Sixth Fleet, "Command History 1973," pp. III-6, III-10, VI-8; "U.S. Carrier Force Is Sent Toward the Indian Ocean," New York Times, October 30, 1973, p. 1; Zumwalt, On Watch, p. 447; Weinland, pp. 77, 85; Watson, p. 111; Roberts, pp. 194, 206. The Soviet first salvo total of 88 anti-ship missiles included eight SS-N-14s carried by the Kresta II-class cruiser, but since 1973 that missile has been determined to be an ASW weapon. The actual Soviet first salvo total was thus 80 anti-ship cruise missiles--a formidable threat to the Sixth Fleet.

directed to stand down from alert and the Kennedy carrier group, which was now a month overdue returning from deployment, was ordered to proceed home to Norfolk. As of November 19 the number of Soviet ships in the Mediterranean had declined from 95 to 70 and Soviet naval operations had essentially returned to normal.⁵⁵⁵

The U.S. and Soviet navies also increased their forces in the Indian Ocean immediately after the crisis. During the crisis, the U.S. Middle East Force consisted of a flagship (a converted dock landing ship) and two destroyers. The Soviet Indian Ocean Squadron consisted of about twenty ships, including a destroyer, a Foxtrot-class attack submarine, two corvettes, two minesweepers, an LST, and various auxiliaries. The CNO had recommended on October 25, the day DEFCON 3 was set, that an attack carrier task group be moved into the Indian Ocean from the Pacific. On October 29, as part of U.S. actions to increase its readiness for military operations in the Middle East, the attack carrier USS John Hancock (CVA 19), with five escorts and an oiler, were ordered into the Indian Ocean. The carrier's destination was stated to be the Persian Gulf area and the deployment was originally described as a response to the Soviet buildup in the Mediterranean (This was later retracted and

⁵⁵⁵ Commander Sixth Fleet, "Command History 1973," p. VI-8; "Sixth Fleet's Alert Ends; Some Vessels Due Home," New York Times, November 20, 1973, p. 4; Zumwalt, On Watch, pp. 447-48; Weinland, pp. 71, 85-86; Roberts, pp. 194, 206.

the deployment described as a routine show-the-flag cruise). At the time, there was no unusual Soviet naval activity in the Indian Ocean. On November 12 a Sverdlov-class cruiser (the one commonly used as the Pacific Fleet flagship) and a Kashin-class DDG transited the Straits of Malacca, but remained in the eastern Indian Ocean rather than joining Hancock in the Arabian Sea. U.S. and Soviet naval activity in the Indian Ocean remained at unusually high levels for several months, for reasons largely unrelated to the situation in the Middle East.⁵⁵⁶

In summary, both the United States and the Soviet Union used their navies for political signaling in the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. Tactical-level interactions between U.S. and Soviet naval forces in the Mediterranean were intense during the crisis: Soviet tattletales and aircraft closely monitored the Sixth Fleet, and U.S. ships and aircraft closely monitored the Soviet Mediterranean Squadron. Soviet ships and submarines armed with anti-ship cruise missiles were constantly within range of U.S. the carriers while they were in the eastern Mediterranean. The Sixth Fleet took

⁵⁵⁶ Zumwalt, On Watch, p. 446; "U.S. Carrier Force Is Sent Toward the Indian Ocean," New York Times, October 30, 1973, p. 1; Roberts, p. 207. The increased U.S. presence in the Indian Ocean was related to the Middle East crisis only in the sense that the carrier task group was available in the event that Arab nations attempted to close the sea lanes out of the Persian Gulf by force. However, there apparently was not much concern on the part of U.S. leaders that the Arab nations would attempt to do this.

actions to counter the threat from Soviet tattletales and anti-carrier forces, seeking the ability to instantly destroy all threatening Soviet units upon indication of a Soviet attack. Tensions at sea were acute during the October 26-31 period due to intense Soviet anti-carrier exercises against the Sixth Fleet.

The 1973 Arab-Israeli War marked several records and new developments in Soviet naval operations. The Soviet Mediterranean Squadron conducted operations on a much larger scale than it had in the 1967 and 1970 Middle East crises, and maintained those operations for a much longer period of time, making it, in Bruce Watson's words, "the most ambitious use of the Soviet Navy for political purposes up to that time."⁵⁵⁷ Additionally, for the first time the Soviet navy conducted crisis-related operations that did not involve countering the U.S. Navy--such as the sealifts to Syria and Egypt and defense of those sealifts--while at the same time conducting significant operations directed against the U.S. Sixth Fleet. The Soviet Mediterranean Squadron was responsive to changes in Sixth Fleet operations, redeploying ships as necessary to counter the U.S. fleet, and did not have to suspend its pro-Arab operations to do so.⁵⁵⁸ This demonstrated a depth and flexibility that had not been seen

⁵⁵⁷ Watson, p. 103. Also see Roberts, p. 210; Rubinstein, p. 272.

⁵⁵⁸ Weinland, p. 86; Roberts, p. 210.

in previous crises. The implications of this are well described by Bradford Dismukes:

On the basis of the information now available, it appears that the Soviets were prepared to accept significantly higher risks in this crisis than before. They committed naval forces that, in the situation, appeared to be quite formidable, and they behaved at the peak of the crisis (with the threat to intervene unilaterally on Egypt's behalf) as though they considered⁵⁵⁹ the Sixth Fleet effectively neutralized.

The Soviet Navy can thus be viewed as having become a full-fledged superpower navy in 1973.

Several specific aspects of Soviet naval operations were also noteworthy. First, the Soviet Navy conducted extensive and sustained operations within a combat zone for the first time. In previous crises, Soviet ships had withdrawn from war zones, entering only as necessary to monitor the fighting ashore and to keep tabs on the Sixth Fleet.⁵⁶⁰ Second, it was the first time that the Soviet Navy provided warships to protect a Soviet airlift and sealift during a crisis.⁵⁶¹ Third, it was the first time that Soviet amphibious ships were deployed to the Mediterranean in significant numbers in a crisis, and the first time that they were used for sealift during a crisis.⁵⁶²

⁵⁵⁹Dismukes, p. 503

⁵⁶⁰Weinland, p. 87.

⁵⁶¹Ibid, p. 82.

⁵⁶²Ibid; Dismukes, p. 503.; Rubinstein, p. 272.

Fourth, it was the first time that the Soviets deployed warships to counter the U.S. amphibious group as well as U.S. carrier groups--a move that made it clear the Soviets were countering the U.S. ability to intervene in the Middle East.⁵⁶³ All of these actions marked a new Soviet willingness to fully exploit the capabilities of its navy in support of crisis foreign policy objectives.

The October 1973 crisis was the first Soviet-American confrontation in which the Soviet Navy posed a significant immediate threat to the U.S. Navy. In the assessment of Bradford Dismukes, "Soviet actions in the October War may well have produced a situation in which the Soviets were tactically superior."⁵⁶⁴ This assessment was shared by senior Navy officers. Early on October 25, Schlesinger and Admiral Moorer briefed the Joint Chiefs on the events leading up to the worldwide DEFCON 3 alert. According to Admiral Zumwalt, Admiral Moorer had stated during the WSAG meeting that "we would lose our ass in the eastern Med [Mediterranean] under these circumstances." Admiral Zumwalt told Schlesinger that the eastern Mediterranean was the worst place for the U.S. Navy to fight the Soviets.⁵⁶⁵

⁵⁶³ Ibid, p. 86; Roberts, p. 206.

⁵⁶⁴ Dismukes, p. 502. Also see Aronson, p. 195; Dowty, pp. 275-76; Harvey Sicherman, "The Yom Kippur War: End of Illusion?," Foreign Policy Papers, Vol. 1, No. 4 (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1976), p. 53.

⁵⁶⁵ Zumwalt, On Watch, p. 446.

Admiral Moorer's opinion was not quite so negative looking back on the crisis in retrospect: "Victory in the Mediterranean encounter in 1973 would have depended on which navy struck first and a variety of other factors. Victory would have depended on the type of scenario which occurred."⁵⁶⁶ This still indicates, however, that the Soviet Navy posed a severe threat to the Sixth Fleet. Bruce Watson has summarized the impact of that threat:

Thus, for the first time in the post-World War II era, the U.S. Navy had been effectively denied complete control of the seas. Throughout the entire period from 1957 through 1980, the Soviet Navy never posed a greater threat against U.S. naval forces operating on the high seas, nor was the [Soviet] navy's effect ever more relevant in the U.S.-Soviet nonstrategic balance of power.⁵⁶⁷

The final noteworthy point about Soviet naval operations in the October 1973 crisis is that the Soviets did not deploy as many ships to the Mediterranean as they could have sent. At the height of the Soviet buildup, only 20 of the 42 cruisers and destroyers in the Black Sea Fleet had been sent to the Mediterranean. Nor did the Soviets deploy any of the modern ASW ships (Kara-class ASW cruisers and Moskva-class ASW helicopter cruisers) that were available in the Black Sea Fleet.⁵⁶⁸ Several possible reasons for this have been proposed by Western naval

⁵⁶⁶ Quoted in Watson, p. 107.

⁵⁶⁷ Ibid, p. 116.

⁵⁶⁸ Weinland, p. 78; Roberts, p. 195; Dismukes, p. 503.

analysts. Stephen Roberts and Robert Weinland suggest that the Soviets only deployed older, less capable, and therefore more expendable ships to the Mediterranean.⁵⁶⁹ Bradford Dismukes concludes, based on this pattern, that the Soviets were maintaining "a strategic reserve to deal with unforeseeable contingencies."⁵⁷⁰ Stephen Roberts, on the other hand, contends that the Black Sea Fleet was approaching the limits of its resources and that the Soviets might have been forced to deploy ships from the Baltic or Northern Fleets to further reinforce the Mediterranean Squadron.⁵⁷¹

All of these interpretations are probably reading too much into the available information. The Soviets sent most of their ships armed with anti-ship missiles to the Mediterranean (five of eight, including both Kynda-class cruisers), probably because their primary concern was U.S. intervention in the Middle East with carrier and amphibious forces (that concern is evident in Soviet naval operations during the crisis, described earlier). No modern ASW ships were sent because the primary threat was U.S. surface ships, not U.S. submarines. The Soviets appeared to send their older ships to the Mediterranean simply because the ships

⁵⁶⁹Roberts, p. 195; Weinland, p. 78.

⁵⁷⁰Dismukes, p. 503.

⁵⁷¹Roberts, p. 195.

armed with anti-ship missiles had been built earlier than the ASW ships (1959-1966 for the Kynda and Kresta I anti-ship missile-armed cruisers, versus 1966-1976 for the Kresta II and Kara ASW cruisers). Additionally, the Soviets sent two relatively new Nanuchka-class corvettes armed with anti-ship missiles to the Mediterranean. The Black Sea Fleet was hardly at the limit of its resources with less than half of its major surface combatants deployed (The number of replenishment ships available to support the ships already deployed was probably a greater constraint than the number of combatants left to deploy). On the other hand, the Soviets probably did not keep 22 major surface combatants in the Black Sea as a strategic reserve: they could easily be bottled up if the U.S. closed the Turkish Straits. The overall pattern of Soviet naval deployments in October 1973 was simple: they sent the ships they needed to counter U.S. surface forces to the Mediterranean, and left those they did not need in the Black Sea. The one possible implication of this pattern is that the Soviets probably did not expect the crisis to escalate to war with the United States. Had they expected war, they probably would have surged every available ship and submarine into the Mediterranean.

The final step in this review of U.S. naval operations during the 1973 Arab-Israeli War is to examine the tactical-level interactions that could have occurred with Soviet or Arab forces and the interactions that did occur with those



forces. The following interactions conceivably could have occurred during the the crisis: collisions at sea between U.S. and Soviet vessels, collisions between U.S. and Soviet aircraft, U.S. ships or aircraft firing on Soviet or Arab planes approaching the fleet in a potentially hostile manner, U.S. ships or aircraft firing on Egyptian ships or submarines approaching the fleet in a potentially hostile manner,⁵⁷² Soviet naval vessels firing on U.S. planes approaching them in a potentially hostile manner, Arab or Israeli aircraft firing on U.S. planes carrying supplies to Israel, U.S. fighters being flown to Israel, or U.S. planes flying reconnaissance missions off their coasts. A remote possibility was that Soviet Mig-25s in Egypt might try to intercept U.S. SR-71 reconnaissance planes flying over the Suez canal.

Despite the intense tactical-level interaction between U.S. and Soviet Naval forces, there were no collisions at sea or other dangerous incidents. Unlike 1967, there were no instances of Soviet close quarters maneuvering to harass the Sixth Fleet. Soviet Tu-16 Badger reconnaissance bombers were active over the Mediterranean, but did not harass the Sixth Fleet. There were minor incidents, such as training

⁵⁷²The Egyptian navy established a distant blockade of Israel south and southwest of Crete with destroyers (beyond the range of Israeli missile boats) and southeast of Crete with submarines. See Dupuy, pp. 557-58, 562; Herzog, pp. 263-64.

guns and missile launchers on U.S. ships, firing flares at U.S. planes, and shining searchlights on U.S. ships at night, all of which violate the Incidents at Sea Agreement. Other than this, however, both sides complied with the provisions of the Incidents at Sea Agreement: the U.S. carrier groups used the maneuvering signals called for in the Agreement and Soviet ships avoided interfering with the U.S. formations.⁵⁷³ No Egyptian or Syrian vessels or aircraft were encountered during the crisis because the sixth Fleet was kept well clear of their coasts.⁵⁷⁴ On October 25 two high speed surface contacts headed out into the Mediterranean raised concern that they might be headed

⁵⁷³ Engen, letter to author, April 25, 1988; J.P. Moorer, letter to author, April 18, 1988; Morin, letter to author, April 14, 1988; Dixon, letter to author, April 18, 1988; Glassman, p. 162; Roberts, p. 196. There was one minor incident between U.S. and Soviet forces outside the Mediterranean about the time war broke out in the Middle East. While Kennedy was participating in a NATO exercise in the Norwegian Sea, there was a minor mid-air collision between a Soviet Tu-16 "Badger" reconnaissance bomber and a U.S. F-4 Phantom jet fighter from Kennedy that had been sent up to intercept and trail the Soviet plane. There was "slight" damage to each, but both landed safely. J.P. Moorer, letter to author, April 18, 1988. The Soviet Union apparently did not file a diplomatic protest over the incident, though it probably filed a complaint through Incidents at Sea Agreement channels.

⁵⁷⁴ Engen, letter to author, April 25, 1988; Morin, letter to author, April 14, 1988; Dixon, letter to author, April 18, 1988. Weinland states that the Sixth Fleet "was not challenged directly by any of the belligerents." Weinland, p. 71. The fact that no Egyptian vessels were encountered by the U.S. Navy during the crisis suggests that the Egyptian destroyers were not aggressively enforcing the blockade of Israel and may have spent considerable time in Libyan or Algerian ports--far from danger.

for the Independence carrier group, but the identity of the contacts was established as Israeli well before there was any need to take action against them.⁵⁷⁵ There were very few accidents involving U.S. naval forces, and none serious enough to impair Washington's ability to manage the crisis.

Findings

This section will review the 1973 Arab-Israeli War to answer the eight research questions. The first question is to what degree were interactions between the forces of the two sides at the scene of the crisis the result of actions taken in accordance with mechanisms of delegated control, rather than direct control by national leaders? The Nixon Administration did not attempt to exercise direct control over the operations of the Sixth Fleet other than its movements in the Mediterranean. Sixth Fleet movements, however, were closely controlled--much closer than in the 1967 Middle East War. Rather than giving the fleet boundaries on where it was permitted to operate, as in 1967, Washington told the fleet exactly where to operate.⁵⁷⁶ On the other hand, the President and Schlesinger did not attempt to communicate directly with any level in the chain

⁵⁷⁵Roberts, p. 196.

⁵⁷⁶Zumwalt, interview by author, February 16, 1988; Zumwalt, On Watch, p. 436; Engen, letter to author, April 25, 1988.

of command below the JCS; orders to the Sixth Fleet were passed via normal channels. Nor did they made an effort to provide specialized guidance in mechanisms of delegated control. As a result, the ships of the Sixth Fleet acted in accordance with Navy standing orders in responding to Soviet naval operations. The measures taken by the Sixth Fleet to counter Soviet tattletales and anti-ship missile-armed ships were standard Navy tactics that had been used in the past (such as in the 1970 Jordanian crisis). There was thus significant delegation of authority to on-scene commanders and the guidance contained in Navy standing orders and standing rules of engagement played a crucial role in determining the nature of the tactical-level interactions that occurred.

The second question is were the forces of the two sides at the scene of the crisis tightly coupled with each other? Soviet tattletales and aircraft closely monitored the Sixth Fleet, and U.S. ships and aircraft closely monitored the Soviet Mediterranean Squadron. The Soviets quickly responded to changes in Sixth Fleet operations, keeping every U.S. carrier in the eastern Mediterranean targeted with anti-ship missiles. Similarly, the Sixth Fleet quickly reacted to changes in Soviet naval operations, keeping Soviet ships that were an immediate threat to the carriers in the sights of U.S. ships or planes. Thus, Soviet and American forces were tightly coupled during the

crisis--much more tightly than they had been in any previous Soviet-American crisis.

The third question is were the forces of the two sides being used by their national leaders as a political instrument in the crisis? It is clear that the United States used the Sixth Fleet for political signaling.⁵⁷⁷ Admiral Zumwalt observes that as part of their political-military strategy, President Nixon and Kissinger "used the fleet for their 'shadow boxing' with the Soviet Union."⁵⁷⁸ What Admiral Zumwalt viewed as "shadow boxing" was what Kissinger viewed as subtle political signaling. Vice Admiral Engen, a veteran of U.S. naval operations in both the 1967 and 1973 Middle East Wars, felt that the Sixth Fleet was used for political signalling more in 1973 than it had been in 1967: "There seemed to be more 'State Department' in this war and positioning of naval forces to convey signals."⁵⁷⁹ That the Soviets received the signals being sent with the Sixth Fleet is indicated by the note the Soviets sent on October 12 protesting the movement of the U.S. fleet into the eastern Mediterranean.⁵⁸⁰

⁵⁷⁷ Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, pp. 475, 587-89; Weinland, pp. 71-73, 75, 90; Safran p. 494.

⁵⁷⁸ Zumwalt, interview by author, February 16, 1988.

⁵⁷⁹ Engen, letter to author, April 25, 1988.

⁵⁸⁰ Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, p. 475.

The Soviet Union used its Mediterranean Squadron for political signaling, and it is clear from Kissinger's comments that U.S. leaders received the Soviet signals.⁵⁸¹ The Soviet naval actions that sent the strongest signals were reinforcement of the Mediterranean Squadron, which almost doubled in numbers of ships and quadrupled in firepower, trailing of Sixth Fleet task groups, keeping the bulk of the Squadron well clear of the fighting ashore, and conducting an anti-carrier exercise from October 26 to November 3. As will be discussed below, U.S. leaders also read political signals into Soviet naval actions that may not have been intended as signals--an example of inadvertent signaling.

The answers to these first three questions establish that the conditions necessary for stratified interaction existed in the 1973 Arab-Israeli War: The United States relied on methods of delegated control, U.S. and Soviet naval forces in the Mediterranean were tightly coupled, and both sides used their forces as political instruments under conditions of acute crisis. Significant and dangerous interactions occurred at the tactical level that were not directly controlled by American leaders. For example, President Nixon had no direct control over Sixth Fleet counter-targeting of Soviet ships carrying anti-ship cruise

⁵⁸¹ Ibid, pp. 475, 509-10; Watson, p. 114; Roberts, pp. 196, 203, 210; Galia Golan, "Soviet Decisionmaking," pp. 202, 209-10; Weinland, p. 89.

missiles, and was probably unaware that this activity had inadvertently been set in motion by White House orders making the fleet an easy target for the Soviet Navy.

The fourth question is did crisis interactions at the tactical level become decoupled from the strategy being pursued by national leaders? To establish that stratified interactions became decoupled in the crisis requires two findings: first, that one or more of the potential causes of decoupling were present, and, second, that operational decisions made by tactical-level decisionmakers differed from those that political-level decisionmakers would have made in order to coordinate the actions with their strategy for managing the crisis. As for the first requirement, four of the potential causes of decoupling were present in the crisis: communications and information flow problems, impairment of political-level decisionmaking, a fast-paced tactical environment, and tactically inappropriate orders.

The U.S. communications system provided much faster communications in 1973 than it had in 1967, but still did not permit the President to exercise real-time direct control over the Sixth Fleet. This did not cause problems because the White House did not attempt to exercise such close control. There were thus no serious communications problems during the crisis.

Impairment of political-level decisionmaking was at least a minor factor in the crisis. President Nixon was in

the midst of the Watergate scandal and the resignation of Vice President Spiro Agnew. Although President Nixon reportedly made key decisions himself and was kept informed of major developments in the crisis, he clearly did not exercise close, detailed control over U.S. actions in the crisis.⁵⁸² The President's political travails appear not to have had a direct impact on U.S. actions in the crisis, but undoubtedly complicated top-level decisionmaking.

The tactical environment in the Mediterranean was very fast-paced during the crisis. As has already been noted, there was intense tactical-level interaction between the U.S. and Soviet navies in the Mediterranean. The White House was not directly controlling the actions of the Sixth Fleet in that interaction, and available accounts of the crisis suggest that Nixon and Kissinger were unaware that it was occurring. Sixth Fleet efforts to counter the Soviet anti-ship missile threat required frequent tactical decisions as Soviet ships maneuvered to keep the U.S. carriers targeted. This intense maneuvering for tactical advantage was too fast-paced for the White House to be able to effectively control it. If a Soviet vessel had fired a missile at a U.S. carrier--accidentally or deliberately--there

⁵⁸² Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, p. 470; Quandt, Decade of Decisions, pp. 171, 183. In his memoirs, Nixon intersperses descriptions of the Middle East crisis with descriptions of the Watergate scandal, providing a good illustration of the impact that the scandal had on his attention. See Nixon, pp. 920-42.

would have been no time for on-scene commanders to consult with higher authority before taking action. The same situation could well have existed for the Soviet Mediterranean Squadron, which was constantly targeted at point blank range by U.S. warships and attack aircraft.

Tactically inappropriate orders were a major factor in the crisis and led to decoupling. To ensure that the Sixth Fleet sent only the desired political signals, the White House ordered the fleet to remain in small, fixed operating areas. This made the U.S. fleet extremely vulnerable to a Soviet preemptive strike. The on-scene commanders--acting on their own initiative and well within their delegated authority--sought to reduce their vulnerability by counter-targeting the most threatening Soviet naval units. Tight direct control of Sixth Fleet movements by the White House thus generated tactically inappropriate orders.

The second requirement for establishing that decoupling occurred is that the operational decisions made by tactical-level decisionmakers differed from those that political-level decisionmakers would have made in order to coordinate those actions with their strategy for managing the crisis. As was discussed earlier, the Sixth Fleet was moved to south of Crete in order to demonstrate to the Soviet Union that the United States was prepared for any contingency, but had no aggressive intent and was not preparing to take an active part in the conflict. Sixth

Fleet movements on October 25 were intended to deter escalation of the conflict--specifically, Soviet intervention in Egypt with airborne forces--but the fleet was restrained in order to avoid signalling excessive hostility or an intention to intervene directly in the conflict. Given these political signalling objectives, it is not clear that the White House would have viewed Sixth Fleet preparations for preemptive strikes against the Soviet navy--preparations the Soviets were well aware of--as supporting the U.S. strategy for managing the crisis or as sending the political signals it wanted sent to the Soviet Union. Thus, there appear to have been decoupled interactions in the crisis.

The fifth question is did national leaders and on-scene commanders hold different perceptions of the vulnerability of on-scene forces to preemption and the need to strike first in the event of an armed clash? During the first week of the crisis, U.S. Navy on-scene commanders were relatively unconcerned about the Soviet naval threat because the Soviet Mediterranean Squadron essentially continued normal peacetime operations. Vice Admiral Murphy, Commander of the Sixth Fleet, stated in a 1973 internal Navy report that he "did not perceive SOVMEDFLT [Soviet Mediterranean Fleet] a threat to successful completion of any of the perceived missions" during the October 6-13 period.⁵⁸³ From

⁵⁸³ Quoted in Zumwalt, On Watch, p. 437.

October 14 onward, however, the tactical situation changed dramatically for the worse. U.S. Navy on-scene commanders in the Mediterranean were highly concerned about the threat of a Soviet preemptive attack due to the untenable tactical position in which the Sixth Fleet had been placed by White House restrictions on the fleet's movements. When asked if he had been put in a position that he considered operationally undesirable or tactically vulnerable during the crisis, Rear Admiral Dixon, Commanding Officer of the Kennedy, replied yes, he had, because his carrier had been placed in "a fixed position in close proximity to the Soviets."⁵⁸⁴ Soviet ships and submarines armed with anti-ship missiles were constantly within range of the U.S. carriers while they were in the eastern Mediterranean.⁵⁸⁵ The threat of preemptive attack appeared to be particularly acute during the October 26-30 period due to intense Soviet anti-carrier exercises against the Sixth Fleet. Bruce Watson had explained why a Soviet anti-carrier exercise creates such grave concerns:

One of the most difficult situations for Sixth Fleet forces to deal with is a Soviet anticarrier warfare exercise. When a U.S. ship is used as the simulated target, Soviet ships maneuver so realistically that it is virtually impossible to distinguish between exercise activity and a real attack on a carrier. In these exercises, Soviet

⁵⁸⁴ Dixon, letter to author, April 18, 1988.

⁵⁸⁵ Morin, letter to author, April 14, 1988; Dixon, letter to author, April 18, 1988; Glassman, p. 162.

forces are in position, and weapons are aimed at the target. All that is needed to transform the exercise into a shooting war is the order to fire.⁵⁸⁶ Just such an exercise was begun on October 26.

The period of this Soviet exercise could well have been the closest that the Soviet Union and the United States have ever been to "hair trigger" readiness for war--at least at the tactical level.

Not surprisingly, senior U.S. Navy officers appear to have had a good grasp of the concerns felt by the on-scene commanders in the Mediterranean. In a statement to the press during the crisis, Admiral Bagley, CINCUSNAVEUR, described how the Sixth Fleet was being targeted by the Soviet navy.⁵⁸⁷ Shlomo Aronson reports that senior naval officers at the Pentagon were very worried about military risks in the Mediterranean.⁵⁸⁸ Admiral Moorer expressed concern about the Soviet naval threat in the eastern Mediterranean during the October 24-25 WSAG meeting, and Admiral Zumwalt expressed similar concerns to Schlesinger.⁵⁸⁹ Thus, there does not appear to have been stratified threat perceptions within the military chain of command from the on-scene commander to the JCS Chairman.

⁵⁸⁶Watson, p. 115-16.

⁵⁸⁷Quoted in Glassman, p. 162.

⁵⁸⁸Aronson, p. 195. Also see Dowty, pp. 275-76; Sichernan, p. 53.

⁵⁸⁹Zumwalt, On Watch, p. 446.

Civilian officials appear to have held threat perceptions much different from those held by U.S. Navy officers. Kissinger, in particular, did not perceive a threat from the Soviet Navy during the crisis. Kissinger's cavalier description of Soviet-American naval interaction during the crisis reveals his perception: "The two fleets, signaling parallel intentions, later met off Crete and started milling around there."⁵⁹⁰ The "milling around" that Kissinger mentions was constant Soviet targeting of the U.S. carriers with anti-ship missiles and simultaneous U.S. counter-targeting of high-threat Soviet warships with ships and armed aircraft--a much more dangerous situation than that implied by Kissinger. Kissinger also was either unaware of the Soviet anti-carrier exercise or did not understand the threat it represented to the Sixth Fleet. Kissinger states in his memoirs that after October 25, when Soviet ships withdrew from the coast of Egypt, "No such threatening Soviet naval activity took place again."⁵⁹¹ In fact, the most threatening Soviet naval activity of the crisis--the anti-carrier exercise--commenced the next day.

After the crisis Kissinger would directly confront charges that the Soviet navy had been a serious threat to the Sixth Fleet: "I have seen statements that in 1973, the

⁵⁹⁰ Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, p. 475.

⁵⁹¹ Ibid, p. 599.

United States was affected in the conduct of the Middle East crisis by its fear of the Soviet navy. This may have been true of our navy; it wasn't true of our government. . . . We all suffered from the illusion that our navy was far superior to the Soviet navy, and we conducted ourselves accordingly."⁵⁹² Admiral Moorer and Admiral Zumwalt certainly did not share this view, so the persons mentioned by Kissinger probably included only himself, President Nixon, and perhaps Schlesinger. The important point is that this confirms a divergence of threat perceptions between civilian and military officials: the Navy chain of command from the JCS Chairman down to the carrier Commanding Officers perceived a serious threat from Soviet anti-carrier operations, while civilian officials did not perceive a threat to the Sixth Fleet. Thus, stratified threat perceptions did arise at the very top of the chain of command, between civilian and military officials.

Part of the reason why civilian officials held much different threat perceptions than those held by military officials is that the Navy chain of command was not kept informed of the political and diplomatic aspects of the crisis. When asked if the JCS was kept informed of U.S. objectives in the crisis and U.S. diplomatic efforts to resolve the crisis, Admiral Zumwalt replied, "No. The JCS

⁵⁹²Quoted in Richard Valeriani, Travels With Henry (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1979), pp. 181-82.

was only kept informed of those things on which Kissinger wanted our support, or which he thought we would find out anyway."⁵⁹³ The Navy chain of command was also kept in the dark. When asked if the chain of command was kept informed of U.S. objectives in the crisis and U.S. diplomatic efforts to resolve the crisis, Vice Admiral Engen, Deputy Commander in Chief U.S. Naval Forces Europe, replied, "There never is such information passed down the line."⁵⁹⁴ Admiral Zumwalt confirms that Vice Admiral Murphy, Commander of the Sixth Fleet, also was not briefed on the political logic behind the tactically inappropriate orders being issued to his fleet: "And, worst of all from my point of view, he was not given the kind of explanation of these orders that a Vice Admiral and Fleet Commander, who after all is not a blabbermouth or a dummy, is entitled to."⁵⁹⁵ The on-scene commander thus lacked important information on the political context of the crisis, and had to interpret Soviet behavior on the basis of the military and naval moves being made by Soviet forces. It is not surprising, therefore, that Soviet naval operations in the Mediterranean appeared much more threatening to the Navy chain of command than they did to Kissinger.

⁵⁹³ Zumwalt, interview by author, February 16, 1988.

⁵⁹⁴ Engen, letter to author, April 25, 1988.

⁵⁹⁵ Zumwalt, On Watch, p. 436.

The only exception to this pattern was that Admiral Moorer informed the unified and specified commander in general terms of the purpose of the DEFCON 3 alert. In addition to contacting them verbally, Admiral Moorer sent them the following message at 3:37 A.M. on October 25:

1. Most recent communication with Soviets contains request that US join them in more forceful enforcement of Israel/Arab ceasefire by introduction of both US/Soviet forces. Soviets further state intentions to consider unilateral action if US declines.
2. Our reply not final at this point but, as you have noted, US response includes signal of elevation in force readiness, i.e., DEFCON Three world wide, alerting of 82nd Airborne, more eastward movement of carriers in Med [Mediterranean], and redeployment of SAC forces from Pacific.
3. I am in session⁵⁹⁶ with SECDEF and Chiefs and will keep you advised.

This message and similar verbal communications were important for ensuring that key military commanders understood the purpose of the alert, which is described as a "signal" to the Soviets.

That the chain of command was not kept informed of political and diplomatic developments during the crisis was not unique to this particular crisis, the same phenomenon was observed in the 1958, 1962, and 1967 crises as well. Commander Seventh Fleet was as much in the dark on U.S. policy during the 1958 Taiwan Strait Crisis as Commander Sixth Fleet was in the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. Top-level

⁵⁹⁶ Joint Chiefs of Staff message, JCS 250737Z OCT 73, October 25, 1973 (declassified 1984).

civilian officials typically believe that political and diplomatic matters must be kept closely held in order to prevent premature disclosure of sensitive negotiations, which could seriously disrupt efforts to resolve a crisis. Although this is certainly a legitimate concern, it can create problems in coordinating military operations with political objectives if the military chain of command is totally excluded from being kept informed on political matters. Failure to provide the military chain of command with sufficient information to be able to understand the political context of a crisis is thus a major source of stratified threat perceptions.

The security dilemma can be stratified in a crisis; that is, decisionmakers at the political and tactical levels of interaction can hold much different threat perceptions. At the political level of interaction, neither the United States nor the Soviet Union had an incentive to launch a preemptive first strike against the other. Both sides desired to prevent the crisis from escalating to war. Military and naval moves, including the U.S. DEFCON 3 alert, were taken primarily for political purposes, rather than to achieve military advantages. At the tactical level of interaction, however, U.S. and Soviet naval forces had strong incentives to strike first and were actively targeting each other. U.S. Navy on-scene commanders were seriously concerned about the threat of a Soviet preemptive

attack due to Soviet anti-carrier operations. Soviet Navy on-scene commanders must have shared similar concerns due to U.S. counter-targeting of their major combatants. The security dilemma was thus stratified--mild at the political level, but acute at the tactical level.

The sixth question is, when tactical-level interactions become decoupled, what factors inhibit escalation dynamics from occurring at the tactical level and being transmitted upward to the strategic and political levels of interaction? Although there were intense tactical-level interactions during the crisis, there were no cases of such interactions generating an escalation sequence. The most dangerous interactions occurred during the October 25-30 period, but did not escalate to violence. Although each side was constantly targeting the other and both sides were ready to instantly launch preemptive attacks, no weapons were fired during the crisis.

Three factors appear to have inhibited escalation during the crisis. First, neither the United States nor the Soviet Union wanted to intervene militarily in the war if they could possibly avoid it, largely out of concern for an armed clash with the other superpower. Therefore they both acted cautiously with their military and naval forces, avoiding situations that could inadvertently involve them in the fighting and, with one exception, avoiding actions that were unnecessarily provocative.

The only exception to this pattern was the Soviet anti-carrier exercise that commenced on October 26--an action much different from Soviet behavior throughout the rest of the crisis. If that exercise had commenced late on October 24 or early on October 25, at the peak of superpower tensions, it might easily have been misperceived by the United States as a further indication of imminent Soviet military intervention in the Middle East. It would be tempting to speculate that the Soviets deliberately waited until after tensions had peaked in the Middle East before starting the exercise, but the available evidence argues against that interpretation. The timing of the exercise was driven by U.S. naval moves: The Soviets started the exercise in response to U.S. concentration of the Sixth Fleet in the eastern Mediterranean. The implication of this is that the Soviet anti-carrier exercise could well have started at any time in the crisis if the Sixth Fleet had been concentrated in the eastern Mediterranean. Therefore, while the overall pattern of Soviet military and naval behavior was one of restraint, the Soviets were willing to engage in certain highly provocative activities.

The second factor inhibiting escalation was that the United States and the Soviet Union communicated with each other frequently during the crisis. This helped to prevent the problem of ambiguous political signals, which can cause intentions and objectives to be misperceived. Soviet

warnings to the United States on October 24 that it was prepared to intervene unilaterally in the Middle East if Israel did not respect the U.N. ceasefire were particularly important for avoiding a clash between the superpowers. Although that warning prompted the most intense superpower tensions of the crisis, including the U.S. worldwide DEFCON 3 alert, the situation probably would have been much worse if the United States and the Soviet Union had not been in direct communication at that point. The two superpowers probably would have had great difficulty interpreting the political significance of each other's military moves on October 24 and 25 had they not been able to express their interests and concerns to each other.

The third factor inhibiting escalation was caution and prudence on the part of U.S. Navy commanders in the Mediterranean. This was particularly important due to Soviet targeting of the Sixth Fleet with anti-ship missile platforms. On-scene commanders had to carefully balance the need to maintain a tactically viable situation against the danger of incidents with the Soviet Navy. This task was not made easier by White House orders prohibiting the carriers from maneuvering to evade Soviet targeting. Caution and prudence were particularly important for the U.S. ships and aircraft assigned to monitor high-threat Soviet ships and destroy them if they attempted to launch anti-ship missiles. When the Soviets commenced their anti-carrier

exercise, U.S. ships and planes counter-targeting the Soviets had to distinguish between preparations for simulated and actual attacks--an exceedingly difficult task. A single misjudgement could have produced a Soviet-American sea battle in the Mediterranean. That no incidents occurred is testimony to the caution and prudence shown by the on-scene commanders.

The seventh question is did actions taken with military forces send inadvertent signals to either adversaries or friends, and did inadvertent military incidents occur that affected efforts to manage the crisis? There were no inadvertent military incidents serious enough to affect the crisis, but there were instances of U.S. leaders misperceiving the political signals being sent by Soviet naval movements.

In his memoirs, Kissinger makes this observation on the naval situation in the Mediterranean as of October 6: "Interestingly, Soviet naval units that had left Egyptian ports on October 5 moved west. They, too, were demonstrating noninvolvement while retaining the capacity for rapid action."⁵⁹⁷ There are two problems with this assessment of Soviet naval moves. First, Soviet naval actions were more complex than Kissinger describes: not all the Soviet ships that left Egypt went west, two went to

⁵⁹⁷ Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, p. 475.

Syria; several Soviet ships remained in Alexandria throughout the war; and the Soviets were also moving AGIs and minesweepers into the war zone. The actual pattern of Soviet naval operations suggests a higher degree of Soviet commitment to Syria and Egypt than Kissinger perceived. Second, the Soviet ships that Kissinger describes as moving west actually went to Soviet anchorages off Crete. The practical reason for that was that Soviet replenishment and supply ships were located at the anchorages. Additionally, the Soviets were concentrating their major warships off Crete to counter the U.S. Sixth Fleet.⁵⁹⁸ The Crete anchorages occupy a strategic position in the eastern Mediterranean, ideal for covering the Sixth Fleet when it moves into the area. Thus, the actual signal being sent by Soviet ships moving west was that of Soviet intent to neutralize the Sixth Fleet.

Kissinger's assessment of Soviet-American naval interaction during the crisis is also revealing: "The two fleets, signaling parallel intentions, later met off Crete and started milling around there."⁵⁹⁹ The two fleets meeting off Crete was not a coincidence arising from parallel political intentions; it was driven by strategic and tactical military considerations. The Soviet ships

⁵⁹⁸Weinland, p. 80.

⁵⁹⁹Ibid.

moved into position to launch a preemptive strike against the U.S. carriers if such became necessary. The Soviets probably were not signaling intentions parallel to those of the U.S. when they concentrated the Mediterranean Squadron off Crete. Kissinger misperceived the intent of the Soviet naval moves, giving them a political interpretation reflecting his view at the start of the crisis that Soviet intentions were benign. Interestingly, Kissinger's views of Soviet intentions changed dramatically during the crisis as the extent of Soviet support for Egypt and Syria became clear.⁶⁰⁰ The key point is that naval movements are inherently ambiguous and their intent easily misperceived.

Naval analysts and other observers have read political signals into several other U.S. and Soviet naval actions during the crisis.⁶⁰¹ It is not clear, however, that any of those alleged signals were intentional or that the other side perceived the signals allegedly being sent. In every case the naval actions can be accounted for by motives or considerations other than political signalling, such as logistic requirements or improving tactical readiness. This further underscores the inherent ambiguity of naval movements as political signals, and the tendency for naval

⁶⁰⁰ On how Kissinger's views evolved during the crisis, see *Ibid*, pp. 469, 474-75, 497, 507-10, 518-19, 578-91.

⁶⁰¹ See Watson, p. 115; Weinland, pp. 73, 75; Roberts, pp. 196, 210; Galia Golan, "Soviet Decisionmaking," p. 202.

movements to be perceived as political signals even when undertaken for non-political purposes.

The eighth question is did any of the three tensions between political and military considerations arise during the crisis? Two of the three tensions arose during the crisis. There was serious tension between political considerations and the needs of diplomatic bargaining, on the one hand, and military considerations and the needs of military operations, on the other. The most serious tension was between Washington's need to control Sixth Fleet movements for political purposes and the on-scene commander's need for freedom to maneuver the fleet in order to reduce its vulnerability.

As was discussed earlier, the White House insisted on restricting the movements of the Sixth Fleet lest the fleet's movements send a misleading signal of U.S. intentions to the Soviet Union. According to Vice Admiral Engen, this was "A real sticking point. . . . Very restrictive and destroyed flexibility of naval forces. This was a big issue with COMSIXTHFLT--and properly so."⁶⁰² Admiral Zumwalt has described the tension that arose from close White house control of Sixth Fleet movements:

Moreover, the orders were extraordinarily rigid. They specified latitudes and longitudes and gave Dan [Vice Admiral Murphy] little or no room for tactical maneuvers aimed at making his missions easier to carry

⁶⁰² Engen, letter to author, April 25, 1988.

out or his forces easier to protect or, optimally, both. Several times during the next few days Dan asked permission of the JCS . . . to move these ships or those toward the east in order to make his surveillance of the battle scene more effective and evacuation of Americans from the Middle East, if it came to that, more rapid. Each request was turned down by Admiral Moorer, acting, he told me, on instructions from the White House, which almost certainly meant Henry Kissinger.⁶⁰³

To explain the nature of the Sixth Fleet's vulnerability requires a brief review of modern naval warfare.

The Soviet tactic of keeping ships and submarines armed with anti-ship cruise missiles within striking range of the U.S. carriers created serious operational problems for the Sixth Fleet. Modern anti-ship missiles, particularly the very large missiles favored by the Soviet navy, allow a single weapon to destroy or seriously damage a ship. Tactically, all the missile needs to do is knock the ship out of the battle--achieving what the Navy refers to as a "mission kill." Captain Frank Andrews has described the threat represented by anti-ship missiles: "A carrier battle group is liable to serious wounds from preemptive missile attack in forward waters . . . because modern technology affords so much advantage to the side which strikes first that the victim may be unable to defend himself."⁶⁰⁴ Soviet Navy doctrine places heavy emphasis on the first strike,

⁶⁰³ Zunwalt, On Watch, p. 436.

⁶⁰⁴ Captain Frank Andrews, "The Prevention of Preemptive Attack," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 106 (May 1980): 128.

making it a central objective of strategy as well as tactics. Soviet naval writings emphasize the importance of "the battle of the first salvo."⁶⁰⁵ The tactical doctrines of the superpower navies interact, producing a war initiation scenario described in the U.S. Navy as the "D-day shootout."⁶⁰⁶ Anti-ship missiles can be difficult to defend against, making destruction of the launch platform the most effective defense against them. U.S. Navy tactical doctrine for the defense of surface ship battle groups thus emphasizes destruction of launch platforms before they can launch their missiles.⁶⁰⁷ Thus, the side that gets off the first salvo in the D-day shootout is likely to accrue a

⁶⁰⁵ Admiral of the Fleet of the Soviet Union Sergei G. Gorshkov, Red Star Rising at Sea (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1974), pp. 131-132; Charles D. Petersen, "About-Face in Soviet Tactics," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 109 (August 1983): 57-63; Lieutenant Commander Alan D. Zimm, "The First Salvo," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 111 (February 1985): 55-60; T.A. Fitzgerald, "Blitzkrieg at Sea," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 112 (January 1986): 33-38.

⁶⁰⁶ Admiral Harry D. Train, "Decision Making and Managing Ambiguity in Politico-Military Crisis," in James G. March and Roger Weissinger-Baylon, eds., Ambiguity and Command: Organizational Perspectives on Military Decision Making (Marshfield, MA: Pitman Publishing, 1986), p. 306.

⁶⁰⁷ See Kidd, "View From the Bridge," 18-29; Admiral Stansfield Turner and Commander George Thibault, "Countering the Soviet Threat in the Mediterranean," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 103 (July 1977): 25-32; Lieutenant Commander T. Wood Parker, "Thinking Offensively," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 107 (April 1981): 26-31; Captain William J. Ruhe, "Antiship Missiles Launch New Tactics," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 108 (December 1982): 60-65; Andrews, "Prevention of Preemptive Attack," pp. 126-39; Gregory, "Their Tattletales," pp. 97-99.

significant tactical advantage that could determine the outcome of a war at sea.

Requiring that a task group operate at a fixed location with little freedom to maneuver (known in the Navy as a "ModLoc") increases its vulnerability to a Soviet preemptive strike. Commander Frederick Glaeser has described the problems that arise from this practice:

Although ModLocs are defended as visible proofs of presence, they are in fact the first step in targeting by an enemy. . . . A force in ModLoc is trapped in a set-piece battle in which an enemy with superior numbers can organize an overwhelming coordinated attack. In essence, we choose the place, and the enemy selects the time, weather, and politically opportune moment for his attack."⁶⁰⁸

This is exactly the situation in which the White House placed the Sixth Fleet. The fleet was not granted the freedom to maneuver it needed in order to outrun slower Soviet tattletales and to prevent the Soviets from keeping the carriers constantly targeted.⁶⁰⁹

In a preemptive strike against the three U.S. carriers on October 25, the Soviet Navy would have been able to launch a first salvo of about thirteen anti-ship missiles against each U.S. carrier--an extremely dangerous threat that could be effectively countered only by destroying

⁶⁰⁸ Commander Frederick J. Glaeser, "Guerrilla Warfare at Sea," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 109 (August 1983): 42.

⁶⁰⁹ Engen, letter to author, April 25, 1988; Morin, letter to author, April 14, 1988; Dixon, letter to author, April 18, 1988; Glassman, p. 162.

Soviet launch platforms before they were able to fire their weapons.⁶¹⁰ Conversely, if the U.S. struck the first blow, it would seriously degrade the ability of the Soviet Navy to destroy the U.S. carriers. U.S. warships, their guns manned and ready, and U.S. attack aircraft, armed with conventional bombs and missiles, kept every Soviet ship that could threaten the carriers constantly in their sights. Both sides thus had strong incentives to strike first if they believed that war was imminent. This was a tense and dangerous situation that would have been at least partially alleviated if the Sixth Fleet had been granted freedom to maneuver at will. The intense tactical-level interactions were not under the direct control of U.S. leaders, who appear not to have understood the chain of events they had set in motion (despite warnings from Admirals Moorer and Zumwalt). Thus, a restriction imposed on the fleet for political purposes (avoiding misperceptions of U.S. intentions) exacerbated the risks of a military confrontation and the danger that a minor incident could touch off an armed clash at sea between the superpowers.

There was also serious tension between the need for top-level control of military operations in a crisis, and the need for tactical flexibility and instantaneous

⁶¹⁰ On October 31, the height of the Soviet buildup in the Mediterranean, the first salvo would have been about 26 missiles against each U.S. carrier.

decisionmaking at the scene of the crisis. The tension over level of control was worse than it had been in the 1958 Taiwan Strait Crisis and the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, but not as bad as it had been in the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis. President Nixon and Schlesinger respected the military chain of command, using it to send orders to the Sixth Fleet rather than attempting to communicate directly with the fleet. Tensions arose primarily from the emphasis that President Nixon and Kissinger placed on using the Sixth fleet to send political signals, which required close White House control over the fleet's movements.⁶¹¹ Vice Admiral Murphy objected to this tight control because it placed the fleet in a tactically untenable position, vulnerable to Soviet preemption, but his requests for greater freedom to maneuver the fleet were denied by the White House.⁶¹² Vice Admiral Engen cited this as the most important lesson of the crisis: "Give the on-scene commander authority [up] to specified limits and leave him alone to position his forces in the way that he feels is best. Don't try to do 'squad right or left' from Washington."⁶¹³ Although the Navy chain of command was irritated by White House control of Sixth

⁶¹¹Zumwalt, interview by author, February 16, 1988; Engen, letter to author, April 25, 1988.

⁶¹²Zumwalt, On Watch, p. 436; Engen, letter to author, April 25, 1988.

⁶¹³Engen, letter to author, April 25, 1988.

Fleet movements, there was no deep resentment against perceived civilian interference as in the Cuban Missile Crisis.

There was moderate tension between performance of crisis political missions and readiness to perform wartime combat missions. Admiral Moorer states that there was no concern that the Navy's response to the crisis would degrade its ability to respond to threats elsewhere, and that wartime considerations influenced the location of the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean: "Our primary consideration was the time required to get in strike position."⁶¹⁴ This suggests that positioning of the Sixth Fleet was influenced by military considerations (the time it would take the fleet to reach a launch point for air strikes against targets in the Middle East and the Soviet Union), as well as by the political considerations described by Kissinger.

The commanding officers of the carriers Kennedy and Roosevelt state that they did not experience a degradation of their readiness to perform wartime missions during the crisis. The increased readiness condition of the Sixth Fleet resulted in improved logistic support for the ships in the Mediterranean and the increased tempo of operations actually improved readiness by providing more flight time for pilots.⁶¹⁵ On the other hand, because the fleet was on

⁶¹⁴T.H. Moorer, interview by author, February 9, 1988.

⁶¹⁵Morin, letter to author, April 14, 1988; Dixon, letter to author, April 18, 1988

standby for Middle East contingencies, routine exercises intended to improve the combat proficiency of the fleet were cancelled. This was a cause for concern on the part of Vice Admiral Murphy and Vice Admiral Engen.⁶¹⁶ But the greatest concerns for U.S. wartime readiness arose from the transfer of large quantities of U.S. military equipment and munitions to Israel. This depleted U.S. war-reserve stocks and left some operational units without sufficient equipment and supplies to carry out wartime missions.⁶¹⁷ Thus, although Sixth Fleet operations in the crisis did not degrade the fleet's readiness for wartime operations, U.S. resupply of Israel degraded the overall combat readiness of U.S. forces.

In summary, the stratified interaction model accurately describes Soviet-American interaction during the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. There was intense tactical-level interaction between U.S. and Soviet naval forces in the Mediterranean, and significant decoupling of tactical-level interactions from political-level crisis management efforts. The overall pattern was one of parallel stratified interactions with frequent momentary decoupling. U.S. and Soviet naval forces were very tightly coupled during the crisis, but there were no serious incidents between them. There were serious political-military tensions arising from

⁶¹⁶ Engen, letter to author, April 25, 1988.

⁶¹⁷ Zumwalt, On Watch, p. 441.

close White House control over the location and movements of the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean.

Conclusion

This chapter has presented case studies of four crises in which U.S. naval forces played a significant role: the 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis, the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, and the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. Eight research questions addressing the theory of stratified interaction and its corollaries were answered in each case study. The the four case studies showed that the stratified interaction model provides an accurate description of international interaction in crises. The next chapter will examine four cases of peacetime attacks on U.S. Navy ships in order to take a closer look at how the military chain of command reacts to such incidents. Chapter IX will then use the findings from all eight of the case studies in a structured, focused comparison in order to derive contingent generalizations on crisis interaction and crisis stability.

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CHAPTER VIII

PEACETIME ATTACKS ON NAVY SHIPS

One of the most difficult missions assigned the Navy is operations in the immediate vicinity of potentially hostile forces during an international crisis or armed conflict. The political importance and potential dangers of such missions are generally recognized. Not as well understood, however, is that routine naval missions viewed as non-political or ordered for peacetime military objectives rather than for political purposes almost always have important political undertones and can generate significant international political repercussions if an unanticipated incident were to occur during the mission. For this reason certain "non-political" missions, such as intelligence collection or surveillance near a potentially hostile country or the scene of fighting, need to be viewed as political in nature even though not ordered for political purposes.

This chapter presents the third phase of the research design, a structured focused comparison of four cases in which a U.S. Navy ship was attacked during peacetime or crisis operations. The purpose of this chapter is to

further develop and refine contingent generalizations on the corollaries to the theory of stratified interaction. The focus will be on how the military and naval chain of command reacted to the attacks.

The incidents that will be examined are the August 1964 Tonkin Gulf Incidents, the June 8, 1967 Israeli attack on the intelligence collection ship USS Liberty (AGTR 5), the January 22, 1968 North Korean seizure of the intelligence collection ship USS Pueblo (AGER 2), and the May 10, 1987 Iraqi attack on the guided missile frigate USS Stark (FFG 31). Four of the eight questions asked in the previous chapter will again be asked in these cases. The four questions address decoupling of stratified interactions, stratified escalation dynamics, misperceptions, and political-military tensions.

The first question is did interactions at the tactical and political levels become decoupled during or after the attack on the Navy ship? The theory of stratified interaction states that under certain conditions crisis interactions are stratified into three levels: political (between national leaders), strategic (between major military commands), and tactical (between on-scene forces). The previous chapter showed that the conditions necessary for stratified interactions are usually present in crises. Decoupling of stratified interactions occurs to the extent that operational decisions on the employment of military

forces made at the strategic and tactical levels differ from the decisions that political-level authorities would have made to coordinate military actions with their political-military objectives in the crisis. Decoupling simply means that national leaders lose control over tactical-level military interaction.

There are seven potential causes of decoupled interactions: communications and information flow problems, impairment of political-level decisionmaking, a fast-paced tactical environment, ambiguous or ambivalent orders, tactically inappropriate orders, inappropriate guidance in mechanisms of indirect control, and deliberate unauthorized actions by military commanders. To establish that tactical-level interactions became decoupled requires two findings: first, that at least one of the causes listed above was present, and, second, that operational decisions made by tactical-level commanders diverged from the political-military objectives of political-level leaders.

The second question is, when stratified interactions become decoupled, what factors inhibit escalation dynamics from occurring at the tactical level and being transmitted upward to the strategic and political levels of interaction? This question addresses the third corollary to the theory of stratified interaction, that in a crisis escalation dynamics can be stratified--arising at the tactical level of interaction while national leaders are still

attempting to resolve the crisis peacefully. The focus will be on identifying escalation-inhibiting features and the conditions that can cause the escalation-inhibiting factors to break down.

The third question is did actions taken with naval forces send inadvertent political signals to adversaries or allies, and did inadvertent military incidents occur that affected efforts to manage the crisis? This question addresses two of the crisis management problems that can arise when military forces are employed in a crisis: misperceptions and inadvertent military incidents.

The fourth question is did any of the three tensions between political and military considerations arise during the response to the attack on a U.S. ship? Three tensions between political and military considerations can arise in crises: tension between political considerations and the needs of diplomatic bargaining, on the one hand, and military considerations and the needs of military operations, on the other; tension between the need for direct top-level control of military operations, and the need for tactical flexibility and instantaneous decisionmaking at the scene of the crisis; and tension between performance of crisis missions and maintaining readiness to perform wartime missions. All three tensions arise from the operational requirements of crisis management, the essence of which is placing political restrictions on military operations.

The 1964 Tonkin Gulf Incident

USS Maddox, commissioned June 2, 1944, was 376 feet in length, displaced about 3200 tons, and had a top speed of around 31 knots. Armament consisted of three 5-inch/38 calibre twin mounts controlled by a MK 37 director, two 3-inch/50 calibre twin mounts controlled by a MK 56 director, two MK 32 ASW torpedo tube mounts, and two fixed Hedgehog ASW launchers. The crew consisted of 11 officers and about 322 men, including a detachment of specialists manning an electronic intelligence collection van mounted on deck. Although an old ship, Maddox was a good choice for intelligence collection duties off the coast of a potentially hostile nation due to its weapons, speed and maneuverability.

The North Vietnamese-backed Viet Cong guerilla war against the South Vietnamese Government and the Communist insurgencies in Cambodia and Laos dominated the international situation in Southeast Asia in August 1964. The political and military situation in the Republic of Vietnam (RVN) had been deteriorating for years due to chronically unstable and ineffective governments. Seeking to exploit the deterioration in the South, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) in December 1963 ordered the Viet Cong to take the offensive and in 1964 sharply increased the infiltration of regular army troops into South Vietnam.¹

¹George McT. Kahin and John W. Lewis, The United States in Vietnam, Revised Edition (New York: Dell, 1969),

The U.S. Government viewed the deteriorating situation in South Vietnam with grave concern. The Cold War had not yet been thawed by detente and the Communist insurgencies in Indochina were viewed by the Johnson Administration as a crucial battle in a global struggle between East and West. Military and economic aid to South Vietnam increased significantly during the first half of 1964 as the U.S. sought to shore up the faltering Saigon regime.²

A program of covert South Vietnamese military operations against North Vietnam, known as Operation Plan (OPLAN) 34A, was approved in January 1964 in an attempt to coerce the North Vietnamese into halting support for the insurgency in the South. As part of OPLAN 34A the U.S. Navy provided South Vietnam with eight fast patrol boats (PTFs) and other small craft, and trained their crews and naval commandoes for raids on North Vietnam. The first successful attacks were conducted in May 1964.³

pp. 153-4; Bruce Palmer, Jr., The 25-Year War: America's Military Role in Vietnam (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1984), pp. 23, 37; George McT. Kahin, Intervention: How America Became Involved in Vietnam (Garden City, NY: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1987), pp. 207-11; Guenter Lewy, America in Vietnam (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), pp. 25-31; Stanley Karnow, Vietnam: A History (New York: Viking Press, 1983), pp. 63-4.

²Anthony Austin, The President's War (New York: Lippincott, 1972), pp. 35-6, 43-5, 227-33; Palmer, pp. 33-5; Kahin, pp. 208-12; Karnow, pp. 323-6.

³Edward J. Marolda and Oscar P. Fitzgerald, The United States Navy and the Vietnam Conflict, Volume II: From

The possibility of the U.S. striking directly at North Vietnam had been raised as early as 1961, but it was not until early 1964 that retaliatory bombing of the North received serious consideration. Contingency plans were drawn up and target lists prepared by June 1964. The desirability of a Congressional resolution authorizing the President to take military action in Indochina was also recognized and a proposed resolution was drafted in May 1964. Thus, by the summer of 1964 the United States had completed military and political planning for some types of direct U.S. military action against North Vietnam.⁴

In April 1962 the U.S. Navy had initiated a series of patrols by destroyers in international waters off the coasts of China, the Soviet Union and North Korea. Although the primary mission of these patrols, code named "Desoto," was

Military Assistance to Combat, 1959-1965 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1986), pp. 334-8; U.S. Congress, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, The Gulf of Tonkin, The 1964 Incidents, Hearings, 90th Congress, Second Session (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1968), pp. 13-14, 20-21 (Cited hereafter as Tonkin Gulf Hearings); Lyndon Baines Johnson, The Vantage Point (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971), p. 113; Admiral Roy L. Johnson, "Reminiscences of Admiral Roy L. Johnson, U.S. Navy (Retired)," (Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, Oral History Program, April 1982), pp. 235-36. Also see John Galloway, The Gulf of Tonkin Resolution (Rutherford, NJ: Farleigh Dickinson University Press, 1970), pp. 37-42; Joseph C. Goulden, Truth Is the First Casualty (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1969), p. 95; Karnow, pp. 364-7.

⁴ Johnson, Vantage Point, p. 119; Palmer, pp. 33-5; Kahin, pp. 217-9; Lewy, pp. 21, 29-31; Karnow, pp. 344-5, 358-62; Austin, pp. 233-8.

intelligence collection, establishing a U.S. naval presence near the target countries and asserting freedom of the seas in international waters off their coasts were recognized by senior Navy officers and civilian officials as being political advantages of the patrols.⁵

The first Desoto patrol off the coast of North Vietnam was conducted in December 1962. DRV Navy vessels shadowed subsequent patrols, but did not interfere with them. There were no joint operations involving RVN OPLAN 34A forces and U.S. Navy Desoto destroyers. Although the value of intelligence collected by the Desoto patrols to the South Vietnamese operations was recognized, coordination between the two programs sought to prevent Desoto patrols from interfering with OPLAN 34A missions. In 1964 minimum distances of the Desoto patrols from North Vietnam were eight miles from the mainland and four miles from islands, reflecting the assumption that only a three mile territorial limit was claimed by North Vietnam.⁶

Maddox was assigned the July-August 1964 Desoto patrol in the Tonkin Gulf. Special communications channels and reporting procedures were in effect to link the ship to key commands, and USS Ticonderoga (CVA-14) was tasked to

⁵Admiral Johnson, "Reminiscences," p. 235; Eugene G. Windchy, Tonkin Gulf (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1971), pp. 54-70; Marolda and Fitzgerald, pp. 393-4; Austin, pp. 240-1.

⁶Tonkin Gulf Hearings, pp. 12, 25-27; Marolda and Fitzgerald, pp. 394-405; Austin, 231-3; Galloway, p. 50.

provide air cover. Maddox arrived off the coast of North Vietnam the afternoon of July 31 and the next afternoon was operating in the vicinity of two islands attacked thirty-six hours earlier by RVN Navy boats on an OPLAN 34A mission. Early in the morning of August 2 DRV Navy headquarters ordered preparations for battle that night. Maddox, warned of the danger of attack, cleared the area by moving out into the Gulf, but was ordered to resume the patrol and had done so by 10:45 A.M.⁷

At 3:00 P.M. on August 2 Maddox detected three DRV P-4 class torpedo (PT) boats on radar closing at high speed. Maddox, which was about twenty-eight miles off the coast, increased speed to twenty-five knots and set a course to the south-east to move away from the coast. At 3:30 P.M. Maddox set general quarters, reported the approaching contacts, and requested air support. Four F-8 Crusaders and the destroyer USS Turner Joy (DD 951) were immediately dispatched to assist Maddox. The first shots of the engagement were fired by Maddox, invoking the principle of anticipatory self-defense against forces showing hostile intent. Maddox fired an initial three shots at 4:05 P.M. as a warning and to get the range to the PT boats, and opened fire on them three

⁷ Admiral U.S. Grant Sharp, "Reminiscences of Admiral U.S. Grant Sharp, U.S. Navy (Retired)," Volume I (Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, Oral History Program, March 1976), pp. 214-17; Marolda and Fitzgerald, pp. 405-14. Also see Karnow, pp. 366-68; Windchy, pp. 113-30.

minutes later at a range of 9,000 yards. The DRV PT boats fired four torpedoes at Maddox, all of which missed. Maddox fired 283 rounds from its 5-inch and 3-inch guns, scoring hits on at least two of the boats and killing the commander of one of them.⁸

About twenty minutes after Maddox opened fire, the torpedo boats broke off the attack. Maddox briefly attempted to pursue but could not close the range. At 4:28 P.M. the F-8s from Ticonderoga attacked the DRV boats, scoring hits one one of them. Commander Seventh Fleet ordered a halt to the action after the air attack. One DRV torpedo boat was sunk, a second heavily damaged and the third slightly damaged. Maddox was struck by one machine gun bullet that caused minor damage and no casualties. One F-8 was struck by gunfire but landed safely in Danang.⁹

The U.S. Government reaction to the incident was restrained. Although intelligence assessments concluded that the attack on Maddox reflected growing North Vietnamese sensitivity to incursions and readiness to take aggressive action when threatened, U.S. leaders concluded that the attack may have been an unauthorized action by a local commander. President Johnson told aides to play down the incident. Johnson used the Soviet-American "hot line" to

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

pass a message to Premier Khrushchev expressing hope that North Vietnam would not make further attacks on U.S. vessels in international waters. A diplomatic protest was also passed to North Vietnam warning that "grave consequences" would result from further attacks on U.S. forces. The President ruled out reprisals against North Vietnam, but in a public statement warned that U.S. Navy ships and aircraft would "attack any force that attacks them."¹⁰

The Navy chain of command in the Pacific--Commander Seventh Fleet (COMSEVENTHFLT), Commander in chief U.S. Pacific Fleet (CINCPACFLT), and Commander in Chief Pacific (CINCPAC)--regarded the North Vietnamese attack on Maddox as a direct challenge to the United States, and believed that the Desoto patrol should be resumed immediately. Vice Admiral Roy L. Johnson, COMSEVENTHFLT, immediately ordered Maddox to "Reverse course, get on station, and remain on station."¹¹ Admiral U.S.G. Sharp, CINCPAC, stated his view at the time clearly in his oral history: "My chief reaction was that we would, at the very least, continue the patrol. The thing we couldn't do was pull the patrol out of the Gulf and not go back in, because that would indicate to the Communists that they had been able to back us down, and we

¹⁰ Johnson, Vantage Point, p. 113; Marolda and Fitzgerald, pp. 419-22; Galloway, pp. 52-53; Goulden, pp. 134-37; Karnow, pp. 368-69; Austin, pp. 22-29.

¹¹ Admiral Johnson, "Reminiscences," p. 184.

couldn't have that happen."¹² Admiral Thomas H. Moorer, CINCPACFLT, provides insight on Admiral Sharp's view, noting that there had been an earlier incident off the coast of the Soviet Union: "Once, a destroyer off Petropavlovsk had run when he was threatened. This infuriated Admiral Sharp. He didn't want that to happen again."¹³ Admiral Sharp approved a recommendation from Admiral Moorer to resume the patrol, and an order was sent to COMSEVENTHFLT for Maddox to do so-- an action that Vice Admiral Johnson had already taken.¹⁴

President Johnson quickly ordered the Desoto patrol resumed by Maddox and Turner Joy to show American determination to exercise the right of freedom of the seas. The manner in which the decision was made in Washington to continue the patrol illustrates the mood among top civilian officials at the time. According to Floyd D. Kennedy, Jr., the Navy duty officer at the Defense Intelligence Agency, a Lieutenant Commander Winston Cornelius, was called upon to brief JCS Chairman General Earle G. Wheeler, Acting Secretary of Defense Cyrus R. Vance, Secretary of State Dean Rusk, and President Johnson even before he was able to notify the CNO's duty officer of the incident:

¹²Admiral Sharp, "Reminiscences," p. 218.

¹³Admiral Thomas H. Moorer, interview by author, February 9, 1988.

¹⁴Admiral Johnson, "Reminiscences," p. 184; Admiral Sharp, "Reminiscences," pp. 221-26. Also see Windchy, pp. 173-75; Goulden, p. 137.

Before briefing Johnson, Cornelius, on his own initiative, prepared a message ordering the Maddox back into the Gulf of Tonkin to reassert the doctrine of freedom of the seas. When Johnson asked for his recommendation, Cornelius showed him the message, which Johnson immediately approved. After leaving the White House, Cornelius finally was able to talk with the Navy's duty captain, and informed him of the president's decision. The message was sent to the Commander in Chief of the Pacific Fleet, who ordered the Maddox, accompanied by the Turner Joy, to return to the Gulf.¹⁵

This fateful decision was thus made with little deliberation and no input from the CNO. The President's action did not raise any opposition because the Navy chain of command agreed with the decision and had already ordered Maddox to resume the patrol. The minimum distance from the North Vietnamese mainland was increased to twelve miles and at night the ships were to move out into the Gulf for safety. The two destroyers were told that DRV forces should be "treated as belligerents from first detection" and were ordered to destroy any vessels that attacked them.¹⁶

Maddox and Turner Joy resumed the Tonkin Gulf Desoto patrol the morning of August 3. The night of August 3-4 the RVN Navy conducted two OPLAN 34A missions, attacking DRV shore defenses. Late in the afternoon of August 4, DRV Navy headquarters ordered two Swatow-class sub chasers to prepare

¹⁵Floyd D. Kennedy, Jr., "David Lamar McDonald," in Robert W. Love, Jr., ed., The Chiefs of Naval Operations (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1980), pp. 347-48.

¹⁶Admiral Sharp, "Reminiscences," pp. 221-26; Johnson, Vantage Point, pp. 113-14; Marolda and Fitzgerald, pp. 419-22; Goulden, pp. 122-60; Windchy, pp. 178-210.

for military operations that night, prompting the two destroyers move out into the Gulf that evening. Maddox and Turner Joy were over sixty miles from the coast of North Vietnam that night when they gained high-speed radar contacts at short range, locked on with fire control radars, and opened fire. For the next four hours the two ships engaged at least five possible contacts at close range while evading several torpedoes detected on sonar. Numerous radar and visual indications of hits on patrol boats were reported. Sixteen U.S. Navy aircraft participated in the engagement, attempting to locate and attack contacts reported by the destroyers.¹⁷

Doubts soon arose over what exactly happened in the Tonkin Gulf the night of August 4. It had been a dark and overcast night, with unusual radar propagation conditions that easily could have generated numerous false contacts. Only two pilots reported sighting possible contacts, and their reports were uncertain. The two destroyers did not hold the same contacts at the same time on radar and several other inconsistencies in the engagement were also noted.¹⁸

¹⁷ Goulden, pp. 122-60; Marolda and Fitzgerald, pp. 422-36; Karnow, 369-70; Windchy, 178-210; Galloway pp. 53-66.

¹⁸ Admiral Sharp, "Reminiscences," p. 229; James B. Stockdale and Sybil Stockdale, In Love and War (New York: Harper and Row, 1984), pp. 3-36. Also see Associated Press dispatch, "Tonkin Gulf," January 24, 1967, reprinted in Galloway, pp. 490-96; "The 'Phantom Battle' that Led to War," U.S. News and World Report, July 23, 1984, pp. 56-67; Windchy, p. 208; Galloway, pp. 57-63.

At 1:27 A.M., about an hour after the incident, the on-scene commander, Captain John J. Herrick, sent a message stating his uncertainty over exactly what had happened:

Review of action makes many reported contacts and torpedoes fired appear doubtful. Freak weather effects on radar and overeager sonarmen may have accounted for many reports. No actual visual sightings by Maddox. Suggest complete evaluation before any further action taken.

About half an hour later Captain Herrick sent a second message summarizing the immediately available evidence of an attack, but warned that the "entire action leaves many doubts except for apparent ambush at beginning."²⁰ The chain of command was thus warned of the ambiguous tactical picture and that further investigation was warranted.

As soon as the incident was over, Admiral Sharp recommended to JCS that "authority be granted for immediate punitive air strikes against North Vietnam."²⁰ This was

¹⁹ Commander Task Group 72.1 message, CTG 72.1 041727Z AUG 64, August 4, 1964 (Tonkin Gulf Incident files, Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC). Reproduced or quoted in Tonkin Gulf Hearings, p. 54; Marolda and Fitzgerald, p. 440; Goulden, pp. 151-52; Galloway, p. 62; Windchy, p. 210.

²⁰ Commander Task Group 72.1 message, CTG 72.1 041754Z AUG 64, August 4, 1964 (Tonkin Gulf Incident files, Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC). Based on my professional judgement (twelve years experience in destroyers, a month at sea in Maddox in 1974, and operational experience in the Tonkin Gulf), this is the best assessment of the incident. There appear to have been two North Vietnamese patrol boats in the vicinity of Maddox and Turner Joy at the start of the incident, but they did not pursue the U.S. ships after they opened fire. For the next four hours the two destroyers engaged false contacts.

shortly after noon, Washington time. Although President Johnson and his advisors were predisposed to retaliate, they wisely insisted on confirmation that there had been a North Vietnamese attack. Vice Admiral Blouin, then Director of the Far East Region in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs (OASD/ISA), has described the pressure for confirmation:

[The] Big question was whether there had been an attack. White House put tremendous pressure on Sec Def, later on OASD/ISA (thus me), on CNO, on CINCPAC. Later, Adm Sharp met in Hawaii--communications were difficult--with Adm Moorer, CINCPACFLT, trying to get answers from Tonkin [Gulf]. President LBJ wanted a decision so he could announce it on prime time TV news. About 2315 all agreed there had been an attack.²²

Admiral Sharp has described the White House pressure for confirmation from his perspective as CINCPAC:

Well, I was on the phone both with General Wheeler and with Secretary McNamara. McNamara was trying to confirm in his own mind that an attack occurred. Of course, that's exactly what we were trying to do also. My staff was working to try and correlate all the reports that would come in and CINCPACFLT staff was doing the same thing. Admiral Moorer, CINCPACFLT, and I decided that there was enough information available to indicate that an attack had occurred. I told Secretary McNamara that, but we also asked the Maddox to confirm absolutely that the ships were attacked and told them to get word to us as quickly as possible. We got a report from

²¹ Sharp, "Reminiscences," p. 229. Also see Marolda and Fitzgerald, p. 438.

²² Vice Admiral Francis J. Blouin, letter to author, February 29, 1988. Also see Tonkin Gulf Hearings, pp. 11, 58-59; Johnson, Vantage Point, pp. 114-15; Marolda and Fitzgerald, pp. 436-44; Windchry, pp. 213-18; Galloway, pp. 63-65; Goulden, pp. 147-57.

the ships which neither absolutely confirmed or denied that they'd been under attack, but the weight of the evidence still was that an attack had occurred, so I told Mr. McNamara that. We also had some radio intercept intelligence which tended to confirm the attack. So we had various conversations back and forth with Admiral Moorer and I in Honolulu and General Wheeler in Washington, Secretary McNamara in Washington, and finally we received an order to attack the next day, attack North Vietnamese patrol craft bases. In the meantime we were still receiving amplifying messages from the Maddox, Turner Joy, and Captain Herrick. Generally speaking, they seemed to still indicate that the attack occurred. Turner Joy said that crew members saw torpedoes and that a target burned when hit, and her men saw black smoke. So while we were getting the planes ready aboard the Ticonderoga and the Constellation, we were still going back and forth about the attack in the Tonkin Gulf.

Vice Admiral Johnson, COMSEVENTHFLT, also provides a vivid description of the pressure to immediately confirm that there had been a North Vietnamese attack, and, like Admiral Sharp, suggests that the decision to retaliate was made before the on-scene commanders had completed their assessment of the incident:

Then began to arrive all this flood of inquiries from Tom Moorer, Chick Clary [CINCPACFLT Chief of Staff], Oley Sharp, and McNamara, "Confirm, confirm." You have to validate the fact that you were actually under attack because this is the thing that will decide whether a retaliatory attack is ordered. So, of course, I told Maddox, "You've got to report immediately what the hell happened." well, unfortunately, on the Maddox they didn't have any automatic [encryption] equipment, they had to do it hand-encrypted, and it took hours and hours. . . .

And all the time the guys [CINCPACFLT and CINCPAC] were driving me nuts. Every hour they were calling, "What happened? What actually happened?" I gave them what information I could. I said: "Now that's all I have, and I can't tell you whether in my

²³ Admiral Sharp, "Reminiscences," pp. 229-30.

opinion an attack occurred tonight or not. All I can tell you is that one did occur last night [sic]. that's all I can tell you that's certain and as soon as I get other information, I'll tell you."

Apparently Moorer and Sharp decided on their own that there had been an attack and that's what they told McNamara, and that's when President Johnson ordered the retaliatory attack.²⁴

The statements by Vice Admiral Blouin, Admiral Sharp, and Vice Admiral Johnson reveal intense pressure from the President and the Secretary of Defense for the Navy chain of command to make an instant assessment as to whether or not an attack had occurred. Furthermore, their comments suggest that the decision to retaliate against North Vietnam was based on a hurried and tentative evaluation of incomplete and ambiguous information. Not even the on-scene commander was certain what actually had happened, but tentative indications that there may have been an attack were viewed as sufficient cause for ordering retaliation.

As early as 3:10 P.M., Eastern Daylight Time--well before the Navy chain of command had reached a firm conclusion about whether or not there had been an attack on the destroyers--President Johnson gave McNamara tentative authorization to conduct retaliatory air strikes against North Vietnam. At 5:19 P.M., about five hours after the incident ended, President Johnson approved plans for air strikes against DRV naval vessels in or near five North Vietnamese ports, and against a fuel depot ashore. At about

²⁴Admiral Johnson, "Reminiscences," p. 239.

6:00 P.M. the President gave final authorization for the air strike based on Admiral Sharp's assessment that there had been an attack, and at 6:07 P.M. McNamara issued the order for the strikes. At 6:45 P.M. the President briefed Congressional leaders on the incident and his intent to retaliate.²⁵ At 11:36 P.M. President Johnson announced on television and radio that there had been an attack on U.S. vessels and that "Air action is now in execution against gunboats and certain supporting facilities in North Viet-Nam which have been used in these hostile operations."²⁶ At the time the President made this announcement, U.S. ships and planes had been searching the Tonkin Gulf for debris from the previous night's engagement for two hours without finding anything (No physical evidence would ever be found).

The first wave of Navy planes attacked at 1:30 A.M. (Washington time), nearly two hours after the President's speech. They destroyed seven DRV vessels, heavily damaged ten, and slightly damaged sixteen others--almost all of the major vessels in the DRV Navy at the time. The fuel depot was estimated to be 90 percent destroyed. Out of the sixty-seven Navy aircraft that participated in the strikes, two

²⁵Tonkin Gulf Hearings, pp. 58-59, 63; Johnson, Vantage Point, pp. 114-15; Marolda and Fitzgerald, pp. 437-46; Goulden, pp. 147-57; Windchy, pp. 213-20.

²⁶Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Lyndon B. Johnson, 1963-1964, Volume II (Washington, DC: U.S. Government printing Office, 1965), p. 927.

were lost and another two damaged. One pilot was killed and another captured by the North Vietnamese. Maddox and Turner Joy resumed the Desoto patrol off North Vietnam from August 5 to August 8, with no further incidents.²⁷

The most important U.S. response to the incident was Congressional passage of the Tonkin Gulf Resolution on August 7. This resolution, based on the draft resolution prepared in May, stated that the security of Southeast Asia was a vital U.S. interest and authorized the President "to take all necessary measures to repel any armed attack against the forces of the United States and to prevent further aggression." The stage was thus set for the 1965 escalation of the U.S. role in the Vietnam War. North Vietnam and the Viet Cong were not cowed by the U.S. resolution or the retaliatory air strikes and conducted further attacks on Americans in South Vietnam.²⁸

Two final points need to be made concerning the second incident; involving Maddox and Turner Joy the night of August 4. First, a decision by the President to delay the decision on whether or not to retaliate against North

²⁷ Admiral Johnson, "Reminiscences," pp. 239-40; Admiral Sharp, "Reminiscences," pp. 229-32; Marolda and Fitzgerald, pp. 444-49. Also see Galloway, pp. 67-70; Goulden, pp. 147-57; Karnow, pp. 371-77; Kahin, pp. 224-5; Austin, pp. 29-30, 38-48.

²⁸ Marolda and Fitzgerald, pp. 451-52; Galloway, pp. 70-98; Palmer, pp. 35-36; Karnow, pp. 374-6; Austin, pp. 53-105; Lewy, pp. 33-36; Goulden, pp. 23-78.

Vietnam while the Navy investigated incident probably would not have resulted in a conclusion that there had not been an attack and a decision that retaliation was not warranted. Captain Alex A. Kerr, assigned by Vice Admiral Johnson to investigate the incident, concluded on August 6 that there had indeed been a North Vietnamese attack on Maddox and Turner Joy.²⁹ Even if the President had delayed the retaliation decision, this investigation probably would have convinced him to proceed with air strikes against North Vietnam.

The second point is that there was a similar incident in the Tonkin Gulf a month after the August 4 incident. USS Morton (DD 948) and USS Richard S. Edwards (DD 950) commenced a Desoto patrol off the coast of North Vietnam on September 13, 1964, remaining at least twenty miles from the coast. At 7:29 P.M. on September 18 the two destroyers detected two radar contacts closing them at high speed, set general quarters, and requested air support. At 8:16 P.M. they fired warning shots and at 8:22 P.M. opened fire on the contacts. Over the next two hours the two destroyers engaged at least four radar contacts, firing 299 shells while they maneuvered to avoid torpedoes. The JCS decided

²⁹ Captain Alex A. Kerr, "The Reminiscences of Captain Alex A. Kerr, U.S. Navy (Retired)," (Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, Oral History Program, 1984), pp. 459-60. Also see Tonkin Gulf Hearings, pp. 15-19, 63-64; Marolda and Fitzgerald, pp. 441-43.

not to retaliate for this alleged attack due to lack of intelligence confirmation of North Vietnamese involvement. A Navy investigation later concluded that a North Vietnamese patrol boat probably was in the vicinity of the ships at the beginning of the incident, but there were no attacks on the destroyers. The radar contacts they engaged and the torpedoes they detected on sonar were evaluated as false.³⁰

The September 18 incident has two implications.

First, it suggests that essentially the same thing may have happened in the August 4 incident--North Vietnamese patrol craft were detected at the beginning of the incident, but there were no attacks on the U.S. destroyers and the targets they engaged were all false. Second, in contrast to the August 4 incident, the chain of command reacted to the September 18 incident with restraint and skepticism. On August 4 the chain of command from the President to CINCPACFLT was predisposed to believe that there had been a North Vietnamese attack and paid little heed to the on-scene commander's doubts. On September 18 the JCS initially recommended retaliatory air strikes, but reversed itself due to lack of evidence that there had been an attack on the destroyers. The chain of command may well have learned a lesson in dealing with ambiguous circumstances from the August 4 incident, but there is no direct evidence of this.

³⁰Marolda and Fitzgerald, pp. 453-62; Galloway, pp. 60-61.

Findings

This section will review the 1964 Tonkin Gulf Incident to answer the four research questions. The first question is did interactions at the tactical and political levels become decoupled during or after the attack on the U.S. Navy ship? At least two of the potential causes of decoupled interactions were present during the August 2 and 4 incidents: communications and information flow problems, and a fast-paced tactical environment. Although the technical capacity to do so may have existed, the Defense Department and Navy communication systems were not configured to enable Washington to speak directly to ships at sea in the Far East (this would become a routine operational capability over the next few years). Officials in Washington spent hours bombarding Navy commanders in the Pacific with demands for more information on the second incident before they felt they had sufficient information on which to base the decision to retaliate. The President and the Secretary of Defense were thus unable to control U.S. Navy operations in the Tonkin Gulf while the incidents were in progress.

Although conditions for decoupling were present, the operational decisions made by tactical-level commanders did not diverge from the political-military objectives of political-level leaders. Captain Herrick acted with caution to avoid encounters with North Vietnamese forces while conducting his surveillance mission, and Vice Admiral

Johnson ordered the engagements on August 2 and 4 halted as soon as it appeared the U.S. ships were out of danger. Military commanders and political leaders were in agreement that North Vietnamese attacks on U.S. ships warranted retaliatory air strikes, and that the Desoto patrol should be resumed after the incidents in order to assert freedom of the seas. Interestingly, the on-scene commander, Captain Herrick, had the greatest doubt that there had been a North Vietnamese attack on August 4 and cautioned against a hasty reaction. Thus, although national leaders temporarily lost control over events in the Tonkin Gulf during the incidents, this did not result in uncontrollable escalation of the confrontations.

The pattern in the two incidents is one of momentary decoupling followed by immediate disengagement. On-scene commanders, acting on their own authority under guidance contained in the rules of engagement, used limited force in response to apparent imminent attacks. They were not required to request--and did not seek--permission from higher authority to use force in self-defense. Once the immediate threat had been countered and the destroyers were out of danger, the on-scene commanders halted the engagements--again on their own authority and without guidance from higher in the chain of command.

The second question is, when stratified interactions become decoupled, what factors inhibit escalation dynamics

from occurring at the tactical level and being transmitted upward to the strategic and political levels of interaction? Three escalation-inhibiting factors appear to have been important in the Tonkin Gulf incidents. The first might be called military prudence: on-scene commanders did not want to fight under tactically unfavorable circumstances. A single torpedo could seriously damage or even sink a destroyer, multiple PT boats are a difficult threat for a single destroyer to counter (as in the August 2 incident), and darkness makes countering PT boats even more difficult (as in the August 4 incident). Air support arrived after the PT boats were driven off by Maddox in the first incident, and was ineffective due to darkness and low cloud cover in the second incident. It may well be the case that when U.S. forces are the victim of an unanticipated attack, tactical military considerations lead military commanders toward the same general course of action that political considerations lead national leaders toward. In the Tonkin Gulf incidents, military considerations tended to make tactical-level commanders more cautious than political-level leaders.

The second escalation-inhibiting factor was compliance by on-scene commanders with the guidance contained in mechanisms of indirect control. Under the peacetime rules of engagement in effect in 1964, Maddox, Turner Joy, and the aircraft supporting them were authorized to use force in self-defense and in anticipatory self-defense when attack

appeared to be imminent. Hot pursuit of the attacking force in international waters was authorized and was used on August 2 when Navy planes attacked the PT boats after they had disengaged. On the other hand, retaliation against targets in North Vietnam was not authorized unless specifically approved by the President.³² These provisions allowed force to be used without further permission from higher authority, but also resulted in the engagements halting quickly rather than escalating.

The third escalation-inhibiting factor was the emphasis that the President and Secretary of Defense McNamara placed on confirming that there actually had been a North Vietnamese attack the night of August 4. They did not accept initial reports from the Tonkin Gulf at face value; they insisted on knowing the basis for the conclusion that there had been an attack on the destroyers. As former Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs Phil G. Goulding points out, there is inherent skepticism toward initial reports: "A cardinal rule in an establishment as large as the Department of Defense is to assume that first reports are always wrong, no matter what their security classification, no matter to whom they are addressed."³³

³²See Marolda and Fitzgerald, pp. 422, 459.

³³Phil G. Goulding, Confirm or Deny: Informing the People on National Security (New York: Harper and Row, 1970), p. 103.

Double-checking the accuracy of initial reports is important for avoiding unwarranted escalation of a confrontation-- particularly when there may not have been a confrontation at all.³⁴

The August 4 incident in the Tonkin Gulf suggests three conditions that can cause the escalation-inhibiting factors to break down. The first condition is long-term frustration and animosity toward the other side in a crisis or incident. U.S. leaders had for years been growing increasingly belligerent toward North Vietnam due to its support for the Viet Cong, and had been preparing contingency plans for direct military action against the North. This created an atmosphere in which an apparent North Vietnamese attack on U.S. forces would be likely to provoke a strong U.S. response. The second condition is the immediate prior occurrence of a confirmed provocation by the other side, particularly when the U.S. response to the prior incident was restrained and the other side was warned against further incidents. The U.S. reacted with notable restraint to the confirmed August 2 North Vietnamese attack on Maddox, merely warning against further attacks. But the August 4

³⁴Verifying the accuracy of initial reports can also have negative consequences: tying up communications channels with requests for further information and detailed descriptions of past events, slowing the flow of current reports and orders, and diverting the attention on military commanders from the tactical situation to handling inquiries from Washington. For example, see Marolda and Fitzgerald, p. 457.

incident provoked U.S. retaliation against the North even though the circumstances of the incident were not clear.

The third condition is for all levels in the military chain of command, from the President to the on-scene commander, to hold similar views toward the adversary and toward the need for immediate retaliation. A strong unity of views can suppress the skepticism that normally greets ambiguous initial reports of a military incident, or lead to hasty assessment of the incident in the rush to launch retaliatory attacks. This appears to have occurred in the U.S. decision to retaliate after the August 4 incident--McNamara sought confirmation that there had been an attack, but the President decided to retaliate before a complete assessment of the evidence had been made.

The third question is did actions taken with naval forces send inadvertent political signals to adversaries or allies, and did inadvertent military incidents occur that affected efforts to manage the crisis? The U.S. responses to the incidents did not send any serious inadvertent political signals or result in any serious inadvertent military incidents. However, the Desoto patrols apparently were misperceived by North Vietnam. Some U.S. intelligence analysts and military officers, including Captain Herrick, suspected that the North Vietnamese misperceived the Desoto patrol destroyers as participating in or directly supporting OPLAN 34A attacks on North Vietnam. Although McNamara would

later adamantly insist that there were no grounds for the North Vietnamese to have confused the Desoto and OPLAN 34A operations, such a misperception provides a plausible explanation for the August 2 North Vietnamese attack on Maddox.³⁵

The fourth question is did any of the three tensions between political and military considerations arise during the U.S. response to the August 2 and 4 incidents? None of the three tensions was serious because the U.S. responses were limited and all levels of the chain of command held generally similar views toward the need to retaliate. The only aspect of the incidents that generated tension was the demand for confirmation that there had been a North Vietnamese attack in the second incident. McNamara's efforts to confirm that there had been an attack somewhat annoyed Admirals Sharp and Moorer, both of whom had immediately recommended retaliation. Tension generated by the demand for confirmation is an example of the tension that can arise between political considerations and military considerations: Confirmation was necessary so that retaliation could be justified politically. But confirmation required time to assess the evidence, which could delay the retaliatory strikes--losing the advantage of surprise and giving the adversary more time to ready his defenses.

³⁵ See Marolda and Fitzgerald, pp. 420-22.

The 1967 Attack on the Liberty

USS Liberty was launched in 1945, mothballed in 1958, began extensive conversion for its new duties in 1963, and recommissioned in late 1964. Liberty's mission was collection of electronic and communications intelligence, though for important reasons the Navy cloaked this mission under the cover of electromagnetic propagation research. The ship was 455 feet in length and had a displacement of about 10,000 tons. At the time of the attack the crew consisted of sixteen officers, 285 enlisted men, and three civilian technicians. Armament was four .50-caliber machine guns--leaving the ship defenseless against any attack with weapons heavier than small arms. Liberty's maximum speed was eighteen knots. Although a superb platform for peacetime intelligence collection, Liberty was extremely vulnerable when operating in close proximity to hostilities.

Liberty was ordered to the Eastern Mediterranean as Arab-Israeli tensions reached the crisis point in late May.³⁶ The ship was to patrol just outside territorial waters (twelve miles) off the coast of the Sinai Peninsula, monitoring the progress of Israeli-Egyptian fighting as well as conducting general surveillance of the region. Specific forces were not designated to defend Liberty because the

³⁶ See Chapter VII for a description of the background to the 1967 war, U.S. policy during the crisis, and Sixth Fleet operations during the crisis.

U.S. was officially neutral in the conflict and the ship was operating in international waters. Just before Liberty commenced its patrol, at least five messages were sent increasing the ship's standoff range from the coasts of the belligerents--apparently in response to Arab claims that the U.S. Navy was aiding Israel, and warnings from Egypt and Israel that the seas off their coasts were war zones. Due to misrouting of the messages to communications stations that were not handling traffic to Liberty, the ship did not receive these crucial messages.³⁷ Rear Admiral J.C. Wylie, Deputy Commander in Chief U.S. Naval Forces Europe in 1967, has stated that "This whole prelude to the attack on Liberty was the most appalling communications snafu [failure] that the U.S. Navy ever had."³⁸ Commander Sixth Fleet gained operational control of Liberty shortly before the ship commenced its mission, but did not have ships or aircraft alerted to provide support for Liberty in the event of an attack on the ship.³⁹

³⁷ James M. Ennes, Jr., Assault on the Liberty (New York: Random House, 1979; Ivy Books Edition, 1987), pp. 51-4, 65; Goulding, pp. 130-2. On the communications problems, see U.S. Congress, House Committee on Armed services, Review of Department of Defense Worldwide Communications, Phase I, Hearings, 92nd Congress, First Session (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1971), pp. 6-17; "Order Didn't Get to USS Liberty," New York Times, June 9, 1967, p. 1; Ennes, pp. 291-300.

³⁸ Rear Admiral J.C. Wylie, letter to author, March 28, 1988.

³⁹ Ibid.

Israeli aircraft spotted Liberty as soon as it arrived in its patrol area the morning of 8 June, identified Liberty as a U.S. Navy ship, and repeatedly flew by the ship throughout the morning. At 2:00 P.M. two Israeli Mirage jet fighters attacked Liberty with rockets and cannon fire, followed by Mystere jet fighters attacking with rockets, napalm, and cannon fire. At 2:35 P.M. three Israeli torpedo boats attacked, launching at least five torpedoes, one of which struck Liberty in its intelligence space. The Israeli boats also raked the ship with machine guns, firing at topside personnel and life rafts in the water before breaking off the attack at 3:15 P.M. Liberty was severely damaged, thirty-four men were killed and 171 were wounded. As the torpedo boats retired, two Israeli assault helicopters arrived, but did not attack (U.S. sources claim they were carrying troops, Israeli sources claim they were sent to assist and evacuate wounded). An hour later the torpedo boats returned to offer assistance, which was refused by Liberty. The ship was able to clear the area under its own power and rendezvoused with U.S. Navy ships the next day.⁴⁰

⁴⁰Ennes, pp. 70-124; Goulding, pp. 93-113; "Israelis, in Error, Attack U.S. Navy Ship," New York Times, June 9, 1967, p. 1; "U.S. Investigating Attack on Vessel," New York Times, June 10, 1967, p. 15; Richard K. Smith, "The Violation of the Liberty," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 104 (June 1978): 64-8. For the Israeli version of the attack, see Israeli Defense Forces, "Preliminary Inquiry," Decision of Examining Judge Sgan Alux Y. Yerulshalmi,

Liberty was in communication with the Sixth Fleet and communications stations ashore via high frequency radio-teletype and high frequency single sideband voice radio (the CINCUSNAVEUR "High Frequency Command Net," commonly referred to as "HICOM"). Except during periods when her radios were out of commission due to Israeli attacks, Liberty was able to report that she was under attack directly to the Sixth Fleet's carriers. Liberty apparently was unable to communicate with the Sixth Fleet during the first half hour of the attack (2:00 P.M. to about 2:30 P.M.) due to power outages and damage to radio antennas and transmitters. Ennes has claimed that the Israelis jammed Liberty's radios, but this cannot be substantiated and could well have been electromagnetic interference rather than deliberate jamming.⁴¹

USS Saratoga (CVA 60), steaming southwest of Crete, first received a voice report from Liberty at about 2:30 P.M., stating "I am under attack. My posit [position] 31-23N, 33-25E. I have been hit. Request immed [immediate]

Preliminary Inquiry File 1/67, July 21, 1967; Captain Yaakov Nitzan, Israeli Navy, "Comment and Discussion," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 104 (November 1978): 111-12; Hirsh Goodman and Zeev Schiff, "The Attack on the Liberty," The Atlantic Monthly, September 1984, pp. 78-84.

⁴¹Ennes, pp. 89-92, 118-19. There were no reports from Sixth Fleet units of communications jamming during the attack on Liberty. What Liberty's radiomen detected was probably Israeli electronic countermeasures (ECM) intended to jam air search and fire control radars, which would have been normal if the Israeli pilots thought they were attacking an armed warship.

assistance."⁴² Saratoga requested authentication of this report (Prudent and required, but much to the annoyance of Liberty), then relayed it to Commander Sixth Fleet (COMSIXTHFLT) and Commander in Chief U.S. Naval Forces Europe (CINCUSNAVEUR). About five minutes later Saratoga received and immediately relayed a second voice report from Liberty, stating "Three unidentified gunboats approaching, vessels now . . ." ⁴³ Liberty did not finish the transmission, probably due to the Israeli attack. At about 2:43 P.M., in the midst of the Israeli torpedo boat attack, Saratoga received and relayed a third voice report from Liberty, stating "Under attack and hit badly."⁴⁴ At 2:53 P.M. Saratoga received and relayed a fourth voice report from Liberty, stating "Hit by torpedo starboard side. Listing badly. Need assistance immediately."⁴⁵ These are

⁴²USS Saratoga (CVA 60) message, USS SARATOGA 081235Z JUN 67, June 8, 1967 (Unclassified. Liberty incident file, Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC). Saratoga was relaying over radioteletype a report received over HF/SSB voice radio. Saratoga probably preceded the radioteletype message with a voice radio report to CTF 60 (the Carrier Strike Force commander) or COMSIXTHFLT.

⁴³USS Saratoga message, USS SARATOGA 081237Z JUN 67, June 8, 1967 (Unclassified. Liberty incident file, Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC).

⁴⁴USS Saratoga message, USS SARATOGA 081245Z JUN 67, June 8, 1967 (Unclassified. Liberty incident file, Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC).

⁴⁵USS Saratoga message, USS SARATOGA 081254Z JUN 67, June 8, 1967 (Unclassified. Liberty incident file, Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC).

the reports on which COMSIXTHFLT and the chain of command up to the President based their initial decisions on how to respond. An important point is that none of these reports give the identity of the attackers. COMSIXTHFLT did not know the identity of the attackers until after he had ordered initial actions in support of Liberty.

Vice Admiral Martin, COMSIXTHFLT, acting on his own authority, responded to Liberty's reports that she was under attack by immediately ordering Saratoga and USS America (CVA 66) to launch aircraft to defend Liberty against further attacks.⁴⁶ This order apparently was first given over voice radio at about 2:40 P.M., then followed with a message order at 2:50 P.M.:

America launch four armed A-4's to proceed to 31-23N 33-25E to defend USS Liberty who is now under attack by gunboats. Provide fighter cover and tankers. Relieve on station. Saratoga launch four⁴⁷ armed A-1's ASAP [as soon as possible] same mission.

Commander Task Force 60 (CTF 60), the Carrier Strike Force,

⁴⁶ Rear Admiral Wylie, letter to author, March 28, 1988. There was no question that Vice Admiral Martin had authority to use force to defend Liberty. Admiral Horacio Rivero, Vice Chief of Naval Operations in 1967, has stated, in reference to the Liberty incident, that "No commander needs permission to defend himself, his forces, or other U.S. forces under attack when he can assist. Any commander who asks permission to do so, instead of acting first, should be relieved." Admiral Horacio Rivero, Jr., letter to author, March 10, 1988.

⁴⁷ Commander Sixth Fleet message, COMSIXTHFLT 081250Z JUN 67, June 8, 1967 (Declassified 1979. Liberty incident file, Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC).

later specified that America was to launch four armed F-4s as fighter cover for the attack aircraft. Because the carriers did not have planes on alert to support Liberty, the A-4s and A-1s had to be fueled and armed and their pilots briefed, which would take about an hour. The estimated launch times were 3:45 P.M. for America's A-4s and 4:00 P.M. for Saratoga's A-1s. The first planes were estimated to arrive over Liberty at 5:15 P.M. Vice Admiral Martin also ordered Task Force 60 to close Liberty's position, and ordered the destroyers USS George F. Davis (DD 937) and USS Massey (DD 778) to rendezvous with Liberty at best speed.⁴⁸ COMSIXTHFLT told Liberty over voice radio

⁴⁸ Commander Sixth Fleet message, COMSIXTHFLT 081320Z JUN 67, June 8, 1967 (Unclassified. Liberty incident file, Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC). The planes launched at 3:45 P.M. and 4:00 P.M. were the first launched specifically to defend Liberty. Ennes claims that prior to this America launched nuclear-armed alert aircraft to defend Liberty, but that they were recalled when higher authorities learned of it. See Ennes, pp. 89-90. This is undoubtedly false. America was conducting routine flight operations for training at the time Liberty was attacked, so the earlier launches described by Ennes were probably training missions. It is likely, however, that the carriers did launch their alert aircraft, but not to defend Liberty. It would have been routine for the carriers to have armed fighters on alert for air defense in the event of a surprise air attack. Additionally, it would have been routine in 1967 for the carriers to have nuclear-armed strike aircraft on alert for general war contingencies. Launching these alert fighters and strike aircraft would have been a normal response to an attack on a U.S. Navy ship: the fighters to defend the carriers (which were far more valuable than Liberty) and the strike aircraft to circle in a safe holding area (ensuring availability for wartime tasking). But none of these planes would have been sent to defend Liberty.

that help was on the way and sent Liberty a message stating "Your flash traffic received. Sending aircraft to cover you. Surface units on the way. Keep SITREPs [situation reports] coming."⁴⁹

The actions that Vice Admiral Martin did not take were as important as those he did take. He did not order attacks on Soviet forces in the Mediterranean or retaliation against Egyptian forces or airfields. The actions he ordered were strictly limited to the defense of Liberty. The rules of engagement he issued (described below) were carefully crafted to avoid further incidents. The restraint and prudence shown by Vice Admiral Martin made a substantial contribution to preventing the Liberty incident from escalating to a superpower confrontation.

At 3:15 P.M. COMSIXTHFLT made an initial voice report to CINCUSNAVEUR and Commander in Chief U.S. Forces Europe (USCINCEUR) stating that Liberty was under attack and that he was taking action to defend her. At 3:30 P.M. COMSIXTHFLT sent a message situation report (SITREP) describing in greater detail the actions he had ordered and informing USCINCEUR that he had declared the forces attacking Liberty hostile.⁵⁰ This illustrates the exercise

⁴⁹ Commander Sixth Fleet message, COMSIXTHFLT 081305Z JUN 67, June 8, 1967 (Unclassified. Liberty incident file, Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC); Ennes, pp. 89-90.

⁵⁰ COMSIXTHFLT 081320Z JUN 67.

of delegated authority within the U.S. command system: the on-scene commander initiates action, then immediately informs his superiors of the actions he ordered. COMSIXTHFLT informed USCINCEUR of his actions before the planes were launched, allowing USCINCEUR to exercise control by negation should it have been necessary. None of Vice Admiral Martin's orders were countermanded by higher authorities.

Vice Admiral Martin used his authority to declare a threatening force hostile in response to reports from Liberty that she was under attack. After ordering aircraft launched to defend Liberty, COMSIXTHFLT at 3:39 P.M. sent the following rules of engagement to the carriers:

1. IAW [In accordance with] CINCUSNAVEUR INST [Instruction] P03120.5B forces attacking Liberty are declared hostile.
2. You are authorized to use force including destruction as necessary to control the situation. Do not use more force than required. Do not pursue any unit toward land for reprisal purposes. Purpose of counterattack is to protect Liberty only.
3. Brief all pilots [on the] contents [of] this msg [message].
4. In addition brief pilots that Egyptian territorial limit [is] only 12 miles and Liberty [is] right on edge. Do not fly between Liberty and shoreline except as required to carry out provisions [of] para [paragraph] 2 above. Brief fighter cover that any attacks on attack aircraft, Liberty, or they themselves is hostile act and para two above applies.⁵¹

⁵¹ Commander Sixth Fleet message, COMSIXTHFLT 081339Z JUN 67, June 8, 1967 (Declassified 1979. Liberty incident file, Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC)

In a separate message COMSIXTHFLT emphasized "Ensure pilots do not repeat do not fly over land."⁵² Vice Admiral Martin thus took precautions to avoid incidents involving the aircraft sent to defend Liberty.

Saratoga and America launched their attack aircraft between 3:45 P.M. and 4:00 P.M. At 4:14 P.M. the U.S. Defense Attache Office (DAO) in Tel Aviv sent a message to COMSIXTHFLT and the chain of command reporting that Israel had informed the U.S. Naval Attache of an accidental attack on a U.S. ship off the Sinai. This was the first indication received as to the identity of the attackers. Shortly thereafter, at 4:22 P.M., Liberty reported that she had identified the attackers as Israeli. In response to these reports and a report from Liberty that the attacks had ended, COMSIXTHFLT at about 4:30 P.M. ordered the attack aircraft recalled. COMSIXTHFLT reported to CINCUSNAVEUR and USCINCEUR at 4:39 P.M. that he had recalled the aircraft sent to defend Liberty.⁵³ Thus, by about 4:30 P.M. the immediate crisis was over and there was little likelihood of further armed clashes involving U.S. forces.

Guidance from Washington lagged far behind the pace of events in the eastern Mediterranean. It was not until 4:16

⁵² Commander Sixth Fleet message, COMSIXTHFLT 081336Z JUN 67, June 8, 1967 (Unclassified. Liberty incident file, Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC)

⁵³ Ennes, pp. 89-92, 118-19; Goulding, pp. 97-98.

P.M. that JCS sent a message authorizing use of force to defend Liberty, and not until 4:46 P.M. that authorization from the Secretary of Defense to use force was received and passed on by USCINCEUR. Both of these messages apparently were sent before Washington learned that Israel was responsible for the attack. Neither of the messages had any impact on actions taken by the Sixth Fleet. The JCS message would have been received by Vice Admiral Martin about the same time he received the DAO Tel Aviv message reporting Israeli responsibility for the attack. Secretary of Defense authorization to use force would have been received by Vice Admiral Martin about fifteen minutes after he ordered recall of the planes sent to defend Liberty.⁵⁴ At 5:29 P.M., almost an hour after Vice Admiral Martin had recalled his planes, JCS sent a message rescinding authorization to use force to defend Liberty.⁵⁵ Top-level civilian and military officials in Washington thus had no direct role in controlling tactical decisions in the Mediterranean after Liberty was attacked. Vice Admiral Martin acted entirely on his own authority, basing his decisions on CINCUSNAVEUR standing peacetime rules of engagement.

⁵⁴ Under other tactical circumstances late arrival of such messages could seriously complicate crisis management efforts, prompting new fighting after initial disengagement.

⁵⁵ Vice Admiral Martin may have received verbal orders to recall his planes before the JCS message rescinding authorization to use force was sent, but the author could find no evidence of this.

COMSIXTHFLT directed the destroyers Davis and Massey to continue at best speed to rendezvous with Liberty, and provided them with air cover as they steamed eastward through the night. Task Force 60 also steamed eastward to rendezvous with Liberty. The destroyers rendezvoused with Liberty early on June 9, and later that morning helicopters from America began evacuating Liberty's wounded.⁵⁶

In some respects tensions were greater in Washington than in the Mediterranean during the attack on Liberty. Secretary of Defense McNamara initially thought that Soviet forces had attacked Liberty:

In the case of the Liberty in the Mediterranean in June as an example, I thought the Liberty had been attacked by Soviet forces. Thank goodness, our carrier commanders did not launch immediately against the Soviet forces who were operating in the Mediterranean at the time. I then thought it had been attacked by Egyptian forces. Who else could have done it? Thank goodness, we did not launch against the Egyptians.⁵⁷ We took time to find out it was the Israelis.

In contrast to McNamara, the Navy chain of command was confident that the Soviets had not conducted the attack on

⁵⁶ Ennes, pp. 141, 144-46; Goulding, pp. 97-98.

⁵⁷ "Secretary Rusk and Secretary of Defense McNamara Discuss Viet-Nam and Korea on 'Meet the Press'," Department of State Bulletin 58 (February 26, 1968): 271. Also see Goulding, p. 97; Authorization for Military Procurement, Research and Development, Fiscal Year 1969, and Reserve Strength, Hearings, 90th Congress, Second Session (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1968), p. 47 (Cited hereafter as Authorization for Military Procurement, 1969); Jonathan T. Howe, Multicrises: Sea Power and Global Politics in the Missile Age (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1971), p. 102.

Liberty. COMSIXTHFLT and CTF 60 took no actions against Soviet naval forces in the Mediterranean. Vice Admiral Donald D. Engen, Commanding Officer of America in 1967, states that the Sixth Fleet knew the Soviets could not have conducted the attack because there were no Soviet aircraft or naval vessels in the vicinity of Liberty. Rear Admiral Wylie states that there was no concern at CINCUSNAVEUR that the Soviets had conducted the attack, and Admiral Horacio Rivero states that there was no concern on the CNO's staff that the Soviets had conducted the attack.⁵⁸ It was thus the more accurate picture that on-scene commanders had of the local tactical situation and their compliance with standing rules of engagement that prevented a clash with Soviet or Egyptian forces. In retrospect, given McNamara's inaccurate suspicions as to who had attacked Liberty, it is perhaps fortunate that the Secretary of Defense was not able to directly control Sixth Fleet actions during the incident.

Officials in Washington made an important contribution to preventing the Liberty incident from escalating to a superpower confrontation by notifying the Soviet Union of the attack and the U.S. response to it. In his memoirs,

⁵⁸Vice Admiral Donald D. Engen, letter to author, March 21, 1988; Rear Admiral Wylie, letter to author, March 28, 1988; Admiral Rivero, letter to author, March 10, 1988. Also see Howe, p. 103; Anthony R. Wells, "The June 1967 Arab-Israeli War," in Bradford Dismukes and James McConnell, eds., Soviet Naval Diplomacy (New York: Pergamon Press, 1979), p. 167.

President Johnson describes his use of the "hot line" to inform the Soviets of the attack and that U.S. warplanes had been sent to the scene:

There was a possibility that the incident might lead to even greater misfortune, and it was precisely to avoid further confusion and tragedy that I sent a message to Chairman Kosygin on the hot line. I told him exactly what had happened and advised him that carrier aircraft were on their way to the scene to investigate. I wanted him to know, I said, that investigation was the sole purpose of these flights, and I hoped he would inform the proper parties. Kosygin replied that our message had been received and the information had been relayed immediately to the Egyptians.⁵⁹

President Johnson somewhat distorted the mission of the planes that had been sent to assist Liberty--they were fully armed and had been ordered to defend her, rather than just investigate. Portraying their mission as investigation was probably intended to allay Soviet and Egyptian concerns. The President's use of the hot line was important because Sixth Fleet actions in support of Liberty--flying attack planes and fighters into a war zone, close to Egyptian territory--could have been misperceived as imminent U.S. intervention in the war.

Israel officially claimed that it had "erroneously" attacked Liberty believing that it was an Egyptian vessel, and apologized for the attack. The U.S. Government did not officially accept the Israeli explanation that the attack

⁵⁹ Johnson, Vantage Point, p. 301. Also see Hugh Sidey, "Over the Hot Line--the Middle East," Life, June 16, 1967, p. 24B.

was a mistake, but, by accepting the Israeli apology and not demanding a full accounting for the incident, tacitly accepted the accident explanation. After an initial burst of outrage, public opinion in the United States soon forgot about the attack--reflecting U.S. Government handling of the incident. In June 1968 Israel paid \$3.3 million to the families of those killed, in April 1969 paid \$3.5 million to the men wounded in the attack, and in December 1980 agreed to pay \$6 million for damage to the ship.⁶⁰

Findings

This section will review the 1967 attack on the Liberty to answer the four research questions. The first question is did interactions at the tactical and political levels become decoupled during or after the attack on the U.S. Navy ship? At least two of the potential causes of decoupled interactions were present during the incident: communications and information flow problems, and a fast-paced tactical environment. Although these factors prevented political-level leaders from exercising direct control over Sixth Fleet actions, decoupling did not occur. The actions ordered by Vice Admiral Martin were restrained and anticipated the desires of top-level officials in Washington. COMSIXTHFLT carefully spelled out rules of

⁶⁰ Ennes, pp. 154-58, 171-72, 184-91; Goulding pp. 123-24, 134-35; Smith, pp. 69-70.

engagement intended to avoid unnecessary incidents while defending Liberty. Thus, although interactions were stratified during the incident--evolving independently at the political and tactical levels--they were not decoupled. The pattern was one of parallel stratified interactions: tactical-level military actions that support the crisis management objectives of national leaders even though not under the direct control of those leaders.

The second question is, when stratified interactions become decoupled, what factors inhibit escalation dynamics from occurring at the tactical level and being transmitted upward to the strategic and political levels of interaction? Although tactical-level interaction did not become decoupled in the Liberty incident, the case does shed light on three escalation-inhibiting factors. First, by fully complying with with the standing rules of engagement and limiting his actions to those necessary to defend Liberty, the on-scene commander contributed to avoiding an unnecessary clash with Soviet or Egyptian forces. Second, use of the hot line apparently helped prevent the Soviets and Egyptians from misperceiving the intent of actions taken by the on-scene commander (or apparently would have, if the planes had not been recalled before reaching Liberty). Third, rapid Israeli notification of the United States that it had inadvertently attacked a U.S. naval vessel cleared up confusion in Washington and resulted in Sixth Fleet planes

being recalled before they entered the war zone off the coast of Sinai. The last two factors emphasize the importance of communications among the parties to a crisis for avoiding misperception and escalation.

The third question is did actions taken with naval forces send inadvertent political signals to adversaries or allies, and did inadvertent military incidents occur that affected efforts to manage the crisis? Neither problem arose during the Liberty incident. Vice Admiral Martin carefully limited the Sixth Fleet response to the attack and the President used the hot line to prevent misperceptions from arising. The Israeli attack on Liberty was itself an inadvertent military incident, momentarily complicating U.S. crisis management efforts in the Middle East War, but no further incidents occurred during the Sixth Fleet's response to the attack.

The fourth question is did any of the three tensions between political and military considerations arise during the response to the attack on Liberty? None of the three tensions was serious during the Liberty incident. There was little tension between political and military considerations because the incident was over before significant diplomatic activity--other than hot line messages--could begin. The limitations that Vice Admiral Martin placed on his forces supported U.S. political objectives in the crisis. There was little tension between the need for top-level control

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and the need for tactical-level flexibility and initiative because the incident evolved too rapidly for officials in Washington to play a direct role in controlling events. JCS and the Secretary of Defense could only reaffirm orders already given by COMSIXTHFLT. There was no tension between performance of crisis missions and maintaining readiness to perform wartime missions because the Sixth Fleet response to the attack was small-scale and of short duration.

The 1968 Seizure of the Pueblo

USS Pueblo was launched in 1944 as FP-344, a light cargo ship in service with the Army Transportation Corps, and was mothballed in 1954. The ship was delivered to the Navy in 1966, renamed Pueblo, underwent extensive conversion for its new duties, and was commissioned on May 13, 1967. Pueblo's primary mission, like that of Liberty, was collection of electronic and communications intelligence, although it was designated an environmental research ship (AGER) with the cover of conducting oceanographic and communications research. The ship was 179 feet in length, had a displacement of 970 tons, and a top speed of thirteen knots. The crew consisted of six officers, seventy-five enlisted men, and two civilian oceanographers. Armament was two .50-calibre machine guns--installed in the wake of the Liberty incident--which had little value for self-defense. Pueblo satisfied the requirement for an economical intelligence

collection platform, but was extremely vulnerable--the worst possible vessel to be operating near the coast of a country possessed by a fanatical and violent hostility to the United States.

In 1968 detente had not yet lessened Soviet-American Cold War tensions, the United States was deeply involved in the Vietnam War, and the protest movement against the war was rapidly gaining momentum. The international setting on the Korean Peninsula was dominated by North Korean hostility to the governments of South Korea and the United States. Although an uneasy truce had been in effect on the Peninsula since the armistice of July 1953, numerous armed clashes had occurred near the demilitarized zone (DMZ) and in South Korean waters due to North Korean efforts to infiltrate agents into the South. The number of DMZ incidents had increased sharply in 1967.

Political and military tensions had risen significantly on the Korean Peninsula in the two weeks before Pueblo arrived on station as the North Koreans renewed talk of uniting the Peninsula militarily. North Korea also stepped up its propaganda claims of South Korean and American provocations against the North, and warned that military action would be taken against incursions into its territorial waters. On January 21, 1968, a team of 31 North Korean troops infiltrated the DMZ to assassinate South Korean President Park Chung Hee, but were stopped just short

of the presidential residence in a bloody confrontation with South Korean police and troops. This incident further increased tensions on the Peninsula, bringing North and South Korea to the brink of a military confrontation.⁶¹

Pueblo's mission was authorized through normal channels. On December 17, 1967, Commander U.S. Naval Forces Japan (COMNAVFORJAPAN), Pueblo's operational commander, submitted a mission proposal with a threat assessment that the mission entailed "minimal risk." Commander Seventh Fleet (COMSEVENTHFLT), who commanded all U.S. Navy combat forces in the Western Pacific, did not participate in evaluating the mission proposal (but was informed of the mission after it was approved).⁶² COMNAVFORJAPAN submitted the Pueblo mission proposal to Commander in Chief U.S. Pacific Fleet (CINCPACFLT), whose staff reviewed and endorsed the proposal and accompanying threat assessment. CINCPACFLT forwarded the proposal to Commander in Chief Pacific (CINCPAC), whose staff also reviewed and endorsed

⁶¹Trevor Armbrister, A Matter of Accountability (New York: Cooward-McCann, 1970), pp. 27-33, 168-9; Lloyd M. Bucher, Bucher: My Story (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Co., 1970), pp. 392-3; Edward R. Murphy, Jr., Second in Command (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971), pp. 117, 378; B.C. Koh, "The Pueblo Incident in Perspective," Asian Survey 9 (April 1969): 272-3.

⁶²Admiral William F. Bringle, Commander Seventh Fleet in 1968, letter to author, March 23, 1988; Vice Admiral Joe P. Moorer, Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations on the staff of Commander Seventh Fleet in 1968, letter to author, March 15, 1988.

it. CINCPAC then forwarded the proposal to the Joint Reconnaissance Center.⁶³

The Joint Reconnaissance Center (JRC) served JCS as the central coordination center for peacetime reconnaissance and surveillance missions. JRC passed the proposal to the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) for a final evaluation of the proposal and threat assessment. DIA concurred with the assessment of minimal risk and returned the proposal to JRC. JRC added Pueblo's mission proposal to hundreds of others in the "Monthly Reconnaissance Schedule, January 1968," which was reviewed by the military services, Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), National Security Agency (NSA), and the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research. After this review, which generated no objections to the minimal risk assessment, the Monthly Reconnaissance Schedule was submitted to the Joint Chiefs. On this occasion the Operations Deputies, acting on behalf of the Chiefs, actually approved the schedule. The Monthly Reconnaissance Schedule was then submitted to Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul H. Nitze, acting on behalf of Secretary McNamara, and the Senior Interdepartmental Review

⁶³ Admiral Sharp, "Reminiscences," pp. 567-68; Admiral John J. Hyland, Commander in Chief U.S. Pacific Fleet in 1968, letter to author, March 24, 1988; U.S. Congress, House Committee on Armed Services, Inquiry Into the USS Pueblo and EC-121 Plane Incidents, 91st Congress, First Session, (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1969), pp. 1636-46 (Cited hereafter as Pueblo Inquiry); Armbrister, pp. 187-95.

group, which handled routine intelligence matters and other policy issues on behalf of the National Security Council, for final approval. On December 29, 1967, Nitze approved the Monthly Reconnaissance Schedule, including Pueblo's apparently routine mission.⁶⁴

The United States had previously conducted surveillance off the coast of North Korea with specially-equipped destroyers and the intelligence ship USS Banner (AGER 1), a vessel similar to Pueblo. Similar surveillance missions conducted off the coasts of the Soviet Union and China were often subjected to harassment, but had never been attacked. North Korea had not reacted to previous surveillance missions and had a very small navy, so the danger to Pueblo was assessed as minimal. United States military and intelligence officials believed that North Korea would not attack a U.S. vessel in international waters. A mission off the coast of North Korea was selected for Pueblo's first operation because it appeared to be a relatively safe way to train an inexperienced crew for more demanding and dangerous missions off China and the Soviet Union. Admiral John J. Hyland, then CINCPACFLT, has aptly described Pueblo's first mission as a "shakedown" voyage.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Pueblo Inquiry, pp. 1636-46; Authorization for Military Procurement, 1969, pp. 42-43; Armbrister, pp. 187-95.

⁶⁵ Admiral Hyland, letter to Author, March 24, 1988. Also see Pueblo Inquiry, pp. 1636-40; Armbrister, pp. 185-90. For background on similar missions prior to Pueblo,

Because Pueblo's mission had been assessed as minimal risk, COMNAVFORJAPAN did not request that COMSEVENTHFLT or Commander Fifth Air Force designate specific naval or air forces for quick-reaction support of Pueblo in the event of an attack. Fifth Air Force had been alerted to provide contingency support for Banner on some previous missions (Seventh Fleet had not because almost all of its ships were committed to the Vietnam War). Additionally, there were no contingency plans for support of Pueblo in an emergency.⁶⁶

On the morning of January 23, 1968, Pueblo was 15.5 miles from the nearest land, dead in the water off the North Korean port of Wonsan. A North Korean SO-1 patrol craft challenged Pueblo at about noon, demanding the ship's

see Vice Admiral John L. Chew, Commander U.S. Naval Forces Japan (1964-1965), "Reminiscences of Vice Admiral John L. Chew, U.S. Navy (Retired)," (Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, Oral History Program, February 1979), pp. 381-85; Vice Admiral Edwin B. Hooper, Commander Service Force Pacific (Pueblo's administrative commander) in 1968, "Reminiscences of Vice Admiral Edwin B. Hooper, U.S. Navy (Retired)," (Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, Oral History Program, 1978), pp. 431-34.

⁶⁶ Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, quoted in Authorization for Military Procurement, 1969, p. 53; "Secretary Rusk and Secretary of Defense McNamara Discuss Viet-Nam and Korea on 'Meet the Press'," Department of State Bulletin 58 (February 26, 1968): 271; Vice Admiral Kent L. Lee, Commanding Officer of USS Enterprise (CVAN 65) in 1968, interview by author, February 5, 1988; Admiral Bringle, letter to author, March 23, 1988; Vice Admiral J.P. Moorer, letter to author, March 15, 1988; Pueblo Inquiry, pp. 1621-22. Also see Rear Admiral Daniel V. Gallery, The Pueblo Incident (New York: Doubleday, 1970), p. 27; Armbrister, pp. 64-66, 117-22, 185-90, 199-200; Bucher, pp. 107-8, 124-26; Murphy, pp. 84-85.

identity and ordering it to "Heave to or I will fire." The patrol boat was soon joined by three P-4 torpedo boats and Pueblo was overflown by North Korean Mig jet fighters. One of the torpedo boats had a boarding party at the ready. Pueblo started heading for sea, but at 1:27 P.M. was fired on by the SO-1 and the P-4's. Shortly thereafter Pueblo halted. In response to a signal to "Follow me" from the SO-1, Pueblo started into Wonsan harbor. After once attempting to stop, which drew a barrage of fire that caused the only death in the incident, Pueblo was ordered to halt and at 2:32 P.M. was boarded and seized by the North Koreans. At about 4:45 P.M. Pueblo entered Wonsan, and at 8:30 P.M. moored to a pier in the harbor.⁶⁷

Pueblo was in communications with the U.S. Naval Communications Station at Kamiseya, Japan over high frequency encrypted radioteletype at the time of the attack. Voice communications normally were available directly with Navy commanders (at sea and ashore) and radio stations in Japan and Hawaii over the high frequency single sideband command net ("HICOM"). At the time of the attack, however, Pueblo was unable to use this circuit due to a frequency shift that was in progress, degrading the net.

⁶⁷ Pueblo Inquiry, pp. 1657-61; Authorization for Military Procurement, 1969, pp. 40-41; Admiral Sharp, "Reminiscences," pp. 569-71; Bucher, pp. 167-212; Murphy, pp. 120-52; Goulding, pp. 267-72. Also see Armbrister, pp. 32-60, 69-78; "North Korea Seizes Navy Ship," New York Times, January 24, 1968, p. 1.

Prior to being boarded, Pueblo transmitted two standard operational reports by radioteletype to Kamiseya. These operational reports, designated "OPREP-3" reports in the joint operational reporting system, were both sent by Pueblo in the "PINNACLE" category--reserved for emergencies and other serious matters of "national level" interest. OPREP-3 PINNACLE reports were automatically sent to every level in a unit's operational chain of command, including the National Military Command Center, JCS, and the White House.

Additionally, Pueblo's radiomen sent informal real-time status reports to Kamiseya over radioteletype until the ship was boarded. Such informal messages were known as "operator chatter" and had to be put into official messages by Kamiseya before commands not listening to Pueblo directly could receive them.⁶⁸

Pueblo sent its first OPREP-3 PINNACLE at 12:52 P.M., local time in the Sea of Japan (10:52 P.M. on December 22 in Washington, D.C.). In this message Pueblo reported the presence of the North Korean naval vessels and their order to "Heave to or I will fire." The message was relayed by Kamiseya and received by the COMNAVFORJAPAN duty officer twenty-three minutes after it was sent. No action was taken on this message by the COMNAVFORJAPAN staff because it appeared to describe harassment much less severe than Banner

⁶⁸ Pueblo Inquiry, pp. 1658-67; Armbrister, pp. 43-47, 64-68.

had experienced from the Soviets and Chinese on previous missions. Because Pueblo had assigned this message a relatively low transmission priority, it was placed in a queue behind other messages of higher priority awaiting transmission to commands outside Japan.⁶⁹

Pueblo sent its second OPREP-3 PINNACLE at 1:18 P.M., local time in the Sea of Japan (11:18 P.M. on December 22 in Washington, D.C.). In this message Pueblo reported that the North Koreans had ordered the ship to follow them and were preparing to board Pueblo. Kamiseya immediately relayed this message to COMNAVFORJAPAN, where the duty officer received it only four minutes after it was sent by Pueblo. This was the message that served as a trigger--alerting the chain of command that there was a genuine emergency in the Sea of Japan. The COMNAVFORJAPAN staff began notifying other commands of the emergency. At 1:45 P.M., twenty-seven minutes after Pueblo sent the second OPREP-3 PINNACLE, Rear Admiral Frank L. Johnson, Commander U.S. Naval Forces Japan, was notified in Tokyo by telephone of the emergency. At 1:53 P.M., thirty-five minutes after Pueblo sent the second OPREP-3 PINNACLE, the duty officer at Fifth Air Force headquarters was notified via secure telephone of the emergency.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

Kamiseya retransmitted Pueblo's second OPREP-3

PINNACLE to Commander Fifth Air Force, which received it at 2:23 P.M., and to USS Enterprise (CVAN 65), which received it at 2:38 P.M.--minutes after Pueblo was boarded by the North Koreans. Additionally, COMNAVFORJAPAN sent several "CRITIC" messages containing Pueblo's operator chatter describing the North Korean attack. At the time, CRITIC was the highest priority of message, reserved for strategic warning and the alerting of National Command Authority of attacks on U.S. forces.⁷¹ As this chronology shows, the Navy communications system was able to maintain connectivity between Pueblo and the radio station at Kamiseya, but experienced serious delays in relaying time-critical messages to the commanders that needed them.

Kamiseya took two actions with with Pueblo's second OPREP-3 PINNACLE. First, Kamiseya immediately retransmitted

⁷¹Ibid. Vice Admiral Lee has stated that Enterprise, then in the East China Sea about 550 nautical miles from Pueblo, monitored Pueblo's operator chatter directly. Vice Admiral Lee, interview by author, February 5, 1988. This is certainly plausible, and means that he would have received Pueblo's reports of the attack real-time. Admiral Bringle, then in the Tonkin Gulf on USS Kitty Hawk (CVA 63), has stated that his radiomen also monitored Pueblo's operator chatter, and that he ordered Enterprise into the Sea of Japan in response to Pueblo's operator chatter. Admiral Bringle, letter to author, March 24, 1988. This is less plausible due to the distance. Admiral Bringle was probably receiving COMNAVFORJAPAN's CRITIC messages relaying the operator chatter. Admiral Sharp, who was visiting Admiral Bringle on Kitty Hawk, has stated that shortly after 5:00 P.M. he and Admiral Bringle received the CRITIC messages forwarding Pueblo's operator chatter. See Admiral Sharp, "Reminiscences," p. 572.

it to the commands that would normally receive an OPREP-3 PINNACLE: COMSEVENTHFLT, CINCPACFLT, CINCPAC, and the National Military Command Center (NMCC, for JCS watch officers). For unexplained reasons this message was extremely slow in reaching some of the commands, particularly CINCPACFLT and CINCPAC. Second, about eighteen minutes after it was sent by Pueblo, Kamiseya retransmitted the second OPREP-3 PINNACLE as a CRITIC message to DIA, NSA, JCS and other commands. This CRITIC message was received by DIA and JCS at 11:57 P.M. (one hour and thirty-nine minutes after Pueblo sent it). JCS Chairman General Earle G. Wheeler was notified of the message at 12:03 A.M., and Secretary of Defense McNamara was notified about twenty minutes later. the White House received the CRITIC at 11:43 P.M. (earlier than JCS), and Situation Room watch officers began notifying National Security Advisor Walt W. Rostow and other top officials of the emergency. According to his memoirs, President Johnson was notified of the emergency at 2:24 A.M.⁷² Meanwhile, Pueblo had been boarded and seized by the North Koreans at 11:35 P.M. (Washington time), and would enter Wonsan at 2:45 A.M. the significance of this chronology is that by the time top-level officials had been notified of the emergency, it was too late to take action to prevent seizure of the ship. If timely action was to be taken to

⁷²Pueblo Inquiry, pp. 1658-67; Armbrister, pp. 43-47; Johnson, Vantage Point, p. 533.

assist Pueblo, military commanders in the Far East would have to order it on their own authority.

U.S. forces in the Far East did not respond to Pueblo's calls for assistance in time to prevent the ship from being captured by North Korea. The Fifth Air Force had seven F-4 fighter-bombers on alert in South Korea, but were configured for nuclear weapons. Commander Fifth Air Force directed that they be reconfigured for conventional weapons to assist Pueblo, but that was a time-consuming process and Sidewinder air-to-air missiles were the only conventional ordnance immediately available (racks for conventional bombs and rockets had to be flown in from Japan). Commander Fifth Air Force also ordered planes dispatched from Okinawa, where there were eighteen fighter-bombers. Two F-105s, armed only with 20 millimeter cannon to save time, were launched at 4:11 P.M., but could not reach Pueblo before dark because they had to land and refuel in South Korea. There were sixteen Air Force and eight Marine Corps attack planes at U.S. bases in Japan--at most about one hour and twenty minutes flight time from Wonsan--but for unknown reasons none were launched.⁷³

The attack carrier Enterprise, escorted by USS Truxton (DLGN 35), was steaming southwest in the East China Sea

⁷³ Pueblo Inquiry, pp. 1622, 1668-73; Authorization for Military Procurement, 1969, p. 46; Armbrister, pp. 61-68, 210-41; "Tie-up of U.S. Jets Laid to Atom Role," New York Times, January 25, 1968, p. 15; Goulding, p. 270.

about 550 nautical miles from Pueblo at the time of the attack. Enterprise carried a total of fifty-nine fighter and attack aircraft (F-4B, A-4E, and A-6A), thirty-five of which were operational on January 23. Rear Admiral H.H. Epes, Commander Task Group 77.5 (the Enterprise task group), received Pueblo's first OPREP-3 PINNACLE at 2:30 P.M., and received Pueblo's second OPREP-3 PINNACLE and the initial CRITIC messages eight minutes later.⁷⁴ Rear Admiral Epes decided not to take immediate action in support of Pueblo, citing five considerations: (a) he had not received any requests to support Pueblo, (b) Pueblo apparently had already been boarded and seized, (c) Pueblo would be in North Korean territorial waters by the time his planes arrived, (d) it would be dark by the time his planes arrived, and (e) his planes would face alerted North Korean air defenses, including surface-to-air missile batteries around Wonsan and superior number of Mig fighters.⁷⁵

Enterprise probably would not have been able to launch attack aircraft in time to prevent Pueblo from being seized. Vice Admiral Lee has stated that "we could have had twenty planes in the air in maybe an hour and a half."⁷⁶ Starting

⁷⁴ Admiral Bringle, letter to author, March 23, 1988; Vice Admiral Lee, interview by author, February 5, 1988; Pueblo Inquiry, pp. 1668-73; Armbrister, pp. 61-68, 210-41.

⁷⁵ Pueblo Inquiry, pp. 1671-72; Armbrister, p. 219.

⁷⁶ Armbrister, p. 219. Also see Pueblo Inquiry, p. 1669.

the clock at 2:40 P.M., which was about the time rear Admiral Epes had sufficient information to understand the seriousness of Pueblo's situation, Enterprise could have had planes in the air by about 4:10 P.M., and the planes could have been over Pueblo at about 5:10 P.M. That is almost three hours after Pueblo was boarded and twenty-five minutes after it reached the mouth of Wonsan Harbor. This supports Vice Admiral Lee's position that "We could have sent an air strike, but it was too late by the time we received messages telling us to respond."⁷⁷ If COMNAVFORJAPAN had requested support from Enterprise as soon as Pueblo's first OPREP-3 PINNACLE was received at 1:21 P.M., Enterprise probably would have been able to place attack aircraft over Pueblo before the ship entered Wonsan.

At 3:06 P.M. Admiral Bringle ordered Enterprise and Truxton to proceed to a position in the Sea of Japan off the coast of South Korea at best speed.⁷⁸ He also directed, however, that "No Task Group 77.5 ship or aircraft take any overt action until further informed."⁷⁹ Enterprise and Truxton received and executed this message at 3:50 P.M.,

⁷⁷ Vice Admiral Lee, interview by author, February 5, 1988. Also see Admiral Sharp, "Reminiscences," p. 576.

⁷⁸ Admiral Bringle, letter to author, March 23, 1988; Vice Admiral J.P. Moorer, letter to author, March 15, 1988; Admiral Sharp. "Reminiscences," pp. 571-72; Pueblo Inquiry, pp. 1669-72; Armbrister, pp. 219-29.

⁷⁹ Pueblo Inquiry, p. 1671. Also see Admiral Sharp, "Reminiscences," p. 572; Armbrister, p. 229.

shortly before Pueblo entered Wonsan. A U.S. navy destroyer was also ordered to the scene, but could not arrive until the next day, well after Pueblo was tied up in Wonsan. Thus, no actions were taken that could have prevented the North Koreans from seizing the Pueblo.⁸⁰

There were three principle reasons for the lack of an effective response by U.S. forces in the Far East: First, there were no contingency plans to support Pueblo in the event of an attack, and no air or naval forces were designated to provide such support. Vice Admiral Lee had described the limitations this creates:

The Navy has forces all over the world. There's no way we can predict incidents in all the places we operate. There's no way you can respond unless you are prepared to. Unless you are on an alert basis, it is difficult to respond quickly. This applies to staffs, too: If⁸¹ they are unprepared, they can't respond quickly.

U.S. forces were unprepared to provide quick-reaction support to Pueblo when she was attacked. Neither the Air force nor the Navy had aircraft on alert to support Pueblo. Aircraft that were not ready for a strike mission would have required one to two hours for fueling and arming and pilot briefings before they could even take off. The Navy did not

⁸⁰ Admiral Bringle, letter to author, March 23, 1988; Vice Admiral Lee, interview by author, February 5, 1988; Pueblo Inquiry, pp. 1668-73; Armbrister, pp. 61-68, 210-41, 257-65; Goulding, pp. 269-90.

⁸¹ Vice Admiral Lee, interview by author, February 5, 1988.

have any warships in the Sea of Japan covering the Pueblo mission. The nearest U.S. warships would have required at least eighteen hours to reach Pueblo.⁸² According to Admiral Hyland, then CINCPACFLT, "At the time of the incident there wasn't anyone poised and ready to take action of any kind against North Korea. . . . It was all over before anyone except Pueblo herself could do anything."⁸³

The lack of contingency plans and alert forces thus severely limited the military options available to U.S. commanders in the Far East.

The second reason for the lack of an effective response was that Air Force and navy commanders in the Far East concluded that they would not be able to provide adequate forces to support Pueblo prior to the ship entering Wonsan Harbor, or prior to darkness, when providing air support would be extremely difficult.⁸⁴ According to JCS Chairman General Wheeler:

⁸² Admiral Hyland, letter to author, March 24, 1988; Admiral Bringle, letter to author, March 23, 1988; Admiral Sharp, "Reminiscences," pp. 573-74; Vice Admiral Lee, interview by author, February 5, 1988; Vice Admiral J.P. Moorer, letter to author, March 15, 1988; Pueblo Inquiry, pp. 1621-22, 1668-73. Also see Armbrister, pp. 61-68, 117-22, 185-90, 199-204.

⁸³ Admiral Hyland, letter to author, March 24, 1988.

⁸⁴ Admiral Bringle, letter to author, March 23, 1988; Admiral Sharp, "Reminiscences," pp. 573-74; Pueblo Inquiry, pp. 1668-73; Authorization for Military Procurement, 1969, pp. 47-48, 52-53; Johnson, Vantage Point, pp. 534; Armbrister, pp. 219-20, 230-31.

factors considered by all levels in the chain of command when the incident occurred were capabilities of friendly and enemy forces, time of day, weather, and probable hostile reaction. When these factors were assessed against actual times of events associated with the incident, time of receipt of the information that the ship was under attack, and force response time, it was apparent to all levels of command that the Pueblo could not be retrieved by any action prior to the time that the ship entered Wonsan Harbor.

Some observers, notably rear Admiral Daniel V. Gallery and the Special Subcommittee that investigated the incident for the House Armed Services Committee, have argued that U.S. commanders in the Far East were wrong in concluding that they could not provide support to Pueblo in time to prevent her from being seized.⁸⁶ The important point for this study, however, is that U.S. commanders perceived--rightly or wrongly--that they could not provide effective support to Pueblo before the ship and crew were in North Korean hands.

The third factor that inhibited an immediate response was the presence of large numbers of North Korean air force Mig fighters and the close proximity of North Korean surface-to-air missile sites around Wonsan. There is unanimous agreement among military commanders that North Korea would have had superior numbers of fighters in the air over Pueblo: The ship had reported Migs overhead before being captured, indicating that the North Korean air force had been alerted to provide air cover. This did not preclude an

⁸⁵Pueblo Inquiry, p. 1668.

⁸⁶Gallery, pp. 51-56; Pueblo Inquiry, pp. 1669-73.

effort to drive off the attackers, but did mean that U.S. attack aircraft would have to be provided with a strong fighter escort if they were to be effective. It might also have been necessary to strike North Korean surface-to-air missile sites in order to protect the attack aircraft and their fighter escort. Similarly, any Navy warships sent to rescue Pueblo would have required substantial air cover. U.S. military commanders thus believed that once Pueblo had been seized, any response would have to be relatively large-scale and include a strong fighter escort for the strike force. Their judgement was that the North Koreans would not be cowed by only a few attack aircraft, which would be relatively easy to shoot down.⁸⁷ The perception that a large-scale response was called for further increased the time required to mount a response, which in turn reinforced the view that there was not sufficient time to respond before Pueblo was tied up in Wonsan.

Rules of engagement and standing orders did not inhibit U.S. commanders from providing support to Pueblo prior to the ship entering Wonsan. Admiral Hyland, CINCPACFLT, Vice Admiral J.P. Moorer, COMSEVENTHFLT Operations Officer, and Vice Admiral Lee, Commanding Officer of Enterprise, have all stated that the rules of engagement

⁸⁷ Admiral Bringle, letter to author, March 23, 1988; Vice Admiral Lee, interview by author, February 5, 1988; Admiral Sharp, "Reminiscences," pp. 573-74; Pueblo Inquiry, p. 1668; Armbrister, pp. 219-20, 230-31.

permitted Navy units to use force to defend Pueblo.⁸⁸

Admiral Sharp, then CINCPAC, has confirmed this: "There was a standing order in the Pacific Command, as there is every place else in the Navy, that says that anyone in a position to help a ship under attack is to do so without any further orders."⁸⁹

Admiral Bringle, then COMSEVENTHFLT, has explained the authority of U.S. Navy commanders:

When an emergency arises which affects the safety of personnel, ships or aircraft, either civilian or military, Navy Commanders don't wait for specific orders from higher authority to tell them to react. They evaluate the situation quickly and react with the forces which are available to assist, if at all possible,⁹⁰ meanwhile keeping everyone involved fully informed.

According to JCS Chairman General Wheeler, U.S. commanders in the Far East had ample authority to assist Pueblo:

At the time of the attack by the North Korean naval units, the United States had the historic right--codified internationally by Article 51 of the United Nations Charter--to take any action in self-defense proportionate to the attack and necessary to protect the ship. Whatever military steps the United States could have taken within these limits from the air or on the sea to prevent the capture of the USS Pueblo would have been fully justified. There were no rules of engagement limiting going to the aid of Pueblo during this time.⁹¹

The statements by Admiral Bringle and General Wheeler are

⁸⁸ Admiral Hyland, letter to author, March 24, 1988; Vice Admiral J.P. Moorer, letter to author, March 15, 1988; Vice Admiral Lee, interview by author, February 5, 1988.

⁸⁹ Admiral Sharp, "Reminiscences," p. 576.

⁹⁰ Admiral Bringle, letter to author, March 23, 1988.

⁹¹ Quoted in Pueblo Inquiry, p. 1668.

fully consistent with the guidance contained in U.S. standing peacetime rules of engagement since the early 1950s.⁹² Additionally, Secretary of Defense McNamara testified in 1968 that Commander U.S. Naval Forces Japan and Commander Fifth Air Force had authority to take military action without having to get permission from CINCPAC.⁹³

While Pueblo remained in international waters, U.S. military commanders had broad authority to use force to defend or recover the ship. In 1955 President Eisenhower had approved a national Security Council staff proposal that a distinction be drawn between self-defense (including hot pursuit for self-defense) and reprisals. Military commanders were authorized to use force in self-defense, including hot pursuit into the airspace or territorial waters of other nations under certain circumstances. But only the President could order reprisals, generally considered to be any retaliatory attacks against the territory of another country.⁹⁴ Under this doctrine, U.S. forces were authorized to use force to defend or gain release of Pueblo so long as it did not entail attacks against North Korean territory, which would have been reprisals requiring Presidential approval.

⁹²See Chapter IV for a detailed discussion of U.S. peacetime rules of engagement.

⁹³Authorization for Military Procurement, 1969, p. 60.

⁹⁴See Chapter IV.

The peacetime rules of engagement in force in 1968 apparently did not permit hot pursuit into North Korean territorial waters in order to defend or recover Pueblo. Rear Admiral Epes stated that he could not take action in North Korean territorial waters, and General John D. Ryan, Commander in Chief Pacific Air Forces, directed Commander Fifth Air Force to keep his planes over international waters while supporting Pueblo.⁹⁵ Vice Admiral Lee has stated that under the rules of engagement "We could respond to defend a Navy ship in international waters."⁹⁶ Hot pursuit into North Korean territorial waters thus does not appear to have been authorized under the rules of engagement.

Once Pueblo entered Wonsan harbor, the rules of engagement placed severe restrictions on the use of force by U.S. military commanders. An effective rescue mission probably could not have been carried out without suppressing North Korean air and coastal defenses, and there would have been a high risk of weapons directed against North Korean naval vessels inadvertently impacting ashore. Admiral Sharp has stated that an attack on Wonsan would have been "an act of retaliation."⁹⁷ An attack on Wonsan Harbor thus fell in the category of reprisals and required approval by the

⁹⁵Armbrister, pp. 219-20.

⁹⁶Vice Admiral Lee, interview by author, February 5, 1988.

⁹⁷Admiral Sharp, "Reminiscences," p. 573.

President. According to Admiral Hyland, Admiral Bringle, and Vice Admiral J.P. Moorer, Navy commanders had to get authorization from higher authority before taking military action against North Korea.⁹⁸ The Navy report to the Special Subcommittee that investigated the incident states that "Combat action after Pueblo arrived in the harbor could be viewed as retaliatory in nature, requiring approval of higher authority."⁹⁹ Evidently, this was precisely the view held by Navy commanders in the Pacific.

General Wheeler testified that on the morning of January 23, he received a "hold" order from "higher authority," which could only be the Secretary of Defense and the President. This order directed that U.S. forces were to remain beyond eighty nautical miles from the coast of North Korea when operating north of the Korean DMZ. General Wheeler issued this order to CINCPAC by telephone at 10:25 A.M. Washington time (12:25 A.M. the next morning in the Sea of Japan, four hours after Pueblo tied up in Wonsan), and reiterated the verbal order with a message that evening.¹⁰⁰ This was the first restraint placed on U.S. commanders in the Far East by officials in Washington, and came well after

⁹⁸ Admiral Hyland, letter to author, March 24, 1988; Admiral Bringle, letter to author, March 23, 1988; Vice Admiral J.P. Moorer, letter to author, March 15, 1988.

⁹⁹ Pueblo Inquiry, p. 1672.

¹⁰⁰ Pueblo Inquiry, p. 1668; Armbrister, p. 239; Admiral Bringle, letter to author, March 23, 1988.

commanders in the Far East had decided against taking immediate military action against North Korea.

After reviewing the orders that had been given on January 23, 1968, the Special Subcommittee concluded that U.S. military commanders in the Far East had authority to take military action in support of Pueblo:

Since higher authority in Washington had apparently not established a hold order on our forces until 0025 on the 24th of January, Korea time (10:25 Washington time on the 23rd), our operational commanders were apparently not precluded from exercising their own judgement in respect to providing some assistance to the Pueblo. Thus, it would appear that these operational commanders had both the authority and the opportunity to act if they had been able to do so immediately.¹⁰¹

The two qualifications that must be placed in this assessment are, first, that U.S. forces were not authorized to engage North Korean forces inside North Korean territorial waters, and, second, that military actions taken after Pueblo was inside the North Korean port of Wonsan would have constituted reprisals, thus requiring approval of the President. These restrictions essentially halted U.S. military action in support of Pueblo from 4:45 P.M. onward.

President Johnson and his advisors considered a wide range of military options, but quickly decided that none of them were feasible. COMSEVENTHFLT had a contingency plan for retaliatory air strikes against North Korea (reportedly code named "Fried Fish"), which was quickly updated for the

¹⁰¹ Pueblo Inquiry, p. 1673.

Pueblo emergency. The President elected not to carry out retaliatory air strikes. Navy commanders in the Far East also prepared a plan to send a destroyer into Wonsan and tow Pueblo out (which would have entailed large-scale combat operations to suppress North Korean defenses), but this plan was also disapproved by the President.¹⁰² Admiral Thomas H. Moorer, then Chief of Naval Operations, states that the JCS recommended strong action: "The JCS recommended that the U.S. deliver an ultimatum to North Korea to return the ship, and to mass B-52s for an attack. Our recommendation was turned down. McNamara's excuse was 'We've already got one war, we don't need two'."¹⁰³ The President decided against presenting an ultimatum to North Korea.

President Johnson's primary concern was for the safe return of the crew, and he was also reluctant to become involved in a second conflict while deeply engaged in Vietnam. The President authorized two military actions: deployment of some 350 Air Force tactical aircraft to South Korea and a buildup of naval forces in the Sea of Japan. As a political gesture President Johnson ordered twenty-two Air Force reserve squadrons and six Navy reserve squadrons called up to active duty. All of these actions were

¹⁰² Admiral Hyland, letter to author, March 24, 1988; Admiral Bringle, letter to author, March 23, 1988; Vice Admiral J.P. Moorer, letter to author, March 15, 1988.

¹⁰³ Admiral Thomas H. Moorer, interview by author, February 9, 1988. Also see Johnson, Vantage Point, p. 535.

essentially symbolic, as the President had already decided that the United States would not take military action against North Korea.¹⁰⁴

The U.S. naval buildup in the Sea of Japan lasted from January 23 to March 22, 1968. At the height of the buildup, the Navy had over eighteen warships in the Sea of Japan, including three aircraft carriers, two cruisers, and fourteen destroyers. This show of force had no apparent effect on the North Koreans, who kept their air and naval forces close to shore--well clear of the U.S. Seventh Fleet. The Soviet Union, on the other hand, reacted to the U.S. naval presence with vitriolic anti-American propaganda and harassment of the carrier task groups. Initially, five Soviet ships, including three destroyers, an intelligence collection ship (AGI), and an naval research ship, trailed the U.S. carriers. On February 4, Soviet Tu-16 Badger bombers began intense surveillance of the U.S. carriers and repeatedly buzzed them at low altitude. The Soviet Badgers, some carrying clearly visible anti-ship cruise missiles,

¹⁰⁴ Admiral Hyland, letter to author, March 24, 1988; Vice Admiral J.P. Moorer, letter to author, March 15, 1988; Johnson, Vantage Point, pp. 535-36; Authorization for Military Procurement, 1969, p. 57; "North Korea Seizes Navy Ship," New York Times, January 24, 1968, p. 1; "U.S. Calls 14,787 Air Reservists," New York Times, January 26, 1968, p. 1; "More U.S. Planes Go to Korea," New York Times, January 28, 1968, p. 1. Also see Armbrister, pp. 237-39, 258-67; Abram Shulsky, "Coercive Diplomacy," in Bradford Dismukes and James McConnell, eds., Soviet Naval Diplomacy (New York: Pergamon Press, 1979), pp. 119-23.



also conducted simulated strikes against the U.S. carriers. This was the first instance of Soviet missile-armed aircraft conducting simulated strikes against U.S. warships during a period of international tension. On February 6 a Soviet anti-carrier group, consisting of two Kynda-class cruisers, (armed with SS-N-3 anti-ship cruise missiles) and four destroyers, took station in the Sea of Japan just north of the DMZ off the coast of North Korea--a clear signal that the Soviet Union would oppose U.S. military action against North Korea. On February 17 a Soviet destroyer and the research ship harassed the U.S. formation by conducting dangerous maneuvers violating the rules of the road.¹⁰⁵ Soviet simulated anti-carrier strikes and harassment significantly increased tensions in the Sea of Japan.

Interestingly, Soviet harassment of U.S. naval forces in the Sea of Japan commenced after the United States began discussion with North Korea in Panmunjon on Pueblo. This pattern would be seen again during the 1973 Middle East War,

¹⁰⁵ Vice Admiral J.P. Moorer, letter to author, March 15, 1988; "A Soviet Trawler Trails enterprise," New York Times, January 26, 1968, p. 1; "Carrier Shifting from Korea Post," New York Times, February 7, 1968, p. 1; Shulsky, pp. 121-23; Armbrister, pp. 258-67. Admiral Hyland and Admiral Bringle state that there were no serious incidents between U.S. and Soviet naval forces in the Sea of Japan during this period. Admiral Hyland, letter to author, March 24, 1988; Admiral Bringle, letter to author, March 23, 1988. However, both COMSEVENTHFLT and CINCPACFLT were preoccupied with the Vietnam War--the Tet offensive was in progress at the time--and probably did not pay close attention to operations in the Sea of Japan.

when Soviet naval units commenced intense anti-carrier exercises against the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean after the Israeli-Egyptian ceasefire finally took hold (See Chapter VI for a further details). In both cases this pattern probably indicated a certain amount of caution by the Soviet Union: avoiding naval actions that could involve the Soviet Union in the conflicts, but, after tensions had started to ease, taking symbolic actions for political signaling purposes. It is not clear, however, exactly what the Soviets were attempting to signal. The most likely Soviet intentions in 1968 were to deter the United States from taking military action against North Korea, to neutralize U.S. coercive threats during the talks with North Korea, and to demonstrate opposition to the U.S. naval presence close to the Soviet Union in the Sea of Japan.

That in 1968 and 1973 the Soviets did not commence simulated anti-carrier attacks until after tensions had started to ease does not mean that such Soviet behavior is not dangerous from a crisis management perspective. Tensions at sea typically do not relax as quickly as they do in the political arena because U.S. naval forces are usually kept on station well after a crisis subsides, and because there normally is a lag in informing U.S. naval commanders of current political developments and future political intentions (if they are told at all). In 1968 and 1973 the Soviets initiated simulated strikes against U.S. naval

forces during the lag period before U.S. forces were directed to stand down and their commanders informed that military action was no longer contemplated. A tense and dangerous situation can thus develop at sea even while U.S. leaders perceive that the crisis has peaked and the danger of an armed clash has eased.

Other than the symbolic military actions described above, the United States limited its response to protests and negotiations for the release of Pueblo's crew. The crew was imprisoned near Pyongyang, where for eleven months they were exploited for anti-American propaganda and subjected to torture and brutal treatment. On December 23, 1968 the United States signed a confession that the Pueblo had intruded into North Korean waters--a confession it immediately repudiated verbally--and the crew of the Pueblo was released in Panmunjom. North Korea scored a propaganda victory over the United States and kept the ship and that portion of its classified equipment and publications that had not been destroyed.¹⁰⁶

Political and military tensions on the Korean Peninsula remained acute throughout 1968 and into 1969. There were dozens of North Korean provocations and infiltration attempts along the DMZ, which resulted in seven

¹⁰⁶ Ed Brandt, The Last Voyage of the Pueblo (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1969), pp. 227-33; Bucher, pp. 349-59; Murphy, pp. 307-17; Armbrister, pp. 333-44.

U.S. soldiers being killed.¹⁰⁷ There were also numerous North Korean provocations at sea. North Korea continued its harassment of the South Korean fishing fleet, seizing at least sixteen South Korean fishing boats in 1968. On June 22, 1968, North Korea claimed that it had sunk a U.S. spy ship in the Yellow sea, but the vessel did not belong to the United States and probably was a South Korean fishing boat.¹⁰⁸ North Korea struck at the United States again on April 14, 1969, shooting down an unarmed U.S. Navy EC-121 reconnaissance plane over the Sea of Japan, ninety miles from the North Korean coast.¹⁰⁹ North Korean seizure of the Pueblo thus was not an isolated incident, but rather one of scores of North Korean provocations and atrocities directed against South Korea and the United States during the 1968-1969 period.

¹⁰⁷ "Korean Reds Kill 4 U.N. Soldiers," New York Times, April 15, 1968, p. 1; "North Koreans Fire on American Unit, Killing One Soldier," New York Times, April 22, 1968, p. 15; "Two U.S. Soldiers Killed in North Korean Buffer Clashes," New York Times, July 23, 1968, p. 14; "G.I. Killed in Clash with Korean Reds," New York Times, July 31, 1968, p. 3; "Rising War Peril Is Seen in Korea," New York Times, August 16, 1968, p. 3; "2 U.S. Soldiers Die in Clash with North Korean Intruders," New York Times, August 20, 1968, p. 13; "G.I. Killed in Clash in Korea," New York Times, October 7, 1968, p. 4.

¹⁰⁸ "Naval and Maritime Events, 1 July 1968-31 December 1969," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 96 (May 1970): 50, 52, 54; "North Korea Says It Sank 'Spy Ship'," New York Times, June 23, 1968, p. 1.

¹⁰⁹ Pueblo Inquiry, pp. 1675-81; "23-Ship U.S. Fleet Off Korean Coast to Guard Flights," New York Times, April 22, 1969, p. 1.

Findings

This section will review the 1968 seizure of the Pueblo to answer the four research questions. The first question is did interactions at the tactical and political levels become decoupled during or after the attack on Pueblo? One of the potential causes of decoupled interactions was present and played an major role in how the incident developed: communications and information flow problems. Emergency messages from Pueblo required over an hour to reach Washington and U.S. military commanders in the Pacific. On the other hand, although U.S. military commanders had authority to take military action in support of Pueblo, they decided not to do so. President Johnson was not confronted with having to halt combat operations or approve them after the fact because none were initiated. U.S. commanders in the Far East had already come to the same conclusion that the President would reach: that there were no effective military actions that could be taken to rescue Pueblo without needlessly endangering the crew. Therefore, although the President did not have direct control over the initial response to the North Korean attack on Pueblo, U.S. forces acted essentially as he would have wanted them to act under the circumstances. This pattern is one of parallel stratified interactions: tactical level interactions that are not controlled by national leaders, but which support the political objectives of those leaders.

The second question is, when stratified interactions become decoupled, what factors inhibit escalation from occurring at the tactical level and being transmitted upward to the strategic and political level of interaction?

Although decoupling did not occur in the Pueblo incident, two of the considerations that prevented decoupling can be viewed as escalation-inhibiting factors: military prudence and compliance with the guidance contained in mechanisms of indirect control. U.S. military commanders were reluctant to mount a response that would have been excessively vulnerable to North Korean attacks. Loss of U.S. aircraft sent to defend Pueblo almost certainly would have generated escalatory pressures, so in this instance military prudence led to tactical decisions that supported crisis management objectives. U.S. military commanders complied with the restrictions imposed on military operations by the standing peacetime rules of engagement, barring their forces from attacking North Korean forces inside North Korean territorial waters and airspace, and not ordering actions that would have constituted reprisals against North Korea. The guidance contained in the peacetime rules of engagement may or may not have been appropriate to the specific circumstances, but U.S. military commanders were careful to comply with that guidance.

The third question is did actions taken with naval forces send inadvertent political signals to adversaries or

allies, and did inadvertent military incidents occur that affected efforts to manage the crisis? Neither problem appears to have been arisen in the Pueblo incident, probably due to the relatively passive U.S. response to the North Korean provocation. North Korea succeeded in achieving a fait accompli, effectively limiting U.S. options to settling on North Korean terms. the passive U.S. response annoyed the South Koreans, but this arose from correct perceptions rather than from misperceptions. It apparently had little impact on long-term U.S. relations with South Korea.

The fourth question is did any of the three tensions between political and military considerations arise during the response to the North Korean seizure of Pueblo? None of the three tensions was serious during the incident. There were essentially no tensions between political and military considerations. All levels in the chain of command agreed that effective military action could not be taken before Pueblo entered Wonsan. There was disagreement between military and civilian officials over whether or not reprisals should be taken against North Korea, and over whether or not if an effort should be made to recover the ship by force. But these disagreements primarily revolved around the military feasibility of the options proposed by the military, rather than the political implications of the options (The Johnson Administration perceived both considerations as weighing against taking military action).

There was little tension between the need for direct top-level control and the need for tactical-level flexibility and initiative. U.S. military commanders in the Far East had ample authority to take military action without having to seek permission from higher authorities so long as Pueblo remained in international waters. The "hold" order issued to the military came well after commanders in the Far East had decided against taking immediate military action, and served only to avoid further incidents with North Korean forces while Washington weighed reprisal options. If U.S. commanders had ordered attacks on North Korean forces in international waters to prevent Pueblo from being taken into Wonsan, it is likely that the President would have supported the action (As he supported Vice Admiral Martin's dispatch of aircraft to defend Liberty in 1967).

There was some tension between performance of crisis missions and readiness to perform wartime missions. The limited time available for taking action meant that the initial response to the North Korean attack on Pueblo had to be made with U.S. forces in and around Japan and South Korea. The aircraft closest to Pueblo--Air Force planes on alert in South Korea--were configured for delivery of nuclear weapons (a wartime mission) and could not be rapidly reconfigured for conventional ordnance (for crisis missions). Commander Fifth Air Force did not hesitate to order these planes reconfigured for conventional ordnance.

Maintaining readiness for wartime missions had greater impact on the decision whether or not to retaliate against North Korea. The heavy commitment of U.S. forces in Vietnam limited the options available to U.S. military commanders and made the President and Secretary of Defense reluctant to take action against North Korea that could result in another military conflict.

The 1987 Attack on the Stark

USS Stark was launched in 1980 and commissioned in 1982. The ship is 445 feet in length, displaces about 3,700 tons, and has a top speed of over twenty-nine knots. Anti-aircraft armament consists of Standard SM-1(MR) 25-mile range missiles fired from a MK 13 launcher, a 76 millimeter MK 75 gun, and a 20 millimeter MK 16 close-in weapon system (CIWS) for defense against anti-ship missiles. With these weapons and the SPS-49 air search radar, naval tactical data system (NTDS), tactical data link, MK 92 fire control system, SLQ-32 electronic warfare system, and chaff launchers, Stark is well-armed for defense against air threats--particularly anti-ship cruise missiles. The crew consists of seventeen officers and 168 enlisted men. With its modern systems for surveillance and self-defense, Stark was a good choice for patrol duties in the Persian Gulf.

The Iran-Iraq War dominated the international situation in the Persian Gulf in May 1987. The war erupted

in September 1980 when Iraq invaded Iran, initially penetrating deep into Iranian territory. Iran repelled the Iraqi assault and the war stagnated along the Shatt al-Arab estuary. Iran and Iraq both frequently attacked oil facilities--including oil platforms and shipping terminals in the Persian Gulf--in an effort at crippling each other's economies.

During the first three years of the war, Iraq conducted sporadic attacks on shipping in the vicinity of Iranian ports and oil terminals. In retaliation for Iraqi attacks on oil facilities, Iran was stopping and boarding tankers entering the Persian Gulf to verify that their destination was not Iraq. The shipping war escalated in May 1984 with the first Iranian attacks on commercial shipping in the Persian Gulf. Iraq also escalated its attacks on shipping in 1984, conducting attacks more frequently and covering more of the Persian Gulf. Iraqi attacks were indiscriminate: Mirage fighters fired Exocet missiles at whatever contacts they picked up on radar without attempting to identify their nationality--hitting ships belonging to Iraq's allies on more than one occasion. Iran and Iraq further intensified their anti-shipping campaigns in 1986, conducting twice as many attacks as in 1985. Approximately 355 ships were attacked in the Persian Gulf from September 1980 to May 1987. In the nine months prior to the attack on the Stark Iraq flew over 330 anti-shipping flights and fired

90 French-made Exocet anti-ship missiles, hitting 40 ships with them.¹¹⁰

Soon after the Iran-Iraq War erupted in 1980 the United States expressed concern for the security of shipping in the Persian Gulf, particularly through the Strait of Hormuz. Iran was viewed as the primary threat due to its hostility to the U.S. and to Arab nations siding with Iraq. U.S. Navy ships began escorting American-flag merchant ships in the Persian Gulf after Iran began attacking shipping in 1984. In the spring of 1987 the United States, responding to a request from Kuwait for assistance in countering an Iranian campaign against Kuwaiti shipping, was making final plans for reflagging and escorting Kuwaiti tankers.¹¹¹

Despite their escort duties, the ships of the U.S. Navy's Middle East Force were primarily serving political

¹¹⁰"As Tension Rises in the Gulf, Role for U.S. Becomes Issue," New York Times, May 23, 1984, p. 1; "Stark Unaware It Was Target, Admiral Says," Los Angeles Times, May 20, 1987, p. 1; "U.S. Policy in Gulf Aimed at Halting Iran, Official Says," Los Angeles Times, May 22, 1987, p. 1; Ronald O'Rourke, "The Tanker War," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 114 (May 1988): 30-34.

¹¹¹"Escalating Iran-Iraq Fighting Prompts U.S. to Study Its Available Options to Keep Strait of Hormuz Open," Wall Street Journal, September 24, 1980, p. 2; Warren Christopher, "Conflict in Iraq and Iran," Current Policy No. 234, U.S. Department of State, October 7, 1980; "Weinberger Pledges to Protect Gulf Shipping," Los Angeles Times, March 23, 1987, p. 1; "U.S. Tells Navy To Bolster Force At Persian Gulf," New York Times, April 5, 1987, p. 1; Michael H. Armacost, "U.S. Policy in the Persian Gulf and Kuwaiti Reflagging," Current Policy No. 978, U.S. Department of State, June 16, 1987.

purposes in the Persian Gulf. Their presence was intended to show the flag, demonstrating U.S. resolve to keep the sea lanes open and deterring Iran from attacking American shipping. Special precautions were in effect to prevent unwanted incidents. To avoid inadvertently shooting down any of the many friendly aircraft over the Gulf, the rules of engagement required Navy ships to radio warnings to approaching planes and carefully assess their actions for indications of hostile intent before firing. Prior to the Stark incident, those procedures had appeared sufficient to avert possible attacks on U.S. Navy ships while avoiding incidents with civilian aircraft.¹¹²

U.S. Navy ships were warned that the primary danger to them was inadvertent attacks, and were told that they were to regard all Iranian and Iraqi aircraft as potentially hostile. Stark had been briefed on the Persian Gulf rules of engagement on February 28, 1987, just prior to joining the Middle East Force. The report of the investigation into

¹¹²Rear Admiral Grant Sharp, "Formal Investigation Into the Circumstances Surrounding the Attack on the USS Stark (FFG 31) on 17 May 1987," letter serial no. 00/S-0487, June 12, 1987 (Sanitized version released in 1988 by the Department of the Navy), pp. 12-13 (Cited hereafter as "Sharp Report"); U.S. Congress, House of Representatives, Committee on Armed Services, "Report on the Staff Investigation into the Iraqi Attack on the USS Stark," 14 June 1987, pp. 4-6 (hereafter referred to as "Staff Investigation"). Also see Michael Vlahos, "The Stark Report," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 114 (May 1988): 65. For an example of how these rules were used in the Gulf prior to the Stark incident, see "U.S. Confirms Naval Incidents in Strait of Hormuz," New York Times, February 29, 1984, p. A7.

the Stark incident conducted by Rear Admiral Grant Sharp states, referring to the February 28 briefing, "The ROE [rules of engagement] briefer highlighted that the probability of deliberate attack on U.S. warships was low, but that indiscriminate attack in the Persian Gulf was a significant danger."¹¹³

According to the Sharp Report, the Stark tragedy was not caused by ambiguous or overly restrictive rules of engagement:

The Rules of Engagement that were in existence on 17 May 1987 were sufficient to enable Stark to properly warn the Iraqi aircraft, in a timely manner, of the presence of a U.S. warship; and, if the warning was not heeded, the Rules of Engagement were sufficient to enable Stark to defend herself against hostile intent and imminent danger without absorbing the first hit.¹¹⁴

Stark was authorized to use force in anticipatory self-defense against any aircraft that demonstrated hostile intent by flying an apparent anti-ship attack profile and failing to respond to radio warnings to remain clear.

Iraqi aircraft were routinely detected on anti-shiping flights, but usually did not provoke a reaction by U.S. Navy ships because the Iraqis were regarded as non-hostile and their targets were inside the Iranian Exclusion Zone--well away from U.S. Navy patrol areas. Occasionally, however, Iraqi jets had to be warned away and at least one

¹¹³ Sharp Report, p. 6.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., p. 32.

close call had occurred when a U.S. Navy warship had been close to the target of an Iraqi missile. Iraqi planes were a danger because they made no effort to identify their targets, firing blindly at radar contacts.¹¹⁵ Commander Middle East Force had warned on May 14 and 16, 1987, that Iraqi planes were conducting anti-shipping strikes in the central Persian Gulf (the area in which Stark was operating), creating an increased danger of indiscriminate attacks. Stark had received these messages and was thus fully appraised of the threat.¹¹⁶

On May 17, 1987, Stark was patrolling the central Persian Gulf about eighty-five miles northeast of Bahrain, twelve miles outside the Iranian Exclusion Zone. Shortly after 8:00 P.M. Stark was informed that a U.S. Air Force AWACS radar plane had detected an Iraqi aircraft two hundred miles from the ship heading southeast along the coast of Saudi Arabia. Stark picked up the plane on air search radar when it was seventy miles away and detected the Mirage's radar in the search mode. At 9:08 P.M., when the Iraqi plane was thirteen miles away, Stark broadcast a warning identifying itself as a U.S. warship and requesting the

¹¹⁵"2nd U.S. Warship Warned Off Iraqi Jets," Los Angeles Times, 21 May 1987, p. 14; "Staff Investigation," pp. 4-5. The near miss occurred in 1986 when an Iraqi missile struck a ship about six miles from the destroyer USS John Hancock. See "1985 Iraqi Attack on U.S. Ship Cited," New York Times, May 24, 1987, p. 13.

¹¹⁶Sharp Report, pp. 7-8.

plane's intentions. At 9:07 P.M. the Mirage launched an Exocet missile from a range of about twenty-two miles. A minute later the plane launched a second Exocet missile at a range of about fifteen miles. Stark was sending a second warning to the Iraqi plane when the second missile was launched. Stark's electronic warfare system detected the homing radars on the Exocet missiles, but they were misidentified as the Mirage's radar in a fire control mode. Stark did not detect the missiles on radar. The Tactical Action Officer (TAO) ordered initial defensive actions after the missiles were launched, but the response was too late to be effective. First detection of the missiles was a sighting by a lookout, who did not recognize them as missiles and sound a warning until seconds before they struck.¹¹⁷

At 9:09 P.M. the first missile impacted the port side of Stark, but failed to explode. About twenty seconds later the second missile struck the ship near where the first had struck, exploding just inside the ship. The blast tore a large hole in the port side and unexpended fuel from the missiles started an intense fire that required nearly a day to extinguish. Thirty-seven men died and several were wounded in the attack.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁷ Sharp Report, pp. 1-3, 8-14; "Staff Investigation," pp. 7-18; Vlahos, pp. 64-65.

¹¹⁸ Sharp Report, pp. 14-15; "Staff Investigation," pp. 18-20; Vlahos, pp. 64-65.

Two Saudi F-15 fighters had scrambled as the Iraqi jet flew down their coast, but their ground controllers refused to let them pursue the Mirage after the attack. No U.S. ships or aircraft attempted to engage the Iraqi plane before the attack and none were able to engage it after the attack. Stark was towed into Bahrain harbor for temporary repairs by a U.S. Navy tender before beginning the long voyage back to the United States.¹¹⁹

The United States delivered a formal diplomatic protest to Iraq and demanded a full explanation for the attack. Reagan Administration spokesmen described the incident as an accident, a case of mistaken identity. The U.S. also stated that it expected an apology and compensation for the men who died and the damage to the ship. The Joint Chiefs of Staff revised the rules of engagement for Middle East Force ships, requiring radio warnings and defensive measures be taken at longer ranges, and emphasizing that all aircraft approaching U.S. Navy ships must be treated as potentially hostile.¹²⁰

¹¹⁹"Staff Investigation," pp. 20-22; "Saudis Balked at Intercepting Iraqi Attacker," New York Times, May 21, 1987, p. A1.

¹²⁰Sharp Report, p. 7; "Staff Investigation," p. 6: "Iraqi Missile Hits U.S. Navy Frigate in Persian Gulf," New York Times, May 18, 1987, p. A1; "Iraqi Missile Hits U.S. Warship; 30 Missing, 3 Dead," Los Angeles Times, May 18, 1987, p. 1; "Missile Toll on Frigate is 28," New York Times, May 19, 1987, p. A1; "Ship Deaths at 28; Iraq, Iran Warned," Los Angeles Times, May 19, 1987, p. 1.

Iraq formally accepted responsibility for the attack, expressing "profound regret" and calling it an "unintentional incident," and presented a compensation proposal to the United States. Iraqi spokesmen stated that the pilot believed he was attacking an Iranian ship and had not heard the warnings broadcast by Stark. Iraq also claimed Stark had been ten miles inside the Iranian Exclusion Zone, a charge the U.S. refuted. Iraq and the U.S. later reached an agreement on measures to prevent inadvertent attacks on U.S. Navy ships, but incidents continued to occur in which U.S. ships had to warn off Iraqi aircraft. In some cases Iraqi planes veered away only seconds before they would have been shot down. Iraqi pilots did not cease their indiscriminate attacks on whatever ships they happened to detect on radar in the Persian Gulf.¹²¹

Findings

This section will review the 1987 attack on Stark to answer the four research questions. The first question is did interactions at the tactical and political levels become decoupled during or after the attack on Stark? There was no decoupling in the Stark incident. The attack lasted only a

¹²¹Sharp Report, p. 16; "Staff Investigation," pp. 8-9; "Missile Toll on Frigate is 28," New York Times, May 19, 1987, p. A1; "Ship Deaths at 28; Iran, Iraq Warned," Los Angeles Times, May 19, 1987, p. 1; "U.S. and Iraq Act to Prevent Raids," New York Times, May 30, 1987, p. 1; O'Rourke, p. 32.

few minutes and was over before any other units could employ their weapons in support of Stark. The identity of the attacking aircraft was known well before the attack, and military commanders at the scene quickly concluded that the attack had been inadvertent. No effort was made to shoot down the Iraqi plane because no U.S. forces were in a position to do so. The only sense in which actions at the tactical level failed to support national policy was that Stark failed to take defensive actions authorized under the rules of engagement.

The second question is, when stratified interactions become decoupled, what factors inhibit escalation from occurring at the tactical level and being transmitted upward to the strategic and political levels of interaction? The Stark incident illustrates an escalation-inhibiting factor: accurate intelligence on friendly and potentially hostile forces. Because the attacking aircraft was known to have been Iraqi, there was no question that Iran might have been responsible for the attack on Stark. Without such intelligence, U.S. commanders in the Persian Gulf probably would have suspected that Iran had conducted the attack. Circumstantial evidence pointing to Iranian complicity and lack of an Iraqi admission of responsibility could well have led to the President ordering retaliatory attacks on Iranian forces or bases. This situation is analogous to that described in the Liberty incident, when accurate information

on Soviet forces in the Mediterranean prevented U.S. military commanders from suspecting that the Soviets had attacked Liberty.

It appears that inadvertent escalation would be more likely when intelligence is incomplete and ambiguous, supporting worst-case assessments of the nature and implications of an attack on U.S. forces. For example, on-scene commanders could conclude that full-scale attacks on U.S. forces at the scene of the crisis will soon follow, placing a premium on preempting the expected enemy attack. Under certain circumstances on-scene commanders might have authority to preempt without having to seek permission from higher authority.

The third question is did actions taken with naval forces send inadvertent political signals to adversaries or allies, and did inadvertent military incidents occur that affected crisis management efforts? Neither of these problems arose after the attack on Stark, but the attack itself was an inadvertent military incident. The attack on Stark illustrates the danger of inadvertent military incidents when U.S. naval forces are operating in close proximity to hostilities.

The fourth question is did any of the three tensions between political and military considerations arise during the response to the attack on Stark? None of the three tensions was present because the incident was brief and the

attack was known to have been inadvertent. U.S. Navy ships in the Persian Gulf had ample authority under the rules of engagement to use force in self-defense or anticipatory self-defense. Nevertheless, Navy commanders in the Persian Gulf had been placed in a complex and dangerous tactical environment. There was great risk of U.S. ships being attacked inadvertently or deliberately, and equally great risk of political embarrassment to the United States if civilian or friendly military aircraft were shot down. Rules of engagement cannot eliminate the dangers and risks inherent in such an environment, they can, at best, reduce the likelihood of incidents with undesirable political or military consequences.

Circumstances and Motives

Comparing the circumstances in which the four incidents occurred and the possible motives of the attackers will shed further light on the nature of peacetime attacks on U.S. Navy ships.

Circumstances of Peacetime Attacks

There are important similarities in the international circumstances of the attacks. In all four cases some form of conflict, tensions, or rivalry among the major powers structured the environment and affected American interests sufficiently to compel limited U.S. involvement. In three

of the cases (Tonkin Gulf, Liberty, and Pueblo) Soviet-American cold war rivalry was a source of tension, and in one case (Stark) Soviet-American competition for influence in the Middle East was a major U.S. concern.

In all four cases some form of armed conflict was in progress. In three cases (Tonkin Gulf, Liberty, and Stark) a local armed conflict was being fought at the time of the incident. In the Pueblo case an intense ideological and political rivalry, held in check only by an uneasy military armistice, had recently escalated to a high level of tension--accompanied by a series of military clashes and a significant rise in casualties. In all of the cases U.S. Navy ships were sent on missions either in the midst of fighting (Stark), near the scene of fighting (Tonkin Gulf and Liberty), or near the scene of severe tensions (Pueblo). Despite the danger inherent in such situations, U.S. leaders felt that the threat to the ships was not excessive because the U.S. was not a belligerent and was officially neutral in the conflict (Liberty and Stark), because the ship would be operating in international waters and the belligerents would respect international law (all four cases), or because belligerents hostile to the U.S. had political-military incentives to avoid incidents with the United States (Tonkin Gulf and Pueblo). As the case studies show, such factors are not always effective in preventing peacetime attacks on Navy ships.

The U.S. role in the conflicts varied considerably, but there are strong similarities among the cases. The United States was officially neutral in the conflict in two of the cases (Liberty and Stark), but in each case the U.S. Government and the American public were either sympathetic to one side (Israel in the Liberty case) or hostile to one side (Iran in the Stark case). In the other two cases (Tonkin Gulf and Pueblo) the U.S. was firmly committed to one side in the conflict, but at the time of the incidents the U.S. was not taking direct military action against the countries it opposed (North Vietnam and North Korea). The situation was politically and militarily complex in all four cases--the United States had interests compelling it to become involved in the conflicts, but other interests and political constraints restrained the U.S. from direct military intervention. Thus, naval forces were employed to pursue limited political-military objectives.

The missions being conducted by the U.S. Navy ships also varied considerably. In three of the cases the ships were on an intelligence collection mission (Tonkin Gulf, Liberty, and Pueblo), and in the remaining case (Stark) the ship was on a surveillance mission. In two of the cases (Liberty and Pueblo) the missions had no important political objectives and were ordered for military purposes. In the other two cases (Tonkin Gulf and Stark) the missions had the political purposes of establishing a visible U.S. presence

in an area of tensions, asserting freedom of the seas in international waters, and demonstrating U.S. resolve to protect its interests in the conflicts.

The political implications of the naval missions in the four cases also varied. Two of the missions (Liberty and Pueblo) were viewed as nominally non-political, but in fact had significant latent or inadvertent political impact. If one accepts the theory (assessed below) that the Israeli attack on Liberty was deliberate, then it is possible that the unannounced presence of Liberty off the Sinai sent an inadvertent signal of retrenchment to Israel--symbolizing opposition to unrestrained Israeli offensives against neighboring Arab countries, particularly new offensive action against Syria. However, there is no evidence to support this. Pueblo appears to have sent an inadvertent signal of hostility to North Korea, symbolizing support for South Korean offensive action against the North. Liberty and Pueblo also had the deterrent effect associated with overt surveillance missions: denying adversaries--and allies, in the case of Israel--the options of surprise attack, fait accompli, or a contrived pretext for an attack.

Two of the missions had definite political purposes in addition to important military functions. In the Tonkin Gulf Incident, Maddox and Turner Joy had the political purposes of demonstrating U.S. support for South Vietnam and

opposing North Vietnamese support for the guerrilla war in the South. Stark had the political purposes of demonstrating U.S. support for the Persian Gulf states opposed to Iran (detering attacks on them), and supporting the principle of freedom of navigation in the international waters of the Persian Gulf. These two cases clearly show the political-military nature of military actions taken during crises.

Motives for the Attacks

The motives of the perpetrators of the attacks in most cases cannot be ascertained with certainty, but sufficient evidence is available to postulate reasonably plausible motives. Two of the attacks (Tonkin Gulf and Pueblo) were motivated by self-defense, defense of territorial waters, or retaliation for hostile acts believed to have involved the ship that was attacked. However, in neither case had the ship committed the hostile acts of which it was accused. The other two attacks (Liberty and Stark) were portrayed as accidents that resulted from mistaken identity. Although allegations have been made to the contrary, none of these four cases can be conclusively established as having been deliberate unprovoked aggression against a warship known by the attacker to belong to the United States and to be on routine operations in international waters.

Two of the incidents (Tonkin Gulf and Pueblo) occurred under circumstances in which the perpetrator plausibly could

have perceived a military threat from the U.S. ship, and therefore have been motivated by self-defense, defense of territorial waters, or retaliation for hostile acts believed to have involved the ship. North Vietnam apparently perceived Maddox as having participated in or supported South Vietnamese raids that had taken place nearby immediately before the destroyer arrived. The first attack on Maddox was probably retaliation for those raids, intended to demonstrate a capability to defend against them and to coerce the U.S. and South Vietnam into ceasing the raids.¹²² The attack would also have secondary political propaganda value, by showing defiance of American strength and portraying the U.S. as a "paper tiger" ineffective against North Vietnam.

Opinions vary widely as to North Korean motives for seizing Pueblo. President Johnson, Secretary of Defense McNamara, and Secretary of State Rusk believed that North Korea sought to divert U.S. and South Korean forces from Vietnam on the eve of the Tet offensive.¹²³ This explanation lacks plausibility: military coordination

¹²² Marolda and Fitzgerald, pp. 420-5; Lewy, pp. 32, 36; Karnow, pp. 366, 370; Kahin, pp. 220-5; Kahin and Lewis, pp. 156-7; Austin, pp. 201-8, 263, 334; Goulden, pp. 92-6, 79-81; Windchy, pp. 147-8, 153-4.

¹²³ Johnson, Vantage Point, p. 535; Authorization for Military Procurement, 1969, p. 65; "Secretary Rusk and Secretary of Defense McNamara Discuss Viet-Nam and Korea on 'Meet the Press'," Department of State Bulletin 58 (February 26, 1968): 262. Also see Howard H. Lentner, "The Pueblo Affair: Anatomy of a Crisis," Military Review 49 (July 1969): 57-59.

between North Vietnam and North Korea probably was not close enough to permit such coordination, and North Korea had no way of knowing that Pueblo would be off Wonsan just prior to the Tet offensive. Press reports, quoting Pentagon officials, speculated that North Korea seized the ship for intelligence purposes (perhaps on behalf of the Soviets), to capture Pueblo's sensitive electronic equipment.¹²⁴ This also lacks plausibility: Since it was Pueblo's first mission, North Korea probably had no way of knowing that Pueblo would be a lucrative target. James Cable has offered two alternative interpretations of the North Korean seizure of Pueblo: first, that it was an impulsive, reckless act, perhaps initiated by a relatively junior commander, or, second, that the act was premeditated, intended to halt the surveillance mission and to deter the United States from conducting such missions in the future.¹²⁵ Either of these interpretations is plausible than the previous explanations, but there is little evidence to support either view.

The political situation on the Korean Peninsula in early 1968 and the pattern of North Korean hostility toward the United States suggest that Pueblo's mission probably was perceived by the North Koreans. Pueblo, on a routine

¹²⁴"Intelligence Data Called a Goal of Ship Seizure," New York Times, January 26, 1968, p. 7.

¹²⁵James Cable, Gunboat Diplomacy, 1919-1979, Second Edition (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981), pp. 52-53.

intelligence mission in international waters, arrived off Wonsan in the midst of acute tensions on the Korean Peninsula. North Korea had been pursuing an aggressive campaign of provocations against the South, raising tensions nearly to the crisis level, and had been warning South Korea and the United States against violating North Korean territorial waters. The North Koreans were spoiling for a fight and were particularly sensitive about the presence of U.S. aircraft and vessels off its coast. North Korea may have misperceived Pueblo to be an immediate threat to North Korean territory or territorial waters (perhaps landing South Korean saboteurs or agents in retaliation for North Korean attacks on the South), or as a deliberate political provocation in response to the North Korean propaganda campaign. If North Korea indeed held such perception, then countering the perceived threat and deterring future such threats would have been the principle motives for seizing Pueblo.¹²⁶ An attack on a U.S. naval vessel would also have secondary political propaganda value: showing defiance of American strength and portraying the U.S. as a "paper tiger" ineffective against North Korea. Thus, although attacking and seizing a U.S. vessel off the coast of North Korea was premeditated, Pueblo was a target of opportunity rather than having been predesignated for seizure.

¹²⁶Armbrister, pp. 27-8, 187-95; Bucher, pp. 392-3; Goulding, pp. 295, 300; Koh, pp. 264-80.

Two of the incidents (Liberty and Stark) were portrayed as accidents, with the nations responsible for the attacks giving the official explanation that the attacks were the result of mistaken identity. Israel claimed Liberty was mistaken for the Egyptian transport El Quisir, and Iraq claimed Stark was mistaken for a civilian tanker headed for an Iranian port. The U.S. Government officially accepted the claims that the attacks were accidents, though it denied that there were grounds for mistaken identity to have occurred in any of the attacks.

The danger of U.S. ships accidentally being caught in the fighting was recognized in the Liberty and Stark cases, as evidenced by the precautions that were taken. In the Liberty case the threat of indiscriminate attacks--deliberate attacks launched without efforts to identify the target--appears to have been seriously underestimated, with the result that Liberty was inadequately protected against such a threat. In the Stark case the rules of engagement authorized measures to defend against indiscriminate attacks and Middle East Force ships had been warned of the danger of indiscriminate attacks. However, the daily contact that Middle East Force ships had with Iraqi planes apparently tended to make at least some of them complacent about the threat of being attacked by the Iraqis. Thus, the threat of indiscriminate attacks must be regarded as everpresent when U.S. ships must operate in the vicinity of hostilities.

Ironically, in both the Liberty and Stark cases the attacks were carried out by the side that the U.S. favored: Liberty by Israel and Stark by Iraq. This underscores the danger of accidental or indiscriminate attacks in peacetime, and warns against assuming that friendly nations can be relied upon to avoid U.S. ships or tacitly provide them a shield. These incidents also warn against reliance on the imaginary lines prominently displayed on charts--the limits of territorial waters, exclusion zones, or war zones--as providing protection against attacks. Precise navigation is a luxury often foregone, either deliberately or inadvertently, in the heat of battle.

Questions were raised in the aftermath of the attacks on Liberty and Stark about whether they were, in fact, accidental. The Liberty incident is by far the most controversial of the two. Former Liberty officer James M. Ennes claims Israel attacked Liberty to prevent it from monitoring Israeli preparations to attack the Golan Heights, a move the Israelis knew the United States opposed and would try to block.¹²⁷ From a purely military perspective the attack was a rational action, but the political rationale for a deliberate attack is weak. Israel has on several occasions shown a willingness to proceed as it sees fit

¹²⁷ Ennes, pp. 172-4, 187-8, 191-2, 254-63. Also see Goulding, pp. 123-4, 136-7; Smith, p. 64; and Anthony Pearson, Conspiracy of Silence (London: Quartet Books, 1978), pp. 105, 116-118, 163.



regardless of U.S. pressure to the contrary. Why in this one instance it was necessary to attack a U.S. ship rather than to just ignore U.S. pressure is not clear.¹²⁸ The political illogic of a deliberate attack is compounded by the fact that the United States had begun a policy shift toward alignment with Israel, which would improve Israel's strategic position.

There is insufficient evidence to resolve the controversy over the Liberty incident. The Israelis insist to this day that the attack was an accident, and have given an elaborate scenario explaining how it occurred.¹²⁹ One need not believe this scenario to accept that the attack was indiscriminate: the forces sent out to find an Egyptian ship

¹²⁸ Certain Israeli leaders, particularly Moshe Dayan (Chief of Staff of the Army in the 1956 war and Defense Minister in the 1967 war), may have had an attitude of "never again" toward giving in to U.S. pressure for them to abandon their military objectives or conquered territory after their experience in the 1956 war with Egypt. In 1956, photographs taken by U-2 reconnaissance planes had alerted President Eisenhower to British, French, and Israeli military and naval moves, enabling him to exert strong pressure on the three nations to abandon their plan to seize the Suez Canal early in the operation. Liberty could have been viewed by the Israelis as giving President Johnson the same advantage in 1967. On the role of U-2s in 1956, see Donald Neff, Warriors at Suez (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1981), pp. 333, 353; and Michael R. Breschloss, Mayday: Eisenhower, Khrushchev, and the U-2 Affair (New York: Harper and Row, 1986), pp. 136-139. In an interview with the author, Arthur C. Lundahl, Director of the CIA's National Photographic Intelligence Center in 1956, confirmed that U-2s had monitored the crisis.

¹²⁹ See Goodman and Schiff, pp. 78-84; Israeli Defense Forces, "Preliminary Inquiry."



attacked the first vessel they found without attempting to identify it.¹³⁰ The arguments given by Israel to support their claim of mistaken identity (Claims that Liberty was not flying a U.S. flag, did not have U.S. hull markings, and was moving at over thirty knots) can be dismissed as an effort to cover a poor showing by the Israeli Defense Forces.

The Stark incident appears to be a clear-cut case of indiscriminate attack, but allegations have been made that it too was deliberate. Former U.S. Air Force Middle East analyst Joseph Churba claims that Iraq deliberately attacked the ship to provoke increased U.S. involvement in the Persian Gulf.¹³¹ Of the charges raised in the three incidents, this one is least plausible and least supported by evidence. Iraq made no attempt to make the attack appear to have been the work of Iran: the Mirage flew a flight path

¹³⁰In an incident strikingly similar to the Liberty incident, the Israeli Air Force on November 2, 1956 attacked the British frigate HMS Crane off of Sharm el Sheikh. At the time Israel and Britain were allies in the Suez Crisis, and Crane was on patrol as part of their campaign against Egypt. During the 1973 Yom Kippur War, Israeli Navy missile boats accidentally struck Greek, Japanese, and Soviet merchant ships with Gabriel anti-ship missiles while attempting to attack Syrian naval vessels. See Dupuy, pp. 210-211, 559. Thus, the Israelis launched indiscriminate attacks in the 1956, 1967, and 1973 wars, apparently due to permissive rules of engagement and lax identification requirements. In the 1956 and 1967 wars, the Israeli Air Force appeared to be poorly trained and organized for war at sea, particularly in the areas of ship recognition training for pilots and intelligence support for maritime operations.

¹³¹"Stark was attacked by two Iraqi jets, not one, experts say," San Diego Union, August 2, 1987, p. A14.



to intercept Iranian shipping in the central Persian Gulf, but released its missiles about thirty miles early. Iraqi leaders would have had to have been extremely ill-informed of U.S. domestic political opinion, which was sceptical of the Navy role in the Gulf to begin with, in order to think that such an attack--easily identified as Iraqi--would have provoked a greater role in the Gulf. If anything, the attack influenced the U.S. decision to delay the start of convoying of Kuwaiti tankers.

There are two sets of motives for the Liberty and Stark incidents: first, the motives for the attacks if they were accidents, and, second, the motives for the attacks if they were deliberate. The first set of motives, those for the attacks the perpetrators claimed they had thought they were launching, are all routine wartime reasons for attacking ships. If the Israeli attack had been on an Egyptian ship, rather than on Liberty, its purpose would have been military: countering a threat to army operations ashore. If the Iraqi attack had been on an Iranian tanker, rather than on Stark, its purpose would have been political-economic: interrupting Iranian tanker shipping as part of a campaign of economic coercion. As these two incidents show, indiscriminate attacks are motivated by common wartime political-military objectives.

The interesting question is why were the attacks launched indiscriminately, rather than after positive



identification of the target? The primary reason why indiscriminate attacks would be preferred is military: avoiding the risks inherent in making positive identification of a target before attacking. This appears to have been the motive for indiscriminate attacks in the Liberty and Stark incidents--neither Israel nor Iraq were motivated to identify their targets before striking. Indiscriminate attacks could also be preferred for political reasons: intimidation or coercion of the enemy and his supporters, or retaliation for unrestrained attacks made by the enemy. Given delegation of decisionmaking authority, these motives may come into play at low levels in the chain of command even when national policy is one of restraint and caution. Indiscriminate attacks are most likely when armed forces equipped with powerful modern weapons have only rudimentary tactical training, as in the case of Iraq, but can also occur when well-trained forces have permissive rules of engagement that emphasize military expediency, as in the case of Israel.

The second set of motives for the two attacks are those that would have prompted deliberate attacks on ships known to have been U.S. Navy. The attack on the Stark would have had a political motives: provoking the U.S. into greater military intervention against Iran in the Persian Gulf. The attack on the Liberty primarily would have had a military motive--preventing surveillance of Israeli military

activities--but could also have had the political motive of warning the United States not to restrain Israel from achieving its territorial objectives. Similar motives could well prompt deliberate attacks on U.S. naval vessels in future crises.

A wide range of military and political motives for attacking ships in wartime could create tactical circumstances in which U.S. Navy ships are indiscriminately or accidentally attacked. Indiscriminate attacks are the greatest danger. Belligerents in a local conflict could also have motives for deliberately attacking U.S. ships near the scene of fighting. The fact that the U.S. Government has readily accepted the accident explanation in the past makes it more likely that deliberate attacks under the guise of accidents could occur in the future.

Conclusion

This chapter presented the third phase of the research design, a structured focused comparison of four cases in which U.S. Navy ships were attacked during peacetime or crisis operations. The focus will be on how the military and naval chain of command reacted to the attacks. The incidents that were examined were the August 1964 Tonkin Gulf Incidents, the June 8, 1967 Israeli attack on the intelligence collection ship USS Liberty (AGTR 5), the January 22, 1968 North Korean seizure of the intelligence

collection ship USS Pueblo (AGER 2), and the May 10, 1987 Iraqi attack on the guided missile frigate USS Stark (FFG 31). Four research questions, addressing the decoupling of stratified interactions, stratified escalation dynamics, misperceptions, and political-military tensions, were asked in each of the cases.

This completes the third and final phase of the research design. The next chapter integrates the findings from all three phases of the research design and from them derives contingent generalizations on the theory of stratified interaction.

CHAPTER IX

FINDINGS AND CONTINGENT GENERALIZATIONS

To provide diagnostic power of the kind needed by policymakers, an explanatory theory must be capable of providing explanations that discriminate among causal patterns. That is, it must be capable of offering differentiated explanations for a variety of crisis management and crisis stability problems. A differentiated explanatory theory is constructed by formulating contingent generalizations--regularities that occur only under certain specific conditions. The objective of this study has been to identify different causal patterns associated with variation in crisis military interaction. For this purpose an analytic-inductive procedure was used to analyze four historical cases of crisis naval operations and four cases of peacetime attacks on U.S. Navy ships. This yielded a typology of crisis management and crisis stability problems, each linked with a somewhat different causal pattern.

To develop the contingent generalizations, eight questions addressing specific aspects of the theory were applied to historical cases through the method of structured focused comparison. All eight questions were addressed in four case

studies of crisis naval operations: the 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis, the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, the 1967 Middle East War, and the 1973 Middle East War. Four of the eight questions--those addressing decoupling of interactions, stratified escalation dynamics, misperceptions, and political-military tensions--were also addressed in four case studies of peacetime attacks on U.S. Navy ships: the 1964 Tonkin Gulf Incidents, the 1967 Israeli attack on the USS Liberty, the 1968 North Korean seizure of the USS Pueblo, and the 1987 Iraqi attack on the USS Stark.

The purposes of this chapter are to summarize the findings of the eight case studies and to derive from them contingent generalizations on crisis military interactions and crisis stability. The first section will present the findings on the theory of stratified interaction, including the corollary of decoupled interactions. The second section will present the findings on crisis stability, including the crisis security dilemma, escalation dynamics, and misperception. The third section will present the findings on the three political-military tensions and their impact on crisis management. The final section will present the contingent generalizations on crisis military interaction.

Stratified Interaction

The first three questions addressed the conditions necessary for stratified interaction to occur: delegated

control, tight coupling, and acute crisis. These questions were examined in the four case studies of crisis naval operations.

Delegated Control

The first question is to what degree were interactions between the forces of the two sides at the scene of the crisis the result of actions taken in accordance with mechanisms of indirect control, rather than direct control by national leaders? Mechanisms of indirect control, rather than direct control by national leaders, played the major role in the 1958 Taiwan Straits crisis, but decisionmaking authority was delegated selectively. The Eisenhower Administration was concerned about the danger of events getting out of control in the Taiwan Straits. To control the risk of escalation, the President retained total control of nuclear weapons and delegated authority to retaliate with conventional weapons against mainland targets only under circumstances in which the Joint Chiefs did not have time to consult with the him prior to taking action.

Beyond this, however, United States communications capabilities in 1958 forced employment of delegated methods of control and heavy reliance on mechanisms of indirect control. U.S. Navy commanders in the Pacific had significant authority to conduct operations as they saw fit--within the policy limits set by the President and the JCS--and

exercised that authority to its limits. The only detailed instructions provided by the JCS concerned rules of engagement and the limit on how close ships could approach Quemoy and the mainland. Throughout the crisis Washington was ill-informed of the status of operations currently in progress, which precluded American leaders from exercising close control over the operations. The overall picture that emerges is of the Eisenhower Administration exploiting the flexibility of the U.S. command system for crisis management purposes.

In the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, the Kennedy Administration was clearly concerned about the danger of an incident with Soviet ships or submarines. The President and McNamara exercised a greater degree of control over U.S. Navy operations than had ever been attempted in the past. However, they primarily controlled naval operations through mechanisms of indirect control, particularly mission orders and rules of engagement, rather than through direct control. The President and McNamara retained authority certain crucial decisions, particularly retaliation against Cuban air defenses and the boarding of ships. Other than this, however, they exercised control by negation, rather than positive control, over Navy operations they felt were particularly sensitive. Less sensitive operations were not closely controlled, with methods of delegated control being used. Presidential orders were passed via the chain of

command and neither the President nor McNamara ever gave orders directly to ships at sea.

In the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, The Johnson Administration did not attempt to exercise direct control over the operations of the Sixth Fleet other than its movements in the Mediterranean. Nor did the President or McNamara make an effort to provide specialized guidance in mechanisms of indirect control, other than limitations on how close the fleet and its aircraft could approach the coasts of the belligerents. When the USS America experienced severe Soviet harassment on June 8 the on-scene commanders were guided by standing Navy policies for handling such situations, rather than by special instructions from the White House. There was thus significant delegation of authority to on-scene commanders and the guidance contained in Navy standing orders and standing rules of engagement played a crucial role in determining the nature of the tactical-level interactions that occurred.

In the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, the Nixon Administration did not attempt to exercise direct control over the operations of the Sixth Fleet other than its movements in the Mediterranean. Sixth Fleet movements, however, were closely controlled--much closer than in the 1967 Middle East War. Rather than giving the fleet boundaries on where it was permitted to operate, as in 1967, Washington told the fleet exactly where to operate. On the other hand, the

President and Schlesinger did not attempt to communicate directly with any level in the chain of command below the JCS; orders to the Sixth Fleet were passed via normal channels. Nor did they made an effort to provide specialized guidance in mechanisms of delegated control. As a result, the ships of the Sixth Fleet acted in accordance with Navy standing orders in responding to Soviet naval operations. There was thus significant delegation of authority to on-scene commanders and the guidance contained in Navy standing orders and standing rules of engagement played a crucial role in determining the nature of the tactical-level interactions that occurred.

In summary, the pattern observed in the four case studies of U.S. naval operations in crises was one of direct control being exercised selectively and to a limited degree. Heavy reliance was placed on mechanisms of indirect control in all four cases, although the guidance contained in those mechanisms was not always revised to reflect the specific circumstances of the crisis at hand. Tactical-level military interactions rarely were under the direct control of political-level leaders.

Tight Coupling

The second question is were the forces of the two sides at the scene of the crisis tightly coupled with each other? The forces of the two sides at the scene of the

crisis were tightly coupled with each other in the 1958 Taiwan Straits crisis, but their interactions were restrained by U.S. and Chinese efforts to avoid military clashes. Both sides appeared to have good intelligence concerning the other side's forces and operations. The pattern of Communist Chinese shelling suggested that they had good intelligence on the convoys and Chinese protests of alleged U.S. violations of their airspace and territorial waters suggest that they were able to keep close tabs on U.S. navy operations in the Straits. U.S. on-scene commanders had similarly good information on Communist military activities. The Taiwan Patrol Force maintained intensive patrol and surveillance of the mainland coast. However, detection of actions by the other side did not automatically generate tactical reactions. The United States and Communist China both took steps to prevent clashes between their forces and those measures largely prevented interactions from occurring. Thus, although the intelligence requirement for tight coupling of the two sides' forces was met, tactical interactions tended to be dampened by measures taken to avoid clashes.

In the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, the forces of the two sides at the scene of the crisis were tightly coupled with each other, but not as tight as might be expected given the seriousness of the crisis. The tightest coupling was between U.S. Navy ASW forces and Soviet submarines, followed

closely by coupling between the Quarantine force and Soviet merchant ships. In both cases, however, Khrushchev's decision not to challenge the quarantine dampened the interactions between the two sides. The Soviet submarines were not attempting to force their way through U.S. naval forces to get to Cuba, they were attempting to return home unmolested. The only Soviet ships that approached the quarantine line were those that the U.S. would have no reason to take into custody. Interactions between U.S. and Cuban forces were also dampened by the efforts that leaders on both sides made to avoid provocations. In this regard the Cuban Missile Crisis was similar to the 1958 Taiwan Strait Crisis: although significant U.S. forces were operating in close proximity to the adversary's forces, tactical-level interactions were dampened by the caution and restraint shown by both sides.

Soviet and American naval forces in the Mediterranean were tightly coupled during the 1967 Arab-Israeli War. Soviet tattletales closely monitored the Sixth Fleet, U.S. aircraft closely monitored the Soviet Mediterranean Squadron, and U.S. ships and planes searched for and trailed Soviet submarines. Each side reacted to actions taken by the other side.

Soviet tattletales and aircraft closely monitored the Sixth Fleet, and U.S. ships and aircraft closely monitored the Soviet Mediterranean Squadron during the 1973

Arab-Israeli War. The Soviets quickly responded to changes in Sixth Fleet operations, keeping every U.S. carrier in the eastern Mediterranean targeted with anti-ship missiles. Similarly, the Sixth Fleet quickly reacted to changes in Soviet naval operations, keeping Soviet ships that were an immediate threat to the carriers in the sights of U.S. ships or planes. Thus, Soviet and American forces were tightly coupled during the crisis--much more tightly than they had been in any previous Soviet-American crisis.

In summary, naval forces at the scene of the crisis were tightly coupled in all four of the crisis naval operations case studies. However, the tightness of coupling between the forces of the two sides can vary significantly from crisis to crisis and over time within a particular crisis. Tactical-level military commanders have independent access to intelligence and surveillance information on adversary forces, and thus are not dependent on political-level decisionmakers for information on the adversary. As would be expected under conditions of tight coupling, naval forces tend to react quickly to changes in the other side's operations, seeking to maintain or improve their tactical position in the event of hostilities. However, this tight action-reaction linkage can be dampened by measures intended to avoid incidents between the two side's forces, such as geographic separation and a deliberately low tempo of operations or pauses (periods of inaction).

Political Use of Force

The third question is were the forces of the two sides being used by their national leaders to convey political signals in support of crisis bargaining? Both Communist China and the United States used their military forces for political purposes in the 1958 Taiwan Straits crisis. Communist China was conducting a limited probe of an ambiguous American commitment to the offshore islands, and exerting carefully controlled pressure on the Nationalists and the United States. The United States responded by accepting a test of capabilities under the ground rules established by the Chinese Communists, backed by a massive concentration of naval and air power in the Straits to convey a strong deterrent threat. Faced with a choice between escalating the confrontation or accepting an unfavorable outcome, the Chinese backed down and salvaged as much as they could politically.

In the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, the forces of the two sides were used by their national leaders as a political instrument. President Kennedy clearly was using the U.S. armed forces to convey political signals to Khrushchev during the crisis. The President and McNamara actively sought out ways to reinforce the signals being sent to the Soviets, such as by modifying Navy ASW procedures to support the political objectives of the quarantine. Khrushchev, on the other hand, may have used military forces for political

signalling, but did not do so as clearly as President Kennedy. Khrushchev was probably avoiding signals of hostile intent by not placing Soviet forces at full alert, recalling freighters carrying arms, and recalling the three submarines in the Atlantic. However, there is insufficient evidence to establish this conclusively. Shooting down an American U-2 over Cuba on October 27 certainly sent the wrong signal to the United States, but this action may not have been authorized in the Kremlin. Cuba placed its armed forces on alert, but avoided provocative actions during the crisis. This was probably intended to avoid giving the United States a pretext for invading the island. Thus, all three of the participants in the crisis used their military forces for political signalling.

The United States and the Soviet Union used their naval forces for political signalling in the 1967 Arab-Israeli War. The Johnson Administration used the Sixth Fleet to signal the U.S. intention not to intervene in the crisis, but also used the fleet to warn the Soviets against direct military intervention in the conflict. The Soviet Union also conveyed political signals by rapidly building up its Mediterranean Squadron, shadowing the Sixth Fleet, and keeping the bulk of the squadron well clear of the fighting and the Sixth Fleet. The 1967 Arab-Israeli War was the first crisis in which both superpowers actively used their navies for political signalling.

Both the United States and the Soviet Union used their naval forces as a political instrument during the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. It is clear that the United States used the Sixth Fleet for political signaling. That the Soviets received the signals being sent with the Sixth Fleet is indicated by the note the Soviets sent on October 12, 1973, protesting the movement of the U.S. fleet into the eastern Mediterranean. The Soviet Union used its Mediterranean Squadron for political signaling, and it is clear that U.S. leaders received the Soviet signals. The Soviet naval actions that sent the strongest signals were reinforcement of the Mediterranean Squadron, which almost doubled in numbers of ships and quadrupled in firepower, trailing of Sixth Fleet task groups, keeping the bulk of the Squadron well clear of the fighting ashore, and conducting an anti-carrier exercise from October 26 to November 3.

In summary, naval forces were used by both sides for political signalling or related political functions in all four of the case studies on crisis naval operations. Use of naval forces for political purposes can bring naval units of the two sides in a crisis into close proximity, creating a danger of military incidents.

Stratified Interaction

The answers to these first three questions suggest that conditions necessary for stratified interaction existed



in all four of the crises. In the 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis, the United States relied on methods of delegated control, U.S. and Chinese Communist military forces were tightly coupled, and both sides used their forces as a political instrument under conditions of acute crisis. Interactions occurred at the tactical level that were not directly controlled by American leaders. The findings of this case suggest, however, that stratification is not an absolute concept--there can be degrees of stratification. Measures taken by both sides to prevent confrontations between their forces can greatly reduce opportunities for tactical-level interaction to occur.

Although the President sought to maintain close control of military operations 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, he relied heavily on methods of delegated control and communications problems constrained his ability to effectively exercise direct control. In certain operations there was tight coupling between the forces of the two sides. Both sides used their forces as a political instrument under conditions of acute crisis. Interactions occurred at the tactical level that were not directly controlled by American leaders. The President did not directly control any of the anti-submarine warfare operations or the boarding of the Marucla (other than to order it to occur). Navy forces encountered Cuban air and naval forces on several occasions without the President or



McNamara controlling the interactions. The President's attention was focused on a very small portion of the overall operations that were in progress. The stratified interaction model offers a good description of Soviet-American interactions in the Cuban Missile Crisis.

In the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, the United States relied on methods of delegated control, U.S. and Soviet naval forces in the Mediterranean were tightly coupled, and both sides used their forces as a political instrument under conditions of conditions of acute crisis. Interactions occurred at the tactical level that were not directly controlled by American leaders. For example, President Johnson had no control over whether or not the Soviet harassment of America on June 8 would produce a clash between the U.S. and Soviet navies. The stratified interaction model of international crises, in which interactions evolve in separate, semi-independent sequences at the political, strategic, and tactical levels, offers a good description of Soviet-American interactions in the 1967 Arab-Israeli War.

In the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, the United States relied on methods of delegated control, U.S. and Soviet naval forces in the Mediterranean were tightly coupled, and both sides used their forces as political instruments under conditions of acute crisis. Significant and dangerous interactions occurred at the tactical level that were not

directly controlled by American leaders. For example, President Nixon had no direct control over Sixth Fleet counter-targeting of Soviet ships carrying anti-ship cruise missiles, and was probably unaware that this activity had inadvertently been set in motion by White House orders making the fleet an easy target for the Soviet Navy.

Decoupled Interactions

The fourth question is did crisis interactions at the tactical level become decoupled from the strategy being pursued by national leaders? There are seven potential causes of decoupling: communications and information flow problems, impairment of political-level decisionmaking, a fast-paced tactical environment, ambiguous or ambivalent orders, tactically inappropriate orders, inappropriate guidance in mechanisms of indirect control, and deliberate unauthorized actions by military commanders. To establish that stratified interactions became decoupled in a crisis requires two findings: first, that one of the seven conditions just mentioned was present, creating conditions for decoupling, and, second, that operational decisions made by tactical-level decisionmakers differed from the decisions that political-level decisionmakers would have made in order to coordinate those actions with their political-diplomatic strategy for resolving the crisis. Decoupled interactions were examined in all eight case studies.

There were instances of tactical-level interactions becoming decoupled from the crisis management strategy being pursued by U.S. leaders in the 1958 Taiwan Straits crisis. Three of the potential causes of decoupling arose on the American side in the crisis: communications problems, a fast-paced tactical environment, and ambiguous orders. Communications between Washington and the Far East were slow and cumbersome. When the President suspended convoy escort operations on October 6 in response to the Communist unilateral ceasefire announcement, the order was not received by Commander Taiwan Patrol Force until after two more Nationalist convoys had been escorted on October 7. As it turned out, the extra day of escort operations did not adversely affect U.S. efforts to resolve the crisis, but it could have had a much more serious impact--the Chinese Communists had made the ceasefire contingent on the U.S. not escorting Nationalist convoys. This was the most serious instance of decoupling in the crisis.

The impact of a fast-paced tactical environment and ambiguous orders were most apparent on August 24, the first full day of the crisis. It would be August 26 before the on-scene commanders received the first JCS directive on the crisis, but they had to respond immediately to a Communist Chinese threat of unknown proportions. In the early hours of the crisis it was not clear whether the Communists intended to attack Taiwan, invade Quemoy or neighboring

islands, or just harass the offshore islands with artillery fire. The Nationalists were appealing for assistance to repel an invasion of one of the islands. Compounding the control problems created by this rapidly evolving situation was the ambiguous Eisenhower Administration policy toward defense of the offshore islands. U.S. military commanders in the Pacific had sought clarification on the offshore islands earlier in August as tensions rose in the Straits, but the President was unwilling to state a definitive policy until September 6. On-scene commanders had ample authority to take military action under the terms of the defense treaty with the Nationalists and the Formosa Resolution if Taiwan were threatened, but initially had no specific guidance on the offshore islands. Left to their own devices, the on-scene commanders took actions on August 24 and 25--sending U.S. destroyers to the assistance of Nationalist forces defending the offshore islands--that the President may not have authorized had he been able to make the decisions himself. This is another potential example of decoupling during the 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis.

Despite the vast scale of operations that were conducted and the intensity of the interactions that took place during the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, decoupling was relatively rare. There were no serious instances of decoupling involving naval forces. The potential cause of decoupling that was most prominent in the crisis was

communications problems. Despite the advances that had been made in communications technology, the effort to exercise close control over large-scale operations seriously overloaded and degraded U.S. communications systems. These communications problems did not cause serious decoupling because only a very small portion of U.S. forces were in contact with adversary forces and because attention had been paid to the guidance contained mechanisms of indirect control, so that U.S. forces would act as the President desired when he could not control their actions.

The second potential cause of decoupling, a fast-paced tactical environment, was not a major problem during the Cuban Missile Crisis. There were no fast-paced engagements. Anti-submarine warfare operations--the most dangerous Soviet-American tactical interactions during the crisis--were particularly slow and tedious, providing ample opportunity for disengagement. Similarly, the intercept and boarding of merchant ships takes place at a leisurely pace and is relatively easy to control. Fast-paced engagements, such as air combat and sea battles fought with tactical aircraft and cruise missiles, never arose. This appears to have been a key factor in the success of the President's crisis management efforts--opening with operations that were inherently slow-paced. The President probably knew intuitively that this was an advantage of a blockade, but it was not an explicit consideration in the decision.

In the Cuban Missile Crisis, President Kennedy and Secretary of Defense McNamara also sought to avoid three of the other potential causes of decoupling: ambiguous or ambivalent orders, tactically inappropriate orders, and inappropriate guidance in mechanisms of indirect control. This is a striking contrast with the 1958 Taiwan Strait Crisis, when the Navy did not have clear guidance on whether or not it could defend the off-shore islands when the crisis erupted. By tailoring certain key guidance contained in mission orders and rules of engagement to support the President's political objectives, the President and McNamara avoided the problem of inappropriate guidance in mechanisms of indirect control. McNamara did not attempt to rewrite Navy tactical doctrine, but did impose certain requirements and limitations on the Navy. The most important innovation, the special submarine surfacing signals, were devised in conjunction with the Navy. By not attempting to exercise positive direct control of operations while they were in progress, the President and McNamara largely avoided the problem of tactically inappropriate orders. The method of control they used--control by negation--only required that orders be given if a Navy commander embarked on a course of action that they opposed.

The final potential cause of decoupling--unauthorized actions by military commanders--did not occur during the Cuban Missile Crisis. President Kennedy was aware, at least

in general terms, of Navy anti-submarine warfare (ASW) operations. He had been briefed on and approved quarantine plans that directed the Navy to surface and identify Soviet submarines, and authorized use of force, if necessary, to prevent Soviet submarines from reaching Cuba without being inspected for offensive weapons. McNamara received detailed briefings on Navy operations, including ASW operations, at least once daily in Flag Plot and received frequent situation reports in between briefings. McNamara's knowledge of Navy ASW procedures was detailed enough to know that the Navy would need to develop special procedures for signalling submarines to surface for identification. Navy ASW forces strictly complied with the special submarine and surfacing procedures. No Soviet submarines were depth charged. No unauthorized actions occurred despite the resentment many senior Navy officers felt against the close attention that the President and McNamara paid to naval operations.

Two of the potential causes of decoupling--communications problems and a fast-paced tactical environment--were present in the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, but there were no serious instances of decoupling. The U.S. communications system did not permit the President to exercise real-time direct control over the Sixth Fleet. Due to geographic distance, President Johnson's ability to communicate directly with the Sixth Fleet in 1967 was less than President Kennedy's ability to communicate directly with the



Second Fleet in 1962. A second potential cause of decoupling--a fast-paced tactical environment--was also present during some periods of the crisis. In spite of these factors, divergence of tactical-level military operations from political-level objectives was not a serious problem during the crisis. Although on-scene commanders often made operational decisions on their own authority, their decisions generally supported the President's political objectives. The response of Navy on-scene commanders to Soviet harassment on June 8 may have been an instance of tactical-level military operations diverging from political-level objectives, but there is no evidence that the President disapproved of how they handled the situation. The overall pattern, therefore, was one of parallel stratified interactions: interactions the President did not control, but which supported his political objectives.

Four of the potential causes of decoupling were present in the 1973 Arab-Israeli War: communications and information flow problems, impairment of political-level decisionmaking, a fast-paced tactical environment, and tactically inappropriate orders. The U.S. communications system provided much faster and more reliable communications in 1973 than it had in 1967, but still did not permit the President to exercise real-time direct control over the Sixth Fleet. Impairment of political-level decisionmaking

was at least a minor factor in the crisis. President Nixon was in the midst of the Watergate scandal and the resignation of Vice President Spiro Agnew. Although President Nixon reportedly made key decisions himself and was kept informed of major developments in the crisis, he clearly did not exercise close, detailed control over U.S. actions in the crisis.

The tactical environment in the Mediterranean was fast-paced during the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. The White House did not directly control the actions of the Sixth Fleet and available accounts suggest that Nixon and Kissinger were unaware of the intensity of the naval interactions that were occurring. Sixth Fleet efforts to counter the Soviet anti-ship missile threat required frequent tactical decisions as Soviet ships maneuvered to keep the U.S. carriers targeted. This intense maneuvering for tactical advantage was too fast-paced for the White House to be able to effectively control it. The same situation could well have existed for the Soviet Mediterranean Squadron, which was constantly targeted at point blank range by U.S. warships and attack aircraft.

Tactically inappropriate orders were a major factor in the 1973 Arab-Israeli War and may have led to decoupling. To ensure that the Sixth Fleet sent only the desired political signals, the White House ordered the fleet to remain in small, fixed operating areas. This made the U.S. fleet extremely vulnerable to a Soviet preemptive strike.

The on-scene commanders--acting on their own initiative and well within their delegated authority--sought to reduce their vulnerability by counter-targeting the most threatening Soviet naval units. Tight direct control of Sixth Fleet movements by the White House thus generated tactically inappropriate orders.

The factors listed above may have led to decoupling of tactical-level interactions during the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. The Sixth Fleet was moved to south of Crete in order to demonstrate to the Soviet Union that the United States was prepared for any contingency, but had no aggressive intent and was not preparing to take an active part in the conflict. Sixth Fleet movements of October 25 were intended to deter escalation of the conflict--specifically, Soviet intervention in Egypt with airborne forces--but the fleet was restrained in order to avoid signalling excessive hostility or an intention to intervene directly in the conflict. Given these political signalling objectives, it is not clear that the White House would have viewed Sixth Fleet preparations for preemptive strikes against the Soviet navy--preparations the Soviets were well aware of--as supporting the U.S. strategy for managing the crisis or as sending the political signals it wanted sent to the Soviet Union. There may well have been tactical-level interactions between U.S. and Soviet naval forces that complicated management of the crisis.

At least two of the potential causes of decoupled interactions were present during the August 2 and 4, 1964, Tonkin Gulf Incidents: communications and information flow problems, and a fast-paced tactical environment. Although the technical capacity to do so may have existed, the Defense Department and Navy communication systems were not configured to enable Washington to speak directly to ships at sea in the Far East. Officials in Washington spent hours bombarding Navy commanders in the Pacific with demands for more information on the second incident before they felt they had sufficient information on which to base the decision to retaliate. The President and the Secretary of Defense were thus unable to control U.S. Navy operations in the Tonkin Gulf while the incidents were in progress.

Although conditions for decoupling were present in the 1964 Tonkin Gulf Incidents, the operational decisions made by tactical-level commanders did not diverge from the political-military objectives of political-level leaders. The on-scene commander acted with caution to avoid encounters with North Vietnamese forces while conducting the surveillance mission, and Commander Seventh Fleet ordered the engagements on August 2 and 4 halted as soon as the U.S. ships were out of danger. Military commanders and political leaders were in agreement that North Vietnamese attacks on U.S. ships warranted retaliatory air strikes, and that the Desoto patrol should be resumed after the incidents in order

to assert freedom of the seas. Interestingly, the on-scene commander had the greatest doubt that there had been a North Vietnamese attack on August 4 and cautioned against a hasty reaction. The pattern in the two incidents was one of momentary decoupling followed by tactical-level escalation and disengagement. On-scene commanders, acting on their own authority under guidance contained in the rules of engagement, used limited force in response to apparent imminent attacks. They were not required to request--and did not seek--permission from higher authority to use force in self-defense. Once the immediate threat had been countered and the destroyers were out of danger, the on-scene commanders halted the engagements--again on their own authority and without guidance from higher in the chain of command.

At least two of the potential causes of decoupled interactions were present during the Liberty incident: communications and information flow problems, and a fast-paced tactical environment. Although these factors prevented political-level leaders from exercising direct control over Sixth Fleet actions, decoupling did not occur. The actions ordered by Commander Sixth Fleet were restrained and anticipated the desires of top-level officials in Washington. Commander Sixth Fleet carefully spelled out rules of engagement intended to avoid unnecessary incidents while defending Liberty. Thus, although interactions were stratified during the incident--evolving independently at

the political and tactical levels--they were not decoupled. The pattern was one of parallel stratified interactions: tactical-level military actions that support the crisis management objectives of national leaders even though not under the direct control of those leaders.

One of the potential causes of decoupled interactions was present in the Pueblo incident and played an major role in how the incident developed: communications and information flow problems. Emergency messages from Pueblo required over an hour to reach Washington and U.S. military commanders in the Pacific. On the other hand, although U.S. military commanders had authority to take military action in support of Pueblo, they decided not to do so. President Johnson was not confronted with having to halt combat operations or approve them after the fact because none were initiated. U.S. commanders in the Far East had already come to the conclusion that there were no effective military actions that could be taken to rescue Pueblo without needlessly endangering the crew. Therefore, although the President did not have direct control over the initial response to the North Korean attack on Pueblo, U.S. forces acted essentially as he would have wanted them to act under the circumstances. This pattern is one of parallel stratified interactions: tactical level interactions that are not controlled by national leaders, but which support the political objectives of those leaders.

There was no decoupling of tactical-level interactions in the Stark incident. The attack lasted only a few minutes and was over before any other units could employ their weapons in support of Stark. The identity of the attacking aircraft was known well before the attack, and military commanders at the scene quickly concluded that the attack had been inadvertent. No U.S. forces were in a position to shoot down the Iraqi plane. The only sense in which actions at the tactical level failed to support national policy was that Stark failed to take defensive actions authorized under the rules of engagement.

In summary, various potential causes of decoupling were present in all eight of the cases examined in this study. The most common cause of decoupling was communications problems or properly functioning communications that are simply too slow to permit direct control of military operations. This was a factor in all eight of the cases. The second most common cause of decoupling was a fast-paced tactical environment. This was a factor in the 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis, the 1964 Tonkin Gulf Incidents, the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, the 1967 Liberty incident, and the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. Ambiguous orders were a factor in the 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis and tactically inappropriate orders were a factor in the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. Impairment of political-level decisionmaking was a factor in the 1973 Arab-Israeli War.

Three patterns of tactical-level interactions were seen in the eight cases. The most common pattern was parallel stratified interactions: tactical-level interactions that were not directly controlled by political-level leaders, but which generally supported their political objectives and crisis management strategy. Parallel stratified interactions were seen in the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, the 1967 Liberty incident, the 1968 Pueblo incident, and the 1987 Stark incident.

The second pattern was momentary decoupling: tactical-level interaction that was not controlled by political-level leaders and did not support their political and crisis management objectives, followed by immediate disengagement (that is, without tactical-level escalation and often without shots being fired). The pattern between instances of momentary decoupling is parallel stratified interactions. Momentary decoupling was seen in the 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis, and possibly in the 1973 Arab-Israeli War.

The third pattern was decoupling followed by disengagement. In this pattern, a tactical-level incident occurs that is not directly controlled by political-level leaders and does not support their political objectives. The incident leads to an armed clash, but then halts at the initiative of on-scene commanders without intervention by political-level authorities. Decoupling followed by disengagement occurred in the 1964 Tonkin Gulf Incidents.

Crisis Stability

Crisis stability exists to the extent that neither side has an incentive to strike the first military blow. The crisis security dilemma is that, in a crisis, many of the actions a state takes to increase its security and improve its bargaining position decrease the security of the adversary. The stratified crisis security dilemma is that, in a crisis, the security dilemma is stratified, arising from the interaction processes occurring separately at each of the three levels, and affecting the likelihood of war separately at each level. This in turn leads to the concept of stratified escalation dynamics: in a crisis in which interaction between the two sides has become stratified and decoupled, the security dilemma, operating separately at each level of interaction, can trigger an escalatory spiral at the tactical level, which under certain circumstances can cause the crisis to escalate uncontrollably to war.

Stratified Crisis Stability.

The fifth question is did national leaders and on-scene commanders hold different perceptions of the vulnerability of on-scene forces to preemption and the need to strike first in the event of an armed clash? This question addresses the second corollary to the theory of stratified interaction, that the security dilemma can become stratified in crises. The implication of this is that decision-makers

at the political and tactical levels can hold different perceptions of the offense-defense balance, vulnerability to preemption, and the need to strike first.

National leaders and on-scene commanders holding different threat perceptions appears not to have been a serious problem in the 1958 Taiwan Straits crisis. The entire chain of command, from the President down to commanding officers at sea in the Straits, appear to have been aware of the danger of incidents with Communist Chinese forces. The emphasis in JCS operational directives was on avoiding clashes with the Communists, and on-scene commanders took similar measures on their own initiative. These actions largely prevented U.S. forces from operating in the sights of Communist guns, thus reducing their vulnerability to preemption by the Communists. Although some U.S. commanders in the Far East wanted to take more vigorous action against Communist China, they did not perceive a significantly greater threat to U.S. forces than did officials in Washington. Thus, the security dilemma was not stratified.

There were instances in the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis of national leaders and on-scene commanders holding different threat perceptions, but this did not create serious crisis management problems. Although the JCS remained committed to the air strike option as its preferred course of action until Khrushchev agreed on October 28 to remove Soviet offensive missiles from Cuba, this does not

reflect differences in threat perceptions. Rather, it reflects differences of opinion over whether or not the quarantine would be sufficient to compel Khrushchev to remove the missiles that were already in Cuba. Even President Kennedy was skeptical that it would work, but decided to give it a try before resorting to force. The primary area in which there appear to have been stratified threat perceptions, that is, on-scene commanders at the tactical level holding threat perceptions different from those held by decisionmakers at the political level, was in the area of ASW. Navy commanders at sea were more concerned about the Soviet submarine threat than were senior military and civilian leaders in Washington. However, the differences were not extreme and the President and McNamara were also concerned about the Soviet submarine threat. There was recognition at all levels that for several reasons, including that fact that submarines were to be stopped and boarded under the quarantine, the Navy would have to conduct intense ASW operations.

The one other area in which threat perceptions were stratified was the Cuban air and naval threat to U.S. Navy ships. Navy commanders were particularly concerned about the threat from Cuban Komar missile boats. There is little mention of this threat in available EXCOMM records. Perceptions of the threat from Cuban aircraft were mixed, not following any pattern, and were not stratified.

In the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, threat perceptions were not acute at any level of the chain of command and officials in Washington appear to have been more concerned about the Soviet naval threat to the Sixth Fleet than were the on-scene commanders. Threat perceptions and the security dilemma thus were not stratified during the crisis.

During the first week of the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, U.S. Navy on-scene commanders were relatively unconcerned about the Soviet naval threat because the Soviet Mediterranean Squadron essentially continued normal peacetime operations. From October 14 onward, however, the tactical situation changed dramatically for the worse. U.S. Navy on-scene commanders in the Mediterranean were highly concerned about the threat of a Soviet preemptive attack due to the untenable tactical position in which the Sixth Fleet had been placed by White House restrictions on the fleet's movements. Soviet ships and submarines armed with anti-ship missiles were constantly within range of the U.S. carriers while they were in the eastern Mediterranean. On-scene commanders perceived the threat of preemptive attack to be particularly acute during the October 26-30 period due to intense Soviet anti-carrier exercises directed against the Sixth Fleet. The period of this Soviet exercise could well have been the closest that the Soviet Union and the United States have ever been to "hair trigger" readiness for war-- at least at the tactical level.



Civilian officials appear to have held threat perceptions much different from those held by U.S. Navy officers during the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. Henry Kissinger, in particular, did not perceive a threat from the Soviet Navy during the crisis, and was either unaware of the Soviet anti-carrier exercise or did not understand the threat it represented to the Sixth Fleet. This suggests a divergence of threat perceptions between civilian and military officials: The Navy chain of command from the JCS Chairman down to the carrier Commanding Officers perceived a serious threat from Soviet anti-carrier operations, while civilian officials did not perceive a threat to the Sixth Fleet. Thus, stratified threat perceptions did arise between civilian and military officials at the top of the chain of command.

Part of the reason why civilian officials held much different threat perceptions than those held by military officials in the 1973 Arab-Israeli War was that the Navy chain of command was not kept informed of the political and diplomatic aspects of the crisis. The on-scene commander lacked important information on the political context of the crisis and had to interpret Soviet behavior on the basis of the military and naval moves being made by Soviet forces. It is not surprising, therefore, that Soviet naval operations in the Mediterranean appeared much more threatening to the Navy chain of command than they did to Kissinger.

The security dilemma appears to have been stratified during the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. At the political level of interaction, neither the United States nor the Soviet Union had an incentive to launch a preemptive first strike against the other. Both sides desired to prevent the crisis from escalating to war. Military and naval moves, including the U.S. DEFCON 3 alert, were taken primarily for political purposes. At the tactical level of interaction, however, U.S. and Soviet naval forces had strong incentives to strike first and were actively targeting each other. U.S. Navy on-scene commanders were seriously concerned about the threat of a Soviet preemptive attack due to Soviet anti-carrier operations. Soviet Navy commanders must have shared similar concerns due to U.S. counter-targeting of their major combatants. The security dilemma was thus stratified--mild at the political level, but acute at the tactical level.

In summary, threat perceptions were stratified in the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis and the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. Stratified threat perceptions did not cause crisis management problems in the Cuban Missile Crisis, but did cause problems in the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. The crisis security dilemma was stratified in the in the 1973 Arab-Israeli War: at the political level of interaction there was little incentive for either side to launch a preemptive first strike, but at the tactical level naval forces had strong incentives to strike first and were actively

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targeting each other. A number of incidents could have triggered an inadvertent naval battle in the Mediterranean that U.S. and Soviet leaders might not have been able to control until the initial engagements were over.

Escalation Dynamics

The sixth question is, when tactical-level interactions become decoupled, what factors inhibit escalation dynamics from occurring at the tactical level and being transmitted upward to the strategic and political levels of interaction? This question addresses the third corollary to the theory of stratified interaction, that escalation dynamics can be stratified in a crisis. Although escalation dynamics cannot be addressed directly--none of the cases escalated to war--research was done to identify escalation-inhibiting factors and conditions that can cause those factors to break down.

When decoupling occurred in the 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis, it did not produce tactical-level escalation. Instead, interactions remained at a relatively low intensity and when U.S. and Communist forces did come in contact, they quickly disengaged. There appear to have been two reasons for this. First, U.S. on-scene commanders exercised caution in the absence of guidance from higher authority. For example, Commander Taiwan Defense Command and Commander Taiwan Patrol Force initially ordered ships to remain twelve



miles from the mainland and aircraft to remain twenty miles from the mainland--a policy more restrictive than that approved by the President later. This tactical-level prudence compensated for lack of operational guidance when decoupling occurred, preventing escalation even when actions took place that the President had not ordered.

The second factor inhibiting escalation in the 1958 Taiwan straits Crisis was that both sides took steps to avoid military clashes and adhered to tacit ground rules for a test of capabilities between their forces. Those ground rules included no Communist attacks on U.S. forces, no U.S. attacks on Chinese forces except in self-defense (and defense of Nationalist forces in international airspace or waters), and no U.S. attacks on the Chinese mainland. By 1958 the United States and Communist China had evolved tacit rules of crisis behavior, and those rules contributed to preventing escalation.

Three escalation-inhibiting factors were present in the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis. The first was caution and prudence on the part of U.S., Soviet, and Cuban leaders during the crisis. President Kennedy's decision to open with relatively slow-paced naval operations, Khrushchev's early decision not to challenge the quarantine, and Castro's decision not to provoke the United States were the factors that determined the nature of the tactical-level interactions. Escalation was avoided by the tactical environment



having been structured in such a manner as to prevent clashes from occurring. Although this was what President Kennedy had in mind when he selected the quarantine over other military options, the outcome was due to decisions made in Moscow and Havana as well as in Washington.

The second escalation-inhibiting factor in the Cuban Missile Crisis was compliance by on-scene military commanders with the guidance contained in mechanisms of indirect control. There was immediate disengagement in the one instance that weapons were fired at a U.S. Navy unit: When Cuban anti-aircraft guns fired at Navy reconnaissance jets on October 27, the unarmed Navy planes simply left the area. The fact that no effort was made by on-scene commanders to strike at Cuban air defenses marks compliance with the requirement that the President approve retaliatory attacks. Navy ASW forces trailed Soviet sub-marines for days without escalation by either side. The special ASW procedures specified by McNamara were used as he had intended. There were no instances of naval forces conducting unauthorized operations or using weapons in violation of the rules of engagement.

The third escalation-inhibiting factor in the Cuban Missile Crisis was communication between Soviet and American leaders. The need for communication between the two sides is well established in the crisis management literature. Formal and informal messages were used to clarify

intentions, express concern over incidents, and defuse situations that might otherwise have generated even greater tensions between the two sides. Military moves were not the only means of signalling intentions available to President Kennedy, he had several other channels for delivering formal and informal messages to Khrushchev. Because Kennedy and Khrushchev were exchanging communications frequently during the crisis, they could wait, send a protest, and assess the implications of an isolated incident, rather than immediately reacting to it. These communications were not perfect, but the availability of formal and informal communications channels between the two superpowers appears to have moderated the use of military forces for political signaling by allowing diplomatic rather than military responses to military incidents.

Although there were intense tactical-level interactions between U.S. and Soviet naval forces during the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, there were no cases of those interactions generating an escalation sequence that the President could not control. Four escalation-inhibiting factors appear to account for this. The first factor was caution on the part of U.S. leaders in the restrictions they placed on Sixth Fleet movements and caution on the part of U.S. naval commanders in the Mediterranean when potentially serious incidents did occur. The most dangerous interactions took place on June 7 and 8 during Soviet harassment of USS America and her

escorts. This interaction sequence did escalate, in the sense that a second Soviet ship joined the harassment on the second day, but did not escalate to violence. There were no collisions and no shots were fired. Although naval commanders on both sides were determined not to be intimidated, they were cautious to avoid collisions.

The second factor inhibiting escalation in the 1967 Arab-Israeli War was that the Soviet Mediterranean Squadron generally behaved in a cautious and circumspect manner. Soviet caution was an important factor in the lack of escalation during particularly intense interactions at sea. U.S. Navy commanders could tolerate a certain amount of indiscretion by individual Soviet ships because it clearly was not part of a pattern of harassment and did not appear to presage a Soviet preemptive attack. Thus, while Soviet efforts to show caution around the Sixth Fleet were not entirely successful in preventing tensions from arising, they did help to prevent serious incidents from occurring.

The third factor inhibiting escalation in the 1967 Arab-Israeli War was the tight coupling between U.S. and Soviet naval forces in the Mediterranean. Overall, this was beneficial for crisis management because the signal the United States and Soviet Union were sending with their fleets was one of non-involvement in the hostilities. Thus, although tight coupling is generally perceived as increasing the danger of escalation in crises, it can also reduce the

likelihood of escalation when both sides are attempting to avoid involvement in a local conflict.

The fourth factor inhibiting escalation in the 1967 Arab-Israeli War was use of the Soviet-American hot line. Both sides used the hot line to express concerns, give warnings, and avoid misperceptions. The hot line was thus used to dampen the potential negative effects of tight coupling between U.S. and Soviet naval forces in the Mediterranean. Ironically, while tight coupling of the naval forces in the Mediterranean increased the need for the hot line, it also increased the effectiveness of the hot line as a means for conveying political messages. Soviet and American leaders could verify the veracity of statements made by the other side by comparing them with reports on the other side's naval operations. The essential requirement for this synergistic relationship to exist was careful coordination of naval operations with political objectives and diplomatic initiatives. The United States and the Soviet Union were largely successful in achieving such coordination.

There were intense tactical-level interactions during the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, but no instances of the inter-actions generating an escalation sequence. The most dangerous inter-actions occurred during the Soviet anti-carrier exercise (October 25-30), but they did not escalate to violence. Although each side was constantly targeting

the other and both sides were ready to instantly launch preemptive attacks, no weapons were fired during the crisis. Three factors appear to have inhibited escalation during the crisis. First, neither the United States nor the Soviet Union wanted to intervene militarily in the war if they could possibly avoid it, largely out of concern for an armed clash with the other superpower. Therefore they both acted cautiously with their military and naval forces, avoiding situations that could inadvertently involve them in the fighting and, with one exception, avoiding actions that were unnecessarily provocative. The only exception to this pattern was the Soviet anti-carrier exercise that commenced on October 26--an action much different from Soviet behavior throughout the rest of the crisis. Thus, while the overall pattern of Soviet military behavior was one of restraint, the Soviets were willing to engage in certain highly provocative activities.

The second factor inhibiting escalation in the 1973 Arab-Israeli War was that the United States and the Soviet Union communicated with each other frequently during the crisis. This helped to prevent the problem of ambiguous political signals, which can cause intentions and objectives to be misperceived. Soviet warnings to the United States on October 24 that it was prepared to intervene unilaterally in the Middle East if Israel did not respect the U.N. ceasefire were particularly important for avoiding a clash between the

superpowers. Although that warning prompted the most intense superpower tensions of the crisis, including the U.S. worldwide DEFCON 3 alert, the situation could well have been much worse if the United States and the Soviet Union had not been in direct communication. The superpowers probably would have had great difficulty interpreting the political significance of each other's military moves on October 24 and 25 had they not been able to express their interests and concerns to each other.

The third factor inhibiting escalation in the 1973 Arab-Israeli War was caution and restraint on the part of U.S. Navy commanders in the Mediterranean. This was particularly important due to Soviet targeting of the Sixth Fleet with anti-ship missile platforms. On-scene commanders had to carefully balance the need to maintain a tactically viable situation against the danger of incidents with the Soviet Navy. This was particularly important for U.S. ships and aircraft assigned to monitor high-threat Soviet ships and destroy them if they attempted to launch anti-ship missiles. When the Soviets commenced their anti-carrier exercise, U.S. ships and planes counter-targeting the Soviets had to distinguish between preparations for simulated and actual attacks--an exceedingly difficult task. A single misjudgement could have produced a Soviet-American sea battle in the Mediterranean, which could well have escalated to general war.

Three escalation-inhibiting factors appear to have been important in the 1964 Tonkin Gulf Incidents. The first was military prudence: on-scene commanders did not want to fight under tactically unfavorable circumstances. It may well be the case that when U.S. forces are the victim of an unanticipated attack, tactical military considerations lead military commanders toward the same general course of action that political considerations lead national leaders toward. In the Tonkin Gulf Incidents, military considerations tended to make tactical-level commanders more cautious than political-level leaders.

The second escalation-inhibiting factor in the Tonkin Gulf Incidents was compliance by on-scene commanders with the guidance contained in mechanisms of indirect control. Under the peacetime rules of engagement in effect in 1964, U.S. forces were authorized to use force in self-defense and in anticipatory self-defense when attack appeared to be imminent. Hot pursuit of the attacking force was authorized in international waters and was used on August 2 when Navy planes attacked the PT boats after they had disengaged. On the other hand, retaliation against targets in North Vietnam was not authorized unless specifically approved by the President. On the one hand, these provisions allowed force to be used without further permission from higher authority, but on the other hand, they resulted in the engagements halting quickly rather than escalating.

The third escalation-inhibiting factor in the Tonkin Gulf Incidents was the emphasis that the President and Secretary of Defense McNamara placed on confirming that there actually had been a North Vietnamese attack the night of August 4. They did not accept initial reports from the Tonkin Gulf at face value; they insisted on knowing the basis for the conclusion that there had been an attack on the destroyers. Double-checking the accuracy of initial reports is important for avoiding unwarranted escalation of a confrontation--particularly when there may not have been a confrontation at all.

The August 4 incident in the Tonkin Gulf suggests three conditions that can cause the escalation-inhibiting factors to break down. The first condition is long-term frustration and animosity toward the other side in a crisis or incident. U.S. leaders had for years been growing increasingly belligerent toward North Vietnam due to its support for the Viet Cong, and had been preparing contingency plans for direct military action against the North. This created an atmosphere in which an apparent North Vietnamese attack on U.S. forces would be likely to provoke a strong U.S. response. The second condition is the immediate prior occurrence of a confirmed provocation by the other side, particularly when the U.S. response to the prior incident was restrained and the other side was warned against further incidents. The U.S. reacted with notable restraint

to the confirmed August 2 North Vietnamese attack on Maddox, merely warning against further attacks. But the August 4 incident provoked U.S. retaliation against the North even though the circumstances of the incident were not clear.

The third condition that can degrade the escalation-inhibiting factors is for all levels in the military chain of command, from the President to the on-scene commander, to hold similar views toward the adversary and toward the need for immediate retaliation. A strong unity of views can suppress the skepticism that normally greets ambiguous initial reports of a military incident, or lead to hasty assessment of the incident in the rush to launch retaliatory attacks. This appears to have occurred in the U.S. decision to retaliate after the August 4 incident--McNamara sought confirmation that there had been an attack, but the President decided to retaliate before a complete assessment of the evidence had been made.

The Liberty incident sheds light on three escalation-inhibiting factors. First, by fully complying with with the standing rules of engagement and limiting his actions to those necessary to defend Liberty, the on-scene commander contributed to avoiding an unnecessary clash with Soviet or Egyptian forces. Second, use of the hot line apparently helped prevent the Soviets and Egyptians from misperceiving the intent of actions taken by the on-scene commander. Third, rapid Israeli notification of the United States that

it had inadvertently attacked a U.S. naval vessel cleared up confusion in Washington and resulted in Sixth Fleet planes being recalled before they entered the war zone off the coast of Sinai. The last two factors emphasize the importance of communications among the parties to a crisis for avoiding misperception and escalation.

Although decoupling did not occur in the Pueblo incident, two of the considerations that prevented decoupling can be viewed as escalation-inhibiting factors: military prudence and compliance with the guidance contained in mechanisms of indirect control. U.S. military commanders were reluctant to mount a response that would have been excessively vulnerable to North Korean attacks. Loss of U.S. aircraft sent to defend Pueblo almost certainly would have generated escalatory pressures, so in this instance military prudence led to tactical decisions that supported crisis management objectives. U.S. military commanders complied with the restrictions imposed on military operations by the standing peacetime rules of engagement, barring their forces from attacking North Korean forces inside North Korean territorial waters and airspace, and not ordering actions that would have constituted reprisals against North Korea. The guidance contained in the peacetime rules of engagement may or may not have been appropriate to the specific circumstances, but U.S. military commanders were careful to comply with that guidance.

The Stark incident suggests an escalation-inhibiting factor: accurate intelligence on friendly and potentially hostile forces. Because the attacking aircraft was known to have been Iraqi, there was no question that Iran might have been responsible for the attack on Stark. Without such intelligence, U.S. commanders in the Persian Gulf probably would have suspected that Iran had conducted the attack. Circumstantial evidence pointing to Iranian complicity and lack of an Iraqi admission of responsibility could well have led to the President authorizing retaliatory attacks on Iranian forces or bases. This situation is analogous to that described in the Liberty incident, when accurate information on Soviet forces in the Mediterranean prevented U.S. military commanders from suspecting that the Soviets had attacked Liberty.

It appears that inadvertent escalation is more likely when intelligence is incomplete and ambiguous, supporting worst-case assessments of the nature and implications of an attack on U.S. forces. For example, on-scene commanders could conclude that full-scale attacks on U.S. forces at the scene of the crisis will soon follow, placing a premium on preempting the expected enemy attack. Under certain circumstances on-scene commanders might have authority to preempt without having to seek permission from higher authority.

In summary, six internal and two external escalation-inhibiting factors were identified in the case studies. The

The following text is extremely blurry and illegible. It appears to be a list or a series of entries, possibly related to a historical or scientific record. The text is too faint to transcribe accurately.

internal factors function within the government and military chain of command of one nation. The internal factors are military prudence (avoiding threat of surprise attack and combat under unfavorable circumstances), caution and restraint on the part of on-scene commanders, compliance by on-scene commanders with the guidance contained in mechanisms of indirect control, national leaders structuring the tactical environment to dampen military interactions, accurate and timely tactical intelligence on friendly and potentially hostile forces, and national leaders and the military chain of command double-checking the accuracy of initial reports of military incidents. These factors tend moderate the intensity of tactical-level interactions, prevent armed clashes from occurring, and produce disengagement rather than escalation when clashed do occur.

External escalation-inhibiting factors function between the two sides in a crisis. There are two external factors: tacit rules of crisis behavior observed by the two sides and communications between the two sides in the crisis. Tacit rules of crisis behavior are best developed between the United States and the Soviet Union, but also contributed to avoiding escalation in the 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis. The Soviet-American tacit rules are not without flaws. Soviet naval forces have engaged in exceedingly dangerous behavior--dangerous maneuvering at close quarters and simulated attacks on U.S. naval forces--



during international crises. The 1972 Soviet-American Incidents at Sea Agreement has only been partially successful in moderating such Soviet behavior. The most dangerous situation arises in confrontations with nations that the United States does not share tacit rules of crisis behavior, like Libya, Iran, and North Korea.

The findings of the eight case studies indicate that, contrary to what the escalation dynamics theory predicts, there is a tendency for naval tactical-level interaction to lose momentum and for the forces involved to disengage after an initial incident or armed clash. Pauses tend to occur naturally in naval operations due to the need to regroup and prepare for further action. Due to the risk of defeat in battle, naval commanders are reluctant to initiate or sustain combat operations under circumstances they cannot predict or control. Naval commanders quickly reach the limits of their authority and need permission from higher authority to initiate further combat operations. If do not have such permission, or anticipate that they will not be able get it, naval commanders normally will try to break off combat action as soon as it is safe to do so--rather than risk being left in an untenable tactical position. The operational requirements of crisis management, if being followed, tend to accentuate the tendency toward disengagement by denying on-scene commanders tactical options (such as surprise attack and concentration of



superior force) that can be crucial for successful combat operations.

The case studies identified three conditions that can cause the escalation-inhibiting factors to break down, allowing a crisis to escalate uncontrollably to war. The first condition is for national leaders and military commanders to be predisposed to take action against the adversary due to a long-term failures of diplomacy to resolve tensions, military and diplomatic frustration with the adversary. Sustained hostility, harassment, or a history of aggression by the adversary can generate a perception that the adversary's leaders are unreasonable, irresponsible, or uninterested in serious negotiations, reducing the incentive to pursue diplomatic initiatives toward the adversary. These expectations could be entirely correct, but could also result from insufficient or ambiguous intelligence on the adversary's objectives and intentions.

The second condition that can erode the escalation-inhibiting factors is the immediate prior occurrence of one or more hostile acts against United States forces, citizens, or vital interests. Prior attacks can create an expectation that further attacks will occur or that the adversary is likely to escalate the level of violence. As with long-term frustrations, short-term expectations of further violence could be entirely correct, but could also result from



insufficient or ambiguous intelligence on the adversary's objectives and intentions. The short-term effects of immediate prior hostile acts can reinforce the effects of long-term frustration with the adversary, appearing to confirm negative assessments of his intentions. Expectation of further attacks tends to predispose national leaders and military commanders toward broader military options toward the adversary.

The third condition that can erode the escalation-inhibiting factors is for all levels in the chain of command, from the President to the on-scene commander, to hold similar views toward the adversary and the need for immediate retaliation for provocations. A strong unity of views can suppress the skepticism that normally greets ambiguous initial reports on a military incident, or lead to hasty assessment of the incident in the rush to launch retaliatory attacks.

Misperceptions and Inadvertent Military Incidents

The seventh question is did actions taken with military forces send inadvertent signals to either adversaries or friends, and did inadvertent military incidents occur that affected efforts to manage the crisis? This question addresses crisis management problems that arise when military forces are employed in crises: the misperception dilemma and inadvertent military incidents.

Inadvertent political signals and inadvertent military incidents were not a serious problem in the 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis. The military moves taken by each side were carefully designed to signal their intentions. The principle problem that the United States experienced arose from the ambiguity of the Eisenhower Administration's commitment to the defense of the offshore islands. U.S. leaders were caught between deterring an adversary and restraining an ally: too strong a commitment might encourage the Nationalists to be overly aggressive, while too weak a commitment might encourage the Communists to be overly aggressive. The Eisenhower Administration attempted to resolve this dilemma with a calculated policy of ambiguity, which only prompted the Communist probe of the American commitment and subsequent efforts by the Nationalists to use the crisis as grounds for striking back at the mainland. The problem was not that the Communists and Nationalists misperceived U.S. intentions, but rather that they correctly perceived the ambivalence in U.S. policy.

There were two instances of U.S. naval forces sending inadvertent signals of hostility during the Cuban Missile Crisis: the first was when a Soviet merchant ship captain mistook a Navy patrol plane's high-powered search light (flashed for photographs) for an attack on his ship, and the second was a Soviet merchant ship captain's complaint that he had been threatened by a Navy destroyer inspecting MRBMs

on his deck. Although the Soviet Government filed protests over these incidents, it did not interpret them as deliberate indications of hostile intentions on the part of the United States.

There was only one inadvertent military incident during the Cuban Missile Crisis serious enough to have affected the President's efforts to manage the crisis: the Air Force U-2 that strayed over the Soviet Union on October 27. This apparently annoyed Khrushchev, who complained about the incident to President Kennedy, but otherwise did not have a major impact on the crisis. There were no serious inadvertent military incidents involving naval forces. The lack of incidents is somewhat surprising, given the tremendous scope of United States military operations during the crisis, and may not be a reliable indicator of what to expect in future crises.

There do not appear to have been any instances of the Soviets seriously misperceiving the intent of Sixth Fleet operations during the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, largely due to close Soviet monitoring of the fleet and United States use of the hot line. Sixth Fleet and Middle East Force movements in May, intended to support the President's efforts to pressure Nasser into reopening the Strait of Tiran, may have sent an inadvertent signal of hostility to the Arab nations. The inadvertent hostile signal would lead Arab leaders to assume U.S. hostility after war broke out. It

thus complicated U.S. efforts to manage the crisis by lending credibility to Arab claims of American complicity in the Israeli attacks--claims that contributed to serious deterioration in U.S. relations with the Arab nations.

There were no inadvertent military incidents that seriously affected United States crisis management efforts in the 1967 Arab-Israeli War. The most serious incident of the crisis was the attack on the Liberty, but Israel quickly notified the United States that it had conducted the attack, thus defusing tensions over the incident. The second most serious incident of the crisis was the harassment of USS America by Soviet ships on June 7 and 8. But there were no collisions and no shots were fired. The absence of serious inadvertent incidents was largely due to the cautious manner in which the two superpowers conducted naval operations in the Mediterranean. The most important factor in avoiding incidents that could complicate crisis management was the decisions made by national leaders on the two sides that structured the tactical environment in such a manner as to moderate the tensions that would arise from tactical-level interactions.

There were no inadvertent military incidents serious enough to affect U.S. crisis management efforts during the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, but there appear to have been instances of U.S. leaders misperceiving the political signals being sent by Soviet naval movements. Kissinger

interpreted Soviet naval moves at the start of the war as demonstrating non-involvement in the conflict, but the actual pattern of Soviet naval operations suggests a higher degree of Soviet commitment to Syria and Egypt than Kissinger perceived. Kissinger also missed the point that Soviet naval movements demonstrated an intent to neutralize the Sixth Fleet if it were positioned to intervene.

Naval analysts and other observers have read political signals into several other U.S. and Soviet naval actions during the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. It is not clear, however, that any of those alleged signals were intentional or that the other side perceived the signals allegedly being sent. In every case the naval actions can be accounted for by motives or considerations other than political signalling, such as logistic requirements or improving tactical readiness. This further underscores the inherent ambiguity of naval movements as political signals, and the tendency for naval movements to be perceived as political signals even when undertaken for non-political purposes.

The U.S. response to the 1964 Tonkin Gulf Incidents did not send any serious inadvertent political signals or result in any serious inadvertent military incidents. However, the Desoto patrols apparently were misperceived by North Vietnam. Some U.S. intelligence analysts and military officers suspected that the North Vietnamese misperceived the Desoto patrol destroyers as participating in or directly

supporting OPLAN 34A attacks on North Vietnam. Although McNamara would later insist that there were no grounds for the North Vietnamese to have confused the Desoto and OPLAN 34A operations, such a misperception provides a plausible explanation for the August 2 attack on Maddox.

The U.S. response to the attack on the Liberty did not send any serious inadvertent political signals or result in any serious inadvertent military incidents. Commander Sixth Fleet carefully limited the fleet's response to the attack and the President used the hot line to prevent misperceptions from arising. The Israeli attack on Liberty was itself an inadvertent military incident, momentarily complicating U.S. crisis management efforts in the Middle East War, but no further incidents occurred during the Sixth Fleet's response to the attack.

The U.S. response to the North Korean seizure of the Pueblo did not send serious inadvertent political signals or result in serious inadvertent military incidents, probably due to the relatively passive U.S. response to the North Korean provocation. North Korea achieved a fait accompli, effectively limiting U.S. options to settling on North Korean terms. The passive U.S. response annoyed the South Koreans, but this arose from correct perceptions rather than from misperceptions.

The U.S. response to the attack on Stark did not send serious inadvertent political signals or result in serious

inadvertent military incidents, but the attack itself was an inadvertent military incident. The attack on Stark illustrates the danger of inadvertent military incidents when U.S. naval forces are operating in close proximity to hostilities.

In summary, inadvertent political signals may have been a factor in some of the crises, but inadvertent military incidents were not serious problems in the eight cases examined in this study. Misperceptions of U.S. intentions or the purposes of U.S. naval operations may have been a factor in the 1964 Tonkin Gulf Incidents, the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, and the 1968 Pueblo incident. U.S. naval operations in response to the four peacetime attacks on U.S. Navy ships appear not to have generated misperceptions.

There appear to be three reasons for the lack of inadvertent military incidents in crises. First, the military chain of command normally cancels most military exercises affecting forces committed to or on standby for the crisis, greatly reducing the possibility of international incidents arising from exercise-related accidents. The primary reason why exercises are cancelled is that the forces are needed for crisis operations, but exercises have also been cancelled to avoid potential political complications. The second reason is that the military chain of command usually advises on-scene commanders to act with caution and to avoid provocative actions. The third reason

for the lack of incidents in crises is best described as military prudence: on-scene commanders, motivated by self-preservation, generally avoid deliberately placing their forces in situations where they are extremely vulnerable to deliberate or inadvertent attacks. Military prudence is occasionally violated by top-level political officials ordering naval forces into dangerous waters, but on other occasions U.S. leaders have been careful to keep U.S. forces well clear of fighting in a local conflict. These three factors counteract other factors--increased tempo of operations and adversary forces in close proximity--that contribute to the occurrence of inadvertent military incidents.

Political-Military Tensions

The eighth question is did any of the three tensions between political and military considerations arise during the crisis? There are three tensions between political and military considerations that can arise when military forces are used as a political instrument in crises: tension between political considerations and the needs of diplomatic bargaining, on the one hand, and military considerations and the needs of military operations, on the other; tension between the need for top-level control of military options in a crisis, and the need for tactical flexibility and instantaneous decision-making at the scene of the crisis; and tension between performance of crisis political missions

and readiness to perform wartime combat missions. All three tensions arise from the requirements of crisis management, the essence of which is placing political constraints on military operations. Tensions between political and military considerations were examined in all eight case studies.

Political vs Military Considerations

In the 1958 Taiwan Strait crisis, tension between political considerations and military considerations arose in the restrictions placed on the support that could be provided for the Quemoy resupply effort. The most efficient way of resupplying the Nationalist garrison would have been to carry their supplies in U.S. amphibious ships escorted right up to the beach by U.S. warships. However, this would have been a serious provocation to the Communists, who might not have refrained from shelling the American vessels. That probably would have led to U.S. naval bombardment and air strikes against Communist shore batteries, air fields, and naval bases. The political restrictions on the resupply operation were thus prudent from a crisis management perspective, even if they required the U.S. and Nationalist navies to improvise ways to get supplies ashore under fire.

In the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, tensions between political considerations and military considerations primarily arose from the fundamental decision to impose a quarantine on offensive arms rather than immediately launch

an air strike against the Soviet missiles sites or invade Cuba. The JCS never wavered from its advocacy of the air strike option. There was also concern that the President's strategy of applying military force in graduated increments would increase the difficulty of carrying out the air strike or invasion options by alerting the Cubans--losing the tactical and strategic advantage of surprise. Further, tensions arose between the military consideration of protecting U.S. forces against a sudden attack by Cuban or Soviet forces, and the political consideration of avoiding military moves that appeared to threaten an immediate effort to achieve a military solution to the crisis. However, civilian leaders accommodated military commanders to a much greater degree than past accounts have acknowledged. President Kennedy and Secretary McNamara were sympathetic to the military's concern with protecting its men. The rules of engagement issued for the quarantine were not significantly different from normal peacetime rules and did not infringe upon a commander's right of self-defense. The only operational area in which the President deliberately denied the military any authority to take action in self-defense was in the case of Cuban air defenses firing on U.S. reconnaissance aircraft, but this was based on the well-established distinction between self-defense and retaliation.

There was moderate tension between political and military considerations during the 1967 Arab-Israeli War.

This arose primarily from the restrictions placed on movements of the Sixth Fleet carriers for purposes of political signalling. The carrier force commanders objected to restrictions on their mobility, which denied them one of the greatest advantages of carrier air power, and the publicity surrounding their movements, which they believed made it easier for the Soviets to target the carriers. On the other hand, the restrictions on the carriers did not impose unreasonable limitations on their ability to carry out their immediate mission. The restrictions were disregarded by the on-scene commander when it was necessary to respond to the attack on the Liberty. The President later authorized the actions that Commander Sixth Fleet had already initiated, which indicates that tensions between political and military considerations were not serious.

There was tension between political and military considerations during the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. The most serious tension was between Washington's need to control Sixth Fleet movements for political purposes and the on-scene commander's need for freedom to maneuver the fleet in order to reduce its vulnerability to Soviet preemptive attack. The White House restricted the movements of the Sixth Fleet lest the fleet's movements send a misleading signal of U.S. intentions to the Soviet Union. The Soviet tactic of keeping ships and submarines armed with anti-ship cruise missiles within striking range of the U.S. carriers

created serious operational problems for the Sixth Fleet. Soviet Navy doctrine placed heavy emphasis on the first strike, making it a central objective of strategy as well as tactics. U.S. Navy tactical doctrine for the defense of surface ship battle groups emphasized destruction of launch platforms before they can launch their missiles. The tactical doctrines of the superpower navies interacted, producing a war initiation scenario described in the U.S. Navy as the "D-day shootout." The side that gets off the first salvo in the D-day shootout is likely to accrue a significant tactical advantage that could determine the outcome of a war at sea. A restriction imposed on the fleet for political purposes (avoiding misperceptions of U.S. intentions) exacerbated the risks of a military confrontation and the danger that a minor incident could touch off an armed clash at sea between the superpowers.

None of the three political-military tensions was serious in the 1964 Tonkin Gulf Incidents because the U.S. responses were limited and all levels of the chain of command held generally similar views toward the need to retaliate. The only tension was that generated by the White House demand for confirmation that there had been a North Vietnamese attack in the second incident. This is an example of the tension that can arise between political considerations and military considerations: Confirmation was necessary so that retaliation could be justified

politically. But confirmation required time to assess the evidence, which could delay the retaliatory strikes-- alerting the adversary and losing the advantage of surprise.

There was little tension between political and military considerations in the Liberty incident because the incident was over before significant diplomatic activity-- other than hot line messages--could begin. The limitations that Commander Sixth Fleet placed on his forces supported U.S. political objectives in the crisis.

There were essentially no tensions between political and military considerations in the Pueblo incident. All levels in the chain of command agreed that effective military action could not be taken before Pueblo entered Wonsan. There was disagreement between military and civilian officials over whether or not reprisals should be taken against North Korea, and over whether or not if an effort should be made to recover the ship by force. But these disagreements primarily revolved around the military feasibility of the options proposed by the military, rather than the political implications of the options.

In summary, tension between political and military considerations were serious in the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis and the 1973 Arab-Israeli War; moderate in the 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis and the 1967 Arab-Israeli War; and minor in the 1964 Tonkin Gulf Incidents, the 1967 Liberty incident, and the 1968 Pueblo incident, and the 1987 Stark incident.

Level of Control

Tension arose between the need for top-level control and the need for on-scene flexibility and initiative in the 1958 Taiwan Straits crisis, but overall a workable balance appears to have been struck. The Chief of Naval Operations insisted on frequent and detailed reports from Navy commanders in the far East, but methods of delegated control were used and officials in Washington relied heavily on mechanisms of indirect control. This muted tension over centralization of control.

Tension arose during the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis between the need for top-level control of military operations and the need for on-scene flexibility and initiative. This was the most severe political-military tension during the crisis. The Cuban Missile Crisis marked a turning point in American civil-military relations and in the evolution of U.S. command and control doctrine. The origin of the tension was a sudden attempt to impose radically new methods of direct control on a command system set up for delegated methods of control without prior planning, consideration of the implications, or even consultation with the military.

The Navy, with its tradition of granting autonomy to commanders at sea, reacted strongly to the Kennedy Administration's efforts at closely controlling military operations. Admiral Anderson, at the interface between

between civilian authorities and the Navy chain of command as Chief of Naval Operations and the JCS Executive Agent for Cuban operations, took the lead in preventing what he perceived to be unreasonable civilian interference in naval operations. Most senior Navy Officers deeply resented the new civilian attention to the details of naval operations, which they viewed as "micromanagement." There was a widespread attitude that McNamara was incompetent at controlling military operations. McNamara, the admirals felt, was trying to run naval operations the way he would manage a Ford assembly line, but without the experience necessary to do so and with no respect for those who did have the requisite experience. If McNamara was resented, his civilian aides were despised. Navy admirals commonly referred to them as "Junior Field Marshals" and a variety of less polite expressions. There was thus serious tension between the President's desire to maintain control over events and the Navy's desire to operate on the basis of its traditional philosophy of command, in which commanders at sea are delegated substantial authority.

Although there was widespread resentment toward McNamara, the admirals who ran the quarantine at sea did not feel unreasonably burdened by civilian authorities and understood the need for close control. The fact that Navy commanders who did not have to work directly with McNamara felt less resentment and better understood the President's

political objectives strongly suggests that much of the friction and anger visible in Washington was generated by the McNamara's personality, management style, and personal attitudes, rather than by the underlying policy conflicts.

Because of the emphasis on direct civilian control of military operations, civilian authorities did not keep military leaders adequately informed of the overall U.S. political-diplomatic strategy for resolving the crisis. By not informing the JCS of political-diplomatic efforts at resolving the crisis, the President risked defeating his efforts to ensure that military operations supported his political objectives. The Chiefs did not need to know the details of sensitive communications with the Soviets to understand the President's diplomatic objectives. Such an understanding might have helped them to anticipate operational problems that could have interfered with the President's crisis management strategy.

There was only moderate level of control tension in the 1967 Arab-Israeli War. Orders to the Sixth Fleet were passed via the chain of command and only the general location and movements of the fleet in the Mediterranean were closely controlled. On-scene commanders disliked this control of their operations, but it did not seriously interfere with their ability to carry out their mission.

Level of control tensions arose during the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. The tension over level of control was worse

than in the 1958 Taiwan Strait Crisis and the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, but not as bad as in the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis. President Nixon and Schlesinger respected the military chain of command, using it to send orders to the Sixth Fleet rather than attempting to communicate directly with the fleet. Tensions arose primarily from the emphasis that President Nixon and Kissinger placed on using the Sixth fleet for political signalling, which required close White House control of the fleet's movements. Although some Navy commanders were irritated by White House control of Sixth Fleet movements, there was no deep resentment against perceived civilian interference as in the Cuban Missile Crisis.

There was little level of control tension in the Liberty incident because the incident evolved too rapidly for officials in Washington to play a direct role in controlling events. JCS and the Secretary of Defense could only reaffirm orders already given by Commander Sixth Fleet.

There was little level of control tension in the Pueblo incident. U.S. military commanders in the Far East had ample authority to take military action without having to seek permission from higher authorities so long as Pueblo remained in international waters. The "hold" order issued to the military came well after commanders in the Far East had decided against taking immediate military action, and served only to avoid further incidents with North Korean forces while Washington weighed reprisal options. If U.S.

commanders had ordered attacks on North Korean forces in international waters to prevent Pueblo from being taken into Wonsan, it is likely that the President would have supported the action (As he supported Vice Admiral Martin's dispatch of aircraft to defend Liberty in 1967).

In summary, level of control tensions were serious in the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis and the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, moderate in the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, and minor in the 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis, and the four cases of peacetime attacks on Navy ships. Level of control tensions appear to be directly proportional to the scale and duration of the crisis military operations being conducted, and more intense when national leaders perceive a danger of the crisis escalating to war (which prompts them to exercise close control over military operations).

Crisis vs Wartime Missions

Tensions arose between performance of crisis missions and readiness to perform wartime missions in the 1958 Taiwan Straits crisis. The CNO's staff was concerned that prolonged operations would erode U.S. capabilities for military operations in other parts of the world or for general war. CNO Admiral Arleigh Burke felt that U.S. naval forces were overextended during the crisis and would have been hard pressed to respond to an outbreak of fighting elsewhere while committed in the Taiwan Straits. Of the three types

of political-military tensions, tension between performance of crisis missions and readiness to perform wartime missions was the most serious in the 1958 Taiwan Straits crisis.

Tensions arose in the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis between performance of crisis missions and readiness to perform wartime missions. Preparations for invasion of Cuba degraded the ability of the United States to respond to Soviet moves in Europe, particularly against Berlin. The only reason that this did not generate severe tensions was that the political-military situation in other theaters, including Europe was relatively quiet. Military men were not overly concerned about the negative consequences of the preparations for invasion of Cuba because there was no immediate need for the forces elsewhere. This situation would have changed drastically if the Soviets had moved against Berlin or Turkey in response to a U.S. move against Cuba, which justifies the President's concern for such a Soviet move.

There was very little tension between performance of crisis political missions and readiness to perform wartime combat missions during the 1967 Arab-Israeli War. Sixth Fleet operations during the crisis did not seriously detract from the fleet's readiness for wartime contingencies. The only feature of the crisis operations that the on-scene commanders did not like, even though they understood its purpose and importance, was the publicizing of the fleet's

movements. This is a crucial consideration in wartime operations, but one that directly conflicts with political crisis management considerations. Other than this, there was little tension between performance of crisis missions and readiness for wartime contingencies.

There was moderate tension between performance of crisis political missions and readiness to perform wartime combat missions in the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. There apparently was little concern that the Navy's response to the crisis would degrade its ability to respond to threats elsewhere. Wartime considerations as well as political considerations influenced the location of the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean, and the fleet's carriers did not experience a serious degradation of their readiness to perform wartime missions during the crisis. The greatest concern for U.S. wartime readiness arose from the transfer of large quantities of U.S. military equipment and munitions to Israel, which depleted U.S. war-reserve stocks and left some operational units without sufficient equipment and supplies to carry out wartime missions.

There was no tension between performance of crisis missions and maintaining readiness to perform wartime missions in the Liberty incident because the Sixth Fleet response to the attack was small-scale and of short duration.

There was some tension between performance of crisis missions and readiness to perform wartime missions in the

Pueblo incident. The limited time available for taking action meant that the initial response to the North Korean attack on Pueblo had to be made with U.S. forces in and around Japan and South Korea. The aircraft closest to Pueblo--Air Force planes on alert in South Korea--were configured for delivery of nuclear weapons (a wartime mission) and could not be rapidly reconfigured for conventional ordnance (for crisis missions). Commander Fifth Air Force did not hesitate to order these planes reconfigured for conventional ordnance. Maintaining readiness for wartime missions had greater impact on the decision whether or not to retaliate against North Korea. The heavy commitment of U.S. forces in Vietnam limited the options available to U.S. military commanders and made the President and Secretary of Defense reluctant to take action against North Korea that could result in another military conflict.

None of the three political-military tensions was present in the Stark incident because the incident was brief and the attack was known to have been inadvertent. U.S. Navy ships in the Persian Gulf had ample authority under the rules of engagement to use force in self-defense or anticipatory self-defense. Nevertheless, Navy commanders in the Persian Gulf had been placed in a complex and dangerous tactical environment. There was great risk of U.S. ships being attacked inadvertently or deliberately, and equally

great risk of political embarrassment to the United States if civilian or friendly military aircraft were shot down.

In summary, tensions between performance of crisis missions and readiness to perform wartime missions were serious in the 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis and the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis; moderate in the 1968 Pueblo incident and the 1973 Arab-Israeli War; and minor in the 1964 Tonkin gulf Incidents, the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, 1967 Liberty incident, and the 1987 Stark incident. Tensions between performance of crisis missions and readiness to perform wartime missions are directly proportional to the scale and duration of the crisis operations being conducted, and can be exacerbated by the geographic location of the crisis (a crisis located far from expected wartime battlegrounds generates more serious tension).

Contingent Generalizations

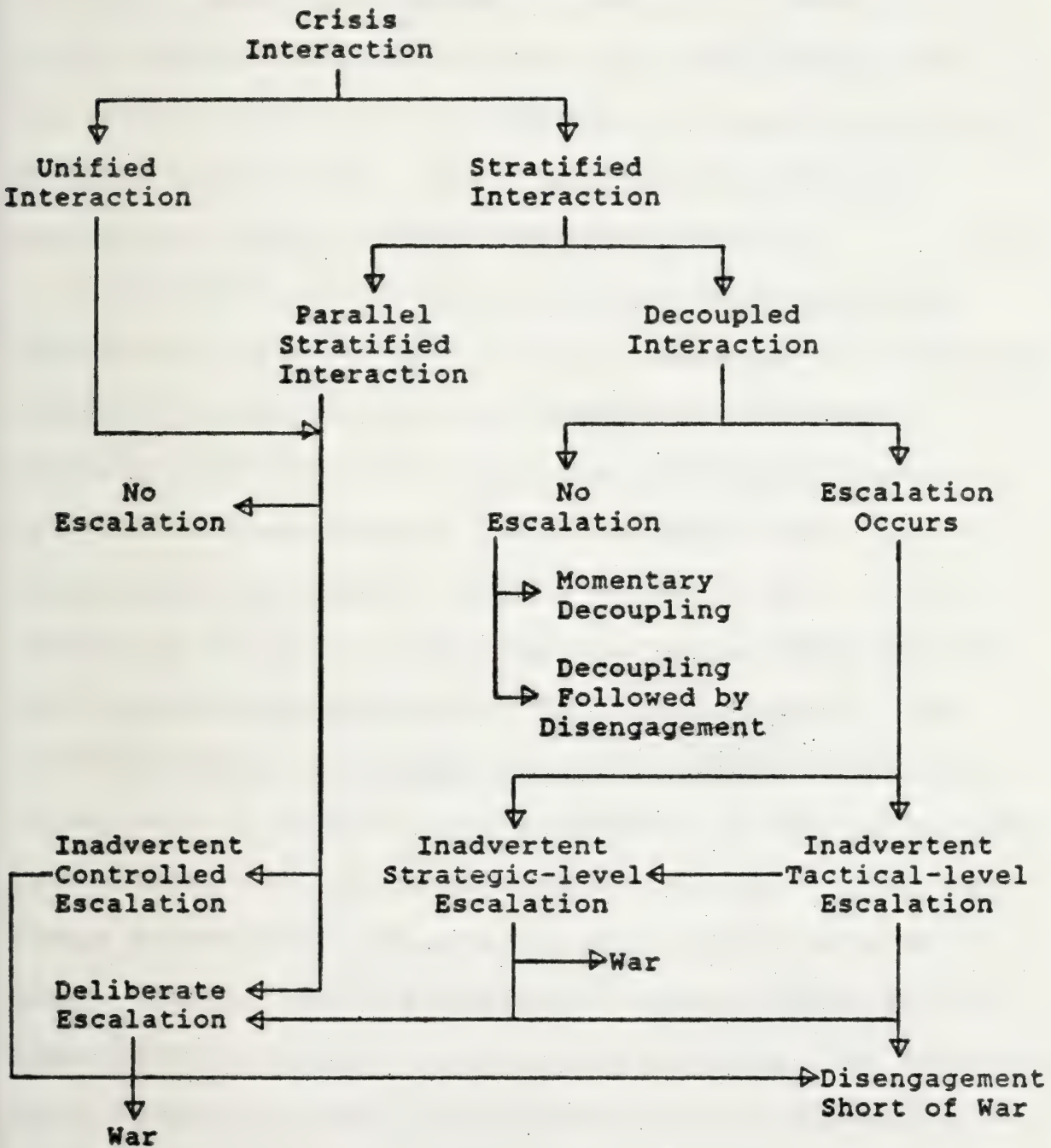
The dependent variable is the outcome of crisis interactions; specifically, whether or not tactical-level military interactions cause escalation of a crisis. The dependent variable is not dichotomous (either escalation or no escalation), a range of outcomes can occur (as will be described below). Inadvertent escalation originally was defined as any increase in the level or scope of violence in a crisis that was not directly ordered by national leaders or anticipated by them as being the likely result of their

orders. This definition encompasses what will be called inadvertent controlled escalation: a military move ordered by national leaders (and executed as they desired) provokes unanticipated escalation by the adversary, which in turn provokes a deliberate escalatory response by the first side. Escalation of the crisis arises from deliberate decisions made by national leaders, rather than from uncontrolled tactical-level or strategic-level interactions. The escalation is inadvertent because national leaders did not intend to escalate the crisis and did not anticipate that their moves would provoke escalation by the adversary.

Variance in the dependent variable will be described in terms of six patterns of crisis military interactions: unified interaction, parallel stratified interaction, momentary decoupling of interactions, decoupled interactions followed by disengagement, inadvertent tactical-level escalation, and inadvertent strategic-level escalation. The first two patterns--unified interaction and parallel stratified interaction--can have three escalation outcomes: no escalation, inadvertent controlled escalation, or deliberate escalation. Inadvertent controlled escalation and deliberate escalation can halt short of war or continue on to war. In the third and fourth patterns--momentary decoupling of interactions and decoupled interactions followed by disengagement--tactical-level interaction halts without significant escalation. The fifth pattern--inadvertent

tactical level escalation--can have three outcomes: disengagement short of war, inadvertent strategic-level escalation, or deliberate escalation to war. The sixth pattern--inadvertent strategic-level escalation--can have three outcomes: disengagement short of war, inadvertent

Figure 2. Crisis Interaction Patterns



escalation to war, or deliberate escalation to war. The six patterns of crisis military interaction and their various outcomes are illustrated in Figure 2.

These six patterns constitute a typology of crisis military interaction and appear to cover the full range of interactions that could occur in a crisis. However, because they were identified through an analytical-inductive process, rather than deductively, no claim is made that the six patterns constitute the universe of possible crisis military interactions. Additional patterns could be identified through further empirical research.

More than one of the patterns of crisis military interaction can occur in a crisis. The first four patterns--unified interaction, parallel stratified interaction, momentary decoupling of interaction, decoupled interactions followed by disengagement, and inadvertent tactical-level escalation--can occur in various sequences in a crisis. Changes in the seven independent variables affecting military interactions determine which pattern occurs. The causal patterns associated with each pattern of military interaction are not mutually exclusive: At any given moment in a crisis, some of the independent variables could have values allowing more than one of the five patterns to occur. Events that are inherently unpredictable, such as communications failures or military accidents, can determine which pattern arises. Assessments of the likelihood of

inadvertent escalation must therefore be made in probabilistic terms--that is, in terms of which patterns are more or less likely to occur.

Contingent generalizations will be formulated for the six patterns of crisis military interaction, offering a distinct causal pattern for each type of interaction. Each of the causal patterns is produced by specific variations in seven independent variables. These seven independent variables were identified in the case studies as significant in determining the outcome of crisis military interaction. The first step in formulating the contingent generalizations will be to define the seven independent variables and describe the range of variation of each variable. The six types of crisis military interaction and their causal patterns will then be described.

Independent Variables

There are seven independent variables that determine the nature of crisis military interaction and its effect on crisis stability: the degree of political-level control of tactical-level military interaction, the scale of military operations, the intensity of tactical-level military interactions, the perceived threat of attack at the tactical level, the relationship between political-level and tactical-level threat perceptions, the strength of escalation-inhibiting factors, and the impact of inadvertent military incidents.

These seven independent variables determine the degree to which crisis interactions to become stratified, whether or not stratified interactions become decoupled, and whether or not decoupled interactions result in an uncontrollable escalation sequence. The seven independent variables and terms that will be used to describe the range of variation of each variable are listed in Table 5.

Table 5
Independent Variables

Independent Variables	Range of Variation		
	Low	Medium	High
Political-level control of tactical-level military interactions	loss	indirect	direct
Scale of military operations	local	theater	global
Intensity of tactical-level military interactions	routine	heightened	intense
Perceived threat of attack at the tactical-level	unlikely	possible	imminent
Relationship between tactical-level and political-level threat perceptions	convergent	similar	divergent
Factors inhibiting escalation	lacking	weak	strong
Impact of inadvertent military incidents	minor	moderate	significant

The first independent variable is political-level control over tactical-level military operations: the ability of national leaders to ensure, by whatever control methods

or mechanisms are used, that crisis military operations support their overall strategy for resolving the crisis. Political-level control of tactical-level military operations will be described as direct, indirect, or loss of control. Direct control means that national leaders can direct changes in military operations as necessary to support their strategy for managing a crisis. National leaders do not have to make every operational decision themselves in order to effectively exercise direct control, but they must have the capability to intervene in the conduct of military operations on a real-time basis when necessary for crisis management.

Indirect control means that national leaders are relying primarily on mechanisms of indirect control to coordinate the actions of military forces. Under indirect control, national leaders normally have some capability to direct changes in military operations in order to ensure that those operations support their crisis strategy. Communications or other constraints preclude constant, real-time, direct control of tactical-level military operations, forcing delegation of control and reliance on mechanisms of indirect control.

Loss of control means that national leaders are not able to direct changes in military operations in order to support their crisis strategy. Loss of control is caused by the sources of decoupling: communications and information

flow problems, impairment of political-level decisionmaking, a fast-paced tactical environment, ambiguous or ambivalent orders, tactically inappropriate orders, inappropriate guidance in mechanisms of indirect control, and deliberate unauthorized actions by military commanders. National leaders can experience loss of control even while in direct communication with the on-scene commander.

The second independent variable is the scale of crisis military operations being conducted by United States armed forces. The scale of military operations partially determines three other factors. First, it affects the ability of political-level officials to control tactical-level military operations. Generally, the larger the scale of operations the more difficult it is for national leaders to maintain direct control over all the operations being conducted and the more likely it is that decoupling will occur. Second, it affects the opportunity for military interactions with the other side's forces. Generally, the larger the scale of operations, the greater the number of tactical interactions between the forces of the two sides. Third, it affects the opportunity for inadvertent military incidents to occur. Generally, the larger the scale of operations, the greater the likelihood of inadvertent military incidents.

The scale of military operations will be described as local, theater, or global. Local operations cover a

relatively small, well-defined geographic area, and involve relatively small forces--a single navy task force, army division, a single air force air task force, or joint task force of roughly equivalent size. The joint task force that invaded Grenada in 1983 represents the approximate maximum size of local-scale operations. Forces larger than this generally require theater-level control in order to coordinate operations. Theater operations involve a substantial portion of the conventional forces in a particular theater. The operations may not cover the entire theater, but require theater--level coordination. The forces that participated in operations against Cuba during the Missile Crisis (including preparations for air strike and invasion contingencies) represent the approximate maximum size of theater-scale operations. Global operations involve operations in two or more theaters. For example, placing United States forces at Defense Condition of Readiness (DEFCON) three, as was done during the Cuban Missile Crisis and the 1973 Middle East War, initiates global-scale operations.

The third independent variable is the intensity of tactical-level interactions between the military forces of the two sides in a crisis. This independent variable is separate from scale of operations because large scale operations do not necessarily result in intense interactions. The adversary may choose not to initiate

operations on a similar scale, or may take precautions to reduce contact with the other side's forces. The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis is an example of this. Although the United States Navy conducted extensive operations off the coast of the mainland, providing ample opportunities for interaction with Communist Chinese forces, the Communist Chinese did not exploit those opportunities and were careful to avoid incidents with us forces.

The intensity of tactical-level military interactions is also affected by geography, the operations being conducted, and the political signals being sent. Geography includes such factors as the presence of national boundaries to separate ground forces and the amount of sea room available for naval forces to maneuver. The nature of the operations being conducted can affect how close the forces are in proximity to each other and the threat they appear to present toward each other. For example, U.S. destroyers escorting convoys in the Persian Gulf are brought into more frequent contact Iranian forces than is a carrier battle group maintaining a presence in the Gulf of Oman. The nature of the political signals being sent with military forces also affects the frequency of contacts and apparent level of threat. Forces used to send a coercive threat for deterrence or compellence generally operate closer to the scene of a crisis, in greater strength, and can conduct more threatening operations (such as when a show of force is

conducted). On the other hand, forces used to signal reassurance and an intent not to resort to force tend to be moved away from the scene of the crisis and tend to conduct less threatening operations.

The intensity of interactions will be described as routine, heightened, or intense. Routine intensity of interaction is the level normally experienced in peacetime. It includes normal peacetime surveillance activities and, for naval forces, the normal level of peacetime contact among vessels at sea. Heightened intensity of interaction includes increased surveillance activity, closer proximity of forces, and tactical positioning of some forces for the possibility of combat. An example would be Soviet anti-carrier forces moving to within missile range of U.S. carrier battle groups. Severe intensity of interaction includes deliberate harassment, constant surveillance and targeting activities, and frequent maneuvering by both sides to maintain and improve their tactical positions.

The fourth independent variable is the perceived threat of attack held by tactical-level military commanders. Tactical-level commanders (also referred to as on-scene commanders) are those directly commanding forces at the scene of a crisis. For naval forces, tactical-level commanders include commanding officers of ships and commanders of task groups and task forces. Certain fleet commanders can also be tactical-level commanders if directly

controlling operations at the scene of a crisis (such as Commander Seventh Fleet during the 1958 Taiwan Strait Crisis, Commander Second Fleet during the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, and Commander Sixth Fleet during the 1967 and 1973 Arab-Israeli Wars).

Tactical-level commanders are constantly assessing the threat to their forces on the basis of their tactical situation relative to the adversary's forces. Because the on-scene commander must at all times be prepared for a sudden outbreak of fighting--either on orders from his superiors or instigated by the adversary--his assessment of the adversary's intentions is heavily influenced by the actions the adversary's forces are taking. This is a particular form of the military practice of assessing intentions on the basis of capabilities. On-scene commanders do not, of course, base their assessment of the adversary's intentions only on the basis of what adversary forces are capable of doing, but this factor plays a much larger role at the tactical level of interaction than it does at the political level of interaction.

The threat perceptions held by tactical-level military commanders can range from being entirely accurate to being acute misperceptions. The on-scene commander could accurately perceive that the adversary's forces are unlikely to attack, or that they are making final preparations for an imminent preemptive attack. But the on-scene commander

might also misperceive military actions taken by the adversary to send political signals or improve defensive capabilities as indicating an intent to attack. This is the crisis security dilemma in action at the tactical level. Many of the actions a state takes in a crisis in order to increase its security and improve its bargaining position decrease the security of its adversary. This dilemma is particularly acute in naval warfare, where the fragility of platforms relative to the destructiveness of weapons dictates tactical emphasis on shooting first. Many of the actions taken with naval forces in crises to increase a nation's security and improve its bargaining position inherently increase the vulnerability of the adversary's naval forces to a first strike.

Quite apart from the crisis security dilemma, another possibility is that the on-scene commander could be deceived into thinking that an attack is unlikely by adversary efforts to cover an imminent surprise attack with secrecy and deception. In this situation the on-scene commander misperceives the threat of attack as being unlikely, when in fact an attack is imminent. An on-scene commander also might not have sufficient information on the level of hostility being shown by the adversary outside the immediate vicinity, producing a misperception that the threat of attack is less than it actually is. Thus, the threat perceptions held by tactical-level military commanders can

range from highly accurate to acute misperceptions, and misperceptions can be of a threat that is either greater or lesser than the actual threat.

The perceived threat of attack held by tactical-level military commanders will be described as unlikely, possible, or imminent. These are terms commonly used by military forces to designate threat warning levels. The perception that threat of attack is unlikely means that the adversary is not expected to launch an attack, or does not have the capability to launch an attack, within a certain time frame (generally one or two days). The perception that threat of attack is possible means that the adversary has the capability to launch an attack in the near future, but there is not sufficient information to determine that it is in fact his intention to attack. The perception that threat of attack is imminent means that the adversary has the capability to launch an attack, and the apparent intention of launching an attack, in the immediate future.

The fifth independent variable is the relationship between political-level and tactical-level threat perceptions. Political-level authorities can hold threat perceptions much different from those held by tactical-level military commanders. The two groups of decisionmakers are making their assessments in much different environments and often on the basis of different information. National leaders focus primarily on the overall political and

strategic picture, including communications with the adversary. To national leaders the tactical situation at the scene of the crisis is but one element in constructing the overall picture. On-scene commanders, on the other hand, focus on their immediate tactical situation, particularly the behavior of the adversary's forces in the vicinity. On-scene commanders normally have only limited information on the overall political-military situation-- primarily intelligence reports on adversary military moves-- and use that information to assess the local picture. A military move that is only a political signal to the national leaders can be seen as a seriously threatening change in the tactical situation by the on-scene commander. Such differences in perceptions are what is meant by stratification of threat perceptions.

Such differences in political-level and tactical-level threat perceptions are important because they create the stratified crisis security dilemma. The stratified crisis security dilemma is that the security dilemma can arise independently at different levels of interaction, affecting the the likelihood of war separately at each level. For example, tactical level military commanders can perceive a severe threat of imminent attack while political level authorities perceive little likelihood of attack. Further, decisionmakers at one level may not be aware that decisionmakers at the other level hold much different threat

perceptions. Thus, the likelihood of serious fighting erupting and escalation occurring can be different at the different levels of crisis interaction.

The relationship between political-level and tactical-level threat perceptions will be described as convergent, similar, or divergent. Convergent threat perceptions occur when decisionmakers at the political and tactical levels of interaction hold essentially the same threat perceptions, even though their focus may be different. For example, threat perceptions would be convergent when national leaders perceive that the adversary has decided to resort to war and that war cannot be averted by further diplomatic efforts, while on-scene commanders perceive that attack by the adversary's forces at the scene of the crisis is imminent. Similar threat perceptions are not exactly the same, thus allowing for some differences, but are not extremely different. Divergent threat perceptions are significantly different at the political and tactical levels of interaction. Historically, the tendency is for tactical-level decisionmakers to perceive a greater threat of attack than do political-level decisionmakers.

The sixth independent variable is the strength of the factors inhibiting escalation. As was discussed earlier in this chapter, there are six internal and two external escalation-inhibiting factors. The internal factors are military prudence, caution and restraint on the part of

on-scene commanders, compliance by on-scene commanders with mechanisms of indirect control, national leaders structuring the tactical environment to dampen military interactions, accurate and timely tactical intelligence on friendly and potentially hostile forces, and national leaders and the chain of command double-checking the accuracy of initial reports of military incidents. The external factors are tacit rules of crisis behavior observed by the two sides and communications between the two sides in a crisis.

The strength of the factors inhibiting escalation will be described as strong, weak, or lacking. Strong inhibiting factors prevent escalation from occurring other than as the result of a deliberate decision by national leaders. Weak inhibiting factors allow escalation to occur when an engagement first breaks out, but prevent the military action from gaining sustained momentum. Lack of the inhibiting factors can allow escalation to arise from an inadvertent military incident and gain momentum, exceeding the ability of national leaders to control it.

The seventh independent variable is the impact of inadvertent military incidents on stratified interactions. Inadvertent military incidents include unanticipated authorized actions, military accidents, and unauthorized actions. Inadvertent military incidents can trigger decoupling of tactical-level military interactions from political-level crisis management objectives, and the start

of an escalation sequence at the tactical level of interaction. Decoupling and escalation are not inevitable consequences of inadvertent military incidents. Whether or not decoupling and escalation occur is a function of the ability of national leaders to exercise direct control over tactical-level military operations, the threat perceptions held by tactical-level military commanders, and the strength of the factors inhibiting escalation. Thus, the significance of inadvertent military incidents can vary widely, and they generally are not particularly dangerous.

The impact of inadvertent military incidents will be described as minor, moderate, or significant. Minor means that inadvertent military incidents have little effect on stratified interaction--they do not occur often, are not likely to cause decoupling when they do occur, and do not impede the re-establishment of control when decoupling does occur. Moderate means that the impact of inadvertent incidents can vary widely, depending on the circumstances in which they occur. The impact can range from momentary decoupling to an uncontrollable escalation sequence. Significant means that inadvertent military incidents tend to have a major impact on stratified interaction. Significant incidents tend to cause decoupling of tactical-level military interactions from political-level objectives, to prevent rapid re-establishment of political-level control, and to trigger escalation sequences.

Unified Interaction

The first pattern of crisis military interaction is unified interaction. In this pattern, political-level leaders exercise direct control over tactical-level military operations. Unified interaction is the optimum pattern of crisis military interaction for crisis management: the pattern achieved when national leaders succeed in meeting the crisis management requirement that they maintain close control over military operations. There were no examples of this pattern of crisis military interaction in the case studies. The fact that the pattern was not actually observed suggests that its occurrence is improbable, particularly in a military establishment as large and complex as that of the United States.

Unified interactions can have three escalation outcomes: no escalation, inadvertent controlled escalation, or deliberate escalation. If the crisis escalates to war, it is through deliberate decisions by national leaders. This does not mean that national leaders preferred war to diplomatic efforts from the beginning of the crisis. They may--particularly in the age of nuclear weapons--opt for war with great reluctance and apprehension, out of desperation rather than hope for decisive gains. Escalatory pressures are primarily top-down rather than bottom-up. That is, the level of violence at the tactical level reflects the strategy being pursued at the political level.

The causal pattern for unified interaction is summarized in Table 6. Political-level control of tactical level military operations is the most significant independent variable determining whether this pattern occurs. Unified interaction occurs when political national leaders

Table 6
Unified Interaction

Independent Variable	Value or Range
Political-level control of tactical-level military operations	Direct
Scale of military operations	Small-scale local
Intensity of tactical-level military interactions	Routine to heightened
Perceived threat of attack at the tactical level	Unlikely to Imminent
Relationship between political-level and tactical-level threat perceptions	Convergent
Factors inhibiting escalation	Strong
Impact of inadvertent military incidents	Minor impact

are exercising direct control of military operations, and have the capability to ensure that tactical-level interactions support their strategy for managing the crisis. Small-scale local military operations favor occurrence of the pattern because national leaders tend to shift from direct to indirect control as the scale of military operations increases. Declaring a worldwide alert (DEFCON 3 or higher) puts great pressure on direct control by setting

in motion a large range of military operations that can generate military interactions with the other side's forces.

Routine to heightened intensity of tactical-level interactions between the two sides eases the difficulty of exercising direct control over military operations. As the intensity of interactions increases, national leaders are increasingly left out of the tactical picture. On-scene commanders must increasingly make their own decisions to keep pace with rapidly-changing tactical circumstances.

Any level of tactical-level threat perceptions, whether unlikely, possible, or imminent, can cause unified interactions. The relationship between political-level and tactical-level threat perceptions is the more important independent variable: the threat perceptions held by political-level leaders and tactical-level military commanders are convergent. An example of convergent threat perceptions would be for national leaders to perceive that the adversary intends to resort to war while on-scene commanders perceive that an attack by the other side is imminent. This type of convergence would tend to generate escalatory pressures. Convergent threat perceptions would also occur when national leaders perceive that the adversary intends to seek a diplomatic solution to the crisis and on-scene commanders perceive that an attack is unlikely. Convergent threat perceptions tend to prevent tactical-level interactions from becoming decoupled from political-level

control. Unified interaction do not exclude the possibility of war resulting from misperception. When misperceptions occur, they are convergent--national leaders incorrectly perceive that the adversary intends to resort to war while on-scene commanders incorrectly perceive that attack is imminent.

If the factors inhibiting escalation are strong, they contribute to the occurrence of unified interactions; but such factors do not have a major causal role because the independent variables already mentioned tend to prevent escalation pressures from occurring. That is, tactical-level military commanders tend not to feel greater pressure to escalate than do political-level leaders. Internal factors are more important than external factors. The internal factors inhibiting escalation tend to prevent tactical-level interactions from generating bottom-up escalatory pressures. The external factors inhibiting escalation become important only when national leaders begin contemplating escalatory military options.

The impact of inadvertent incidents must be minor for the unified interaction pattern to occur. Inadvertent incidents do not trigger decoupling of tactical-level interactions; national leaders retain direct control. The most important independent variables causing unified interactions are thus direct political-level control of tactical-level military interactions and convergent threat perceptions.

Parallel Stratified Interaction

The second pattern of crisis military interaction is parallel stratified interaction. In this pattern national leaders retain control over the escalation and de-escalation of conflict. The separate interaction sequences at the political and tactical levels evolve in parallel, in the sense of reflecting the same overall strategy toward the adversary. National leaders do not control every operational decision made at the tactical level, but the decisions made by on-scene commanders support the crisis management strategy of national leaders. Parallel stratified interaction is the second best pattern of military interaction from a crisis management perspective (second only to unified interaction). Like unified interactions, parallel

Table 7
Parallel Stratified Interaction

Independent Variable	Value or Range
Political-level control of tactical-level military operations	Indirect
Scale of military operations	Local to theater
Intensity of tactical-level military interactions	Routine to heightened
Perceived threat of attack at the tactical level	Unlikely to Imminent
Relationship between political-level and tactical-level threat perceptions	Convergent
Factors inhibiting escalation	Strong
Impact of inadvertent military incidents	Minor impact

stratified interactions can have three escalation outcomes: no escalation, inadvertent controlled escalation, or deliberate escalation.

The causal pattern for parallel stratified interaction is summarized in Table 7. Political-level control of tactical-level military interaction is the most important independent variable in this pattern. Political-level control is indirect, rather than direct, as in the unified interaction pattern. National leaders rely primarily on mechanisms of indirect control for ensuring that tactical-level interactions support their strategy for managing the crisis. For this reason crisis interactions are stratified, rather than unified.

Local to theater scale of operations favor occurrence of the pattern because national leaders tend to have greater difficulty controlling tactical-level military operations as their scale increases. The likelihood of tactical-level interactions becoming decoupled from political-level objectives tends to increase as the scope of military operations increases. Smaller-scale operations thus contribute to stratified interactions being parallel.

Routine to heightened intensity of tactical-level interactions between the two sides makes the task of controlling tactical-level military operations feasible. As the intensity of interactions increases, national leaders are increasingly left out of the tactical picture and

on-scene commanders must make their own decisions to keep pace with rapidly-changing tactical circumstances. Intense tactical-level interactions tend to increase the likelihood of decoupling and inadvertent military incidents, causing one of other patterns of crisis military interaction.

Any level of tactical-level threat perceptions, whether unlikely, possible or imminent, can cause parallel stratified interactions. As in the unified interaction pattern, the more important independent variable causing the parallel stratified interaction pattern is that the threat perceptions held by political-level leaders and tactical-level military commanders are convergent. Convergent threat perceptions tend to keep tactical-level interactions parallel with political-level interactions when national leaders are not exercising direct control of military operations. When misperceptions occur, however, they are convergent--national leaders incorrectly perceive that the adversary intends to resort to war while on-scene commanders incorrectly perceive that attack is imminent.

If the factors inhibiting escalation are strong, they contribute to the occurrence of parallel stratified interactions; but such factors do not have a major causal role because the independent variables already mentioned tend to prevent stratified escalation pressures from occurring. Tactical-level commanders tend not to feel greater pressure to escalate than do political-level leaders.

Strong internal factors inhibiting escalation do not mean that parallel stratified interactions inevitably end in successful crisis resolution short of war. The internal factors serve only to prevent escalation of tactical-level interactions, they do not prevent escalatory pressures from arising separately at the political level of interaction. The most dangerous situation under conditions of parallel stratified interactions is for escalatory pressures to arise simultaneously at all three levels in the chain of command--political, strategic, and tactical. This is a convergence of perceptions at the three levels that escalation of the conflict is the only course of action that can forestall unacceptable damage to vital national interests. This type of convergence is essentially what occurred in the 1964 Tonkin Gulf Incident, in which all levels in the chain of command perceived the North Vietnamese attacks as deliberate provocations warranting strong retaliation. Doubts about the circumstances of the attacks and whether retaliation was appropriate were not thoroughly explored due to a broad consensus supporting an escalatory response.

The impact of inadvertent military incidents must be minor for the parallel stratified interaction pattern to occur. The essential requirement is that if inadvertent incidents occur, they do not trigger decoupling (which causes other patterns of crisis military interaction to arise). That is, the responses made by on-scene commanders

to inadvertent incidents support the crisis management strategy being pursued by national leaders--the essence of parallel interactions. The most important independent variables in the parallel stratified interaction pattern are thus indirect political-level control of tactical-level military operations and convergent threat perceptions.

Momentary Decoupling

The third pattern of crisis military interaction is momentary decoupling of interaction. In this pattern national leaders temporarily lose control of military interactions, but are able to quickly re-establish control. However, there is a brief period in which national leaders are not controlling tactical-level military interactions. During that period, the actions taken by the on-scene commander do not support the crisis management efforts being pursued by national leaders. Those actions could well be authorized under guidance contained in the mechanisms of indirect control, but nevertheless complicate political and diplomatic efforts to resolve the crisis. This does not mean that the on-scene commander was "wrong" to take the actions. For example, he may have been compelled to use force in self-defense as authorized in his rules of engagement. The use of force could well have been necessary to avert an attack, appropriate to the tactical circumstances, and fully justified under international law,

but still have interfered with crisis management efforts. The key point is that tactical-level interactions not controlled by national leaders occur, and that those actions complicate or interfere with political-level crisis management efforts. Instances of momentary decoupling were observed in the 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis, the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, and the 1973 Arab-Israeli War.

The causal pattern for momentary decoupling of interactions is summarized in Table 8. Momentary loss of political-level control of tactical military operations is the key independent variable causing the pattern: National leaders lose effective direct or indirect control over military operations. This can result from several factors,

Table 8
Momentary Decoupling

Independent Variable	Value or Range
Political-level control of tactical-level military operations	Loss of control
Scale of military operations	Local to theater
Intensity of tactical-level military interactions	Routine to heightened
Perceived threat of attack at the tactical level	Unlikely to Possible
Relationship between political-level and tactical-level threat perceptions	Convergent to similar
Factors inhibiting escalation	Strong
Impact of inadvertent military incidents	Significant

including communications and information flow problems, impairment of political-level decisionmaking, a fast-paced tactical environment, ambiguous or ambivalent orders, tactically inappropriate orders, inappropriate guidance in mechanisms of indirect control, and deliberate unauthorized actions by military commanders. The important feature is that whatever causes decoupling is not permanent; it does not prevent national leaders from quickly re-establishing control.

Local to theater scale of military operations favor the occurrence of momentary decoupling by increasing the likelihood that national leaders will be able to re-establish control over tactical-level military interaction. Global-scale operations make it more difficult for national leaders to re-establish control over tactical-level military interaction after decoupling occurs. When national leaders are managing global operations they have difficulty focusing their attention on an individual engagement, leading to one of the patterns in which decoupled interactions evolve on their own (toward escalation or disengagement).

The same is true of the intensity of tactical-level military interaction: routine to heightened interaction favors the occurrence of momentary decoupling. At the lower intensities, decoupled tactical-level interactions are less likely to gain a momentum of their own and national leaders have less difficulty keeping abreast of the tactical

situation--both of which facilitate the re-establishment of control over tactical-level military operations. Intense tactical-level interactions favor the occurrence of patterns that are not controlled by political-level authorities (the last three patterns of crisis military interaction, which are discussed below).

The tactical-level threat perception that favors the occurrence of momentary decoupling is that attack is unlikely or possible. Momentary decoupling can result from technical problems with communications systems even when the on-scene commander views an attack as unlikely. But momentary decoupling can also result from actions taken in response to a perception that attack is possible. The perception that attack is imminent tends not to be associated with momentary decoupling because it prompts more intense tactical interactions, which prevent national leaders from immediately re-establishing control.

A relationship between political-level and tactical-level threat perceptions that is convergent or similar favors the occurrence of momentary decoupling. Convergent or similar threat perceptions facilitate the ability of national leaders to re-establish control over tactical-level military operations. Divergent threat perceptions, on the other hand, tend to cause tactical-level interactions to maintain their own momentum, resisting control by national leaders.

Strong escalation-inhibiting factors cause decoupling to be momentary rather than leading to escalation sequences beyond the control of national leaders. Strong internal factors inhibiting escalation facilitate the ability of national leaders to re-establish control over tactical-level military operations. For example, on-scene commanders normally reach the limits of their authority under the mechanisms of indirect control early in an engagement, and turn to the chain of command for further guidance. This creates an opportunity for control to be re-established if communications channels are open and top-level officials have a grasp of the tactical situation. The external factors inhibiting escalation also facilitate re-establishment of control by slowing the pace of action and preventing tactical-level interaction from gaining momentum during the period in which control is lost.

When inadvertent military incidents have a significant impact on crisis military interactions, they tend to cause the initial decoupling of tactical-level military interactions from political-level objectives. The most common type of incident is for an unanticipated authorized action by an on-scene commander to produce an engagement with the other side. An example would be use of force in self-defense under the rules of engagement. The use of force is both necessary and authorized, but had not been directly ordered by national leaders and results in an engagement

over which they have no control. This situation has arisen several times in the Persian Gulf when Iranian forces threatened U.S. Navy ships or aircraft. In every incident the on-scene commanders halted the engagement when the immediate needs of self-defense were met and sought guidance from higher authority concerning retaliatory attacks. In some instances the President was able to issue order on retaliatory attacks within minutes of an engagement, a clear example of direct control being re-established after decoupling. Although accidents and unauthorized actions can also trigger momentary decoupling, there were no instances of this occurring in any of the case studies.

In summary, two of the independent variables cause decoupling to occur, while the other five cause the decoupling to be momentary. The independent variables that cause decoupling to occur are loss of political-level control over tactical-level military operations and inadvertent incidents with a significant impact on crisis military interaction. The independent variables that cause the decoupling to be momentary are local to theater scale of military operations, routine to heightened intensity of tactical-level military operations, unlikely to possible tactical-level threat perceptions, a convergent to similar relationship between political-level and tactical-level threat perceptions, and strong escalation-inhibiting factors. Momentary decoupling is the most common of the four crisis military interaction

patterns that are marked by decoupling of tactical-level military interaction from political-level objectives.

Decoupled Interactions Followed by Disengagement

The fourth pattern of crisis military interaction is decoupled interactions followed by disengagement. This pattern begins with decoupling of tactical-level interaction from political-level control. National leaders are not able to immediately re-establish control due to communications problems, decisionmaking overload, or a fast-paced tactical environment. But the initial tactical-level engagement between the two sides does not gain momentum and escalate, it loses momentum and the forces disengage. By the time national leaders re-establish control, the shooting has stopped. Tactical-level disengagement can be a requirement for political-level control to be re-established, particularly in a fast-paced tactical environment.

The Tonkin Gulf incidents of August 2 and 4, 1964 are examples of decoupling followed by disengagement. President Johnson and his advisors had not been paying close attention to the USS Maddox prior to the first North Vietnamese attack, and were not able to control the engagement once it started. Although the White House was paying much closer attention to events in the Tonkin Gulf at the time of the second incident, U.S. communications capabilities still did not permit top-level officials to control the engagement.

In both incidents, U.S. Navy commanders in the Tonkin Gulf acted on the authority delegated to them in mechanisms of indirect control. Neither of the incidents escalated after the initial engagements: U.S. naval forces disengaged as soon as the immediate threat of attack by North Vietnamese appeared to have been countered, rather than being ordered to disengage by national leaders. On-scene commanders consulted with higher authority on retaliation and President Johnson made the decision on further military operations against North Vietnam. Thus, although escalation occurred after the second Tonkin Gulf incident, it was deliberate (as opposed to inadvertent) escalation.

The causal pattern for decoupled interactions followed by disengagement is summarized in Table 9. The most

Table 9
Decoupled Interactions Followed by Disengagement

Independent Variable	Value or Range
Political-level control of tactical-level military operations	Loss of control
Scale of military operations	Local to global
Intensity of tactical-level military interactions	Intense
Perceived threat of attack at the tactical level	Imminent
Relationship between political-level and tactical-level threat perceptions	Convergent to divergent
Factors inhibiting escalation	Strong
Impact of inadvertent military incidents	Significant

portant independent variables causing this pattern of crisis military interaction to occur are loss of political-level control over tactical-level military interactions and strong escalation-inhibiting factors.

Loss of political-level control over tactical-level military interactions is most likely to arise from a fast-paced tactical environment, rather than communications or decisionmaking problems. National leaders tend to lose control because they are remote from the scene of action and the on-scene commander does not have time to consult with higher authority. Improved communications have not significantly alleviated this limitation over the period covered in this study (1958-1987): A fast paced-tactical environment precluded direct White House control over the engagements between U.S. Navy and Iranian forces in the Persian Gulf in 1987. On the other hand, improved communications contributed to the President being able to make speedy decisions on retaliation against Iranian forces, allowing retaliatory attacks to commence soon after Iranian provocations. The primary effect of improved communications thus has been to make it easier to re-establish control after an engagement begins, making the momentary decoupling pattern more likely than the decoupling followed by re-engagement pattern.

The scale of military operations tends not to be a significant independent variable causing the decoupling

followed by disengagement pattern because loss of control is primarily caused by the nature of the local tactical environment. The pattern can occur during military operations of any scale when the local tactical environment is the cause of decoupling. Although no examples were found in the case studies, it is possible that this pattern of crisis military interaction could also be caused by communications or decisionmaking problems. Such problems are more likely to arise as the scale of operations increases to theater and global.

The intensity of tactical-level military interactions is a significant independent variable causing the decoupling followed by disengagement pattern. Intense tactical-level interactions are more prone to cause loss of control and an initial engagement than are routine intensity of interactions, and make it more difficult for national leaders to re-establish control before the forces disengage.

Tactical-level threat perceptions that attack is imminent tend to cause decoupling and the initial engagement. A perception that attack is imminent can prompt the on-scene commander to use force without consulting with higher authority or without waiting for a top-level decision after reporting his intentions. The tactical-level perception of threat can range from being completely accurate, as in the first Tonkin Gulf Incident, to being an acute misperception of the adversary's intentions.

The relationship between political-level and tactical-level threat perceptions tends not to be a significant independent variable causing the decoupling followed by disengagement pattern, and therefore can range from convergent to divergent. Regardless of the threat perceptions they may hold, national leaders are not able to re-establish control over tactical-level interaction until the forces disengage.

Strong escalation-inhibiting factors favor occurrence of the decoupling followed by disengagement pattern, rather than the two patterns involving escalation. The internal factors are more important than the external factors. Internal factors prevent the tactical-level engagement from spreading upward, becoming a larger battle involving additional forces. The on-scene commander breaks off the engagement once the immediate threat to his forces is countered. The chain of command reacts with caution rather than over-reacting. External factors can also contribute to the forces of the two sides disengaging rather than escalating after the initial engagement. The most important external factor is adherence to tacit rules of crisis behavior. Even when the adversary instigates an incident with a deliberate provocation, he could well decide that escalation of the resulting engagement would not serve his interests. The adversary's leaders could also be decoupled from their forces, leaving the escalation decision to the

adversary's on-scene commander. In either case, observance of tacit rules of crisis behavior by the adversary contributes to disengagement rather than escalation being the result of an incident.

The occurrence of inadvertent military incidents with a significant impact on crisis military interaction favors occurrence of the decoupling followed by disengagement pattern. Inadvertent military incidents can trigger the decoupling of tactical-level inter-actions and the initial engagement between the forces of the two sides. The most common pattern is for an unanticipated authorized action by an on-scene commander to produce an engagement with the other side, as in use of force in self-defense under the rules of engagement. Military accidents or unauthorized actions could also trigger this pattern of decoupling, but no examples were found in the case studies.

In summary, four of the independent variables cause decoupling and the initial engagement to occur, one of the independent variables causes disengagement to occur without tactical-level escalation, and two of the independent variables are not significant causes of the pattern. The independent variables that cause decoupling and the initial engagement to occur are loss of political-level control over tactical-level military operations, intense tactical-level military operations, tactical-level threat perceptions that attack is imminent, and inadvertent incidents with a

significant impact on crisis military interaction. The independent variable that causes decoupled tactical-level interactions to disengage rather than escalate is strong escalation-inhibiting factors. The independent variables that have no significant role in causing the pattern to occur are the scale of military operations and the relationship between political-level and tactical-level threat perceptions. The decoupling followed by disengagement pattern occurs less often than the momentary decoupling pattern, but more often than the two decoupling patterns involving escalation.

Inadvertent Tactical-Level Escalation

The fifth pattern of crisis military interaction is inadvertent tactical-level escalation. This pattern begins with decoupling of tactical-level interaction from political-level crisis management objectives. National leaders are not able to immediately re-establish control due to communications problems, decisionmaking overload, or a fast-paced tactical environment. The initial tactical-level engagement gains momentum and escalates, increasing in violence and involving an increasing amount of each side's forces.

The inadvertent tactical-level escalation pattern can have three outcomes: disengagement short of war, inadvertent strategic-level escalation, or deliberate escalation by national leaders. The escalation sequence stops under one

of three circumstances: one side disengages after suffering catastrophic losses, both sides disengage from an inconclusive engagement due to exhaustion of ordnance and attrition of forces, or national leaders re-establish control and order disengagement. The third scenario--national leaders halting tactical-level escalation after losing control--is unlikely due to the extreme difficulty of maintaining direct control of forces once they are engaged in battle.

There were no examples of this crisis military interaction pattern in the case studies. The possibility of decoupled interactions being followed by tactical level escalation can be inferred from observed variation in the independent variables affecting military interaction.

Table 10
Inadvertent Tactical-Level Escalation

Independent Variable	Value or Range
Political-level control of tactical-level military operations	Loss of control
Scale of military operations	Theater to global
Intensity of tactical-level military interactions	Intense
Perceived threat of attack at the tactical level	Imminent
Relationship between political-level and tactical-level threat perceptions	Divergent
Factors inhibiting escalation	Weak
Impact of inadvertent military incidents	Significant

However, the fact that the pattern was not actually observed suggests that its occurrence is improbable.

The causal pattern for decoupled interactions followed by tactical level escalation is summarized in Table 10. The most significant independent variables in the inadvertent tactical-level escalation pattern are loss of political-level control of tactical-level military interaction, divergent threat perceptions, and weak factors inhibiting escalation.

Loss of political-level control of tactical-level military interaction causes decoupling to occur and allows tactical-level escalation that is not controlled by national leaders to occur. Such loss of control can be caused by communications and information flow problems, impairment of political-level decisionmaking, a fast-paced tactical environment, ambiguous or ambivalent orders, tactically inappropriate orders, inappropriate guidance in mechanisms of indirect control, or unauthorized actions by military commanders. Inadvertent tactical-level escalation could even occur while national leaders are in direct communication with the on-scene commander if they are incapable of staying abreast of a rapidly changing tactical environment.

Theater to global scale of military operations are normally significant in causing the inadvertent tactical-level escalation pattern. Larger-scale operations can cause loss of control arising from communications and information



flow problems or impairment of political-level decision-making. Inadvertent tactical-level escalation can also occur during smaller-scale military operations when the cause of decoupling is a fast-paced tactical environment, ambiguous or ambivalent orders, tactically inappropriate orders, inappropriate guidance in mechanisms of indirect control, or unauthorized actions by military commanders.

Intense tactical-level military interaction contributes to causing the inadvertent tactical-level escalation pattern by causing loss of political-level control of tactical-level military interaction and making it more difficult for national leaders to re-establish control before significant tactical-level escalation occurs.

Tactical-level threat perceptions that attack is imminent tend to cause decoupling, the initial engagement, and the tactical-level escalation. A perception that attack is imminent can prompt the on-scene commander to use force without consulting with higher authority or without waiting for a top-level decision after reporting his intentions. The tactical-level perception of threat can range from being completely accurate to being an acute misperception of the adversary's intentions.

A divergent relationship between political-level and tactical-level threat perceptions is an important independent variable in the inadvertent tactical-level escalation pattern. Divergent threat perceptions inhibit the

re-establishment of political-level control over tactical-level interaction, but also help prevent tactical-level escalation from causing inadvertent strategic-level or deliberate political-level escalation. A divergent relationship between political-level and tactical-level threat perceptions thus contributes to escalation remaining limited to the tactical level of interaction.

Weak escalation-inhibiting factors favor occurrence of the inadvertent tactical-level escalation pattern. Neither internal nor external escalation-inhibiting factors are sufficient to prevent tactical-level escalation from occurring. On the other hand, the internal and external escalation-inhibiting factors prevent escalation from spreading upward to the strategic and political levels. Internally, strategic-level military commanders and political-level leaders react with caution to the tactical-level engagement. Externally, both sides adhere to tacit rules of crisis behavior that inhibit escalation, and communications between the two sides may be used to avoid escalation and hasten tactical disengagement. The escalation-inhibiting factors are thus too weak to prevent tactical-level escalation, but are strong enough to prevent inadvertent strategic-level escalation or deliberate political-level escalation.

The occurrence of inadvertent military incidents with a significant impact on crisis military interaction favors

the occurrence of the inadvertent tactical-level interaction pattern. Inadvertent military incidents can trigger the decoupling of tactical-level interactions and the initial engagement between the forces of the two sides. The most common pattern is for an unanticipated authorized action by an on-scene commander to produce an engagement with the other side, as in use of force in self-defense under the rules of engagement. Military accidents or unauthorized actions could also trigger this pattern of decoupling.

In summary, four of the independent variables cause decoupling and the initial engagement to occur, two of the independent variables cause tactical-level escalation to occur, and two of the independent variables allow tactical-level escalation to occur but prevent it from causing inadvertent strategic-level escalation or deliberate political-level escalation. The independent variables that cause decoupling and the initial engagement to occur are loss of political-level control over tactical-level military operations, intense tactical-level military operations, tactical-level threat perceptions that attack is imminent, and inadvertent incidents with a significant impact on crisis military interaction. The independent variables that cause decoupled tactical-level interactions to escalate are intense tactical-level military interaction, and a tactical-level threat perception that attack is imminent. The independent variables that allow tactical-level escalation

but prevent inadvertent strategic-level escalation or deliberate political-level escalation are a divergent relationship between political-level and tactical-level threat perceptions and weak escalation-inhibiting factors.

Inadvertent Strategic-Level Escalation

The sixth pattern of crisis military interaction is inadvertent strategic-level escalation. This pattern can arise via either of two paths: escalation at the strategic level arising from tactical-level escalation, or initiation of escalation at the strategic level without prior tactical-level escalation. Inadvertent strategic-level escalation arising from tactical-level escalation was the path examined in this study, which focused on tactical-level military interaction. Inadvertent strategic-level escalation without prior tactical-level escalation could arise from inadvertent military incidents (unanticipated authorized actions, military accidents, and unauthorized deliberate actions) involving strategic-level forces. Many of the factors affecting tactical-level interaction probably also affect strategic-level interaction, but such strategic level factors were not addressed in this study. The remainder of this discussion will address only inadvertent strategic-level escalation arising from tactical-level escalation.

Inadvertent strategic-level escalation arising from tactical-level escalation begins with tactical-level

interactions decoupling from political-level control. National leaders are unable to immediately re-establish control over tactical-level interaction due to communications problems, decisionmaking overload, or a fast-paced tactical environment. The initial tactical-level engagement gains momentum and escalates, increasing in violence and involving an increasing amount of each side's forces. The tactical-level escalation spiral generates escalatory pressures at the strategic level, reinforcing perceptions that the adversary is preparing for war and is not interested in a diplomatic solution to the crisis. The scope of fighting rapidly grows to the theater level and spreads to other theaters, possibly becoming global in scope. The spread of the escalatory spiral to the strategic level of interaction is through deliberate decisions made by strategic-level military commanders, but is considered to be inadvertent because it was not directly ordered by national leaders and did not support their efforts to manage the crisis.

The inadvertent strategic-level escalation pattern of crisis military interaction can have three outcomes: inadvertent escalation to war, deliberate escalation to war, or disengagement short of war. Inadvertent escalation to war occurs if strategic-level military commanders, acting on their own authority, order initiation of wartime military operations (that is, to execute contingency war plans). This could occur under three circumstances: First,

inadvertent escalation to war could occur when tactical-level and initial strategic-level escalation is misperceived as initiation of war by the adversary. Strategic-level military commanders then order wartime operations under the authority delegated to them to act in such situations. This would appear to be the most likely circumstances for inadvertent escalation to war. Second, inadvertent escalation to war could arise from strategic-level military commanders misperceiving that national leaders desire that wartime operations be initiated, but are for some reason (such as communications failure) incapable of issuing the order. Third, inadvertent escalation to war could arise from an unauthorized deliberate decision by a strategic level military commander to initiate wartime operations (that is, ordering such operations knowing that national leaders would oppose the decision). Based on the findings of this study, this would be the least likely path for inadvertent escalation to war.

Deliberate escalation to war occurs when inadvertent strategic-level escalation prompts national leaders to make a deliberate decision to initiate wartime operations. The final decision for war is a deliberate one made by national leaders. The decision for war could be based on an accurate assessment to that the adversary intends to initiate wartime military operations, or has already done so, but could also be based on a misperception of the adversary's intentions

and the causes of the tactical-level and strategic-level escalation being experienced in the crisis.

Disengagement short of war can occur under either of two circumstances: First, when national leaders are able to re-establish control over strategic-level military interaction and halt escalation of the conflict, or, second, when strategic-level military commanders halt escalation of military operations on their own authority (perhaps realizing that their original decision to commence strategic-level military operations was unwarranted).

There were no examples of the inadvertent strategic-level escalation pattern of crisis military interaction in the case studies. The possibility of decoupled interactions being followed by escalation spreading to the strategic level can be inferred from observed variation in the independent variables affecting military interaction. However, the fact that the pattern was not actually observed suggests that its occurrence is improbable.

The causal pattern for inadvertent strategic-level escalation is summarized in Table 11. The most important independent variables causing this pattern are loss of political-level control of tactical-level military interaction, convergent threat perceptions, and lack of escalation-inhibiting factors.

Loss of political-level control of tactical-level military interaction causes decoupling to occur and allows

Table 11
Inadvertent Strategic-Level Escalation

Independent Variable	Value or Range
Political-level control of tactical-level military operations	Loss of control
Scale of military operations	Global
Intensity of tactical-level military interactions	Intense
Perceived threat of attack at the tactical level	Imminent
Relationship between political-level and tactical-level threat perceptions	Convergent
Factors inhibiting escalation	Lacking
Impact of inadvertent military incidents	Significant

tactical-level escalation that is not controlled by national leaders to occur. Such loss of control can be caused by communications and information flow problems, impairment of political-level decisionmaking, a fast-paced tactical environment, ambiguous or ambivalent orders, tactically inappropriate orders, inappropriate guidance in mechanisms of indirect control, or unauthorized actions by military commanders. Decoupling could occur while national leaders are in direct communication with the on-scene commander if they cannot stay abreast of a rapidly changing tactical environment.

Global-scale Military operations tend to favor the occurrence of the inadvertent strategic-level escalation



pattern. Larger-scale operations make loss of political-level control over tactical-level and strategic-level interactions more likely, and provide an opportunity for a tactical engagement to rapidly spread to theater and strategic forces. The most acute danger is when the military forces of both sides are at a high level of alert, maintaining readiness to commence combat operations on short notice.

Tactical-level threat perceptions that attack is imminent tend to cause decoupling, the initial tactical-level engagement, and tactical-level escalation. A perception that attack is imminent can prompt the on-scene commander to use force without consulting with higher authority or without waiting for a top-level decision after reporting his intentions. The tactical-level perception of threat can range from being completely accurate to being an acute misperception of the adversary's intentions.

A convergent relationship between strategic-level and tactical-level threat perceptions is an important independent variable in the inadvertent strategic-level escalation pattern. The spread of escalation to the strategic level results from strategic-level military commanders perceiving that war with the adversary is imminent and unavoidable. Further, a convergent relationship between political-level and strategic-level threat perceptions is important in causing deliberate escalation to war to result from inadvertent strategic-level escalation. National leaders make a



deliberate decision to initiate wartime military operations, rather than to halt strategic-level escalation, because previous tactical-level and strategic-level escalation appears to confirm their suspicions that the adversary is not interested in a diplomatic solution to the crisis. Convergence of threat perceptions is thus a significant independent variable in the inadvertent strategic-level escalation pattern of crisis military interaction.

A lack of escalation-inhibiting factors is also a significant independent variable in the inadvertent strategic-level escalation pattern. The internal factors that would ordinarily prevent escalatory pressures from spreading upward are nullified by convergent threat perceptions. On-scene commanders and the chain of command have little incentive to react with military and political caution because national leaders share their worst-case perceptions of the adversary's intentions. The external factors inhibiting escalation are also lacking. A lack of, or erosion of, tacit rules of crisis behavior cause the two sides to react to tactical-level escalation with strategic-level escalation, rather than restraint, and communications between the two sides are not used or not effective in preventing misperceptions of intentions and arresting the escalation spiral.

The occurrence of inadvertent military incidents with a significant impact on crisis military interaction favors



the occurrence of the inadvertent strategic-level interaction pattern. Inadvertent military incidents can trigger the decoupling of tactical-level interactions and the initial engagement between the forces of the two sides; and can also contribute to the spread of tactical-level escalation to the strategic level. For example, accidental launch of a strategic nuclear weapon in the midst of tactical-level escalation could well trigger strategic-level escalation by appearing to be preemption by the other side.

In summary, five of the independent variables cause decoupling and the initial engagement to occur, while five of the independent variables cause tactical-level escalation to result in inadvertent strategic-level escalation. The independent variables that cause decoupling and the initial engagement to occur are loss of political-level control over tactical-level military operations, global-scale military operations, intense tactical-level military interaction, tactical-level threat perceptions that attack is imminent, and inadvertent incidents with a significant impact on tactical-level military interaction. The independent variables that cause tactical-level escalation result in inadvertent strategic-level escalation are loss of political-level control over strategic-level military operations, global-scale military operations, a convergent relationship between strategic-level and tactical-level threat perceptions (and, in the case of deliberate escalation to war,



convergent political-level and strategic-level threat perceptions), a lack of escalation-inhibiting factors, and inadvertent incidents with a significant impact on strategic-level military interaction. The inadvertent strategic-level escalation pattern appears to be the crisis interaction pattern least likely to occur.

Conclusion

The dependent variable in the theory of stratified interaction is the outcome of crisis military interaction; specifically, the degree to which and the manner in which tactical-level military interactions cause escalation of a crisis. Variance in the dependent variable is described in terms of six patterns of crisis military interaction: unified interaction, parallel stratified interaction, momentary decoupling, decoupled interactions followed by disengagement, inadvertent tactical-level escalation, and inadvertent strategic-level escalation. The first two patterns--unified interaction and parallel stratified interaction--can have three escalation outcomes: no escalation, inadvertent controlled escalation, or deliberate escalation. Inadvertent controlled escalation and deliberate escalation can halt short of war or continue on to war. In the third and fourth patterns--momentary decoupling of interactions and decoupled interactions followed by disengagement--tactical-level interaction halts without



significant escalation. The fifth pattern--inadvertent tactical level escalation--can have three outcomes: disengagement short of war, inadvertent strategic-level escalation, or deliberate escalation to war. The sixth pattern--inadvertent strategic-level escalation--can have three outcomes: disengagement short of war, inadvertent escalation to war, or deliberate escalation to war.

These six patterns constitute a typology of crisis military interaction and appear to cover the full range of interactions that could occur in a crisis. However, because they were identified through an analytical-inductive process, rather than deductively, additional patterns could be identified through further empirical research.

More than one of the patterns of crisis military interaction can occur in a crisis. The first four patterns--unified interaction, parallel stratified interaction, momentary decoupling of interaction, decoupled interactions followed by disengagement, and inadvertent tactical-level escalation--can occur in various sequences in a crisis.

Contingent generalizations were formulated for the six patterns of crisis military interaction, offering a distinct causal pattern for each type of interaction. Each of the causal patterns is produced by specific variations in seven independent variables that were identified in the case studies as significant in determining the outcome of crisis military interaction. The seven independent variables that



determine the nature of crisis military interaction and the likelihood of escalation are (a) the degree of political-level control over tactical-level military interaction, (b) the scale of military operations, (c) the intensity of tactical-level military interactions, (d) the perceived threat of attack at the tactical level, (e) the relationship between political-level and tactical-level threat perceptions, (f) the strength of escalation-inhibiting factors, and (g) the impact of inadvertent military incidents. The seven independent variables determine the degree to which crisis interactions to become stratified, whether or not

Table 12
Comparison of Crisis Interaction Patterns

Ind Var	Unified Interaction	Parallel Stratified Interaction	Momentary Decoupling
(a)	direct	indirect	loss
(b)	local	local-theater	local-theater
(c)	routine-heightened	routine-heightened	routine-heightened
(d)	any*	any*	unlikely-possible
(e)	convergent	convergent	convergent-similar
(f)	strong	strong	strong
(g)	minor	minor	significant

*Independent variable not significant in the pattern.

Note: Independent variables (Ind Var) are lettered in the sequence given at the top of this page.

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that every entry should be supported by a valid receipt or invoice. This ensures transparency and allows for easy verification of the data. The text also mentions that regular audits are necessary to identify any discrepancies or errors in the accounting process. It is noted that such audits help in maintaining the integrity of the financial statements and provide a clear picture of the company's financial health.

Date	Description	Debit	Credit	Balance
2023-01-01	Opening Balance			1000.00
2023-01-05	Received from Client A		500.00	1500.00
2023-01-10	Paid for Office Rent	200.00		1300.00
2023-01-15	Received from Client B		300.00	1600.00
2023-01-20	Paid for Utilities	100.00		1500.00
2023-01-25	Received from Client C		400.00	1900.00
2023-01-30	Paid for Salaries	600.00		1300.00
2023-02-05	Received from Client D		200.00	1500.00
2023-02-10	Paid for Insurance	150.00		1350.00
2023-02-15	Received from Client E		350.00	1700.00
2023-02-20	Paid for Office Supplies	50.00		1650.00
2023-02-25	Received from Client F		450.00	2100.00
2023-03-01	Closing Balance			2100.00

The second part of the document provides a detailed breakdown of the company's revenue and expenses for the period. It shows that the total revenue generated was 2100 units, while the total expenses amounted to 1000 units. This results in a net profit of 1100 units. The document also includes a summary of the company's assets and liabilities, showing that the company is in a strong financial position. It concludes by stating that the company's financial performance is satisfactory and that it is well-positioned for future growth.

Table 12 (Continued)
Comparison of Crisis Interaction Patterns

Ind Var	Decoupled Interaction/ Disengagement	Inadvertent Tactical-level Escalation	Inadvertent Strategic-level Escalation
(a)	loss	loss	loss
(b)	any*	theater-global	global
(c)	intense	intense	intense
(d)	imminent	imminent	imminent
(e)	any*	divergent	convergent
(f)	strong	weak	lacking
(g)	significant	significant	significant

*Independent variable not significant in the pattern.

Note: Independent variables (Ind Var) are lettered in the sequence given at the top of page 1090.

stratified interactions become decoupled, and the degree to which decoupled interactions result in escalation of a crisis. The values of the seven independent variables that cause or tend to favor each of the patterns of crisis military interaction are summarized in Table 12.

On the basis of the eight historical cases examined in this study, a ranking of the six patterns of crisis interaction--from most to least likely to occur when U.S. naval forces are employed in a crisis--would be as follows: parallel stratified interaction, momentary decoupling,



decoupled interactions followed by disengagement, inadvertent tactical-level interaction, inadvertent strategic-level interaction, and unified interaction. The independent variables that most affect this ranking are political-level control of tactical-level interaction and the strength of the escalation-inhibiting factors. Direct political-level control of tactical-level military operations is difficult for U.S. leaders due to the size and complexity of the U.S. armed forces, making the unified interaction pattern rare and providing ample opportunities for stratified crisis interactions to become decoupled. The escalation-inhibiting factors are generally quite strong, preventing escalation even when decoupling occurs--making momentary decoupling and decoupling followed by disengagement much more common than inadvertent tactical-level escalation or inadvertent strategic-level escalation.

Three issues remain to be addressed. First, what do these findings imply for the analytical value of the theory of stratified interaction. Second, what are the implications of these findings for the practice of crisis management. Third, to what degree can these findings be generalized to crises involving forces other than naval forces. These issues will be addressed in the next chapter, which will offer overall conclusions on the theory of stratified interaction, the implications of these findings for crisis management, and areas for further research.

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that every entry should be supported by a valid receipt or invoice. This not only helps in tracking expenses but also ensures compliance with tax regulations.

In the second section, the author provides a detailed breakdown of the company's revenue streams. This includes sales from various product lines and services. The data shows a steady increase in revenue over the past year, primarily driven by the launch of new products and improved marketing strategies.

The third section focuses on the company's operational costs. It details the expenses related to manufacturing, distribution, and administrative functions. The analysis reveals that while production costs have remained relatively stable, distribution and marketing expenses have increased significantly.

Finally, the document concludes with a summary of the overall financial performance. It highlights the company's strong profitability and its ability to manage costs effectively. The author also outlines key areas for future improvement, such as optimizing the supply chain and exploring new market opportunities.

CHAPTER X
CONCLUSIONS

The theory of stratified interaction and the contingent generalizations derived from it provide a policy-relevant explanatory theory of crisis military interaction. The theory provides differentiated explanations for a variety of crisis military interactions, thus allowing policymakers to diagnose specific situations in which crisis management and crisis stability problems can arise.

Studies of international crises have repeatedly concluded that the success of crisis management is critically dependent upon top-level political authorities maintaining close control of the actions of their military forces. This essential requirement for crisis management has also been identified as a potentially serious problem area. But the existing literature on crises and crisis management by and large has not progressed beyond identifying general requirements for crisis management. Policymakers need an enhanced ability to diagnose specific situations in which particular crisis management and crisis stability problems can arise. Policymakers cannot operate effectively only on the basis of general requirements for



crisis management. Rather, they need the ability to judge how the general requirements of crisis management apply in the particular crises they face.¹

Contemporary crisis management theory has poor diagnostic power when applied to a particular crisis situation. Scholars engaged in formulating crisis management theories generally have not attempted to develop a differentiated typology of situations in which crisis management and crisis stability problems can arise. Most scholars engaged in formulating crisis management theory have been insufficiently concerned with explanatory, as opposed to prescriptive, theory. What is needed is an explanatory theory that is policy-relevant without being prescriptive. Earlier studies have not succeeded in identifying theoretically relevant variation in crisis military interaction. Crisis management and crisis stability problems can arise in different ways, causing crisis management to fail for different reasons.

To acquire diagnostic power of the kind needed by policymakers, an explanatory theory must be capable of providing explanations that discriminate among causal

¹This discussion draws heavily from Alexander L. George and Richard Smoke, Deterrence in American Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974), pp. 509-515; Alexander L. George, "Case Studies and Theory Development: The Method of Structured, Focused Comparison," in Paul Gordon, ed., Diplomacy: New Approaches in History, Theory, and Policy (New York: The Free Press, 1979), pp. 59-60.



patterns. That is, it must be capable of offering differentiated explanations for a variety of patterns of crisis military interaction. A differentiated explanatory theory is possible by formulating contingent generalizations, which identify regularities that occur only under certain specific conditions. The objective of this study was to identify different causal patterns associated with variation in crisis military interaction. For this purpose an analytical-inductive procedure was used to analyze four historical cases of crisis naval operations and four cases of peacetime attacks on U.S. Navy ships. This inductive procedure yielded a typology of crisis military interactions, each linked with a somewhat different causal pattern.

The dependent variable was whether or not inadvertent escalation occurs in an international crisis. For the purposes of this study, inadvertent escalation was defined as any increase in the level or scope of violence in a crisis that was not directly ordered by national leaders or anticipated by them as being the likely result of their orders. The specific phenomena explained in the study were the interaction of military forces in crises and the impact of such interactions on crisis stability. Empirical research on the use of United States naval forces in crises was used to develop a set of contingent generalizations explaining three aspects of the theory: (a) the conditions under which crisis interactions become stratified and decoupled, (b) the



conditions that prevent stratified escalation dynamics from occurring, and (c) the conditions under which tensions between political and diplomatic objectives arise and affect crisis decision-making in particular ways. The analysis defined discrete patterns of tactical-level crisis interaction, each associated with a particular causal pattern. Because the patterns of tactical-level interaction were arrived at empirically, the patterns identified in this study probably do not cover the universe of interaction patterns--additional patterns could well be identified through further empirical research.

The scope of the study was limited to international crises in which two fundamental conditions were present: The first was that both sides in a crisis sought to protect or advance vital national interests, or at least had vital interests at stake that they were unwilling to sacrifice for the purpose of avoiding war. Both sides thus took military actions intended to support crisis bargaining and to counter military moves by the other side. The second condition was that neither side desired war as the outcome of the crisis. National leaders on each side limited their objectives and restrained their military moves to avoid provoking a war. Both sides thus sought to avoid inadvertent escalation of the crisis while deterring escalation by the other side. When both of these conditions are met, the primary danger is of war arising from inadvertent escalation.



The nature of the phenomena being addressed dictated a focus on decisionmaking and the details of how crisis military operations are controlled. That, in turn, required a research design in which a small number of cases were examined using the method of structured focused comparison, rather than a research design using a large number of cases and statistical methods to identify significant causal variables explaining variance in outcomes.

Empirical data for the study came from two sets of case studies. The first set consisted of four cases in which United States naval forces were employed in crises: the 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis, the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, the 1967 Middle East War, and the 1973 Middle East War. The second set of case studies consisted of four cases in which U.S. Navy ships were attacked in peacetime: the 1964 Tonkin Gulf Incidents, the 1967 Israeli attack on the USS Liberty, the 1968 North Korean seizure of the USS Pueblo, and the 1987 Iraqi attack on the USS Stark.

The Theory of Stratified Interaction

Previous studies of international crises implicitly viewed the various political and military interactions that occur between the two sides as a single interaction sequence. The flow of events in a crisis is viewed as a single sequence of actions and reactions. A consequence of this perspective is the implicit assumption that all the



actions taken by a nation during a crisis either are ordered by national leaders in pursuit of their policy objectives, or should not have occurred and therefore represent a loss of control over events. The single interaction sequence model does not accurately describe international crises. What actually occurs is multiple interaction sequences that only partially influence each other. Multiple interaction sequences, evolving simultaneously but semi-independently, arise when national leaders do not make all operational decisions themselves, but must delegate significant decision-making authority to subordinates.

Stratified Interaction

The theory of stratified interaction states that, given conditions of delegated control, tight horizontal coupling between the military forces of the two sides, and acute crisis, interactions between the two sides will be stratified in three levels: political, strategic and tactical. The first corollary to the theory is that tactical-level interactions can become decoupled from the political-military objectives of national leaders. The term decoupled is used to mean that vertical command and control links to operational military forces at the scene of a crisis are severed or otherwise fail to ensure that tactical-level decisionmaking supports the crisis management strategy of national leaders. Decoupling occurs to the extent that



operational decisions on the employment of military forces made at the strategic and tactical levels differ from the operational decisions political level decisionmakers would have made to coordinate those military actions with their political-diplomatic strategy for resolving the crisis. This is an inductive theory arrived at through empirical historical research into crisis interactions.

Crisis Stability

Crisis stability exists to the extent that neither side has an incentive to strike the first military blow. The crisis security dilemma is that, in a crisis, many of the actions a state takes to increase its security and improve its bargaining position decrease the security of the adversary. The stratified crisis security dilemma is that, in a crisis, the security dilemma is stratified, arising from the interaction processes occurring separately at each of the three levels, and affecting the likelihood of war separately at each level. This in turn leads to the concept of stratified escalation dynamics: in a crisis in which interaction between the two sides has become stratified and decoupled, the security dilemma, operating separately at each level of interaction, can trigger an escalatory spiral at the strategic or tactical levels, which under certain circumstances can cause the crisis to escalate uncontrollably to war.

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions and activities. It emphasizes the need for transparency and accountability in financial reporting.

Furthermore, it highlights the role of internal controls in preventing fraud and ensuring the integrity of the financial statements. The document also mentions the importance of regular audits and reviews.

In addition, it discusses the impact of external factors such as market conditions and regulatory changes on the organization's financial performance. It suggests that the organization should remain flexible and adaptable to these changes.

The document also touches upon the importance of communication and collaboration between different departments. It states that effective communication is essential for the successful implementation of any strategy.

Finally, it concludes by stating that the organization's success depends on its ability to manage its resources effectively and to respond to the challenges of the business environment. It encourages the organization to continue to improve and innovate.

The document is intended to provide a comprehensive overview of the organization's financial and operational performance. It is hoped that this information will be helpful to all stakeholders.

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Among the various ways in which wars can arise, pre-emption and inadvertent escalation are particularly relevant to the study of how war can arise from a crisis. Preemption is motivated by perceptions and fears that the other side is about to strike first. An important implication of the stratified crisis security dilemma is that tactical-level military commanders can perceive incentives to preempt while political-level leaders do not. Tactical-level commanders can be delegated the authority to order certain types of preemption under the doctrine of anticipatory self-defense. Such tactical-level preemption could well set in motion an escalation sequence that is at least temporarily beyond the control of national leaders.

War can also arise inadvertently through an escalation process in which the two sides take increasingly threatening military and diplomatic moves in an effort at gaining leverage in crisis bargaining and improving their military positions. Accidents and other inadvertent military actions contribute to the escalation process. The escalation dynamic is driven by rising stakes in the outcome of a conflict, which increase the motivation of national leaders to prevail, and by an action-reaction process, in which an escalatory action by one side provokes an escalatory reaction by the other side in recurring cycles. This escalation dynamic increases tensions and hardens resolve until it results in a deliberate or preemptive decision for war.

Another aspect of crisis stability is the danger of misperception under conditions of stratified interaction. The concept of the misperception dilemma describes the inadvertent results that can occur when military forces are used for signalling in a crisis. When signalling adversaries, the dilemma is between inadvertent signals of hostility and inadvertent signals of acquiescence. When signalling an ally or friend, the misperception dilemma is between inadvertent signals of encouragement and inadvertent signals of retrenchment. Given stratified interactions, then perceptions of the adversary can also be stratified, with different perceptions being held at different levels of interaction. Misperceptions can arise at one level without other levels necessarily being aware of them, providing a mechanism by which stratified interactions can become decoupled.

Political-Military Tensions

The crisis management literature is based on an erroneous view of the manner in which military forces are controlled in crises. This apparently resulted from the frequently observed phenomenon of United States leaders exercising close control over military operations in crises, combined with a lack of familiarity with military command and control procedures. The crisis management literature typically describes the control of crisis military

operations as being highly centralized, with top-level civilian authorities exercising direct control--in contrast to routine peacetime operations, which are described as highly decentralized and having little involvement of civilian political authorities. Although this description is essentially correct, it fails to grasp the complexity of military command and control, and leads to inaccurate assessments of the crisis management problems arising from the employment of military forces in crises.

Even in crises, military commanders are delegated significant authority to make operational decisions on the employment of their forces--including decisions on the use of force. Under certain circumstances military commanders can use conventional weapons without seeking permission from higher authorities. The scope of their authority is spelled out in a variety of documents, which collectively will be referred to as mechanisms of indirect control. There are even provisions for commanders to act contrary to their written instructions when circumstances dictate. Although some scholars have recognized that these features exist in the United States military command and control system, the actual complexity of that system has not been reflected in the literature on crisis management.

The interaction of political and military considerations when military force is employed as a political instrument in crises generate tensions--actual and potential

conflicts between political and military considerations which force decision-makers, either knowingly or tacitly, to make trade-offs among individually important but mutually incompatible considerations. These political-military tensions, which can give rise to difficult policy dilemmas in a crisis, are inherent in the use of force as a political instrument under conditions of stratified interaction.

There are three political-military tensions. The first is tension between political considerations and the needs of diplomatic bargaining, on the one hand, and military considerations and the needs of military operations, on the other. The second is tension between the need for top-level control of military options in a crisis, and the need for tactical flexibility and instantaneous decision-making at the scene of the crisis. The third is tension between performance of peacetime political missions and readiness to perform wartime combat missions. These three tensions between political and military considerations affect the degree to which stratified interactions become decoupled in a crisis, thus having a significant impact on crisis decision-making and crisis stability.

Mechanisms of Indirect Control

Organization and management studies show that significant delegation of decisionmaking authority is common in large organizations. Delegation of decisionmaking is

driven by the limits on decisionmaking, which cause decision-making by top-level officials to deteriorate as the size and complexity of the organization increase. These observations apply particularly well to the military chain of command, which is founded on the principle of delegating control while retaining command. As organization theory predicts, delegation of control in the military command system is primarily due to constraints on the ability of top-level authorities to effectively control tactical operations.

Organization and management studies show that tension between autonomy and control is always present in public and business organizations, particularly those consisting of numerous independent operating units. As before, these findings apply particularly well to the U.S. military. Tension between delegation and control is always present in the military chain of command. Pressures toward centralized control are driven by the complexity of modern warfare, fear of nuclear war, and efforts to exploit the force multiplier effect. Pressures toward decentralized control are driven by severe constraints on the ability of top-level authorities to effectively control tactical operations, and by the advantages gained by granting the on-scene commander flexibility to exercise initiative.

Organization and management studies show that delegation of decisionmaking can range from being highly rule-governed, for standard, repetitive situations, to highly

discretionary, for situations that cannot be anticipated. This also applies to military command and control. The methods of exercising control cover a "tightness of control" spectrum ranging from very tight to very loose control. Toward the tight end of the spectrum are positive direct control, and direct control by negation. Toward the loose end of the spectrum are monitored delegated control and autonomous delegated control. The guidance contained in mechanisms of indirect control can also range from being detailed and specific (tight indirect control) to general and flexible (loose indirect control). In military command and control, as in public administration and business management, tighter forms of control are more appropriate for standard situations that are easily anticipated, while looser forms of control are more appropriate for an environment marked by uncertainty and ambiguity, in which specific decisionmaking situations are difficult to anticipate.

Organization and management studies show that three types of control mechanisms are used in various combinations: hierarchical (rules and procedures), collegial (professionalism), and nonhierarchical (organizational and societal norms and culture). All three methods are used in the military organizations. The mechanisms of indirect control--the alert system, standing orders, mission orders, contingency plans, and rules of engagement--are all hierarchical controls. They relieve higher authorities of

the burden of having to closely monitor the details of military operations--a burden that can quickly exceed their information processing and decisionmaking capabilities when large-scale operations are being conducted in a fast-paced political-military environment. Relieved of this burden, top-level authorities are better able to concentrate on monitoring the overall political-strategic situation, formulating and revising their strategy for dealing with the confrontation, and coordinating the overall execution of military operations so that they support that strategy. Hierarchical controls serve similar functions in public and business organizations.

Collegial and nonhierarchical controls are relied upon heavily in military organizations. Collegial control is provided by the professionalism of the officer corps, which is highly developed and stressed in the training of officers. Non-hierarchical controls--organizational norms and values--are also widely used in the military. They are most visible in elite military units, such as Army Special Forces and the Marine Corps. Members of these units are indoctrinated that their elite status requires that they meet superior standards of performance--typically discipline, endurance, aggressiveness, and fighting skill--unique to their organizations. Similar nonhierarchical controls are used throughout the armed forces to complement and reinforce military professionalism.

Collegial and nonhierarchical controls have a major impact on the effectiveness of delegated control and the mechanisms of indirect control. On the one hand, controls such as discipline, loyalty, and respect for the chain of command are essential for delegated control and mechanisms of indirect control to function at all. Similarly, professional experience and judgement can be crucial for correctly interpreting ambiguous orders and carrying out general guidance under rapidly changing circumstances. The ultimate test of professional experience and judgement is knowing when to disregard inappropriate orders in order to take action that better supports the national interest. On the other hand, collegial and nonhierarchical controls can generate commitment to particular operational doctrines or procedures, and resistance to operations custom-designed for crisis management purposes.

Studies of public administration and business management repeatedly show that in large organizations comprised of numerous independent operating units, optimum performance is achieved with decentralized decisionmaking combined with appropriate--primarily collegial and nonhierarchical--controls. The issue as to what degree of centralization or decentralization is optimum for military operations was not directly addressed in this review of the military command system. The strength and weaknesses of the methods of control and mechanisms of indirect control, and the arguments

for and against centralization of decision-making authority, were discussed, but the focus was on how military command and control function in principle. Many things can go wrong in the stress and confusion of crisis military operations, and there are inherent limits on the ability of any methods or mechanisms of control to ensure that decisions made at one level are those that are most appropriate for the situation at another level. The optimum degree of centralization or decentralization can vary widely depending on the nature of the military operation being conducted and the political-military context of the operation.

The United States armed forces rely on a flexible combination of direct and indirect control. The methods of control range from positive direct control and direct control by negation at the tight end of the "tightness of control" spectrum, to monitored delegated control and autonomous delegated control at the loose end. Certain of the methods of control can be used in conjunction, and forces can be rapidly shifted from one method to another as the situation warrants.

When a military commander delegates control of operational forces, he does not relinquish all control of those forces to his subordinate. In most cases, he retains a certain amount of direct control, which can vary widely in tightness. Additionally, the commander has at his disposal various mechanisms of indirect control. Mechanisms of

indirect control are orders, instructions, or detailed guidance issued to a commander prior to the start of a mission in order to ensure that the operational decisions he makes support the objectives and intentions of his superiors. Such instructions can range from being very detailed and specific to very general in nature. As the method of control being used moves across the "tightness of control" spectrum from tight to loose--that is, as the subordinate is granted increasing freedom from direct control--the importance of the mechanisms of indirect control increases. When a subordinate is operating under autonomous delegated control, with no direct communications links at all, the mechanisms of indirect control are the only means of control available. There are five mechanisms of indirect control: the alert system, standing orders, mission orders, contingency plans, and rules of engagement.

The U.S. alert system, which is based on five levels of Defense Readiness Condition (DEFCON), defines the overall framework for controlling the readiness of U.S. forces, providing a uniform system for all operational commands. Within this framework, following guidance from the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), individual commands formulate alert procedures and readiness postures applicable to their forces. The system is highly flexible, allowing different major commands to be placed at different DEFCON levels as the world situation warrants. Much of the detailed guidance

for operational forces is included in standing orders and contingency plans activated as higher levels of DEFCON are declared. Certain military commanders are delegated authority to increase the readiness of their forces independent of the DEFCON set by the JCS. They must maintain the minimum readiness level set by JCS, but can place their forces at a higher condition of readiness if warranted by the particular threat facing their commands. They can also select from among various readiness postures--tailored for different types of threats--within a given DEFCON level. Lower level commanders (who do not have authority to order changes in DEFCON) can also increase the readiness of their forces independent of the worldwide or theater DEFCON level.

Standing orders are detailed guidance on operational procedures prepared on a routine basis during peacetime. Although they are revised periodically, the intent is that they provide stable guidance, thereby minimizing uncertainty over operational procedures and facilitating the exercise of delegated control. Standing orders fall into four general categories: doctrinal publications, operations orders, operations plans, and long-range schedules.

Mission orders include letters of intent (LOIs), operations plans or operations orders issued for a specific short-term operation, and various other types of orders used to initiate routine and non-routine operations. Mission

orders can range from being very detailed and specific to being very brief and general. At a minimum, a mission order includes the objective of the operation, the forces assigned to it, the identity of the commander, and the time frame for the operation. Mission orders serve as a mechanism of indirect control by relieving a commander of having to exercise direct control over the details of an operation's execution. An important function of mission orders is to define the scope of decisionmaking authority delegated to subordinate commanders. A mission order can specify which decisions must be referred to higher authority and which decisions the subordinate commander is authorized make himself.

Contingency plans are those operations plans (OPLANs) prepared in advance for execution in the circumstances specified in the plans. Contingency plans are commonly prepared for crisis and peacetime emergency scenarios, various limited war scenarios, and general war scenarios (the last two types are often collectively referred to as "war plans"). Contingency plans serve as a mechanism of indirect control by allowing a commander to rapidly issue a single order to execute an operation that he and his staff have had time to prepare in detail ahead of time. Contingency plans are distributed in advance, eliminating the burden of having to issue a large volume of orders when a decision is made to carry out the operation. The only

direct orders that are needed are last-minute revisions to the contingency plan and the mission order directing that it be executed as modified.

Rules of engagement are orders issued to define the circumstances in which the U.S. armed forces are authorized to use their weapons for defense against hostile forces in peacetime, and to specify the scope and level of violence of combat operations in wartime. Rules of engagement serve as a mechanism of indirect control by allowing top-level authorities to specify policies on the use of force prior to situations in which direct control of the decision to use force is not possible. The purpose of rules of engagement is to provide guidance to operating forces from National Command Authorities, via the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the operational chain of command, on how to respond to threat of attack in peacetime, and on limitations on fighting in wartime.

Wartime rules of engagement place limits on military action when U.S. forces are engaged in an armed conflict. Certain military options may be deemed undesirable in wartime due to escalation control, diplomatic, and humanitarian considerations. For example, an important escalation control function of wartime rules of engagement is to prevent incidents with the military forces of non-belligerents. Wartime rules of engagement can also be used to prevent geographic expansion of a conflict when it is politically

and diplomatically desirable to confine the fighting to a limited area. Wartime rules of engagement allow military action under such circumstances only for self-defense--the adversary is forced to make the decision to escalate or expand the conflict.

Peacetime rules of engagement are founded on the right of self-defense as defined under international law and in U.S. Department of Defense directives. The peacetime rules prohibit U.S. military commanders from using force in peacetime unless absolutely necessary for self-defense. The principle of anticipatory self-defense allows commanders to shoot first upon clear demonstration of hostile intent (i.e., when threatened with imminent attack). There are two categories of peacetime rules of engagement: standing and special. Standing rules of engagement are written for routine peacetime operations. They are in effect at all times for the forces they cover. Special rules of engagement are issued to cover particularly sensitive situations, such as operations near a country openly hostile to the U.S. and operations during an international crisis.

The operational requirement of crisis management that national leaders maintain close control over military operations can be exercised in a variety of ways. One approach is to shift from methods at the loose end of the tightness of control spectrum--autonomous delegated control monitored delegated control--to methods at the tight end of the

spectrum--direct control by negation and positive direct control. This is the approach commonly referred to in the crisis management literature. This type of direct control has its costs, and can even hinder effective crisis management. Unless the scope of military operations is very small and simple, direct control can quickly overload information processing and decisionmaking. National leaders typically focus on selected aspects of the operations, which may not be the most important or dangerous evolutions taking place. The need for close control thus needs be weighed against the constraints on the ability of national leaders to exercise effective direct control of military operations.

A second approach to maintaining close control of crisis military operations is through the mechanisms of indirect control. This entails shifting the guidance contained in mechanisms of indirect control from being general and flexible (loose indirect control), to being detailed and specific (tight indirect control). Close attention to the rules of engagement is particularly important in this regard. As was also true with methods of control, excessive tightness in the mechanisms of indirect control can be counterproductive--denying the on-scene commander the flexibility he needs to adapt to rapidly changing circumstances. The optimum tightness of control lies somewhere between absolute control and absolute autonomy. Establishing precisely where the optimum balance

between control and delegation lies is one of the inherent tensions in crisis management.

U.S. military command and control procedures allow ample opportunity for stratified interaction to occur in crises. The U.S. armed forces rely on a flexible combination of direct and delegated control that emphasizes delegation of authority and providing on-scene commanders with freedom of action. Monitored delegated control is the method of control preferred by military commanders, and when direct control is necessary, control by negation is preferred over positive control. Primary emphasis is placed on use of mechanisms of indirect control rather than on the exercise of direct control. These preferences are strongest in the Navy, which has a long tradition of operational autonomy and which accords substantial authority to commanding officers. Even in crises, when there is a tendency for high-level military commanders as well civilian authorities to centralize control over operations, on-scene commanders are delegated substantial decisionmaking authority.

Tactical-Level Military Interaction

Tactical-level interactions are divided, based on the perspective of political-level decisionmakers, into two major categories: deliberate military actions and inadvertent military incidents. Deliberate military actions are ordered by political-level decisionmakers. They can occur

under delegated as well as direct control, and can be ordered in mechanisms of indirect control as well as directly over real-time communications links. Inadvertent military incidents are military actions that may affect the development of a crisis, but which are not specifically ordered or anticipated by national leaders. There are three categories of inadvertent military incidents: unanticipated authorized actions, military accidents, and unauthorized deliberate actions. Inadvertent military incidents are troublesome because decisionmakers may fail to realize they are unauthorized and perceive them as a deliberate provocation, signal of hostile intent, or escalation of a crisis.

Unanticipated authorized actions are military actions taken by military commanders in compliance with guidance contained in mechanisms of indirect control, but not directly ordered or specifically approved by national leaders. Such actions are taken by on-scene commanders in response to events or tactical conditions that national leaders did not anticipate, are not aware of, or do not understand. Such actions are authorized, in that they are taken in compliance with guidance contained in one of the mechanisms of indirect control--the alert system, standing orders, mission orders, contingency plans, or rules of engagement. But they are unanticipated, in the sense that national leaders did not directly order the specific action or anticipate that the specific action would result from

guidance contained in mechanisms of delegated control.

National leaders can only react to unanticipated authorized actions and try to manage their impact on the crisis.

The most common phenomenon appears to be that national leaders order a military operation without understanding the full range of specific military actions that military commanders have authority to take in order to carry out that operation. Ambiguous orders, operations initiated without specific military objectives to guide decisionmaking by on-scene commanders, and open-ended military operations (those that drag on without a definitive conclusion) are particularly prone to cause unanticipated authorized actions.

Reliance on methods or delegated command and mechanisms of indirect control is the most important condition giving rise to the possibility of unanticipated authorized actions, but such actions can also occur when tighter methods of control are being exercised. National leaders exercising control by negation could tacitly approve a military action (by not vetoing it) without understanding what the action entails. This could also occur when positive direct control is being exercised, though in this case it is more accurate to describe the consequences of the action, rather than the action itself, as being unanticipated.

Misperceptions on the part of on-scene military commanders are another possible cause of unanticipated authorized actions. This could occur when a military commander

misperceives the political-military context of the local tactical situation. For example, he might misperceive aggressive enemy military moves as indicating that friendly forces are in imminent danger of attack, or even that war had started, and order military actions that would have been authorized in these situations. The possibility of such misperceptions underscores the danger inherent in simulating attacks on an adversary's forces during a crisis--such as the Soviet Navy conducted against the U.S. Sixth Fleet while U.S. forces were at DEFCON 3 in the 1973 Middle East War. In this instance U.S. Navy commanders in the Mediterranean either knew or presumed that the Soviets were only conducting an exercise and did not attack any Soviet ships. Under other circumstances, however, such forbearance could be much more difficult for on-scene commanders.

Contingency plans can be a source of unanticipated authorized actions if national leaders do not fully understand the operational implications of the plans or do not have the time or inclination to carefully review the content of a plan before ordering it executed. Although United States military contingency plans contain a broad range of options for the employment of military forces, civilian policy-makers tend to view most predefined military options as inappropriate because the options were designed for a crisis scenario different than the one at hand, or were defined to meet purely military objectives rather than the

requirements for employment of military forces in a crisis. In practice, top-level military and civilian officials jointly review and revise contingency plans to meet the needs of the specific crisis at hand prior to executing them. However, the possibility of a contingency plan setting in motion military operations that top-level political leaders had not anticipated cannot be excluded entirely.

The alert system can also be a source of unanticipated authorized actions. The President and his advisors--even the Secretary of Defense--may not be aware of the full range of actions that can result from setting a higher level of Defense Condition of Readiness (DEFCON). Further, they may not be informed that a particular action has been initiated until it is too late to halt it or until it has already had an unanticipated effect on the crisis.

The most important potential source of unanticipated authorized actions is operational decisions made by tactical level military commanders on the basis of guidance contained in standing orders, mission orders, or the rules of engagement. Even when under direct control by top-level political authorities, operational commanders usually have sufficient authority to take actions that could significantly affect the development of a crisis. Ambiguous or ambivalent orders greatly increase the likelihood of unanticipated authorized actions by leaving the on-scene commander uncertain as to



the objectives of his mission, the intentions of national leaders, and the actions he is authorized to take. Movement of forces outside the scene of a crisis into battle positions, employment of weapons in self-defense in accordance with the rules of engagement, and stepped up surveillance of sensitive targets are all actions the President might not anticipate as resulting from his decisions, but which could raise tensions in a crisis.

Military accidents are actions not ordered or deliberately initiated at any level in the chain of command.

Military accidents are troublesome because decisionmakers may fail to realize they are unauthorized and perceive them as a deliberate provocation, signal of hostile intent, or escalation. This problem is compounded by modern communications systems, which in theory give national leaders in many countries the capability for detailed control of military operations and the ordering specific tactical actions.

Since almost any military action could conceivably be the result of orders from national leaders, an adversary may assume that those leaders ordered an action, that was, in fact, an accident. Thus, virtually any military action can assume strategic importance if believed to have been conceived and personally supervised by national leaders.

In practice, national leaders and even military commanders attempt to distinguish accidents from deliberate provocations or attacks. Among the factors that are



considered when evaluating whether a particular incident was a provocation or an accident are (a) the international political climate (Did the adversary have political and military motives to make a deliberate provocation or attack?), (b) the overall pattern of military operations at the time of the incident (Was the incident isolated or one of several attacks?), and (c) whether the circumstances of the incident indicate that it was a deliberate action (Were appropriate combat tactics used?). However, when assessment of a military accident must be made in the fog of a crisis, with possibly incomplete and erroneous information coming in from the scene and decision makers attempting to sort out adversary intentions under great stress, the possibility of an accident being misperceived as a deliberate provocation or attack is heightened.

U.S. and Soviet leaders have used communications with each other to clarify whether incidents were accidents or provocations. One tactic is to assume (at least for diplomatic purposes) that an isolated incident was an accident, but warn that further such incidents would be viewed as deliberate provocations or attacks. Both of the superpowers have used the "hot line" to prevent incidents from becoming confrontations. Communications between the United States and the Soviet Union, particularly over the hot line, have thus proven valuable for sorting out accidents from provocations (and for preventing provocations from recurring

by warning against similar "accidents" in the future). Situations could arise, however, in which national leaders or on-scene military commanders on the side that was the victim of a military accident perceive that they do not have time for communications with the other side before taking a military response to an apparent deliberate attack.

Military accidents occur infrequently in international crises. There are three reasons for this. First, the military chain of command normally cancels most military exercises affecting forces committed to or on standby for the crisis, greatly reducing the possibility of international incidents arising from exercise-related accidents. The primary reason why exercises are cancelled is that the forces are needed for crisis operations, but exercises have also been cancelled to avoid potential political complications. The second reason for the rarity of accidents in crisis is that the military chain of command usually advises on-scene commanders to act with caution and to avoid provocative actions. The third reason for the lack of incidents in crises is military prudence: on-scene commanders, motivated by self-preservation, generally avoid deliberately placing their forces in situations where they are extremely vulnerable to deliberate or inadvertent attacks. Military prudence is occasionally violated by top-level political officials ordering naval forces into dangerous waters, but on other occasions U.S. leaders have

been careful to keep U.S. forces well clear of fighting in a local conflict. These three factors counteract other factors--increased tempo of operations and adversary forces in close proximity--that might otherwise contribute to the occurrence of inadvertent military incidents.

Unauthorized deliberate actions are ordered or executed by tactical-level military commanders in violation of orders issued directly by national leaders, or in violation of operational guidance contained in mechanisms of indirect control. One way in which an unauthorized deliberate action can occur is for a military commander to stretch the limits on the actions he is authorized to take--complying with a broad interpretation of the letter of his orders rather than with what he knows to be the spirit of those orders. This type of unauthorized action is especially likely when the orders given to military forces are vague or ambiguous, leaving ample room for an on-scene commander to rationalize his actions. Unauthorized deliberate actions incidents are exceedingly rare.

Not all unauthorized deliberate actions are harmful to crisis management efforts. An on-scene military commander with an appreciation of the political objectives being pursued by national leaders could well decide to ignore orders that are inappropriate for the local situation and pursue a course of action that better supports crisis management efforts. Two types of unauthorized deliberate actions can

be distinguished on the basis of the military commander's intentions: constructive and malicious.

A constructive unauthorized action is taken in the belief that actions called for in existing orders are inappropriate under the circumstances, and that the unauthorized action would better support the national objectives in the crisis. Whether or not the outcome is constructive is a different matter, and a well-intentioned action could seriously complicate crisis management efforts. The mark of a constructive unauthorized action is an effort to inform the chain of command as soon as possible of the action taken and the reasons for taking it.

A malicious unauthorized deliberate action is taken out of opposition to the objectives underlying specific orders, disrespect for the chain of command or the method of control being used, or frustration with particular orders felt to be unnecessarily endangering the men performing the mission. The mark of a malicious unauthorized action is an effort to conceal the action from higher authority.

Incidents at sea can be either deliberate or inadvertent. Incidents at sea include various forms of harassment and other dangerous interactions between Soviet and American naval forces. They may be initiated deliberately on direct or standing orders from national leaders (for military reasons or as a political signal), or may occur inadvertently--that is, without having been ordered by national

leaders. Inadvertent incidents at sea can fall into any of the three categories of inadvertent military incidents: anticipated authorized actions, military accidents, and unauthorized deliberate actions.

Findings of the Case Studies

Eight questions addressing specific aspects of the theory of stratified interaction were addressed in the case studies. The first three questions address the conditions necessary for stratified interaction to occur: delegated control, tight coupling between the forces of the two sides, and conditions of acute crisis. The first question is to what degree were interactions between the forces of the two sides at the scene of the crisis the result of actions taken in accordance with mechanisms of indirect control, rather than direct control by national leaders? The pattern observed in the four case studies of U.S. naval operations in crises was one of direct control being exercised selectively and to a limited degree. Heavy reliance was placed on mechanisms of indirect control in all four cases, although the guidance contained in those mechanisms was not always revised to reflect the specific circumstances of the crisis at hand. Tactical-level military interactions rarely were under the direct control of political-level leaders.

The second question is were the forces of the two sides at the scene of the crisis tightly coupled with each

her? Naval forces at the scene of the crisis were tightly coupled in all four of the crisis naval operations case studies. However, the tightness of coupling between the forces of the two sides can vary significantly from crisis to crisis and over time within a particular crisis. Tactical-level military commanders have independent access to intelligence and surveillance information on adversary forces, and thus are not dependent on political-level decisionmakers for information on the adversary. As would be expected under conditions of tight coupling, naval forces tend to react quickly to changes in the other side's operations, seeking to maintain or improve their tactical position in the event of hostilities. However, this tight action-reaction linkage can be dampened by measures intended to avoid incidents between the two side's forces, such as geographic separation and a deliberately low tempo of operations or pauses (periods of inaction).

The third question is were the forces of the two sides being used by their national leaders to convey political signals in support of crisis bargaining? Naval forces were used by both sides for political signalling or related political functions in all four of the case studies on crisis naval operations. Use of naval forces for political purposes can bring naval units of the two sides in a crisis into close proximity, creating a danger of military incidents.

The answers to these first three questions suggest that conditions necessary for stratified interaction existed in all four of the crises. In the 1958 Taiwan Straits crisis, the United States relied on methods of delegated control, U.S. and Chinese Communist military forces were tightly coupled, and both sides used their forces as a political instrument under conditions of acute crisis. Interactions occurred at the tactical level that were not directly controlled by American leaders. The findings of this case suggest, however, that stratification is not an absolute concept--there can be degrees of stratification. Measures taken by both sides to prevent confrontations between their forces can greatly reduce opportunities for tactical-level interaction to occur.

Although the President sought to maintain close control of military operations in the 1962 Cuban Missile crisis, he relied heavily on methods of delegated control and communications problems constrained his ability to effectively exercise direct control. In certain operations there was tight coupling between the forces of the two sides. Both sides used their forces as a political instrument under conditions of acute crisis. Interactions occurred at the tactical level that were not directly controlled by American leaders. The President did not directly control any of the ASW operations or the boarding of the Marucla (other than to order it to occur). Navy

forces encountered Cuban air and naval forces on several occasions without the President or McNamara controlling the interactions. The President's attention was focused on a very small portion of the overall operations that were in progress. The stratified interaction model of international crises, in which interactions evolve in semi-independent sequences at the political, strategic and tactical levels, offers a good description of Soviet-American interactions in the Cuban Missile Crisis.

In the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, the United States relied on methods of delegated control, U.S. and Soviet naval forces in the Mediterranean were tightly coupled, and both sides used their forces as a political instrument under conditions of conditions of acute crisis. Interactions occurred at the tactical level that were not directly controlled by American leaders. For example, President Johnson had no control over whether or not the Soviet harassment of America on June 8 would produce a clash between the U.S. and Soviet navies. The stratified interaction model of international crises, in which interactions evolve in separate, semi-independent sequences at the political, strategic, and tactical levels, offers a good description of Soviet-American interactions in the 1967 Arab-Israeli War.

In the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, the United States relied on methods of delegated control, U.S. and Soviet naval

forces in the Mediterranean were tightly coupled, and both sides used their forces as political instruments under conditions of acute crisis. Significant and dangerous interactions occurred at the tactical level that were not directly controlled by American leaders. For example, President Nixon had no direct control over Sixth Fleet counter-targeting of Soviet ships carrying anti-ship cruise missiles, and was probably unaware that this activity had inadvertently been set in motion by White House orders making the fleet an easy target for the Soviet Navy.

The fourth question is did crisis interactions at the tactical level become decoupled from the strategy being pursued by national leaders? There are seven potential causes of decoupling: communications and information flow problems, impairment of political-level decisionmaking, a fast-paced tactical environment, ambiguous or ambivalent orders, tactically inappropriate orders, inappropriate guidance in mechanisms of indirect control, and deliberate unauthorized actions by military commanders. To establish that stratified interactions became decoupled in a crisis requires two findings: first, that one of the seven factors just mentioned was present, and, second, that operational decisions made by tactical-level decisionmakers differed from the decisions that political-level decisionmakers would have made in order to coordinate those actions with their political-diplomatic strategy for resolving the crisis.

Various potential causes of decoupling were present in 1 eight of the cases examined in this study. The most common cause of decoupling was communications problems or improperly functioning communications that are simply too slow to permit direct control of military operations. This was a factor in all eight of the cases. The second most common cause of decoupling was a fast-paced tactical environment. This was a factor in the 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis, the 1964 Tonkin Gulf Incidents, the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, the 1967 Liberty incident, and the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. Ambiguous orders were a factor in the 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis and tactically inappropriate orders were a factor in the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. Impairment of political-level decisionmaking was a factor in the 1973 Arab-Israeli War.

Three patterns of tactical-level interactions were seen in the eight cases. The most common pattern was parallel stratified interactions: tactical-level interactions that were not directly controlled by political-level leaders, but which generally supported their political objectives and crisis management strategy. Parallel stratified interactions were seen in the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, the 1967 Liberty incident, the 1968 ueblo incident, and the 1987 Stark incident.

The second pattern was momentary decoupling: tactical-level interaction that was not controlled by political-level leaders and did not support their political and crisis

agement objectives, followed by immediate disengagement (that is, without tactical-level escalation and often without shots being fired). The pattern between instances of momentary decoupling is parallel stratified interactions. Momentary decoupling was seen in the 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis, and possibly in the 1973 Arab-Israeli War.

The third pattern was decoupling followed by disengagement. In this pattern, a tactical-level incident occurs that is not directly controlled by political-level leaders and does not support their objectives for the operation in progress. The incident leads to an armed clash, but then is halted by the on-scene commanders without intervention by political-level authorities. Decoupling followed by disengagement occurred in the 1964 Tonkin Gulf Incidents.

The fifth question is did national leaders and on-scene commanders hold different perceptions of the vulnerability of on-scene forces to preemption and the need to strike first in the event of an armed clash? This question addresses the second corollary to the theory of stratified interaction, that the security dilemma can become stratified in crises. The implication of this is that decision-makers at the political and tactical levels can hold different perceptions of the offense-defense balance, vulnerability to preemption, and the need to strike first.

Threat perceptions were stratified in the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis and the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. Stratified

Threat perceptions did not cause crisis management problems in the Cuban Missile Crisis, but did cause problems in the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. The crisis security dilemma was stratified in the in the 1973 Arab-Israeli War: at the political level of interaction there was little incentive for either side to launch a preemptive first strike, but at the tactical level naval forces had strong incentives to strike first and were actively targeting each other. A number of incidents could have triggered an inadvertent naval battle in the Mediterranean that U.S. and Soviet leaders might not have been able to control until the initial engagements were over.

The sixth question is, when tactical-level interactions become decoupled, what factors inhibit escalation dynamics from occurring at the tactical level and being transmitted upward to the strategic and political levels of interaction? This question addresses the third corollary to the theory of stratified interaction, that escalation dynamics can be stratified in a crisis. Although escalation dynamics cannot be addressed directly--none of the cases escalated to war--research was done to identify escalation-inhibiting factors and the conditions that can cause those factors to break down.

Six internal and two external escalation-inhibiting factors were identified in the case studies. The internal factors function within the government and military chain of

command of one nation. The internal factors are military prudence (avoiding threat of surprise attack and combat under unfavorable circumstances), caution and restraint on the part of on-scene commanders, compliance by on-scene commanders with the guidance contained in mechanisms of direct control, national leaders structuring the tactical environment to dampen military interactions, accurate and timely tactical intelligence on friendly and potentially hostile forces, and national leaders and the military chain of command double-checking the accuracy of initial reports of military incidents. These factors tend to moderate the intensity of tactical-level interactions, prevent armed clashes from occurring, and produce disengagement rather than escalation when clashes do occur.

External escalation-inhibiting factors function between the two sides in a crisis. There are two external factors: tacit rules of crisis behavior observed by the two sides and communications between the two sides in the crisis. Tacit rules of crisis behavior are best developed between the United States and the Soviet Union, but also contributed to avoiding escalation in the 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis. The Soviet-American tacit rules are not without flaws. Soviet naval forces have engaged in exceedingly dangerous behavior--dangerous maneuvering at close quarters and simulated attacks on U.S. naval forces--during international crises. The 1972 Soviet-American

Accidents at Sea Agreement has only been partially successful in moderating such Soviet behavior. The most dangerous situation arises in confrontations with nations that the United States does not share tacit rules of crisis behavior, like Libya, Iran, and North Korea.

The findings of the eight case studies indicate that, contrary to what the escalation dynamics theory predicts, there is a tendency for naval tactical-level interaction to lose momentum and for the forces involved to disengage after an initial incident or armed clash. Pauses tend to occur naturally in naval operations due to the need to regroup and prepare for further action. Naval commanders are reluctant to initiate or sustain combat operations under circumstances they cannot predict or control due to the risk of defeat in battle. Naval commanders quickly reach the limits of their authority and need permission from higher authority to initiate further combat operations. If they do not have such permission, or anticipate that they will not be able to get it, naval commanders normally will try to break off combat action as soon as it is safe to do so--rather than risk being left in an untenable tactical position. The operational requirements of crisis management, if being followed, tend to accentuate the tendency toward disengagement by denying on-scene commanders tactical options (such as surprise attack and concentration of superior force) that can be crucial for successful combat operations.

The case studies identified three conditions that can use the escalation-inhibiting factors to break down, allowing a crisis to escalate uncontrollably to war. The first condition is for national leaders and military commanders to be predisposed to take action against the adversary due to a long-term failure of diplomacy to resolve tensions, military and diplomatic frustration with the adversary. Sustained hostility, harassment, or a history of aggression by the adversary can generate a perception that the adversary's leaders are unreasonable, irresponsible, or not interested in serious negotiations, reducing the incentive to pursue diplomatic initiatives toward the adversary. These expectations could be entirely correct, but could also result from insufficient or ambiguous intelligence on the adversary's objectives and intentions.

The second condition is the immediate prior occurrence of one or more hostile acts against United States forces, citizens, or vital interests. Prior attacks can create an expectation that further attacks will occur or that the adversary is likely to escalate the level of violence. As with long-term frustrations, short-term expectations of further violence could be entirely correct, but could also result from insufficient or ambiguous intelligence on the adversary's objectives and intentions. The short-term effects of immediate prior hostile acts can reinforce the effects of long-term frustration with the adversary,

appearing to confirm negative assessments of his intentions. Expectation of further attacks tends to predispose national leaders and military commanders toward broader military options toward the adversary.

The third condition that can erode the escalation-inhibiting factors is for all levels in the chain of command, from the President to the on-scene commander, to hold similar views toward the adversary and the need for immediate retaliation for provocations. A strong unity of views can suppress the skepticism that normally greets ambiguous initial reports on a military incident, or lead to a hasty assessment of the incident in the rush to launch retaliatory attacks.

The seventh question is did actions taken with military forces send inadvertent signals to either adversaries or friends, and did inadvertent military incidents occur that affected efforts to manage the crisis? This question addresses crisis management problems that arise when military forces are employed in crises: the misperception dilemma and inadvertent military incidents.

Inadvertent political signals may have been a factor in some of the crises, but inadvertent military incidents were not serious problems in the eight cases examined in this study. Misperceptions of U.S. intentions or the purposes of U.S. naval operations may have been a factor in the 1964 Tonkin Gulf Incidents, the 1967 Arab-Israeli War,

d the 1968 Pueblo incident. U.S. naval operations in response to the four peacetime attacks on U.S. Navy ships appear not to have generated misperceptions.

The eighth question is did any of the three tensions between political and military considerations arise during the crisis? There are three tensions between political and military considerations that can arise when military forces are used as a political instrument in crises: tension between political considerations and the needs of diplomatic bargaining, on the one hand, and military considerations and the needs of military operations, on the other; tension between the need for top-level control of military options in a crisis, and the need for tactical flexibility and instantaneous decision-making at the scene of the crisis; and tension between performance of crisis political missions and readiness to perform wartime combat missions.

Tension between political and military considerations were serious in the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis and the 1973 Arab-Israeli War; moderate in the 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis and the 1967 Arab-Israeli War; and minor in the 1964 Tonkin Gulf Incidents, the 1967 Liberty incident, and the 1968 Pueblo incident, and the 1987 Stark incident.

Level of control tensions were serious in the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis and the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, moderate in the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, and minor in the 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis, and the four cases of peacetime attacks on

Navy ships. Level of control tensions appear to be directly proportional to the scale and duration of the crisis military operations being conducted, and more intense when national leaders perceive a danger of the crisis escalating to war (which prompts them to exercise close control over military operations).

Tensions between performance of crisis missions and readiness to perform wartime missions were serious in the 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis and the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis; moderate in the 1968 Pueblo incident and the 1973 Arab-Israeli War; and minor in the 1964 Tonkin gulf Incidents, the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, 1967 Liberty incident, and the 1987 Stark incident. Tensions between performance of crisis missions and readiness to perform wartime missions are directly proportional to the scale and duration of the crisis operations being conducted, and can be exacerbated by the geographic location of the crisis (a crisis located far from expected wartime battlegrounds generates more serious tension).

Contingent Generalizations

The dependent variable in the theory of stratified interaction is the outcome of crisis military interaction; specifically, the degree to which and the manner in which tactical-level military interactions cause escalation of a crisis. Variance in the dependent variable is described in

terms of six patterns of crisis military interaction: unified interaction, parallel stratified interaction, momentary decoupling, decoupled interactions followed by disengagement, inadvertent tactical-level escalation, and inadvertent strategic-level escalation. The first two patterns--unified interaction and parallel stratified interaction--can have three escalation outcomes: no escalation, inadvertent controlled escalation, or deliberate escalation. Inadvertent controlled escalation and deliberate escalation can halt short of war or continue on to war. In the third and fourth patterns--momentary decoupling of interactions and decoupled interactions followed by disengagement--tactical-level interaction halts without significant escalation. The fifth pattern--inadvertent tactical level escalation--can have three outcomes: disengagement short of war, inadvertent strategic-level escalation, or deliberate escalation to war. The sixth pattern--inadvertent strategic-level escalation--can have three outcomes: disengagement short of war, inadvertent escalation to war, or deliberate escalation to war.

These six patterns constitute a typology of crisis military interaction and appear to cover the full range of interactions that could occur in a crisis. However, because they were identified through an analytical-inductive process, rather than deductively, additional patterns could be identified through further empirical research.

More than one of the patterns of crisis military interaction can occur in a crisis. The first four patterns--unified interaction, parallel stratified interaction, momentary decoupling of interaction, decoupled interactions followed by disengagement, and inadvertent tactical-level escalation--can occur in various sequences in a crisis.

Contingent generalizations were formulated for the six patterns of crisis military interaction, offering a distinct causal pattern for each type of interaction. Each of the causal patterns is produced by specific variations in seven independent variables that were identified in the case studies as significant in determining the outcome of crisis military interaction. The seven independent variables that determine the nature of crisis military interaction and the likelihood of escalation are the degree of political-level control over tactical-level military interaction, the scale of military operations, the intensity of tactical-level military interactions, the perceived threat of attack at the tactical level, the relationship between political-level and tactical-level threat perceptions, the strength of escalation-inhibiting factors, and the impact of inadvertent military incidents. The seven independent variables determine the degree to which crisis interactions to become stratified, whether or not stratified interactions become decoupled, and the degree to which decoupled interactions result in escalation of a crisis.

The first pattern of crisis military interaction is unified interaction. In this pattern, political-level leaders exercise direct control over tactical-level military operations. Unified interaction is the optimum pattern of crisis military interaction for crisis management: the pattern achieved when national leaders succeed in meeting the crisis management requirement that they maintain close control over military operations. Unified interactions can have three escalation out-comes: no escalation, inadvertent controlled escalation, or deliberate escalation.

The causal pattern for unified interaction is direct political-level control of tactical-level military interaction, local scale of military operations, routine to heightened intensity of tactical-level military interaction, any tactical-level threat perceptions (not a significant variable in this pattern), a convergent relationship between political-level and tactical-level threat perceptions, strong factors inhibiting escalation, and inadvertent military incidents that have minor impact on crisis military interaction. There were no examples of the unified interaction pattern in the case studies. The fact that the pattern was not actually observed suggests that its occurrence is improbable, particularly in a military establishment as large and complex as that of the United States.

The second pattern of crisis military interaction is parallel stratified interaction. In this pattern national

leaders retain control over the escalation and de-escalation of conflict. The separate interaction sequences at the political and tactical levels evolve in parallel, in the sense of reflecting the same overall strategy toward the adversary. National leaders do not control every operational decision made at the tactical level, but the decisions made by on-scene commanders support the crisis management strategy of national leaders. Parallel stratified interaction is the second best pattern of military interaction from a crisis management perspective (second only to unified interaction). Parallel stratified interactions can have three escalation outcomes: no escalation, inadvertent controlled escalation, or deliberate escalation.

The causal pattern for parallel stratified interaction is indirect political-level control of tactical-level military interaction, local to theater scale of military operations, routine to heightened intensity of tactical-level military interaction, any tactical-level threat perceptions (not a significant variable in this pattern), a convergent relationship between political-level and tactical-level threat perceptions, strong factors inhibiting escalation, and inadvertent military incidents that have minor impact on crisis military interaction. The most important independent variables in the parallel stratified interaction pattern are indirect political-level control of tactical-level military operations and convergent threat perceptions.

The third pattern of crisis military interaction is momentary decoupling of interaction. In this pattern national leaders temporarily lose control of military interactions, but are able to quickly re-establish control. However, there is a brief period in which national leaders are not controlling tactical-level military interactions. During that period, the actions taken by the on-scene commander do not support the crisis management efforts being pursued by national leaders. Those actions could well be authorized under guidance contained in the mechanisms of indirect control, but nevertheless complicate political and diplomatic efforts to resolve the crisis. This does not mean that the on-scene commander was "wrong" to take the actions. For example, he may have been compelled to use force in self-defense as authorized in his rules of engagement. The use of force could well have been necessary to avert an attack, appropriate to the tactical circumstances, and fully justified under international law, but still have interfered with crisis management efforts. The key point is that tactical-level interactions not controlled by national leaders occur, and that those actions complicate or interfere with political-level crisis management efforts. Instances of momentary decoupling were observed in the 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis, the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, and the 1973 Arab-Israeli War.

In the causal pattern for momentary decoupling, two of the independent variables cause decoupling to occur, while the other five cause the decoupling to be momentary. The independent variables that cause decoupling to occur are loss of political-level control over tactical-level military operations and inadvertent incidents with a significant impact on crisis military interaction. The important feature is that whatever causes decoupling is not permanent; it does not prevent national leaders from quickly re-establishing control. The independent variables that cause the decoupling to be momentary are local to theater scale of military operations, routine to heightened intensity of tactical-level military operations, unlikely to possible tactical-level threat perceptions, a convergent to similar relationship between political-level and tactical-level threat perceptions, and strong escalation-inhibiting factors. Momentary decoupling is the most common of the four crisis military interaction patterns that are marked by decoupling of tactical-level military interaction from political-level objectives.

The fourth pattern of crisis military interaction is decoupled interactions followed by disengagement. This pattern begins with decoupling of tactical-level interaction from political-level control. National leaders are not able to immediately re-establish control due to communications problems, decisionmaking overload, or a fast-paced tactical

environment. But the initial tactical-level engagement between the two sides does not gain momentum and escalate, it loses momentum and the forces disengage. By the time national leaders re-establish control, the shooting has stopped. Tactical-level disengagement can be a requirement for political-level control to be re-established, particularly in a fast-paced tactical environment.

In the causal pattern for decoupling followed by disengagement, four of the independent variables cause decoupling and the initial engagement to occur, one of the independent variables causes disengagement to occur without tactical-level escalation, and two of the independent variables are not significant causes of the pattern. The independent variables that cause decoupling and the initial engagement to occur are loss of political-level control over tactical-level military operations, intense tactical-level military operations, tactical-level threat perceptions that attack is imminent, and inadvertent incidents with a significant impact on crisis military interaction. The independent variable that causes decoupled tactical-level interactions to disengage rather than escalate is strong escalation-inhibiting factors. The independent variables that have no significant role in causing the pattern to occur are the scale of military operations and the relationship between political-level and tactical-level threat perceptions. The decoupling followed by disengagement

attern occurs less often than the momentary decoupling pattern, but more often than the two decoupling patterns involving escalation.

The fifth pattern of crisis military interaction is inadvertent tactical-level escalation. This pattern begins with decoupling of tactical-level interaction from political-level crisis management objectives. National leaders are not able to immediately re-establish control due to communications problems, decisionmaking overload, or a fast-paced tactical environment. The initial tactical-level engagement gains momentum and escalates, increasing in violence and involving an increasing amount of each side's forces. There were no examples of this crisis military interaction pattern in the case studies.

The inadvertent tactical-level escalation pattern can have three outcomes: disengagement short of war, inadvertent strategic-level escalation, or deliberate escalation by national leaders. The escalation sequence stops under one of three circumstances: one side disengages after suffering catastrophic losses, both sides disengage from an inconclusive engagement due to exhaustion of ordnance and attrition of forces, or national leaders re-establish control and order disengagement. The third scenario--national leaders halting tactical-level escalation after losing control--is unlikely due to the difficulty of maintaining direct control of forces once they are engaged in battle.

In the causal pattern for inadvertent tactical-level escalation, four of the independent variables cause decoupling and the initial engagement to occur, two of the independent variables cause tactical-level escalation to occur, and two of the independent variables allow tactical-level escalation to occur but prevent it from causing inadvertent strategic-level escalation or deliberate political-level escalation. The independent variables that cause decoupling and the initial engagement to occur are loss of political-level control over tactical-level military operations, intense tactical-level military operations, tactical-level threat perceptions that attack is imminent, and inadvertent incidents with a significant impact on crisis military interaction. The independent variables that cause decoupled tactical-level interactions to escalate are intense tactical-level military interaction, and a tactical-level threat perception that attack is imminent. The independent variables that allow tactical-level escalation but prevent inadvertent strategic-level escalation or deliberate political-level escalation are a divergent relationship between political-level and tactical-level threat perceptions and weak escalation-inhibiting factors.

The sixth pattern of crisis military interaction is inadvertent strategic-level escalation. This pattern can arise via either of two paths: escalation at the strategic level arising from tactical-level escalation, or initiation

escalation at the strategic level without prior tactical-level escalation. Inadvertent strategic-level escalation arising from tactical-level escalation was the path examined in this study, which focused on tactical-level military interaction. Inadvertent strategic-level escalation without prior tactical-level escalation could arise from inadvertent military incidents (unanticipated authorized actions, military accidents, and unauthorized deliberate actions) involving strategic-level forces. Many of the factors affecting tactical-level interaction probably also affect strategic-level interaction, but such strategic level factors were not addressed in this study. There were no examples of this crisis military inter-action pattern in the case studies.

Inadvertent strategic-level escalation arising from tactical-level escalation begins with tactical-level interactions decoupling from political-level control. National leaders are unable to immediately re-establish control over tactical-level interaction due to communications problems, decisionmaking overload, or a fast-paced tactical environment. The initial tactical-level engagement gains momentum and escalates, increasing in violence and involving an increasing amount of each side's forces. The tactical-level escalation spiral generates escalatory pressures at the strategic level, reinforcing perceptions that the adversary is preparing for war and is not interested in a

diplomatic solution to the crisis. The scope of fighting rapidly grows to the theater level and spreads to other theaters, possibly becoming global in scope. The spread of the escalatory spiral to the strategic level of interaction is through deliberate decisions made by strategic-level military commanders, but is considered to be inadvertent because it was not directly ordered by national leaders and did not support their efforts to manage the crisis. The inadvertent strategic-level escalation pattern of crisis military interaction can have three outcomes: inadvertent escalation to war, deliberate escalation to war, or disengagement short of war.

In the causal pattern for inadvertent strategic-level escalation, five of the independent variables cause decoupling and the initial engagement to occur, while five of the independent variables cause tactical-level escalation to result in inadvertent strategic-level escalation. The independent variables that cause decoupling and the initial engagement are loss of political-level control over tactical-level military operations, global-scale military operations, intense tactical-level military interaction, tactical-level threat perceptions that attack is imminent, and inadvertent incidents with a significant impact on tactical-level military interaction. The independent variables that cause tactical-level escalation to result in inadvertent strategic-level escalation are loss of political-level control over

strategic-level military operations, global-scale military operations, a convergent relationship between strategic-level and tactical-level threat perceptions (and, in the case of deliberate escalation to war, convergent political-level and strategic-level threat perceptions), a lack of escalation-inhibiting factors, and inadvertent incidents with a significant impact on strategic-level military interaction. The inadvertent strategic-level escalation pattern appears to be the crisis interaction pattern least likely to occur.

On the basis of the eight historical cases examined in this study, a ranking of the six patterns of crisis interaction--from most to least likely to occur when U.S. naval forces are employed in a crisis--would be as follows: parallel stratified interaction, momentary decoupling, decoupled interactions followed by disengagement, inadvertent tactical-level interaction, inadvertent strategic-level interaction, and unified interaction. The independent variables that most affect this ranking are political-level control of tactical-level interaction and the strength of the escalation-inhibiting factors. Direct political-level control of tactical-level military operations is difficult for U.S. leaders due to the size and complexity of the U.S. armed forces, making the unified interaction pattern rare and providing ample opportunities for stratified crisis interactions to become decoupled. The escalation-inhibiting

actors are generally quite strong, preventing escalation even when decoupling occurs--making momentary decoupling and recoupling followed by disengagement much more common than inadvertent tactical-level escalation or inadvertent strategic-level escalation.

Generality of Findings

The generality of this study--that is, the applicability of the theory and findings to international crises other than cases that were studied--must be addressed because the cases studies all concerned crisis naval operations and peacetime attacks on Navy ships. As was explained in the introduction, there were four reasons for this focus. First, the Navy is the branch of the U.S. armed forces called upon most often to respond to crises. Second, American leaders and many analysts perceive naval forces as having important advantages over other types of forces for crisis response. Third, in spite of the frequency of use and perceived advantages of naval forces, the role of naval forces as a political instrument is not well understood. Fourth, in some respects naval forces have a greater escalatory potential than do other types of military force. These reasons for focusing on naval forces provide a starting point for assessing the generality of the findings.

The theory and contingent generalizations are applicable to a broad range of crisis naval operations. The

ases that were studied ranged from large-scale (the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis and the 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis), to moderate in scale (the 1967 and 1973 Middle East Wars), to relatively small in scale (the 1964 Tonkin Gulf Incidents, 1968 Pueblo Incident, and 1987 Stark Incident). Because naval forces are the type of force most commonly used by the United States in crises, the theory is thus directly applicable to most of the crises in which the United States has been involved over the past forty years.

The theory and contingent generalizations are also applicable to most other U.S. crisis operations with conventional forces, including amphibious operations, ground force operations, shore-based air operations, and operations with combination of forces. The theory is applicable to other U.S. forces because central features of the U.S. command and control system--such as delegation of control and the mechanisms of indirect control (described in Chapter IV)--affect tactical-level interaction involving all types of U.S. forces. Additionally, the escalation-inhibiting factors and the conditions that can erode those factors are not unique to naval forces--they would affect the likelihood of escalation regardless of the type of force being employed in crisis. All forms of tactical-level military interaction can thus be accommodated by the theory.

The key to applying the theory to military interactions other than those involving naval forces is to take

nto account the specific command and control procedures used by other U.S. forces, and the differing warfare environments of other types of forces. For example, the likelihood of inadvertent incidents or initiation of uncontrollable tactical level escalation would appear to be less with ground forces than with naval forces: national boundaries normally separate the ground forces of the two sides, but on the high seas opposing naval forces are free to intermingle at close quarters. The technology of naval warfare has long placed a premium on striking first in battle (particularly in the age of anti-ship cruise missiles), but the offensive has enjoyed--or has been perceived as enjoying--a similar advantage in land warfare at various times. Naval battles tend to be intense but brief--ordnance is rapidly exhausted and losses of ships and planes mount quickly, forcing disengagement. On the other hand, once fighting among ground forces has started, it can be more difficult for national leaders to control and less likely to die out without escalation after the initial engagement. In short, relative to naval forces, ground forces are less likely to become engaged in fighting, but are more difficult to disengage after fighting starts. These differences are readily accommodated in the theory, which explicitly recognizes that they exist.

One area to which this study cannot be applied is the employment of strategic nuclear forces as a political

instrument in crises. Strategic nuclear forces are under command and control procedures significantly more centralized than those of general purpose forces. While there is, of necessity, significant delegation of authority concerning the details of strategic force operations, decisionmaking authority for employment of nuclear weapons is highly centralized--resting with National Command Authorities. The concepts that were developed in this study could be used to assess strategic level interaction in crises--interaction that can become a significant factor when forces are alerted in order to send political signals--but the contingent generalizations must be modified to account for the unique features of strategic nuclear command and control.

The theory can be applied to crises involving countries other than the United States, but again care must be taken to account for the different command and control methods and procedures used by other countries, the differing strategic environments they face, and the differing warfare environments their forces face. The forces of some countries, such as the Israeli and West German armies, emphasize freedom of action for and initiative on the part of lower-level commanders. In other countries, notably the Soviet Union, the emphasis is on centralized control of military operations. Differences in command and control philosophies, operational styles, and professional traditions can produce significant differences in the crisis

management and crisis stability problems facing different nations.

Implications for Crisis Management

The theory of stratified interaction and the findings of this study have several implications for crisis management. The most important is that effectively exercising close control of all crisis military operations can be exceedingly difficult in practice. This is an inherent problem that improved communication technology has affected only marginally. Several variables affect the ability of top-level political authorities to exercise direct, real-time control of military operations, including the scale of the operations, the nature of the missions, the intensity of interaction with the other side's forces, the pace at which the tactical situation evolves, and the speed and reliability of communications links.

As the scale of military operations and the intensity of interactions with the other side increase, there is a tendency for top-level officials to become overloaded and focus their attention on selected, narrow aspects of crisis operations. But tactical-level-military interactions are often too fast-paced for top-level officials to exercise direct control over even small-scale local operations. National leaders therefore generally delegate significant discretionary decisionmaking authority to military

Commanders and rely heavily on mechanisms of indirect control to guide tactical-level decisionmaking. Significant reliance is placed on rules of engagement and the distinction between use of force in self-defense (which on-scene commanders can order) and retaliation (which only the president can order). The crisis management requirement that top-level political authorities maintain close control of the details of military operations thus can be difficult to meet in practice, and attempts to exercise such control can in fact be counterproductive--impeding effective crisis management.

Not only can national leaders be overly optimistic about their ability to closely control crisis military operations, they can also be overly optimistic about their ability to use military force--or the threat of military force--as a precision instrument for political signaling. In some circumstances, particularly when the scope and intensity of military operations are relatively small, national leaders can be highly discriminating in the manipulation of forces for signaling. But as the scope and intensity of operations increase, military forces become an increasingly unwieldy political instrument. In addition to the control problems mentioned above, this is caused by the scale, speed and complexity of modern combat.

If military operations are to be conducted effectively, whether their purpose is to send a political signal

r to achieve a military objective, they must be conducted in accordance with the operational principles on which their effectiveness depends. Those principles often have a great deal of flexibility, but attempting to bend them excessively in an effort at sophisticated political signaling can create serious problems for tactical-level military commanders--an example of the tension between political and military considerations. Such problems arose during the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, when the Sixth Fleet placed in a situation of grave vulnerability to preemption by Soviet naval forces in the Mediterranean--a situation created by White House efforts to use the fleet for political signalling. Efforts by U.S. on-scene commanders to cope with their vulnerability created a situation in which the naval forces of the two sides were constantly targeting each other at point blank range, and were at hair-trigger readiness to launch preemptive strikes against each other.

National leaders must expect that some things will go wrong when they employ military forces in crises. Inadvertent military incidents of various types occur in virtually all crisis military operations. The friction Clausewitz observed in war begins as soon as military forces are set in motion, and long before the first shot is fired. Although inadvertent military incidents are unavoidable, they generally are not particularly dangerous. The tendency is for inadvertent incidents to provoke highly cautious

actions on the part of on-scene commanders. At least in
aval operations, when engagements occur, they tend to end
quickly rather than escalate. In fact, because on-scene
commanders are almost always better informed on the local
tactical situation, they are less likely to overreact or
make worse case assumptions than are top-level authorities.
There is normally a requirement that on-scene commanders
consult with higher authority after taking initial defensive
action, and a tendency for them to do so even when it is not
required. The military chain of command tends to double-
check the accuracy initial reports before ordering further
military operations. Thus, the most important action that
national leaders can take when an inadvertent military
incident occurs is not to seize direct control of tactical
decisions, but rather to focus on communicating with the
other side in order to avoid misperceptions of the incident.

A further implication of the findings of this study
on crisis management, one certainly not anticipated when
the study was launched, is that the greatest danger of a
crisis escalating to war may well arise from decisionmaking
at the political level of interaction, rather than from
decisionmaking at the tactical level of interaction.
Parallel stratified interaction--tactical-level interaction
that generally supports political objectives even though not
directly controlled by national leaders--was found to be the
most common pattern of crisis military interaction. When

tactical-level interactions become decoupled from political-level objectives, the most common patterns are momentary coupling and decoupling followed by disengagement, rather than escalation. Tactical-level military engagements tend to lose momentum as on-scene commanders reach the limit of their authority and seek guidance from higher authority. The implication of these findings is that tactical-level military interaction normally will not escalate to war without a deliberate decision by national leaders to initiate wartime operations. The deliberate decision could well be based on misperceptions of the adversary's intentions--misperceptions that may have been heavily influenced by inadvertent tactical-level escalation (the inadvertent controlled escalation path to war)--but the decision for war is still a deliberate decision made by national leaders. The strategic, political, psychological, and cognitive factors that can cause national leaders to abandon diplomatic efforts and resort to war--whether reluctantly or eagerly--thus are probably the most important variables in crisis and escalation theory.

Further Research

The previous discussion of the generality of the theory of stratified interaction suggested that additional research would allow refinement of the theory to apply to a broader range of crisis military interactions. Additional

case studies of United States crisis naval operations would be useful for refining the theory in a broader range of crisis situations. Particularly valuable would be case studies on United States naval operations in the 1954 Quemoy-Matsu Crisis, 1956 Suez Crisis, 1970 Jordanian Crisis, 1971 Indo-Pakistani War, 1981 and 1986 Gulf of Sidra operations, and 1984-1988 Persian Gulf operations. These cases cover a broader range of crisis naval operations, including operations in a prolonged crisis (1984-1988 Persian Gulf operations), evacuation of civilians and allied forces (1954 Quemoy-Matsu Crisis and 1956 Suez Crisis), and incidents in which the United States was exercising the initiative, rather than reacting to events (1981 and 1986 Gulf of Sidra operations).

The theory would also benefit from, and provide useful analytical tools for, case studies of U.S. amphibious operations, such as the 1958 Lebanon Crisis, 1965 intervention in the Dominican Republic, and 1983 invasion of Grenada. Amphibious operations entail particularly complex command and control procedures, and involve a wide range of forces. Thus, there is potential for a much wider range of interaction with the forces of the other side. Case studies of amphibious operations allow the command procedures and warfare environments of diverse forces to be contrasted in the context of a single intervention. Additionally, case studies of these three operations would address the

particular problems of limiting and controlling the use of force by ground forces.

Additional areas for further research can also be identified. The command and control procedures and crisis operations of the other United States armed forces need to be investigated in the manner that the United States Navy was investigated in this study. There are differences among the services in the details of their command philosophies and the operational environments they face in crises. Certain types of military operations, such as covert missions by special forces, can raise particularly difficult command and control problems.

Strategic level interaction needs to be examined in the same manner that tactical level interaction was examined in this study. Particularly important would be case studies (and perhaps sophisticated simulations) of the interaction between United States and Soviet strategic nuclear forces when either or both sides begin using them to send political signals in crises. Although strategic nuclear command and control is highly centralized, there could be opportunities for decoupling and escalatory sequences to occur.

Crisis military interaction involving the forces of other countries needs to be examined in the same manner that interactions involving United States forces were examined in this study. Different countries can have different command and control philosophies, and face different strategic and

tactical environments in crises. Additional research in these areas would broaden the applicability of the theory of stratified interaction.

Closing Remarks

In summary, the theory of stratified interaction provides a policy-relevant explanatory theory of crisis military interaction. The contingent generalizations derived from the theory provide differentiated explanations for a variety of crisis military interactions, thus allowing policymakers to diagnose specific situations in which crisis management and crisis stability problems can arise. The theory thus advances the study of crisis management beyond identification of crisis management requirements to identify the manner in which those requirements apply in specific crisis situations. The method of structured focused comparison, which provides an inductive approach to theory formulation based on historical case studies, is a valuable methodology. It is particularly appropriate for the formulation of a differentiated theory cast in the form of contingent generalizations. Further studies using this method to examine crisis military operations would broaden and refine the theory of stratified interaction.

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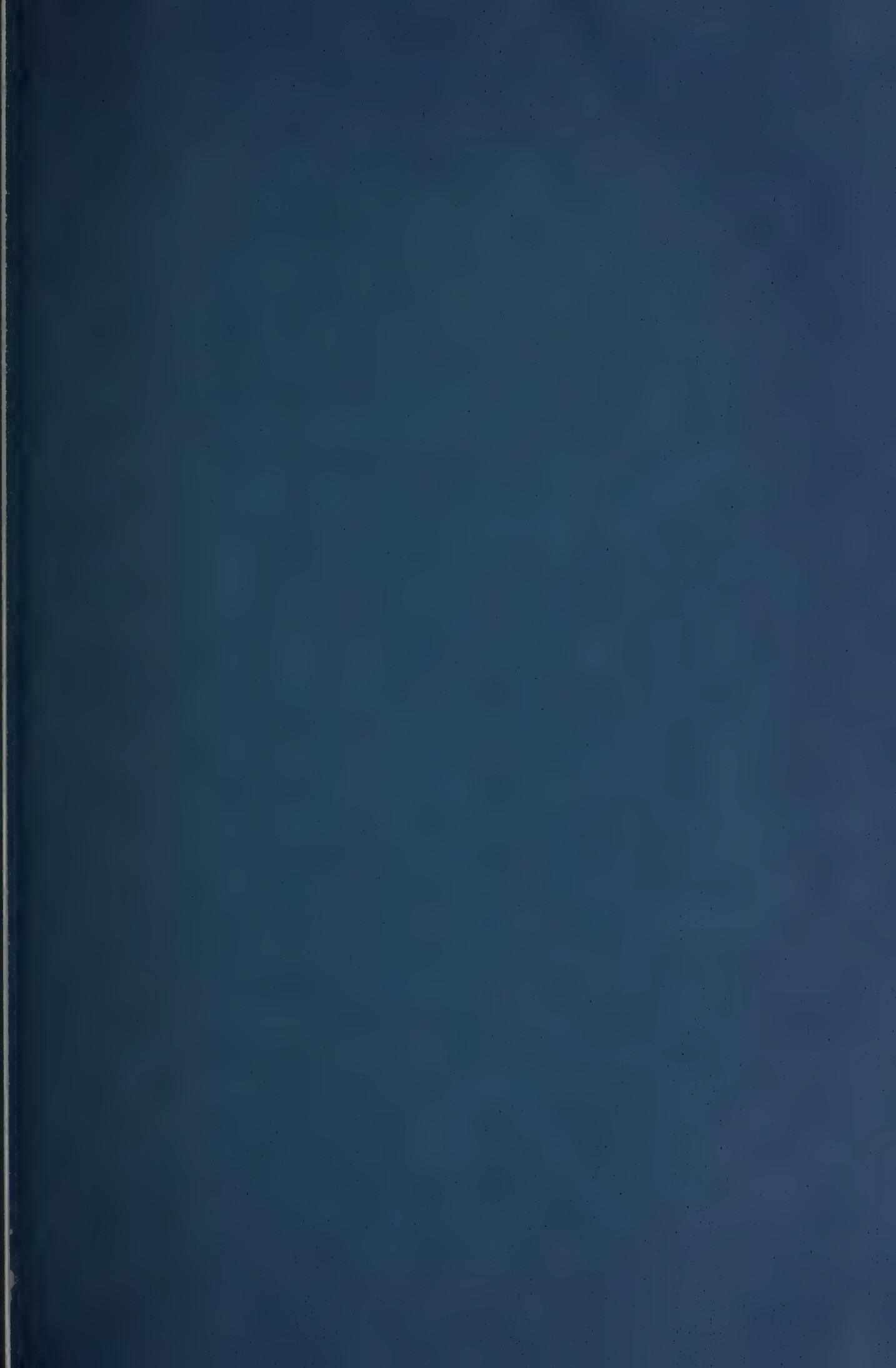
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