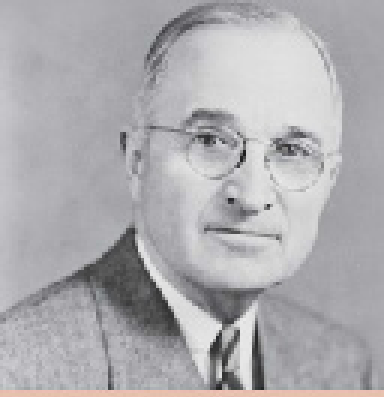

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Responses to International Challenges

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Softcover reprint of the hardcover 1st edition 2014 978-1-137-29485-2

First published in 2014 by PALGRAVE MACMILLAN® in the United States—a division of St. Martin's Press LLC, 175 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10010.

Where this book is distributed in the UK, Europe and the rest of the world, this is by Palgrave Macmillan, a division of Macmillan Publishers Limited, registered in England, company number 785998, of Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 6XS.

Palgrave Macmillan is the global academic imprint of the above companies and has companies and representatives throughout the world.

ISBN 978-1-349-45163-0 ISBN 978-1-137-29486-9 (eBook)
DOI 10.1057/9781137294869

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Hybel, Alex Roberto.
US foreign policy decision-making from Truman to Kennedy : responses to international challenges / Alex Roberto Hybel.
pages cm
Includes bibliographical references and index.

1. United States—Foreign relations—1945–1953—Case studies. 2. United States—Foreign relations—1953–1961—Case studies. 3. United States—Foreign relations—1961–1963—Case studies. 4. Presidents—United States—Decision making—Case studies. 5. Truman, Harry S., 1884–1972. 6. Eisenhower, Dwight D. (Dwight David), 1890–1969. 7. Kennedy, John F. (John Fitzgerald), 1917–1963. I. Title.

E744.H94 2014
327.73009'04—dc23

2013036308

A catalogue record of the book is available from the British Library.

Design by Amnet

First Edition: March 2014

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

To
Jan, Sabrina, and Gabriela

Contents

Preface

This book marks the convergence of two factors—one experiential, one intellectual.

During the second half of 1969 and throughout much of 1970, I was stationed in Pleiku, South Vietnam, where I served in the US Army as an information specialist. My task during that period was to cover the military activities of the 7th Squadron, 17th Cavalry Regiment, throughout the Central Highlands. Because of my responsibilities, I was exposed daily to a wide range of military decisions made by low- to mid-level officers, ranging from the first lieutenant to the lieutenant colonel. Their decisions were often based on information gathered by the squadron's intelligence section (S2). From the first S2 meeting that I was authorized to attend, about a month after I had arrived at my base camp, I became fascinated with the way military officers derived conclusions and planned operations. Time and again, before I accompanied one of the squadron's troops to the field, I would ask a lieutenant, a captain, a major, or a lieutenant colonel to tell me what it was about the information he had been given that led him to the conclusions he had inferred. I was frequently struck by the absence of a clear connection between the available intelligence and the interpretations that the officers derived from it. This fascination never left me.

When I started graduate school at Stanford, I was fortunate to have as my advisor Alexander L. George, who helped me transform my interest into a dissertation. Since then, I have written a number of books that deal with the process of foreign policy decision-making.

My central academic curiosity has dictated aspects of my teaching interests. Through the years I have come to realize that to be an effective teacher in a US foreign policy decision-making course, one must fulfill two broad goals. One must first instill in students the principle that before they try to unravel how a foreign policy was formulated, they must understand the history that preceded it. With that knowledge as their foundation, students must then decipher the mindsets that dominated the thinking processes of Washington's

leading political figures as the foreign policy was being designed; comprehend the cognitive system of the president; examine the manner in which he (or she, in the future) interpreted intelligence; ascertain the type of advisory system he relied on; and determine whether he considered a wide range of options before making his final decision.

So after years of telling myself that one day I would write a book in which I would apply multiple foreign policy decision-making theories to a series of cases, I decided to take the plunge. Aware that I would face a monumental task, I asked some of my best students in my US Foreign Policy Decision-Making classes whether they would be willing to engage in a collaborative project with me. Every student whom I asked agreed enthusiastically. My collaborators in this book are Joanna Gillia, Caitlyn Turgeon, Marina Sachs, Benedikt Gottwald, and Aditya Harnal.

At the end of every single acknowledgment that I have written through the years, I have expressed my gratitude to Barbara Peurifoy, my mother-in-law. Once again, I must thank her. Her strict grammatical standards and demand for clarity have helped me immensely, both in the classroom and in my struggles to put my thoughts on paper. No son-in-law could ever expect to have a kinder and more supportive mother-in-law than Barbara. However, final responsibility for the structure and content of every chapter throughout this book and for whatever errors that may remain is mine alone.

INTRODUCTION

Alternative Theoretical Perspectives

Introduction

The analysis of the foreign policies of the United States since the start of the Second World War reveals the behavior of a powerful but fallible international actor. It exposes an entity that, despite its extraordinary material capabilities, often failed to comprehend the nature of the forces besetting the international system or to anticipate the actions of rivals. It shows an actor that too often allowed a rigid mindset to dictate its interpretations of the international challenges it faced and that from time to time reacted to crises without thoroughly assessing the information at its disposal. It reveals a state that sometimes chose a response without systematically comparing it with other possible alternatives and without considering carefully the consequences such a response might generate. However, the analysis also unveils an international player that, in quite a few instances, paused long enough to define the problems it faced, to unravel the mixed signals emitted by the incomplete information generated by its intelligence agencies, to weigh a range of options, and to select the policy that, in addition to having the greatest chance of maximizing its most wanted goals, would generate the fewest number of unwanted consequences.

The circumstances that led the United States to act in such varied ways have been studied extensively. Foreign policy decision-making (FPDM) analysts have long argued that the interests of the United States, whether strategic, political, or economic, do not automatically impose themselves as objective data upon foreign policy decision-makers who, as suggested by Hans Morgenthau, use their rational faculties to design foreign policy. US foreign policy decision-makers facing the same international challenge sometimes disagree as to how the problem should be defined and how the available information should be interpreted. They do not always concur as to what objectives they think the United States ought to strive for or how different values should be ranked. And lastly, US foreign policy decision-makers quite often are at odds with one another as to which alternatives they should evaluate and which

option they should select. In short, US FPDM is a complicated process composed of several interrelated but distinct stages. Each stage demands scrutiny.

Throughout this book we attempt to fulfill multiple objectives. Our first goal is to describe the different FPDM processes generated by various presidents. Our second objective is to gauge the explanatory value and theoretical applicability of some of the leading FPDM models presently being proposed and used by analysts. Our third aim is to incorporate into the models, whenever applicable, two factors that in our estimation will improve measurably their explanatory value: the first component is the president's cognitive system; the second component is the mindsets that dominate the thought process of the president and of Washington's leading political figures at the time a foreign policy is being designed. Our fourth objective is to assess the quality of the FPDM processes designed by the different presidents. Our last goal is to introduce, or in some cases merely reacquaint readers with, some of the core foreign policies that have placed the United States at the forefront of world affairs.

In this volume we analyze three presidents and their handling of two cases each. They include the following:

1. Harry Truman's July 1945 decision to authorize the use of a nuclear bomb against Japan.
2. Harry Truman's 1950 decisions to aid South Korea militarily after it had been attacked by North Korea, and then to authorize General Douglas MacArthur to cross the 38th parallel to unify both Koreas under the leadership of a regime friendly to the United States.
3. Dwight Eisenhower's 1954 decision to authorize the CIA to attempt to topple the Guatemalan government covertly.
4. Dwight Eisenhower's decisions during the 1956 Suez Canal Crisis.
5. John F. Kennedy's 1961 decision to authorize the CIA to attempt to topple the Cuban government covertly.
6. John F. Kennedy's decisions during the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis.

The Study of Foreign Policy Decision-Making

The assumption that presidents and their advisors behave rationally dominated the early attempts to infuse explanations of US FPDM with a theoretical perspective. The paths analysts took differed. Under the realist rubric, scholars claimed that political leaders have as their most valued objective the protection or augmentation of the power of the state. Hans Morgenthau referred to the connection between power and rationality when he noted that to give meaning to the raw material of foreign policy (i.e., power), political

reality must be approached with a rational outlook.[1] Setting aside the emphasis placed by Morgenthau on power, what does approaching political reality with a rational outlook entail?

A useful staring point is formal rational choice theory.[2] As explained by Stephen Walt, though there are important epistemological and methodological disagreements among formal rational choice theorists, they agree on five basic assumptions and techniques. Rational choice theory views political outcomes as the collective product of individual choices.

1. Given "a particular set of preferences and a fixed array of possible choices, actors will select the outcome that brings the greatest expected benefits."
2. Actors can rank their preferences for different outcomes, and the preferences are transitive.
3. It is possible to identify the set of actors, the likelihoods of each actor's pattern of preferences, each actor's information at every choice point, and the way each actor sees his moves as connected to the possible outcome.
4. "If the game structure is an accurate representation of the phenomenon in question, and if there are no mathematical mistakes," then the analyst searches for the equilibrium of the game, which reflects the only outcomes that are logically possible.[3]

According to Frank C. Zagare, rationality can be viewed from either an instrumental or a procedural perspective.[4] Instrumental rationality interprets the concept the same way rational choice theory does. From an instrumental viewpoint a rational actor is one who "given a particular set of preferences and a fixed array of possible choices . . . will select the outcome that brings [to him or her] the greatest expected benefits."[5] The actor must have "connected and transitive preferences over the set of available outcomes." *Connectivity* refers to an actor's ability to compare and evaluate in a coherent way the outcomes he or she has identified. *Transitive* means that if the actor prefers outcome A over B, and B over C, then he or she will prefer A over C.[6] Instrumental rationality further assumes that the actor derives his or her preferences subjectively and does not offer normative evaluations. Moreover, it accepts that the preferences may be rooted in incomplete, imperfect, or erroneous information. Of no lesser significance is the contention that the decision-maker's actions would still be considered rational even if the pressures of time and stress in a crisis might have clouded his or her judgment.[7]

Procedural rationality presents a more complex interpretation. "Behavior is procedurally rational when it is the outcome of appropriate deliberation."

In this instance, the process dictates whether rationality is present. Analysts who rely on procedural rationality to explain and predict decisions are interested less in the problem solution per se and more in the method used by the decision-maker to arrive at it.[8] The rational actor is viewed as one who, after evaluating every possible course of action and systematically weighing the pluses and minuses of each alternative, makes a decision. Misperceptions or other deficiencies of human cognition and rational decision-making "are mutually exclusive."[9]

Applied to FPDM, a procedural rational response to an international problem entails proceeding along several paths, sometimes simultaneously. Decision-makers first define the nature of the problem and isolate the interests at stake. To carry out such a task, they seek information and identify potential linkages among the affected interests. They then isolate goals they intend to fulfill, rank them, and ascertain the extent to which they either correspond or conflict with one another. In the next three endeavors, they set apart a number of viable alternatives, weigh them against one another by including the risks they are likely to encounter in their implementation, and select the one with the highest expected utility. Because the resolution of an international problem generally requires the execution of a series of measures throughout an extended period, decision-makers evaluate the effects of the original policy and recommence the process if it falls short of realizing the initial goals or generates costly, unexpected consequences.[10]

Multiple hurdles afflict the process just depicted. Obstacles to rationality in FPDM have four distinct sources: (i) the decision-making environment, (ii) the intelligence agencies and the manner in which they interact with one another and with the main decision-making body, (iii) the central decision-making group, and (iv) the individual decision-makers.

The decision-making environments under which foreign policies are formulated affect their creation. Uncertainty, stress, understanding or lack of understanding about the challenge ahead, risk, threat perception, and answerability may degrade the quality of the foreign policy process and, as a result, of the designed policy.[11] Stress, ambiguity, and time constraints are known to increase the rigidity of the decision- making process. As a result, foreign policy decision-makers are sometimes inclined to rely on experience-based techniques without carefully analyzing whether the techniques fit the challenges they face.[12]

As the world's leading actor, the United States incessantly gathers information concerning potential, developing, or existing threats to its interests, both domestic and abroad. Intelligence agencies, such as the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) are some of the organizations responsible for this

task. Every day, each intelligence agency is compelled to prioritize and compress a massive volume of information before transmitting it in the form of an intelligence briefing to the central decision-making body. The intelligence briefing is not always an accurate reflection of the information assessed by the intelligence agency. Analysts constantly engage in uncertainty and inconsistency absorption—that is, they often exclude from their intelligence report the fact that they relied on incomplete and contradictory information to derive their inferences.[13] Sometimes their decisions to leave out uncertainties and inconsistencies are shaped by their own priorities, at other times by their reading of what the principal foreign policy–making group expects. But whatever the rationale, their actions jeopardize the decision-makers' ability to adequately appraise the situation.

Historically, intelligence agencies have been protective of their respective bureaucratic dominions and have sought to weaken each other's capability and reputation. The measures they have designed to undermine one another have taken different forms. It is not uncommon for an intelligence agency to approach an international problem with its own set of distinct interests in mind. When producing intelligence analyses, for instance, analysts may exaggerate the benefits or costs of particular interpretations that selectively benefit their particular agency. They may choose to avoid dealing with problems that are unlikely to enhance their interests but that might be of significant concern to others. They may decide not to pass on information to other agencies or to botch the bureaucratic lines of communication(s). In short, this shared hostility toward one another too often has resulted in the production of flawed "partisan analyses."[14]

The president surrounds himself with a small number of advisors who represent governmental institutions responsible for carrying out a variety of foreign policy tasks. The advisors keep the president informed about important developments both at home and abroad, alert him about existing or rising threats, help him understand and define problems, suggest alternative remedies, and serve as a sounding board as he decides on a policy. A president's personality, his value system, and the type of advisory system he creates, determine the power and influence of his advisors.[15]

The size, membership, and role structure of the presidential advisory group can affect both the policy-formulation process and the quality of the policy. Of significant concern to many analysts are the effects of groupthink. *Groupthink* refers to "a mode of thinking that people engage in when they are deeply involved in a cohesive in-group, when the members' striving for unanimity overrides their motivation to realistically appraise alternative courses of action."[16] A decision-making group constrained by groupthink has one or more self-appointed mind guards, rationalizes collectively, develops illusions

of invulnerability and unanimity (often by pressuring internal dissenters to conform), believes in its inherent moral superiority, thinks of other groups as enemies and less competent, and tolerates only self-censorship. During instances of high stress, members of the group tend to conduct poor information searches, consider only that information that confirms their beliefs and expectations, and carry out an incomplete survey of objectives and alternatives. They have a propensity to ignore the risks behind their preferred choice, fail to reappraise alternatives, and neglect to work out contingency plans.[17]

Each decision-making group is made up of individuals who independently can also degrade the rational process. The different theories presented below attempt to outline a variety of innate human shortcomings that impede this process. As Herbert Simon pointed out in the 1950s, no single human being possesses the intellectual capability or energy to assess all pertinent information and to evaluate all relevant alternatives and their potential consequences. Human rationality, he stressed, is always bounded.[18] Other analysts soon broadened the analytical path opened by Simon. Cognitive psychologists emphasized the necessity of "extensive processing time, cognitive effort, concentration and skills" to achieve maximization. These conditions, however, are seldom fully present when leaders face extraordinary pressures and time constraints.[19]

The effects of the aforementioned limits on the FPDM process are widely debated. How restrictions are interpreted vary from one theory to another. Attribution theory characterizes decision-makers as "naïve scientists" who often erroneously come to less-than-ideal decisions because they fail to recognize that the best way to test a hypothesis is by attempting to falsify it.[20] State leaders are essentially misguided sleuths who impose a solution to an existing problem intuitively and then confirm their decision by searching for evidence that backs their decision. They are subrational actors not because of cognitive needs but because they are ignorant of their own intellectual inadequacies.

A related body of literature is schema theory. Its advocates opine that decision-makers resort to various cognitive shortcuts in order to ascertain the nature of a problem and the proper action. Decision-makers, according to this theory, are overwhelmed by a barrage of information, which does not always reduce uncertainty, and are burdened by the lack of time and energy. Thus, they seek to understand the world as rapidly and as effortlessly as possible. This tendency is especially important when leaders are faced with novel information. Hence, in order to reduce uncertainty, actors attempt to match new information and stimuli with past experiences and events. Psychologists refer to this response as "cognitive scripting"—employing a sequence of events that tell a story and that lie embedded in the memory of the decision-maker. Information-processing theorists stress that decision-makers rely on

scripts and try to identify analogies that help them deal with new situations. Particularly relevant to the study of international relations is the use of historical case studies perceived to be similar to the current challenge. Scripts come in different forms. Episodic scripts are based on the analysis of a single experience, whereas repeated experiences shape categorical scripts. Decision-makers remember experiences in which they or others were attempting to fulfill similar goals, and they make the structure applicable to the new situation in order to formulate a generalized plan of action. When confronted with a problem, moreover, the more familiar the decision-makers deem the issue, the more likely they are to respond by utilizing scripting in order to deal with it. Essentially, their intent is to create a "familiar problem space" they can rely on so that they can solve the problem with greater ease.[21]

A third psychological perspective characterizes humans as "consistency-seekers." It stresses that human beings are innately biased when they attempt to deal with a problem. As decision-makers, they try both to deal with the issue at hand and to keep their core beliefs and values mutually consistent.[22] Human beings, contends the theory, are driven to shape an unwieldy, contradictory world into a coherent ideological construct that simplifies the nature of problems and gives concrete meaning and explanations for the seemingly random stimuli assaulting the senses.[23]

Leaders have different attitudes toward risk-taking. The amount of risk any one leader is prepared to take when faced with an international problem will affect his decision. Risk-taking refers to the level of uncertainty a leader is willing to accept when making a decision. "A high-risk alternative," write Alex Mintz and Karl DeRouen, Jr., "is one in which the probability associated with failure is large enough that the expected utility of action is negative." Risk-taking, however, is not defined solely by the nature of the individual making the decision; it is also affected "by the individual's level of satisfaction with the status quo: those who are more dissatisfied are more willing to take risks."[24]

Intimately related to the nature of the central decision-making group and the way its members approach international problems and seek solutions is the role played by its leading figure—the president. A focus on the president is imperative, because it is he who decides on the structure of the decision-making group that will function as his principal advising entity, and it is he who generally decides what foreign policy to implement. A president can have a substantial effect on the decision-making process by the way he interacts with his principal advisors and through his core personal attributes, such as his cognitions, analytical skills, and emotional resources.[25]

Modest intellectual insight is required to appreciate how cumbersome it is to formulate a parsimonious theory of foreign policy making, considering the

myriad of impediments decision-makers typically encounter. The boundaries between the theories are not always easy to identify. For that reason, we begin our analysis by revisiting the procedural rationality model, which serves as the "ideal" model. The models that follow refer to the procedural rationality model directly or indirectly.

Procedural Rationality Model

The procedural rationality model is built on the assumption that the decision-maker engages in a holistic approach to FPDM[26] and carries out the following tasks:[27]

a. Identifies the problem by cataloging the imperiled interests and values.
b. Gathers information.
c. Identifies and ranks goals.
d. Examines a wide range of options. Conducts thorough assessment of the consequences and the human and material costs each option is likely to generate and estimates the likelihood that each option will produce his or her favored goals.
e. Selects the option with the best chance of fulfilling his or her most favored goals.
f. Implements the selected option.
g. Observes and assesses.

Compensatory Versus Noncompensatory Models

The compensatory approach is an offshoot of the procedural rationality model. It postulates that the decision-maker relies on the same information to assign values to a set of dimensions in each of the alternatives he or she is considering, combines additively the values assigned to the dimensions within each option to produce an overall value, compares the values of each option, and then selects the one with the highest score.[28] The compensatory model concedes that during the analysis of options, political leaders assess potential domestic and political costs. The model, however, does not state whether decision-makers will outright reject any option that carries a high domestic political cost or whether they will combine the domestic political cost with other values to derive an overall aggregate score for a particular option.

The compensatory model has been contested. The common claim is that foreign policy–makers rely on cognitive shortcuts to rational decision making and engage in a noncompensatory process. Foreign policy–makers do not depend on rules "that require the evaluation and comparison of all alternatives

across different dimensions." Instead, they rely on a perspective than enables them to adopt or reject alternatives "on the basis of one or a few criteria."[29] As explained by Mintz, the decision-maker, rather than relying on "holistic decision rules that require the evaluation and comparison of all alternatives across different dimensions, adopts heuristic decision rules that do not require detailed and complicated comparisons of alternatives and rejects or adopts alternatives on the basis of one or a few criteria."[30] For instance, when two important dimensions are present in one alternative and one has a high negative value, the foreign policy–makers, instead of comparing the extent to which the positive dimension compensates for the negative one in each alternative, outright rejects any alternative that has a negative dimension.

Cybernetic Model

The cybernetic model is built on the contention that foreign policy–makers approach decision making nonholistically. According to Herbert Simon, decision-makers do not possess the mental capacity, cognitive skills, time, and energy required to conduct a thorough analysis, at multiple levels, and in conditions of uncertainty. Decision-makers are *utility satisfiers*, not *utility maximizers*. They focus on limited information and consider a small number of options.[31] Foreign policy leaders simplify the decision-making process by focusing on three dimensions. They are attentive to the international, domestic, and political environments. When the focus is on whether to use force, the decision-maker compares "the summary evaluation of the use of force alternative across [the three] dimensions to a satisficing threshold." When the "threshold is crossed, the probability of the use of force increases."[32] The model may be used to explain decisions by organizations or by individual decision-makers. When confronted by a problem, organizations do not analyze it extensively; instead they refer to existing plans designed to address the challenge and conduct minor changes if they believe they are necessary. Political leaders often rely on such an approach when compelled to make a decision in the presence of uncertainty and in the absence of adequate time.

Poliheuristic Model

Recently, an attempt has been made to combine the noncompensatory and the compensatory approaches by dividing them into stages. The combined approach is referred to as the poliheuristic theory of foreign policy. In the first step, the decision-maker uses a noncompensatory approach to eliminate unacceptable alternatives. In the poliheuristic model, domestic politics is the ruling criterion. Proponents of the model acknowledge that, although in the

making of foreign policies international factors are important, ultimately foreign policy is never independent of domestic politics. A political leader rejects any option that is below a cutoff level on the political dimension. From a poliheuristic perspective, if a president were to estimate that his decision to go to war would inflict on him substantial political costs, he would reject the option even if its implementation had the potential to generate significant military benefits. In the second stage of the poliheuristic theory, the decision-maker may rely on traditional decision procedure to select from the remaining set of acceptable alternatives.

Prospect Theory

Prospect theory also challenges the rational utility maximizer model, but its focus is on how individuals respond to risk. As explained by Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman, decision-makers systematically violate basic axioms of subjective expected utility theory when they face risks. They tend to be risk-averse when things are going well and will be more inclined to take risks when they are in the middle of a crisis.[33]

As explained by Jack Levy, when individuals find themselves in the midst of a decision and are appraising possible outcomes, they do not focus on the net assets each outcome might generate; instead they pay attention to deviations from a particular reference point. The framing of a choice—or what has been referred to as the identification of the reference point—is important because individuals treat the prospect of gains and losses differently. People value more what they have than what they do not have, hence are more afraid to lose what they have than interested in winning what they do not possess.[34] The theory may also be used to explain situations in which political leaders face the prospect of losing political capital. In such instances, the likelihood is that they will be risk-averse.

Related Foreign Policy Decision-Making Models

Two additional models worth identifying are the organizational model and the bureaucratic politics model. Though on its own, neither model can explicate the decisions formulated by the president of the United States, each one includes aspects of the FPDM process that often influence his action.

Organizational Model

The organizational model is built on assumptions similar to the cybernetic model. The general argument is that whenever an international problem

arises, the organization responsible for addressing it seldom has the time and energy to conduct a thorough analysis, at multiple levels, and in conditions of uncertainty, as postulated by the rational model. The first thing members of an organization do is ascertain whether similar problems had been previously addressed and, if they had been, determine whether there are standard operating procedures that could guide them in their response to the new problem. The dynamics of an organization are conservative; thus if the standard operating procedures exist and require changes, they will be introduced incrementally.

Foreign policy decisions require the participation of multiple organizations led by individuals who answer to the president. To contend that the president receives alternative plans from organizations that rely on standard operating procedures is not to argue that the normalized practices invariably dictate the president's and his advisors' choices. For starters, top officials of the major organizations who advise the president are seldom, if ever, individuals who have spent their professional lives within the organization they represent. Their principal allegiance is to the president, not to the organization. This is not to say that the leaders of organizations generally disregard the advice submitted to them by their subalterns, but they will do so if their advice does not concur with what they favor or if they think it does not meet the president's expectations.

Second, it is critical to differentiate between the deliberation that ensues between the president and his advisors as they try to formulate a foreign policy and the actual implementation of the selected policy. An example should help clarify the distinction. When confronted with a major foreign policy challenge, a president must sometimes consider the use of violence and will generally seek the advice of his secretary of defense and members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. A case in point is the role played by the Pentagon during the Cuban Missile Crisis. When President John F. Kennedy asked the members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff for a recommendation after Soviet nuclear missiles had been spotted on the island, they advised him to authorize the launching of an air attack on Cuba, followed by an invasion. They viewed the problem solely from a military standpoint, relied on existing standard operating procedures to explain how they would conduct the operation, and then insisted that the president accept their recommendation. However, as the president noted and as the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Maxwell Taylor acknowledged, the recommendation presented by the men in uniform did not account for the possible political repercussions of such an attack; they viewed it entirely from a strategic perspective.

Though the president did not reject their advice outright, during the early stages of the crisis he relied on a less radical measure. The more moderate

response necessitated the implementation of a quarantine, which in turn entailed the application of a standard operating procedure designed by the US Navy. Its execution generated substantial tension between Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara and the admiral in command of the operation. McNamara, determined to minimize the probability of a violent confrontation between the US Navy and the approaching Soviet vessels, at one point questioned the admiral's actions. The admiral objected to being queried, told the secretary of defense as much, and added that the navy had lots of experience in conducting quarantines. McNamara did not back off. He retorted that he did not care what the admiral felt and added that the navy had never blockaded the passage of vessels of a state that possessed nuclear missiles. In short, McNamara was not going to allow an admiral committed to the execution of a particular set of standard operating procedures to dictate the way in which the quarantine would be implemented before ensuring that it would not engender unwanted effects. Shortly thereafter, the admiral retired.

In sum, as the empirical cases presented in this book will reveal, the principals sometimes may accept standardized plans, outright reject them, or modify them, but in all cases the choices are theirs. The principals' control over the process is diminished markedly during the implementation process. Though the leaders of the various organizations assigned to implement the agreed-upon policies are responsible for their appropriate execution, by then part of the process is in the hands of individuals with limited decision-making power who rely principally on standard operating procedures to guide their actions.

Bureaucratic Politics

Organizations are hierarchical institutions that strive to protect the formulation of policies that belong to their field of expertise and that consistently attempt to enlarge their decision-making authority. The bureaucratic politics' approach to foreign policy making contends that policy outcomes result from the bargaining that takes place among a small, highly placed group of governmental actors. The actors approach the FPDM process with different preferences, abilities, and positions of power. "Participants," writes Brent Durbin, "choose strategies and policy goals based on different ideas of what outcomes will best serve their organizational and personal interests. Bargaining then proceeds through a pluralist process of give-and-take that reflects the prevailing rules of the game as well as power relations among the participants." This procedure may generate "suboptimal outcomes that fail to fulfill the objectives of any of the individual participants."[35]

Ultimately, however, bureaucratic politics is not a theory of decision making but a variable. As Thomas Preston and Paul 't Hart note, bureaucratic politics is not an invariant feature but a "contingent phenomenon whose form and intensity vary across situations, policy domains, and national administrative systems. Thus, if bureaucratic politics is a variable, then its effect on foreign policy-making also varies."[36] How much the effects of bureaucratic politics vary is extensively determined by the extent to which the president allows it to intrude in his decisions.

The Definition of International Problems

Foreign policy decision-making (FPDM) entails identifying and defining problems and ordering and choosing among alternatives. As our descriptions of the most commonly used FPDM models reveal, most analysts have channeled their efforts to the second task. They define the problem in advance and then identify a hierarchy of available options by referring to the values of the decision-makers. It is well-known, however, that the initial definition of a problem can have a decisive effect on the alternatives considered and the decision reached.[37] Donald A. Sylvan alerts us to their possible relationship when he asks: "Why were blockade, air strike, and invasion initially chosen as potential options [by the Kennedy administration during the Cuban Missile Crisis]?" The question, Sylvan adds, compels analysts to focus on the way the problem was characterized, that is, on the determinants of the problem and the ramifications the description generates.[38]

As we intend to demonstrate, two elements typically affect the way a president interprets a problem: the type of cognitive system he relies on to try to resolve it and the mindsets that guide his thinking and the thinking of Washington's leading political actors. Throughout much of Western history, it has been recognized that, while rationality is rarely accomplished, its practice has always been advocated. For some time, however, studies have demonstrated that under certain conditions people who rely on their intuitions are able to formulate better decisions than those who conduct systematic analyses.[39] According to psychologists, people possess two basic cognitive systems. In the rational system, reasoning "is conscious, verbal, abstract, analytical, affect free, effortful, and highly demanding of cognitive resources."[40] In the experiential system, reasoning "operates in a manner that is preconscious, automatic, nonverbal, imagistic, associative, rapid, effortless, concrete, holistic, immediately associated with effect, highly compelling, and minimally demanding of cognitive resources."[41] For individuals who trust their intuition to define a problem and make decisions, the input is provided mostly "by knowledge stored in long-term memory that has been primarily acquired

via associative learning. The input is processed automatically and without conscious awareness."[42]

The second element, the mindset, refers to the beliefs, assumptions, and rules of behavior adhered to by one or more individuals, groups of people, a community, or a nation. A broadly shared mindset can create a powerful incentive to accept an existing definition of a problem, behavior, choice, or tool, and in turn to prevent the consideration of alternative definitions, behaviors, choices, or tools. Depending on the circumstances, mindsets can help to solidify and protect a system of social dominance, or they can lead to its destruction. The origins of mindsets vary, but regardless of their roots every president who walks into the White House for the first time could be influenced by one or more mindsets—his own, his predecessor's, Washington's, and possibly, in a broader sense, America's. Theoretically, these mindsets could differ; in practice they are seldom totally at odds with one another.

Methodology

There are a number of methods one can use to identify which model best explains the FPDM process and to explain the kind of effects cognitive systems and mindsets have on the way presidents define international problems. A possible way to identify the correct model would be to isolate a priori an existing FPDM theory or postulate a new one, and then conduct empirical analyses of the administrations in question to test its applicability. A second option would be to impose a number of pertinent FPDM theories on each of the presidents considered in order to identify the theory that derives the best explanation. A third alternative would be to conduct a thorough empirical analysis of the way various presidents engaged in FPDM, steered by a set of carefully designed questions, with the intent of categorizing the obstacles each administration faced and its ability to surmount them (or not surmount them) to derive a theoretical construct inductively. Our analysis is shaped by the third method.

We favor the last perspective for a number of reasons. First, as social scientists we sometimes yearn to be identified with a particular theoretical argument or as one of its leading designers. This urge occasionally drives us to disregard evidence that could either weaken or falsify our theoretical construct. Second, it is imprudent to assume that any one FPDM theory can capture the varied responses to international problems that are fashioned by presidents with unlike attributes and qualities. Third, it is exceedingly difficult to draw a clear conceptual divide between some of the competing FPDM theories; this is to say that there is substantial crossover from one theory to another. Fourth, not every theory focuses on the same types of actors.

As noted earlier, some theories concentrate on the impact of bureaucratic competition among the various intelligence agencies; others try to decipher the overall effect of the main foreign policy–making group; while a third group ponders the actions of the decision-making group's leading figures. An argument built inductively, though markedly less elegant than the previous options, enables analysts to isolate the elements identified by different theories and restructure them in the shape of an alternative theoretical construct.

To identify the factors that entered into the FPDM of the various administrations under consideration and to explain their respective effects, we bring into play a relatively simple analytical method. Each foreign policy begins with the identification and definition of a problem. The way a problem is defined can have a decisive effect on the formulation of a foreign policy.[43] Sometimes intelligence analysts working within the same or different bureaucracies identify an event or set of events as a problem and try to warn their superiors of its existence. At other times, members of the leading decision-making group carry out the identification. The classification of a problem is not always followed by the admission on the part of those who did not participate in the task that the supposed problem is, in fact, a problem or by an agreement as to how it should be interpreted. Because these challenges are often encountered, we begin each of our analyses with the identification of the information available to each administration, explain the inferences the respective intelligence analysts and the principal decision-makers derived from the available information, assess the extent to which the existing information backed the alternative inferences, describe the rationales posited by the leading members of each administration to validate their inferences, and put forward an analytical explanation for the proposed rationales.

As explained earlier, in a rational process the leading decision-makers, after coming up with a formulation of the problem, must identify possible alternatives and gauge their suitability. In order to decide which alternative to implement, they must first appraise each goal's import, examine the problems their concurrent quest could generate, and compare the potential effectiveness of various options. An investigation of how each administration performed this portion of the process calls for a determination of whether the core decision-making group's organizational structure aided or impeded the conduct of judicious appraisals, and it calls for an explanation as to the manner in which each group's distinct characteristics helped engender either effect. This investigation also entails assessing the extent to which the central decision-makers engaged in thoughtful evaluations of possible goals and policies. This assessment requires an examination of the evidence the decision-makers relied on to rationalize their choices and on the identification of the cognitive and motivational factors that affected their judgments and helped determine their final choice.

The questions we address in each case are likely to vary from one case to another; nevertheless, the following questions are pertinent to all of them:

1. What was the quality of the information provided to the president and his advisors by the various intelligence agencies? Were the agencies able to paint a clear picture of the challenge(s) at hand? Were there any substantial differences between the agencies regarding the information/analyses they delivered? Were their analyses substantiated by the collected intelligence? Did the intelligence agencies distort any of the information they forwarded? Did the intelligence agencies conceal any information?
2. Did the president and his advisors thoroughly and systematically assess the information they were given as they sought to understand the nature of the problem(s)? How did they define the nature of the problem(s)?
3. Did the president and his advisors isolate pertinent goals, rank them, and ascertain the extent to which they either corresponded or conflicted with one another? If so, what were the goals, how did they rank them, and did any of the goals conflict with one another?
4. Were there any significant differences between the president and his advisors as to how they ranked the goals? If so, was the president aware of the disparities, and did he determine the final ranking? If he determined the final ranking, did any one advisor influence his ranking more than others?
5. Were there any significant differences between the president and his advisors regarding the ranking of alternatives? If so, was the president aware of the disparities, and did he make the final choice?
6. If the president made the final choice, did any one advisor or group of advisors influence his decision more than others?
7. Did the president or any of his advisors, jointly or singularly, attempt to prevent the open discussion of options?
8. In the process of evaluating their options, did the president and his advisors receive new information? If they did, did they reevaluate their previous goals and options?
9. What FPDM model best explains the president's foreign policy choice?

We present the FPDM cases chronologically. We divide the examination of each case into five distinct but related sections. We first place the case in a historical context. Specifically, we summarize the central underlying international and domestic issues pertinent to the case and the role the United States played just prior to the moment we begin the analysis of the FPDM

process. Second, we use the above questions to guide our analysis of the evolution of the FPDM process. At this stage, we also focus on the mindsets that influenced the definitions of the problems encountered by the president and his leading advisors. Third, we isolate the impediments to rationality that afflicted each of the identified procedures. We pay careful attention as to whether the leading decision-maker approached the problem intuitively or systematically. With this analysis as our foundation, we identify the model that best captures each president's approach to FPDM. Finally, based on the conclusion we derived in the previous stage, we gauge the quality of each president's FPDM approach.

CHAPTER 1

Harry Truman, the Dropping of the Atomic Bombs on Japan, and the End of the Second World War

Introduction

On October 9, 1941, Franklin D. Roosevelt instructed Vannevar Bush, head of the Office of Scientific Research and Development, to find out whether an atomic bomb could be built and at what cost. Three months later Roosevelt approved the production of such bombs. The initial step of the endeavor, managed by Brigadier General Leslie Groves, was to find a way to harness the power of the atom to design and build a weapon that, if necessary, could be used to accelerate the ending of the war and, eventually, to shape "post war policies."[1]

By early April 1945, the scientists had nearly achieved the assigned goal.[2] Sensing that victory in Europe was imminent, Roosevelt saw no need to use the new weapon against Germany to force its unconditional surrender. The war in the Far East, however, posed a different challenge. Because the fighting against Japan had been growing more violent and more deadly, Roosevelt was prepared to use the atomic bomb. He acknowledged that, after "mature consideration," he might have no choice but to use it "against the Japanese" repeatedly "until they surrender."[3]

Roosevelt's death on April 12, 1945, after serving for twelve years as president, shocked the American public and members of government. Given the unexpected nature of his death, top officials within the executive branch had not taken the appropriate measures to elicit a smooth transition.[4] Harry Truman, an inexperienced leader in matters of foreign affairs, was thrust into an arena that would have daunted even the most skilled politician. Determined to assure those both at home and abroad, allies and foes, that the change in leadership would not weaken Washington's resolve, Truman, in his first address to the Congress as president, pledged to carry on the policies of his predecessor,

including calling for the surrender of the Germans and the Japanese. "Our demand," he stated, "has been and it remains—unconditional surrender. We will not traffic with the breakers of the peace on the terms of the peace."[5]

With the war against Germany about to end, our focus in this chapter is centered on Truman's drive to bring the war with Japan to a close. We examine Harry Truman's foreign policy decision-making (FPDM) process during his administration's drive to bring the war with Japan to a close. Our analysis is guided by the questions posited in the introduction. Specifically, we concentrate on the mindsets that influenced Truman's definition of the problem, what his goals were and how he ranked them, the number of alternatives he considered, and whether he analyzed and compared those options carefully before making his final decision. During this process we will examine whether he was receptive to different points of view, the information he and his advisors considered, the care with which they assessed the information, and whether they derived the same interpretations of the intelligence they evaluated. We bring the study to a close with a discussion of the FPDM model that best explains Truman's decision to use the atomic bombs, with an assessment of the quality of the FPDM process.

Evolution of a Decision under Truman

Within hours of assuming the presidency, two issues appeared on Truman's agenda: an increasingly strained relationship with Moscow and intelligence concerning the development of the atomic bomb. Disagreements between Moscow and Washington over the postwar status of Poland had strained their relationship. Washington backed an independent and democratic Poland, whereas Moscow wanted to exert control over the region and its form of government.[6] In an April 2 memo to Roosevelt—later provided to Truman—the US ambassador to the Soviet Union, W. Averell Harriman, noted that the rift between Washington and Moscow had intensified. Harriman feared that the Soviet Union would "emerge from the present conflict by far the strongest nation in Europe and Asia . . . [and] in the foreseeable future may well outrank the United States."[7]

On April 23, the Soviet ambassador to the United States, V. Molotov, met with Truman in Washington. Despite substantial disagreements, the two were able to agree on a very important issue for the United States. On April 24, Moscow declared its decision not to renew its Neutrality Pact with Japan.[8] The move signaled the Soviet Union's recommitment to aid the United States in a conventional invasion of the Japanese homeland. Planners for the Joint Chiefs of Staff expressed concern about the agreement. In an April 25 memo, planners cautioned the Joint Chiefs of Staff that if "Russia enters the war, her

forces will probably be the first into Manchuria . . . This will raise the question of introducing at least token US forces in Asia."[9] Despite the warning, Truman welcomed Moscow's promises of assistance.

The development of a nuclear bomb posed a different type of challenge for the president. When Truman made his first address to Congress on April 16, he was not yet fully aware of the enormity of the venture. Nine days later, Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson, accompanied by Groves, informed the president that within four months the United States would "in all probability, have completed the most terrible weapon ever known in human history, one bomb of which could destroy a whole city."[10] He added that the use of the atomic bomb could bring the campaign in the Pacific to a swift conclusion with fewer American casualties,[11] shape history, change the nature of civilization, and alter the way wars were conducted. During the meeting Stimson suggested that Truman form a committee to consider the possible "implications of this new force."[12] The committee would also be responsible for "recommending action to the Executive and legislative branches of our government when secrecy is no longer in full effect . . . [and] the actions to be taken by the War Department prior to that time in anticipation of the postwar problems."[13]

With Truman's approval, Stimson created the Interim Committee, which he chaired. Other members of the committee were his assistant, George Harrison; Assistant Secretary of State William L. Clayton; Undersecretary of the Navy Ralph Bard; James Byrnes, who was to serve as the president's personal representative on the committee; the chairman of the National Defense Research Committee, Dr. James B. Conant; Vannevar Bush; and the director of the Office of Field Service, Dr. Karl Compton. The head of the atomic lab in Los Alamos, Dr. Robert Oppenheimer; Groves; and Chief of Staff of the Army General George Marshall, were not permanent members but attended many of the committee's meetings.[14]

During this period, Washington learned that the Japanese were becoming increasingly concerned about the Soviet Union's stance and its alliance with the United States. Intelligence had intercepted communiqués from Japanese Army Vice Chief of Staff Masakazu Kawabe to his military attaches in Stockholm, Sweden, and Lisbon, Portugal. In the communiqués, Kawabe voiced Tokyo's fear that Moscow might ultimately decide to enter the war against Japan. In one dispatch, shown to Truman and his advisors on May 10, Kawabe stated, "Russia's anti-Japanese attitude has clearly become more vigorous since her recent action with respect to the Neutrality Pact . . . we must view with alarm the possibility of future military activity against Japan."[15]

Shortly after the message was sent, Germany capitulated. Truman welcomed the news with a speech in which he clarified the terms of unconditional

surrender for the Japanese. He stated: "Just what does unconditional surrender of the armed forces mean for the Japanese people? It means the end of the war. It means the termination of the influence of the military leaders who have brought Japan to the present brink of disaster . . . Unconditional surrender does not mean the extermination or enslavement of the Japanese people."[16]

Truman's speech drew the attention of military leaders and members of the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC), who believed that clarifying the meaning of *unconditional surrender* might elicit an earlier surrender from Japan.[17] They were not the only ones concerned about the use of the term. On May 12, Truman received a memo from the chief of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), William J. Donovan, in which he suggested that the request for unconditional surrender from the Japanese be modified. He wrote: "One of the few provisions the Japanese would insist upon would be the retention of the Emperor as the only safeguard against Japan's conversion to Communism . . . Undersecretary of State [Joseph C.] Grew . . . the best US authority on Japan, shares this opinion."[18]

The Interim Committee began to meet during this period. On May 9, Stimson outlined the nature of the project and the role that members would play. As explained by Stimson, the committee was established "to make recommendations on temporary war time controls, public announcement, legislation and post-war organization."[19]

On May 10 and 12, further attempts were made by Washington's top officials to determine what to do about the prospect of the Soviet Union's entering the war against Japan. Harriman argued that pursuing Soviet involvement in the fight against Japan might facilitate the collapse of China into the Soviet Communist sphere of influence. "Russian influence," noted Harriman**,** "would move in quickly and toward ultimate domination . . . the two or three hundred millions in that country would march when the Kremlin ordered."[20] The attending officials accepted Harriman's assessment but adjourned without making a decision. Later that day, Harriman, Assistant Secretary of War John J. McCloy, and Stimson's special assistant, Harvey Hollister Bundy, met to further discuss the Soviet problem. According to Stimson, the ambassador gave them "a gloomy report . . . He didn't think that there was any chance of getting the seeds of liberalism into Russia in the shape of liberalizing and implementing the new constitutions for the sixteen Soviet provinces or zones which Stalin has put forth but never implemented. Yet . . . [he] thinks that Russia is really afraid of our power or at least respects it and, although she is going to try to ride roughshod over her neighbors in Europe, he thought that she really was afraid of us."[21]

In a separate conversation, Stimson and Marshall weighed the pros and cons of dropping the bomb on Japan against mounting a direct invasion.

Stimson asked whether the invasion could be delayed until the test of the first atomic bomb. Marshall indicated that the United States likely "could get the trial before the locking of arms came and much bloodshed [brought about by the invasion of mainland Japan]."[22]

Two days later, on May 13, Stimson received a memo from Grew regarding the importance of Soviet entry into the war. Grew posed the following questions:

1. Is the entry of the Soviet Union into the Pacific War at the earliest possible moment of such vital interest to the United States as to preclude any attempt by the United States to obtain Soviet agreement to certain desirable political objectives in the Far East prior to such entry?
2. Should the Yalta decision in regard to the Soviet political desires in the Far East be reconsidered or carried into effect in whole or in part?[23]
3. Should a Soviet demand, if made, for participation in the military occupation of the Japanese home islands be granted or would such occupation adversely affect our long-term policy for the future treatment of Japan?[24]

The memo also included commentary from the State Department. It emphasized that the United States should not commit itself to upholding its end of the Yalta Agreement before Washington was able to ascertain whether the Soviet Union intended to respect the sovereignty of Korea, Manchuria, and the Chinese province of Sinkiang. Stimson was pleased with the questions, for they were intertwined with and were contingent upon the success of "S-1."[25]

The following day, Stimson told Marshall that he was beginning to view the weapon as a solution for the United States' diplomatic problems with the Soviet Union. "[T]he time now and the method now to deal with Russia," stated Stimson, "was to keep our mouths shut and let our actions speak for words. The Russians will understand them better than anything else. It is a case where we have got to regain the lead and perhaps do it in a pretty rough and realistic way."[26] From this early date Stimson reasoned that the bomb could be instrumental in obtaining three interrelated goals: controlling Soviet behavior in Poland and Manchuria, limiting Soviet involvement in Japan, and maintaining dominance in the postwar international system.

On May 15, Stimson, Grew, and Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal met to further discuss the questions Grew had posed in his memo. Stimson reiterated his concern about how to deal with the Soviets and the promises that Roosevelt had made at Yalta. Stimson was aware that the successful test of the atomic bomb would be a valuable asset during diplomatic negotiations

with Moscow. He also emphasized that it would be "a terrible thing to gamble with such big stakes in diplomacy without having your master card in your hand."[27]

In a May 16 meeting with Truman and the Joint Chiefs, Stimson repeatedly argued for "the need for speed in the Pacific."[28] At this stage, the atomic bomb was not yet finished, thus necessitating the formulation of alternate plans. By then, the Joint Chiefs had already drawn up a two-step plan for an invasion, known as "Operation Olympic." The first phase, to be initiated on November 1, 1945, would consist of an amphibious landing on the shores of Kyushu by the Sixth Army under General Walter Krueger. Four months later, a second larger invasion would be launched on the Kanto Plains near Tokyo. The generals estimated that they could "bring Japan to her knees" by late fall but feared that many American soldiers would be lost during the invasion.[29] Several evaluations were advanced. Marshall predicted 31,000 casualties; others forwarded estimates that ranged from a quarter of a million to a million American lives.[30]

Despite their anxiety, the generals held out some hope that the casualties would not be as grave and the fighting not as drawn out. A memo issued nearly three weeks earlier by the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) to the Joint Chiefs of Staff was the catalyst for such hope. It underscored that increasing numbers of informed Japanese, both military and civilian, "already realize the inevitability of absolute defeat . . . [T]he collapse of Germany (with its implications regarding redeployment) should make this realization widespread within the year . . . The entry of the USSR into the war would, together with the foregoing factors, convince most Japanese at once of the inevitability of complete defeat."[31]

On May 18, the Interim Committee met to discuss the United States' monopoly of atomic power. Scientists and politicians presented estimates concerning how long the United States would be able to monopolize atomic energy. Byrnes, having read a memo from November 1944 authored by Bush and Conant, estimated that other countries, particularly the Soviet Union, would catch up with the United States in three to four years. Groves was more optimistic because he believed that the Russians did not have, and could not obtain, uranium. Groves calculated that it would take the Russians at least twenty years to develop such a weapon. Regardless of estimates, for the committee, retaining an American monopoly over atomic power was vital if the United States wanted to continue asserting its dominance, especially over the Soviets.

While the Interim Committee was discussing the future implications of atomic power, some of the scientists who had worked on the project were having second thoughts. Since Germany's defeat, O. C. Brewster, a scientist

who had focused on the isotope separation aspect of the program, had been tormented by the destructive technology he had helped create. He believed that "the idea of the destruction of civilization is not melodramatic hysteria or crackpot raving. It is a very real, and I submit, almost inevitable result."[32] He suggested that, in the absence of a viable German threat, the project should be terminated. He recommended that the United States demonstrate the impact of one bomb on Japan to elicit surrender and then cease the production of nuclear material. "Horrible as it may seem," stated Brewster, "I know it would be better to take greater casualties now in the conquering of Japan than to bring upon the tragedy of unrestrained, competitive production of this material."[33] Upon receiving the letter, Stimson forwarded it to Marshall, requesting that he review it before the Interim Committee meeting on May 31.

On May 28, Truman met with former president Herbert Hoover, who had written that Japan's surrender was imminent and that its leaders could be convinced to do so if Washington made it clear that the emperor would be respected as Japan's spiritual leader.[34] That same day Truman met with Grew, who had served as ambassador to Japan for ten years.[35] During the meeting, Grew advised Truman to announce that the United States would allow the emperor to retain his status as Japan's head of state if it were to surrender. "[T]he Japanese," noted Grew,

> are a fanatical people and are capable of fighting to the last ditch and the last man. If they do this, the cost in American lives will be unpredictable. The greatest obstacle to unconditional surrender by the Japanese is their belief that this would entail the destruction or permanent removal of the Emperor and the institution of the Throne. If some indication can now be given the Japanese that they themselves . . . will be permitted to determine their own future political structure, they will be afforded a method of saving face without which surrender will be highly unlikely.[36]

Truman asked Grew to delineate his idea in a formal memo and to arrange a meeting with the secretary of war, the secretary of the navy, Marshall, and Admiral Ernest King. The president added that once the preliminary meeting had been held, he would meet with the same group at the White House.[37]

Politicians and military advisors to the president, such as Grew, were not the only ones reformulating many of their conceptions. During this period, Walter Bartky and Leo Szilard, two scientists from Chicago's Metallurgical Lab, traveled to Washington to meet with Truman. Szilard had been concerned about the weapon scientists had been developing since before Roosevelt's death. Szilard believed that the use of the atomic bomb "would precipitate a race in the production of these devices between the United

States and Russia."[38] He argued that the continuation of the war in Japan was far less threatening than the possibility of a breakdown in relations between the United States and the Soviet Union.

Szilard and Bartky did not meet Truman. Instead, the president's appointment secretary redirected them to South Carolina to talk with the future secretary of state, James Byrnes, who was at that time still a private citizen. At that gathering, Szilard noted that, by not using the bombs against Japan, the United States might be able to avoid a catastrophic collision with the Soviets and the precipitation of a nuclear arms race.[39] He insisted that only the scientists who had created the bomb and had firsthand knowledge of its capacity to destroy could truly evaluate the risks associated with its use.[40]

Byrnes disagreed. The sheer expense of the project, argued Byrnes, warranted the testing of the bomb. Failure to use it, he added, would make it impossible to procure money for future atomic research. Furthermore, he did not think that possession of atomic energy by the United States would damage its relations with the Soviet Union. "American possession of enormously destructive weapons," asserted Byrnes, "would make the Russians more cooperative in the disputes about Poland and Eastern Europe."[41] The Soviets, he continued, did not have access to uranium and thus would not be able to make a similar weapon for quite some time.

On May 29, a group of high-level officials met to discuss Grew's proposal to alter the surrender terms. The group consisted of Grew, Stimson, Forrestal, McCloy, Marshall, director of OWI Elmer Davis, counsel to the president Judge Samuel Rosenmann, and Eugene Dooman from the Department of State. They all agreed that such a change should be carried out, but not immediately. Stimson told Grew that although he was "inclined to agree with giving the Japanese a modification of the unconditional surrender formula . . . the timing was wrong."[42]

By this time one of Truman's leading concerns was whether the first atomic bomb test would be successful. If the bomb worked, he believed that he could use it as diplomatic leverage with the Japanese. He wanted to "afford Japan a clear chance to end the fighting before we made use of this newly gained power."[43] If it did not work, he would need to sell the Japanese on the conditional surrender more than ever, in order to avoid a massive invasion and the subsequent loss of American lives.

Marshall, who favored Washington altering the terms of surrender, believed that the administration was holding off on the announcement for other reasons. He reasoned that the administration might use the atomic bomb in a test demonstration on a Japanese urban center or military target after warning all the citizens and personnel to evacuate. A memo from McCloy, dated May 30, indicated that Marshall believed that the psychological impact of

such a demonstration, coupled with a guarantee that Japan's imperial institution would be preserved, would speed up the process of surrender. Although the Interim Committee eventually shot down Marshall's suggestion, it represented a general consensus among American leaders. "[V]irtually every American leader was quite aware that modifying the terms [of surrender] was almost certainly the only way surrender could ultimately be achieved."[44]

At the end of the May 29 meeting, Stimson, Marshall, and McCloy stayed back to discuss further the atomic bomb project. Because some of the members were not aware of the bomb's existence, many pertinent issues had not been addressed in the morning session. The three agreed with the morning committee's assessment that the alteration of surrender terms should not take place until a later date. Stimson asked Marshall whether the atomic bomb could be used in lieu of traditional incendiary bombs against the Japanese. Marshall stated that he was a clear proponent of initially utilizing the bomb against military objectives or large naval installations in Japan. If the first attacks did not render a sufficient reaction, Marshall proposed that others be dropped on manufacturing centers, but only after the Japanese citizens had been sufficiently warned. Marshall also indicated that the United States needed to stay away from its standard defense tactics against the Japanese in order to cope with "the care and last ditch defense tactics of the suicidal Japanese."[45] The three produced a memo titled, "Objectives toward Japan and methods of concluding war with minimum casualties."

On that same day, Bartky and Szilard returned to Chicago determined to stop the use of the atomic bomb. Research in Chicago, unlike that in Los Alamos, was winding down, and scientists had time to ponder the implications of the new weapon. James Franck, also a Chicago scientist, drafted a report airing their grievances and advocating the cessation of plans to utilize the atomic bomb directly on Japan.

On May 31 and June 1, another set of Interim sessions were conducted. The list of attendees was extensive; it included Bard, Clayton, Byrnes, Harrison, Bundy, Arthur Page, Marshall, Groves, Bush, Conant, Compton, Oppenheimer, Enrico Fermi, and Ernest Lawrence. The central focus of the discussions was how, when, and where to use the weapon in Japan and how to best influence future Soviet behavior. Oppenheimer argued that the psychological implications of such a blast would be the primary catalyst for Japanese surrender, which in turn would impress the Soviets. The "visual effect of a bombing," he noted, would be tremendous. "It would be accompanied by a brilliant luminescence [that] would rise to a height of 10,000 to 20,000 feet. The neutron effect would be dangerous to life for a radius of at least two-thirds of a mile."[46] With Marshall's support, Oppenheimer suggested that Washington inform Moscow of the bomb's existence and perhaps allow two

Soviet scientists to witness the first explosion. Byrnes objected. "[I]f information were given to the Russians, even in general terms, Stalin would ask to be brought into a partnership . . . [This would] be particularly likely in view of our commitments and pledges of cooperation with the British."[47] Ultimately, the committee recommended that the bomb be used as soon as possible. The bomb, its members argued, would be instrumental in procuring Japan's surrender and placing the United States at an advantage vis-à-vis the Soviets. They also agreed not to allow Soviet scientists to witness a test of the weapon or to inform them of its existence. They concurred that "the most desirable program would be to push ahead as fast as possible in production and research to make certain that [the United States] stay ahead and at the same time make every effort to better [its] political relations with Russia."[48]

Of no less significance were the general conclusions arrived at by the Interim Committee regarding the actual use of the bomb against Japan. The committee never considered the option of *not* dropping the bomb on Japan. Though Stimson claimed that the committee held discussions regarding whether to use the bomb, the committee's minutes contain no mention of such discussions.[49] At one point Byrnes addressed alternatives to direct atomic use, but it was over an informal lunch meeting with Lawrence, which lasted for about ten minutes. Most of the members agreed that the committee was assembled to make suggestions regarding the forthcoming release of the atomic bomb. Many members of the committee, including Groves, confirmed that the committee did not have "any influence on the decision to use the atomic bomb."[50] All the committee did regarding the use of the weapon against Japan was to approve "a decision that had already been made."[51]

The content of the committee's report was a composite of recommendations. First, it recommended that the United States not warn Japan about the bomb's existence prior to dropping it on the targets. Since the atomic bomb had not been tested, no one wanted to risk the embarrassment of claiming to have a bomb that they did not yet possess. Second, the committee counseled that targets be of substantial military significance and that places with high civilian concentration be avoided. Third, Byrnes and Oppenheimer were adamant that the bomb have "a profound psychological impression on the Japanese" in order to secure a surrender.[52] And fourth, striking two targets at once was briefly considered, but the idea was abandoned because they believed that the United States would lose the advantage of gaining knowledge about the bomb with each new strike. After reading the document, Truman remarked that he "could think of no other alternative" than to drop the bomb on Japan.[53]

A pivotal meeting took place on June 6 between Stimson, Marshall, and Truman to further discuss the conclusions reached by the Interim Committee.

Prior to the briefing, Truman indicated that he had been able to postpone the conference of the "Big Three" to July in order to "give us more time." Though there is no record explaining why Truman needed more time, it has been speculated that the president wanted to allot the scientists more time to test the atomic bomb so that he could use it as leverage in negotiations with the Soviet leader, Joseph Stalin, at the upcoming Potsdam meeting.[54] Stimson and Oppenheimer concurred. As already noted, Stimson believed that it would be "a terrible thing to gamble with such big stakes in diplomacy without having the master card in our hands."[55] Oppenheimer, as the person responsible for delivering the bomb, expressed his anxiety when he said: "We were under incredible pressure to get it done [the atomic bomb] before the Potsdam meeting."[56]

From June 4 to June 13, the number of communiqués sent by Japan's government to its ambassadors abroad concerning the Soviet Union's possible entry in the war increased. On June 4, Washington intercepted a message from the Japanese foreign minister in Tokyo that stated, "It is a matter of the utmost urgency that we should not only prevent Russia from entering the war but should also induce her to adopt a favorable attitude toward Japan." The cable was passed on to Stimson, along with a report from Marshall and the War Department's Strategy and Policy Group. The report proposed that Japan, in light of the threat of a Soviet invasion, might be more predisposed to discuss surrender. "The Russian declaration of war," it noted, "either alone or in combination with a landing or imminent threat of landing might be enough to convince the Japanese of the hopelessness of their position."[57]

In Chicago, scientists continued to rally support from their colleagues to protest the use of the atomic bomb without more careful consideration. On June 11, Franck presented the "Franck Report" to officials in Washington. In the report he and other scientists requested an international demonstration of the bomb before its use on Japan and, preferably, that the bomb not be used on Japan at all.[58] They rationalized that such a demonstration would ease the development of an international control system on atomic energy and weapons, coerce Japan to surrender sooner, give justification for atomic use if surrender were not achieved, and delay the nuclear arms race long enough to create international controls governing atomic energy. The Franck Report also sought to refute Byrnes's claim that the bomb had to be used because of the money already spent on the project. It noted that large stores of poisonous gas were purchased and never used during the war.[59] Throughout the report, the scientists consistently emphasized the threat of an impending arms race between the United States and the Soviet Union if the bomb were used and the likelihood that chaos and insecurity would govern their relations in the years to come.

Compton and the Interim Committee's secretary, R. Gordon Arneson, were the first to view and discuss the Franck Report. Before submitting it to Stimson, Compton argued that, were the demonstration to fail, the Japanese would be inclined to fight harder during the invasion, thus resulting in an increase in American casualties.[60]

While many of the scientists in Chicago were opposed to the use of the bomb, some in Los Alamos remained ambivalent. On June 16, Los Alamos scientists met to discuss the suggestions contained in the Franck Report. Those in attendance included Compton, Lawrence, Oppenheimer, and Fermi. They concluded that a demonstration blast would not be feasible, as there were only three atomic weapons in existence, one of which needed to be used as a "tester" in July.[61] The panel agreed with Compton's assessment that if the international demonstration failed it might provoke the Japanese to fight harder. In the end, they decided that as scientists they could not offer sound advice regarding political and military matters. And yet, at the same time, they released a statement supporting the use of the bomb. They wrote, "We can propose no technical demonstration likely to bring an end to the war; we see no acceptable alternative to direct military use."[62]

Though the statement from Los Alamos seemed to indicate that its scientists were in agreement, some differences existed. On a July 24 memo to Grove's deputy, Kenneth D. Nichols, Compton wrote that, despite the earlier report of a consensus, "[t]here was not sufficient agreement among the members of the panel to unite upon a statement as how or under what conditions such use was to be made."[63]

On June 18 the president met with the Joint Chiefs and other high-ranking officials to discuss alternative plans to bring the war to an end, including the plan for conventional invasion of the Japanese homeland. Prior to the meeting, Truman instructed his chief of staff, Admiral William D. Leahy, to inform military leaders that it "was [his] intention to make his decisions on the campaign with the purpose of economizing to the maximum extent possible in the loss of American lives. Economy in the use of time and in money cost is comparatively unimportant."[64]

At the meeting Truman stressed that, though he still approved the military plan set forth in May by the Joint Chiefs, he "hoped for some fruitful accomplishment through other means."[65] Stimson concurred. Most Japanese citizens, he argued, would consider an invasion of their homeland a heinous act, and this would induce them to resist more fiercely. The Joint Chiefs emphasized that an invasion of the Japanese homeland would involve a high human cost.[66] Marshall pointed out that a reduction in American casualties could be achieved if the commitment of Soviet ground troops was secured. "[T]he impact of Russian entry on the already hopeless Japanese," Marshall

said, "may well be the decisive action levering them into capitulation at that time or shortly thereafter if we land in Japan."[67] Despite Marshall's optimism, the plans they had drawn up earlier still worried the generals. Memories of the losses the military had sustained in Okinawa and Iwo Jima were fresh in their minds. In Iwo Jima, the military had lost more American soldiers than on D-Day, and during the Okinawa campaign American casualties were growing rapidly.

Even after the approval of the invasion plans, Truman, Stimson, and military officials continued to discuss other options. On a June 18 meeting Leahy made it clear that he thought a change in the terms of surrender could eliminate the necessity of invasion, and perhaps of the use of the bomb. Leahy, as explained by Stimson,

> could not agree with those who said to him that unless we obtained the unconditional surrender of the Japanese that we will have lost the war. He feared no menace from Japan in the foreseeable future, even if we were unsuccessful in forcing unconditional surrender. What he did fear was that our insistence on unconditional surrender would result only in making the Japanese desperate and thereby increase our casualty lists.[68]

Like many other advisors, Leahy predicted that an attack on the Japanese mainland would actually be more dangerous than any other previous campaign. Forrestal concurred. "[O]ur determination to stick to the unconditional surrender position would possibly produce the result that every living person in Japan would prefer to die fighting rather than accept military defeat."[69] Upon hearing the various opinions, Truman responded that though he might be willing to consider a change in the terms of surrender, the thrust of public opinion compelled him for the time being not to alter them. Moreover, though by the culmination of the meeting Truman had approved plans for the November 1945 invasion of Kyushu, he remained unwilling to commit himself to one course of action. "[H]e considered the Kyushu plan all right from the military standpoint and, so far as he was concerned the Joint Chiefs of Staff could go ahead with it; that we can do this operation and then decide as to the final action later."[70]

At the end of the meeting, McCloy met in private with Truman. The president asked McCloy whether he believed there were alternatives to direct invasion of Japan. McCloy stated that the United States needed to consider taking diplomatic action in Japan before initiating an all-out invasion or dropping the bomb. He advised that the United States open diplomatic channels with the Japanese and delineate exactly the terms of surrender. Washington should inform Japan that it would be permitted to remain a nation, choose its own

form of government, retain its imperial institution, and control its own borders. "I do think you've got an alternative," stated McCloy, "and I think it's an alternative that ought to be explored and that, really, we ought to have our heads examined if we don't explore some other method by which we can terminate this war than just by another conventional attack and landing."[71] Truman stated that he, too, had considered taking a similar route and that McCloy should bring his proposal to Byrnes. When McCloy presented his argument to Byrnes, the secretary of state replied that "[Truman] would have to oppose my proposal because it appeared to him [Byrnes] that it might be considered a weakness on our part."[72]

On June 19, Truman's cabinet members reconvened to discuss the previous day's meeting. Stimson, Grew, and Forrestal agreed that a clarification of surrender terms, which would guarantee the perpetuation of the Japanese government and religion, might procure an earlier surrender without the necessity of an attack. The consensus on this matter was widespread; it also included Leahy, King, and Nimitz.[73] In his diary Stimson wrote, "There was a pretty strong feeling that it would be deplorable if we have to go through the military program with all its stubborn fighting to a finish. We agreed that it is necessary to plan and prepare to go through, but it became very evident today in the discussion that we all feel that some way should be found of inducing Japan to yield without a fight to the finish."[74]

On June 26, Stimson, Forrestal, and Grew met to discuss the most effective ways of persuading Japan to surrender. Stimson proposed that it would be possible to get Japan to surrender "by giving her a warning after she had been sufficiently pounded possibly with S-1. This is a matter about which I feel very strongly and feel the country will not be satisfied unless every effort is made to shorten the war."[75] Stimson believed that the bomb could be instrumental in procuring surrender, thus making a costly invasion of the Japanese homeland unnecessary. Both Forrestal and Grew approved of Stimson's suggestion and ordered McCloy, State Department Japan experts Eugene Dooman and Joseph Ballantine, and Forrestal's legal advisor, Mathias Correa, to draft a memo for President Truman. Stimson presented the memo to Truman on July 2; it was titled "Proposed Program for Japan."

In the meantime, as part of their effort to change the attack procedures, Bard and Grew proposed that they consider other alternatives to using the bomb. Their proposal reached Truman and Byrnes also on July 2. In their memo Bard insisted that the atomic bomb not be used on Japan without giving at least two or three days of warning to maintain "the position of the United States as a great humanitarian nation and fair play attitude of our people."[76] Additionally, Bard argued that a Naval blockade around Japan, coupled with an alteration in the surrender terms, would exert enough pressure

to starve the Japanese into submission while making them less averse to surrendering.[77] Bard believed it was possible to end the war without launching Operation Olympic or dropping the atomic bomb. For Bard and Grew, the way to achieve peace without invasion or the use of the bomb was to "eliminate the serious single obstacle to Japanese unconditional surrender, namely, concern over the fate of the throne."[78]

On July 2, Stimson met with Truman. Throughout the meeting, Stimson asserted that defeating the Japanese with "conventional" methods would be markedly more difficult than defeating Germany. Victory for the Allied forces would come, but it would come at a higher monetary and human cost than initially calculated. Specifically, Stimson highlighted that "the attempt to exterminate [Japan's] armies and [its] population by gunfire or other means will tend to produce a fusion of race solidarity and antipathy which had no analogy in the case of Germany."[79] Stimson, in alignment with Grew and Bard's statement, stated that the United States should give Japan a detailed warning regarding the use of an atomic weapon and its capacity to destroy the "Japanese race and nation" in the hope that it would elicit a premature surrender. Stimson's memo reconfirmed Grew's contention that allowing the emperor to retain his status would be instrumental in achieving an expedient Allied victory. By this time, Stimson had begun to deviate from the hard-line approach set forth by the Roosevelt administration.

Truman's reactions to Stimson's statements, though not recorded in a first-hand account by Truman, can be ascertained from Stimson's diaries. Stimson had the distinct impression that the president was impressed by the memo he had sent him and wrote, "[Truman's] attitude was apparently very well satisfied with the way in which the subjects were presented and he was apparently acquiescent with my attitude towards the treatment of Japan and pronounced my paper a powerful paper."[80]

And yet, Truman, along with Byrnes, "chose not to clarify the surrender terms during this period . . . [H]e continued to hold to [his initial] policy even though by the third week of June all the president's official advisors—his chief of staff, the secretary of war, the secretary of the navy . . . the acting secretary of state, the Joint Chiefs of Staff—favored some form of clarification."[81] Still, the president was aware of the challenge he faced. As he noted in his diary: "I have to decide Japanese strategy—shall we invade Japan proper or shall we bomb and blockade? This is my hardest decision to date."[82]

On July 3, Stimson held one of his last discussions with Truman prior to their departure for Potsdam. Much of the talk centered on how Truman should handle the Soviet leader and whether he should alert the Soviet leader of the atomic bomb. In May, the Interim Committee had suggested that Truman not inform Stalin about the bomb until it was utilized on Japan. Truman

had concurred. On June 21, however, the Interim Committee reversed its earlier recommendation. During his discussion with the president, Stimson advised him to tell Stalin that the United States was

> busy with this thing working like the dickens . . . and that we were pretty nearly ready and we intended to use it against the enemy, Japan; that if it was satisfactory we proposed to then talk it over with [him] afterwards, with the purpose of having it make the world peaceful and safe rather than to destroy civilization. If [Stalin] pressed for details and facts, Truman was simply to tell him that we were not yet prepared to give them.[83]

Truman welcomed Stimson's advice.

On July 7, Truman left for Potsdam and asked Byrnes to join him on the president's flagship, the *USS Augusta*. Stimson and McCloy were not invited; both left for Germany a few days later.[84] The Potsdam Conference, which began on July 15, was intended to solve many of the problems that had been left unresolved at Yalta. Primarily, the leaders of the United States, England, and the Soviet Union were to discuss the political future of Europe, the occupation and dismantling of Germany, and whether the Soviets should commit to helping defeat the Japanese. Initially, one of Truman's primary goals was to reconfirm the Soviets' assistance in the war against Japan. A July 8 memo that Truman received from the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) further articulated the importance of obtaining a Soviet commitment while at Potsdam. "An entry of the Soviet Union into the war," wrote the JIC, "would finally convince the Japanese of the inevitability of complete defeat."[85]

While Truman and Byrnes were en route to Potsdam, US military intelligence continued to intercept Japanese messages. On July 12, Japan's ambassador to Moscow, Naotake Sato, received a secret radio message from Japan's minister of foreign affairs, Shigenori Togo. Togo informed the ambassador that the emperor was increasingly disturbed by the number of citizens perishing in incendiary raids and was ready to look for a peaceful solution. The message read: "His majesty's heart's desire is to see the swift termination of this war . . . so long as England and the United States insist upon unconditional surrender the Japanese Empire has no alternative but to fight on with all its strength for the honor and the existence of the Motherland."[86] Grew forwarded the message to Truman and Byrnes, noting that "if the President, either individually or jointly with others, now conveys the impression that unconditional surrender may not be as bad as they had first believed, the door may well be opened to an early surrender. This of course is guesswork but it seems to be sound guesswork."[87] On July 18, Truman acknowledged in his journal that he had received Grew's message.[88] Forrestal, who earlier had been

hesitant to accept Japan's intercepted cables, cited the message as the "first real evidence of a Japanese desire to get out of the war."[89] Like Grew, Forrestal believed that procuring such a surrender would be possible only if the terms were changed to allow the retention of the imperial institution. Stimson and McCloy were also informed of the telegram's contents, which helped reaffirm their belief that the United States should give Japan an advance warning and should change the terms of surrender.

While preparations for the conference in Europe were moving along, other events in the United States were unfolding rapidly. On July 16, in Alamogordo, New Mexico, scientists successfully tested the first atomic bomb. According to their measurements, the explosion's force was equivalent to the power of an explosion caused by 20,000 tons of TNT, much stronger than what they had estimated.[90] The so called neutron effect that Dr. Oppenheimer had warned about was understood only weeks later, when radiation was detected at least 120 miles from the site of the explosion.[91] The scientists immediately sent a message of the successful trial to Potsdam. The first notification was sent to Stimson, which he received on the evening of July 16.

That night Stimson sent Truman a memo stating: "It seems to me that we are at the psychological moment to commence our warnings to Japan."[92] In light of Japan's shown interest in negotiating a peace agreement, Stimson, backed by McCloy, proposed that the United States draft a warning to the Japanese. The warning should be a "double warning"; if at first the Japanese did not surrender, Washington would offer them another chance before utilizing the bomb. Little is known about Truman's reaction to the memo. The sparse records available, namely McCloy's diary, imply that the memo was never discussed in a formal setting. McCloy's entry on the subject states: "The Secretary of War went off to the President's for dinner, but I gather it was rather difficult for him to find a satisfactory opportunity to talk with the President. That was unfortunate as the Japanese matter is so pressing."[93]

The following morning Truman met with Stimson. Truman informed Stimson that Byrnes was wholeheartedly against issuing an early warning to Japan regarding the atomic bomb.[94] Later that afternoon Truman met Stalin for the first time.[95] The meeting went better than Truman had expected. He was able to secure Moscow's commitment to aid in the war against Japan. In his diary the president wrote: "I've gotten what I came for—Stalin goes to war August 15th with no strings on it."[96] And yet, the following day Truman expressed a somewhat contradictory sentiment to his earlier statement. He wrote: "Japanese would fold up before Russia comes in. I am sure they will when Manhattan appears over their homeland."[97]

On July 18, the American president received a more detailed account of the atomic bomb's first test. After receiving the report, Truman met with

Churchill and notified him of the bomb's success. By then, Stimson had already informed Churchill about certain aspects of the test. According to Stimson, the British prime minister had been "intensely interested and greatly cheered up, but was strongly inclined against any disclosure [to the Soviet Union about the a-bomb]. I argued against this to some length."[98] Later, while talking with Truman, Churchill stressed that it would be wise to clarify the terms of surrender. The British prime minister's suggestion was partially based on the intercepted July 17 cable from Togo. In the cable Togo underscored that "If today, when we are still maintaining our strength, the Anglo-Americans were to have regard for Japan's honor and existence they could save humanity by bringing this war to an end . . . If however, they insist unrelentingly upon unconditional surrender, the Japanese are unanimous in their resolve to wage a thorough-going war."[99] Churchill reasoned that changing the terms of surrender would be advantageous for both sides because there would be "a tremendous cost in American life, and, to a smaller extent, in British life . . . involved in forcing 'unconditional surrender' upon the Japanese."[100] Truman did not voice a clear response to Churchill's recommendation.[101]

In the meantime, Stimson, Bundy, and McCloy were growing frustrated by the lack of access to information regarding the meetings between Truman, Stalin, and Churchill. Stimson expressed his exasperation when he wrote: "[W]e [McCloy, Bundy, and Stimson] were all troubled by the wastage of time in getting information about what is going on."[102] "Informal as well as formal conferences are being held," he wrote, "and we have to wait until they are finished and then McCloy gets hold of some one of the State Department subordinates who has been present, finds out from him what has happened and then brings it to me."[103] Eventually, Stimson asked Byrnes whether McCloy would be allowed to attend "the conferences where other Assistant Secretaries were present."[104] Byrnes consented. When Stimson asked Byrnes for minutes of the meeting, Byrnes replied that none were kept. Stimson's concluded that Byrnes was "hugging matters in this Conference pretty close to his bosom, and that my assistance, while generally welcome, was strictly limited in the matters in which it should be given."[105]

Back in Chicago the scientists continued with their attempt to change Truman's mind. In July, sixty-nine of the Chicago Metallurgical Laboratory scientists signed a petition that called for the president to clarify the terms of surrender and waited for a response from the Japanese before authorizing the use of the bomb.[106] Originally, Szilard, the driving force behind the petition, had attempted to obtain the signatures of scientists from the Manhattan Project's headquarters, but to little avail. Groves's staff, though it procured eighty-eight signatures, stopped the circulation of the petition at the Oak Ridge facility.[107]

While Szilard and his colleagues were circulating their petition, Groves was distributing a questionnaire. Groves's survey, which would become known as the Farrington-Daniels survey, asked the Chicago scientists the following: "Which of the following five procedures comes closest to your choice as to the way in which any new weapons that we may develop should be used in the Japanese war?"[108] Of the 160 scientists polled, a total of 69 scientists favored giving a military demonstration in Japan, which would be followed by an opportunity to surrender. If the Japanese did not surrender, they agreed that the bomb should be used. Compton, who was in charge of the survey's distribution, was struck by the fact that 87 percent of the scientists polled favored options that specified that the weapon be used only after other nonmilitary means were exhausted.[109] On July 19, Compton sent the results of the Farrington-Daniels survey, as well as Szilard's survey, to Groves for consideration. The results took six days to reach Groves's office, where Groves held them until August 1 before sending them to Stimson. By then, Truman had already authorized the dropping of the atomic bomb and was on his way home from Potsdam.[110]

On Friday, July 20, Truman met with Generals Dwight Eisenhower and Omar Bradley to discuss the strategy in the Pacific and the use of the atomic bomb. Though Truman did not ask for their opinions regarding the use of the bomb, Eisenhower offered his, noting that he opposed its use. At the time, Eisenhower believed that the Japanese were already defeated. Reflecting on that discussion later, Eisenhower admitted that his reaction was based more on personal feelings than on an actual analysis of the situation. However, he also advised Truman not to "beg" the Soviet Union to help in the Pacific. Eisenhower believed that there was "no power on earth that could keep the Red Army out of the war unless victory came before they could get in."[111] Bradley, unlike Eisenhower, was a more passive observer, absorbing information about the recent test and discerning that "Truman had already made up his mind to use the new weapon."[112]

On July 21 Stimson presented Truman and Byrnes with Groves's formal assessment of the first test. Both the president and the secretary of state were, according to the secretary of war, "immensely pleased. The President was tremendously pepped up by it and spoke to me of it again and again when I saw him . . . He said it gave him an entirely new feeling of confidence."[113] Having viewed the report, the president asked Marshall for his opinion. Bundy, who observed the exchange, noted that Truman found that the general, whom he greatly respected, "no longer thought it urgent to have Soviet help."[114]

That same night Truman met with Stalin. Throughout the meeting, Churchill and Truman's advisors were impressed by the president's attitude. Churchill told Stimson that Truman seemed like a new man. In his diary

entry Stimson described Churchill's reaction to Truman's transformation: "Truman was evidently much fortified by something . . . [H]e stood up to the Russians in a most emphatic and decisive manner . . . He told the Russians just where they got on and off and generally bossed the whole meeting."[115]

On Sunday, July 22, Truman continued to take the hard-line approach with the Soviets in negotiations. For instance, when Stalin continued to question Truman about Poland and the type of government that would be established, Truman essentially ignored him. Finally, Truman told the Soviet leader that the Americans were not budging on their policy that Poland would need to have a democratically elected government. Truman "had already stated the case so far as the US was concerned . . . this was his position yesterday, that was his position today, and that would be his position tomorrow."[116] Later that day, Stimson met with Truman. When they finished talking, there was no question in Stimson's mind that the bomb had become a clear factor in the decision-making process. The United States, wrote the secretary of war, "was standing firm and [Truman] was apparently relying greatly upon the info as to S-1."[117]

The following morning Byrnes sent out a cable to the minister of foreign affairs for the Chinese nationalist government, T. V. Soong, suggesting that he briefly discontinue negotiations with the Soviets. In the cable he instructed Soong "not to give way on any points to the Russians, but to return to Moscow and keep negotiating."[118] Churchill, upon hearing about this cable, deduced that the United States wanted to make sure that the Soviets could not negotiate until after Japan had surrendered. In a cable to his Foreign Service secretary, Churchill wrote, "It is quite clear that the US [does] not at the present time desire Russia's participation in the war."[119] In his 1958 manuscript *All in One Lifetime*, Byrnes admitted that he was trying to

> encourage the Chinese to continue the negotiations after the Potsdam conference. I had some fear that if they did not, Stalin might immediately enter the war . . . on the other hand, if Stalin and Chiang were still negotiating it might delay Soviet entrance and the Japanese might surrender. The President was in accord with that view.[120]

By July 24, Truman and Byrnes had decided to return to the United States as soon as possible. Before then, Truman ordered Stimson to ask Marshall whether the United States still needed Soviet assistance to defeat Japan. Upon hearing the question, Marshall's response was that the United States could do it on its own, but he also cautioned that "even if we went ahead in the war without the Russians and compelled surrender to our terms, that would not prevent the Russians from marching into Manchuria."[121] That same

morning, Stimson provided Truman two crucial pieces of information. He informed the president about Marshall's opinion and that the bomb could be used any time after August 1. Elated by the information he had just received, that same afternoon Truman told Stalin that when "there was nothing more upon which they could agree he was returning home."[122] Then, as the discussions came to an end, the president informed the Soviet leader that the United States was in possession of a massively destructive weapon that could be used against Japan to end the Pacific campaign. Stalin calmly expressed his desire that the Americans use the weapon against the Japanese in the most expedient manner. Stalin's nonchalant reaction left Truman perplexed. How could a project and a development of such magnitude not impress the Russian leader? It was later discovered that a Soviet spy, Klaus Fuchs, had infiltrated the project, giving the Soviets a heads-up on the development of the new "super-weapon."[123]

In the meantime Japan continued to fight. A July 8 US-British Combined Intelligence Committee report to Truman had noted that "the basic policy of the present Japanese Government is to fight as long and as desperately as possible in the hopes of avoiding complete defeat."[124] Military leaders in the United States knew this. There was not one American general in the Allied Forces in the Pacific who thought the Japanese were going to quit without the promise of retaining the imperial institution. Yet the report's tone was not hopeless. It also noted that

> a considerable portion of the Japanese population now consider absolute military defeat probable. The increasing effects of sea blockade and the cumulative devastation wrought by strategic bombing which has already rendered millions homeless and has destroyed from 25%–50% of the built-up areas of Japan's most important cities, should make this realization increasingly general.[125]

Despite the optimistic tone, American casualties in the Pacific in the three months since Truman had assumed the presidency continued to mount, and they accounted for half of the total casualties from the last three years of the war. In the end, intelligence estimates made it clear to Truman that an invasion of the Japanese homeland, while feasible given their weakness, would be an American bloodbath. But it also suggested that the "shock effect of one devastating blow, or two, could stop war."[126]

By late July, the Potsdam Declaration, an ultimatum by the Big Three to Japan, was almost complete, with the exception of a few points. There was some deliberation over whether Roosevelt's unconditional surrender should be abandoned to allow the emperor to retain his status. At one point, the declaration contained a stipulation that allowed the Japanese to pick their

government and maintain the imperial institution. Stimson was one of the many officials who favored it; Byrnes did not. For the secretary of state to abandon unconditional surrender would be equivalent to appeasement. Truman concurred with Byrnes. The demand for unconditional surrender was kept, and the stipulation guaranteeing the retention of the imperial institution was removed.[127]

The use of the atomic bomb against Japan soon became official. Earlier in 1945 Groves had set up a Target Committee at Los Alamos and had assigned its members the task of selecting potential atomic bomb targets. By May the committee had selected four: Hiroshima, Kokura, Niigata, and Kyoto. Stimson ordered the removal of Kyoto because of its intrinsic historical value; Nagasaki, thus, became the fourth possible target. Groves drafted the letter ordering the use of the atomic bomb, and, after Truman and Stimson's approval, it was relayed to Washington.

The official decision to use the atomic bomb expedited the already hasty process to formulate and send a resolution requesting surrender to the Japanese. On July 26 the Allies issued the Potsdam Declaration. No one explained better the relationship between the decision to drop the bomb and preempting Soviet entrance in the war than Byrnes. When focusing on the question, "Was there a feeling of urgency to end the war in the Pacific before the Russians became too deeply involved?" he responded:

> There certainly was on my part, and I'm sure that, whatever views President Truman may have had of it earlier in the year, that in the days immediately preceding the dropping of the bomb his views were the same as mine—we wanted to get through the Japanese phase of the war before the Russians came in.[128]

The declaration warned that the US, UK, and China would apply their combined land, sea, and air forces on Japan if it did not surrender. A failure to surrender would bring about "the complete and inevitable destruction of the Japanese Armed forces and the utter devastation of the Japanese homeland."[129] Though the document cited the destruction caused by the Allied forces in their war against Germany as a cautionary tale, it did not warn that the United States possessed an atomic bomb and would use it if Japan's leaders rejected the terms of the declaration. The warning was not as explicit as many scientists and politicians had advised. The declaration also addressed the issue of war criminals. It noted that those who had committed war crimes and "deceived and misled the people of Japan" would be brought to justice.[130] It stated in no uncertain terms that the Allied powers would occupy Japan after the surrender until the country was deemed "stable." The declaration did not alter Roosevelt's original terms for surrender nor did it state that

Japan would be allowed to retain its emperor. With the document sent, the Allied forces had only to wait for a reply before undertaking their plan.

On July 27, Suzuki responded to the proclamation during a press conference with the following statement: "The government does not regard it as a thing of any great value; the government will just ignore [*mokusatsu*] it. We will press forward resolutely to carry the war to a successful conclusion."[131] From Washington's point of view, the response warranted quick and decisive action. Immediately, the recommendations by the Interim Committee were put into motion. On July 30, a single presidential directive was issued permitting the drop of two atomic bombs, each on a different city.[132]

Truman and Byrnes boarded the *Augusta* on August 2 to head back to the United States. During their voyage, both received MAGIC (Marine Air/Ground Intelligence Cell) documents pertaining to Tokyo's ongoing pursuits of a diplomatic settlement. The intelligence came in two parts in two separate days. The first one, received on August 2, read: "Unanimous decision of top leaders in Tokyo that Japan should seek peace."[133] The second cable was an assessment from War Department analysts. It stated, "The Japanese Army is interested in an effort to end the war with Soviet assistance."[134] Truman and Byrnes disregarded both cables.

The first bomb, dropped at 8:15 AM, August 6, 1945, targeted an industrial center in Hiroshima, Japan. Oppenheimer had predicted that 20,000 people would die, fewer than in a conventional incendiary raid. It would be the "stunning" visual effect that would leave the impression on the citizens, thus eliciting the surrender. Oppenheimer was right on one count—the visual effect was extraordinary. However, he greatly underestimated the loss of life generated by the bomb—some 200,000, not 20,000, were killed. Truman received word of the operation on August 6. On August 9, the United States dropped a second bomb, this one on Nagasaki. It also destroyed thousands of lives.[135]

Intelligence received after the bombing of Nagasaki revealed that on the morning of the second bombing, the Japanese Supreme Court for Direction of War met to discuss a probable course of action. Three of Japan's highest ranking and most influential military leaders argued against surrender. They insisted that it would be better to lure the US forces onshore and slaughter them in a lengthy land battle. General Korechika Anami, Japan's minister of war, favored waging one more war on Japanese soil, even if it meant defeat. It was not until they received word of the second bombing on Nagasaki that Emperor Hirohito accepted the terms of surrender designed at Potsdam.[136] The Japanese government surrendered on August 14, thus effectively ending the Second World War. United States officials agreed to allow the emperor to retain his status as a subordinate to the occupying forces.

Analysis: A Nearly Predetermined Decision

Multiple goals guided the decision by the Truman administration toward Japan. As new information became available, some of its members altered their ranking, not everyone prioritized information in the same way, and some of the goals were ultimately transformed into alternatives.

For Roosevelt and Truman and their various advisors, the leading goals were to end the war against Japan as quickly as possible and to minimize the number of US lives lost in the effort. For Truman, the two goals coexisted with a long-term goal—the United States' emergence from the Second World War as the world's eminent power. As soon as he assumed the presidency, Truman pushed for the rapid development and testing of the atomic bomb. Because he and his advisors were unsure as to when the atomic bomb would be completed, initially they were determined to convince the Soviet Union to become actively involved in the war against Japan. Truman and his leading advisors were mindful that if the Soviet Union were to enter the war against Japan, in all likelihood Moscow would lay claims to Manchuria and demand to play a major role in the surrender negotiations with Japan.

The ranking of goals by the president and his advisors do not always correspond. Occasionally, advisors will attempt to convince their president to alter his ranking of goals and to consider a different option or set of options. Several members of the scientific community and a number of Truman's advisors believed that it was important to avoid an arms race and that the United States not be viewed as acting inhumanely against Japan. To help achieve these additional goals, some suggested that the president not use the bomb, others that he alter the terms of surrender, and a third group that he do both.

Members of the Franck Committee proposed that the United States either demonstrate the "new weapon" on a barren island or desert before representatives of the United Nations. They viewed dropping the bomb without forewarning as an inhumane act. Moreover, to avert an arms race, they called for the creation of an international organization with the assigned task of developing an effective international control on such weapons. The Chicago scientists were not the only ones who advocated the formation of an international nuclear control authority. Advisors and scientists who had access to the White House reasoned that because other countries would in the not-too-distant future develop their own nuclear weapons, international controls would help diminish the probability of a nuclear arms race. As Bush and Conant wrote in a memo to Roosevelt toward the end of 1944, the United States "has a temporary advantage which may disappear, or even reverse, if there is a secret arms race on this subject." They added that they feared that a nuclear arms race could lead to the development of a hydrogen bomb and

would increase the probability of a nuclear war. However, Bush and Conant defined their goal narrowly. They did not pair it with the ideas of preventing the use of a nuclear bomb against Japan, international control of nuclear weapons, ban of the weapons, or disclosure of manufacturing and military details. Instead they proposed the "complete international scientific and technical interchange on this subject, backed up by an international commission acting under an association of nations and having the authority to inspect." The commission, they emphasized, should be created only after the use of the first atomic bomb. In short, their goal was never to actually prevent its use against Japan. On June 21, 1945, members of the Interim Committee reviewed the reports and advised that the bomb "be used against Japan as soon as possible; that it be used on a war plant surrounded by workers' homes; and that it be used without prior warning."

Neither Byrnes nor Truman identified the avoidance of a nuclear arms race as one of their principal priorities. In fact, Byrnes argued that the use of the weapon would extend the United States a substantial advantage in future negotiations with the Soviet Union. It is unknown whether Byrnes ever informed Truman that many scientists had voiced their fear that use of the atomic bomb against Japan would generate an arms race. If one were to speculate based on what Truman said to Oppenheimer during a discussion in 1946, it is reasonable to infer that the president was not greatly concerned. Truman asked Oppenheimer: "When will the Russians be able to build the bomb?" The scientist replied that he did not know. Truman responded: "I know. Never."[137]

Convincing Truman to alter Japan's terms of surrender became the critical goal of Leahy, Nimitz, King, Grew, McCloy, Bard, and finally Forrestal and Stimson. Their basic claim was that if Washington made it clear to Japan's leaders that the legitimacy of their emperor would not be defiled, Tokyo would most likely surrender.

An implicit goal during the discussions was Truman and Byrnes's determination to retain the support of the American public. Both the president and the secretary of state feared that if they did not do everything within their powers to accelerate the end of the war, Americans would not forgive them. In their minds, failure to use the weapons would elicit strong condemnation from the American public. They also feared that the American public would react negatively if it were to learn that Washington was willing to alter the terms of surrender.

The successful testing of the atomic bomb enabled Truman and Byrnes to alter the ranking of their goals. Initially, determined to end the war against Japan rapidly and to minimize the number of American lives lost in the process, Truman sought to recruit Soviet participation in the final stages of the

war. He and Byrnes were aware of the costs Moscow's involvement would most likely engender. Members of the US military have made it clear that the Soviets had their eyes on Manchuria and that it would not take them long to control it the moment they entered the war against Japan. No one within the Truman administration contested this conclusion.

As soon as Truman and Byrnes learned that the nuclear test was successful and that the United States could use the weapon, the president, determined to preempt Moscow's next move, immediately authorized the use of the bomb against Japan. What is more, the successful testing of the nuclear device strengthened their belief that its effective use would enable them to fulfill another important goal—the procurement of additional funds for future atomic research.

Analysts often challenge the goals sought and alternatives opted by political leaders. Our task for the time being is not to pass judgment on whether we find Truman and Byrnes's goals and alternatives suitable or objectionable. Our aims are to determine the quality of the decision-making process based on the goals and values adhered to by the leading foreign policy–maker; on whether they sought to uncover potential conflicts among goals; and on whether they evaluated several options, sought to estimate their potential consequences, and selected the one with the highest likelihood to fulfill their preferred objectives. Based on such an analysis, we hope to isolate the model that best explains the foreign policy decision-making process.

An issue that merits consideration at this stage is whether groupthink was present during the decision-making process. It has been argued that the Truman administration became the victim of "the bureaucratic strategy of a handful of American officials with a stake in dropping the bomb on Japan" who were determined to head off opposition that had arisen in the scientific community.[138] The claim has been that the Interim Committee, though developed to make recommendations to the president based on sound and equitable deliberations, inevitably became a tool through which two members, Stimson and Byrnes, manipulated Truman.

According to this perspective, from the moment the Interim Committee was created, Stimson's well-established views dictated the overall direction of the recommendations. As Stimson himself acknowledged, the "responsibility for the recommendation to the president rested on me [Stimson], and I have no desire to veil it. The conclusions of the committee were similar to my own."[139] Those who adhere to this perspective also claim that the most detrimental member of the committee with regard to a sound decision-making process was Byrnes. It was Byrnes's presence on the committee, the argument goes, that ultimately locked the committee into the conception that an alternative to direct military use of the bomb did not exist. Even before he

sat on the committee, Byrnes had predetermined that the use of the atomic bomb was vital to shaping the structure of the postwar system in relation to the Soviet Union and that he had an enormous effect on the decision-making process of the Interim Committee. Under the influence of Byrnes, the committee, far from "formulating policy independently and upon due deliberation . . . responded for the most part to the interventions of the most important member when any significant difference of opinion arose: Byrnes spoke for the President."[140] Consequently, Truman's decision-making body not only discarded numerous alternatives to direct atomic use; they also erred in failing to consider, and relay to Truman, the criticism and dissent of the scientists who had worked on the project.

That Byrnes was Truman's most influential advisor is not an overstatement. Some even referred to Byrnes as the second president. It was also evident that some of the key members of the Interim Committee were not properly informed of political and diplomatic events that could feasibly have altered the nature of their recommendations. Advocates of this argument acknowledge that many government officials, including Stimson, Marshall, and Byrnes, had access to information that was crucial to their decision-making process, such as the cables from Japan that relayed their willingness to surrender, given an alteration to the surrender terms. But because of their own personal beliefs and biases, these officials never made any of that essential information available to lower ranking civilian and scientific members of the committee, thus disrupting the rational decision-making process and perpetuating groupthink. For Marshall, it was important to maintain the proper relationship between the civilian and military institutions. Marshall believed that it was a military man's obligation to "follow—not buck—directions which came from the ultimate civilian authority . . . he advised mainly on the strictly military aspects of the problem . . . the basic atomic decision was not to be made by the military."[141] In this case, the ultimate civilian authority was the president, who was represented by Byrnes on the committee. Byrnes made it clear that in his opinion the weapon would be useful in controlling the Russians, and thus Marshall, despite any personal reservations, accepted that assessment and stifled his objections during the crucial sessions of the committee.

We disagree with the claim groupthink afflicted the Truman administration. First, though Stimson was one of the two leading figures within the committee, while at Potsdam the secretary of war wrote a draft of the declaration he hoped would be issued at the end of the conference. In the draft he included language guaranteeing the continuance of the imperial dynasty.[142] There is no question that he favored using the bomb against Japan, but he was prepared to extend its leaders a chance to surrender before the bomb was

dropped. That his words were ultimately excluded from the final declaration concerned him greatly. Second, notwithstanding the fact that Byrnes was the president's most trusted advisor, he was not the only one with access to the president, nor did the president ever attempt to prevent his other advisors from voicing their dissent. True, not all members of the Interim Committee were equally informed, but many of those who were conveyed their views and concerns directly to the president. In short, the decision-making group was neither small nor cohesive, information to Truman was never totally filtered or altered, the president was aware of the various options discussed, and he knew that some of his advisors favored altering the terms of surrender.

However, there is a caveat. As noted earlier, though Byrnes knew many scientists involved in the Manhattan Project feared that the use of the atomic bomb against Japan would launch an arms race, it is not known whether he passed on the information to Truman or whether the president ever learned about it independently. However, when four prominent scientists—Compton, Fermi, Oppenheimer, and Bush—were asked to review the objections voiced by the scientists who attached their signatures to the Franck Report, they made it clear that they saw no option but to use the weapon.

During the last days leading to the dropping of the atomic bombs on Japan, Truman and Byrnes's six leading objectives were as follows:

1. End the war against Japan as rapidly as possible.
2. Minimize the number of American lives lost in the operation.
3. Avert the Soviet Union's participation in the war.
4. Procure additional funds for future atomic research.
5. Position the United States as the international system's leading power.
6. Maintain the support of the American public.

During the period leading to the decision to use the atomic bomb, Truman considered—or was asked to consider by some of his advisors, but not always concurrently—the following alternatives:

1. Launch a two-phase invasion of the Japanese homeland with British support but without Soviet participation.
2. Involve the Soviet Union in the final operation against Japan.
3. Set up a naval blockade around Japan coupled with the alteration of the terms of surrender.
4. Give Japan a noncombat demonstration of the atomic bomb coupled with the alteration of the terms of surrender.
5. Engage Japan in secret diplomatic negotiations.

6. Drop one or more atomic bombs on Japanese soil without forewarning as to their destructive capacity and without altering the terms of surrender.

Each option merits a summary analysis in terms of the goals sought by Truman and Byrnes. All the decision-makers agreed that launching a two-phase invasion would be costly in human and material terms and that the war would drag for at least another year. On how costly it would be, they disagreed.

Though everyone recognized that involving the Soviets in the drive to defeat Japan would help reduce American casualties and material costs, they also predicted that it would enable the Soviet Union to claim possession over Manchuria and would grant Moscow the right to participate in the negotiations with Tokyo. Such developments would undermine the United States' capacity to emerge from the war as the world system's leading power.

Giving Japan a noncombat demonstration of the atomic bomb coupled with the alteration of the terms of surrender carried its own set of potential costs. First, though by July 1945 the Japanese Air Force had been severely degraded, a warning could have led Japan to attempt to intercept a lone B29 carrying the bomb. Second, a number of top US military officials feared that, if the bomb failed to explode, it would encourage Japan to fight longer and with greater vigor. Third, in July the United States possessed only a few plutonium capsules, and several US military officials and scientists believed that they could not afford to conduct additional testing, particularly since they did not know how Japan would actually respond. Fourth, though many of Truman's advisors in Washington were convinced that Tokyo would surrender if Washington were to alter the terms of surrender, some were not. Those in doubt argued that, though Japan's foreign ministry might be advocating negotiations with Moscow's participation, it was not clear that Japan's military would be willing to give the green light. Reaching a negotiated agreement as to the terms of surrender, moreover, would be time-consuming, which would undercut the United States' capacity to exclude Moscow from the war. The August 2 and 3 MAGIC intercepted messages, in which Tokyo sought to reach a diplomatic settlement with Moscow's assistance, added credence to Truman and Byrnes's commitment to bring the war to a rapid end before the Soviets became involved. Of no less significance, particularly to the president and the secretary of state, was the fear that the American public would object to the weakening of the terms of surrender.

The idea of setting up a naval blockade around Japan was dismissed early on. Though top US military officers agreed that Japan could not survive a blockade with continual bombing for long, they were convinced that a

blockade would prolong the war unnecessarily. General Douglas MacArthur, the commander of the US Pacific forces, was the strongest voice against this option. Moreover, the alternative countered Truman and Byrnes's goal to end the war as swiftly as possible, enhanced the likelihood that the Soviet Union would become an active participant of the war, and hampered Washington's determination to assume leadership over the world system as rapidly as possible.

It goes without saying that if none of the alternatives discussed so far had much of a chance of fulfilling Truman and Byrnes's preferred goals, resorting to negotiations would rank the lowest in their range of options. There was no guarantee that Japan would have surrendered immediately had the Truman administration altered the terms of surrender and made it clear that it would not demand the deposing of the Japanese emperor. Negotiations would have ensued, which could have dragged for an extended period, thus enabling the Soviets to demand that they be included in them.

Of the six options considered, using the atomic bomb against Japan was the one with the highest probability of maximizing Truman and Byrnes's subjective expected utilities. Their calculation was that the atomic bomb would eliminate the need to invade Japan; it would help save the lives of thousands of American soldiers and, though of less importance, millions of dollars; it would make Soviet involvement in the war unnecessary and thus enable Washington to be the sole decider of Japan's future; it would be applauded by the American public; it would help generate funding for future nuclear research; and it would elevate the United States to the pinnacle of power.

Concern still lingers when one asks: Did Truman place excessive value on the impact the decision to forego the use of the nuclear bomb and to alter the terms of surrender would have on the opinion of the American public? Did Truman ever give much consideration to the possibility that using the atomic bombs would provoke an arms race?

Regarding the first question, as individuals we find it ethically objectionable that a leader would make a decision of such magnitude based in no small part on how it could affect him politically. But as analysts we are cognizant that we cannot expect for a decision-maker to disregard what he is: a politician. It is in the DNA of politicians to enter into their calculations how their decisions will affect them politically. In fact, from a purely political perspective, one could even go so far as to say that it would be irrational for a political leader to ignore the effect his action could have on his political future.

Concerning the second question, it is not entirely clear whether Truman ever considered the above questions, but there is little doubt that Byrnes did, and decided that other goals merited greater priority. In March 1945, Byrnes, then as head of the War Mobilization Board, sent a memo to

President Roosevelt warning him that, if his administration did not come up with a product [an atomic bomb] before the end of the war, after spending some two billion dollars building it, "there would be serious consequences for the Democratic Party."[143] During his meeting with Szilard and Bartky, after hearing their warning that the use of the atomic bomb on Japan would precipitate an arms race, Byrnes counteracted with two arguments. First, he asked them: "How would you get Congress to appropriate money for atomic energy research if you do not know the results for the money which has been spent already?"[144] And second, he challenged directly their claim that the use of the atomic bomb would instigate an arms race. The Soviets, he argued, had no access to uranium. Moreover, the use of the weapon would so impress the Soviets that ultimately they would have no choice but to be more conciliatory in negotiations. It is not pertinent that he was wrong in his assessment. At that point in time, they were all guessing how the world system would evolve.

In the introduction we identified a number of possible ways to explain the way decision-makers designed foreign policies. The three models that could help explain Truman and Byrnes's decision to use the nuclear bomb against Japan are the compensatory, the cybernetic, and the poliheuristic models.

According to the compensatory model, decision-makers assign values to each alternative's dimensions, develop an overall score for each alternative, and then select the alternative with the highest value. The driving assumption behind this approach is that though a particular alternative—e.g., the use of force—may score low on the political dimension, such an alternative could still be adopted if it scored high on the military dimension.[145] An alternative to the compensatory process is the poliheuristic model. The model proposes that decision-makers arrive at a decision via two steps. In the first step, they use cognitive shortcuts to reduce the number of alternatives they will consider. Typically, leaders will discard options that would affect them negatively politically. In the second step, they rely on a somewhat rational approach to select from the remaining alternatives.[146]

Did the president and the secretary of state assign values to each alternative's dimensions, develop an overall score for each alternative, and then select the alternative with the highest value, as proposed by the compensatory model? The discussion that precedes the posing of our question might lead some readers to assume that we are prepared to argue that the compensatory model best explains Truman's decision to use the nuclear bomb. We are reluctant to do so for a couple of reasons.

First, one of the critical problems with an attempt to apply the compensatory model to Truman and Byrnes's decision, or for that matter to most foreign policy decision-making processes, is that it is rarely possible to ascertain whether each leader actually conferred a specific value to a particular goal,

and, if each one did, which was the value each person assigned. Nor is it possible to establish whether Truman or Byrnes actually allocated an overall score for each alternative. What we can determine is that Truman and Byrnes valued highly each of the goals identified and that in their minds using the bomb would help fulfill all of them simultaneously.

Second, it is critically important to differentiate between a president who demonstrates his willingness to allow his advisors to state their opinions freely and gives serious consideration to what they have to say and one who, though he does not restrict the voicing of dissenting opinions, typically disregards them. From the moment Truman became president to the instant he authorized the dropping of the bomb, he never curtailed discussions, and as a result he knew that many of his advisors favored altering the terms of surrender, or that he not use the nuclear bomb, or that he at least forewarn the Japanese of its highly destructive power with a nuclear demonstration. But the fact that both the president and the secretary of state knew what their advisors were saying does not mean that they ever spent much time seriously considering their advice. We do not think that they did.

Truman had a tendency to make "jump decisions." Indeed, he admitted that when making big decisions he would "immediately make a decision when things [were] put up to [him] and [he] didn't want to tell anybody that [he had] made that decision." He would then gather the information necessary, claiming that: "[You] get all those facts and put them together and in the long run, if your heart's right and you know the history and the background of these things, it'll be right."[147]

Intuitive decision making entails a process in which information acquired through associated learning and stored in long-term memory is accessed by the decision-maker unconsciously to arrive at a judgment or make a decision.[148] Reliance on intuition is not uncommon, particularly when a decision-maker has little time to make a decision. But as analysts have argued, a decision-maker should not take his intuition at face value. A gut feeling must be taken as an important data point that the decision-maker must then consciously and deliberately evaluate.[149]

It is doubtful that upon making a decision Truman tried to revisit it. As he acknowledged, he was not one to ever question his decisions, even when they proved to be costly.[150] Of no less significance is the fact that Truman delayed his trip to Potsdam for as long as he could to give scientists enough time to test the nuclear bomb, and that, upon learning that the test had more than fulfilled the scientists' expectations, he immediately authorized its use against Japan. In other words, if we accept Truman's own words and take into consideration that he did not want to meet the Soviets until he was quite sure that the bomb was ready and that he immediately authorized its use when he

was told it was ready, we can infer that he had decided to use the weapon if it became operational, but allowed his advisors to think that he welcomed their recommendations. If our arguments stand scrutiny, then it is reasonable to assume that he never carried out the decision-making steps identified by the compensatory model. This brings us to the cybernetic model.

The cybernetic model, as we already said, is built on the assumption that in conditions of uncertainty the decision-maker lacks the mental capacity, cognitive skills, time, and energy required to conduct thorough analyses at multiple levels. Instead, he or she simplifies the decision-making process by focusing on the international, domestic, and political environments. Moreover, if a plan to address the existing problem exists, he or she will refer to it and will modify it if changes are necessary, but only in small ways. The decision-maker is not driven by the need to seek the best alternative; he or she is simply interested in finding an alternative that is bound to generate a satisfactory result. Thus, when the decision-maker is trying to decide whether to use force, one the most important steps that he or she will take is to determine whether its aggregate value across the three dimensions reaches a satisficing threshold. If that threshold is crossed, it is likely that the decision-maker will rely on force.

The cybernetic model helps to explain several aspects of Truman and Byrnes' decision. First, the two leaders kept a close eye on the international, domestic, and political environments, as proposed by the cybernetic model. Second, Roosevelt had already advocated the use of the nuclear bomb. From a cybernetic model perspective, it could be argued that Truman and Byrnes were simply relying on a plan already in place. Since they no longer needed to use the bomb against Germany after it surrendered, all that they did was to modify the plan slightly by implementing it against a different country—Japan. Truman's commitment to following the path designed by Roosevelt, but which now pertained to Japan, was explained by Barton J. Bernstein as follows:[151]

> Acting on the assumption that the bomb was a legitimate weapon, Roosevelt initially defined the relationship of American diplomacy and the atomic bomb. He decided to build a bomb, to establish a partnership on atomic energy with Britain, to bar the Soviet Union from knowledge of the project, and to block any effort at international control of atomic energy. These policies constituted Truman's inheritance—one he neither wished to abandon nor could easily escape. He was restricted politically, psychologically, and institutionally from critically reassessing this legacy.

The problem with the cybernetic model is that part of its argument would be that the two leaders were in search of a satisfactory rather than an optimal

alternative, which clearly was not the case. For Truman and Byrnes, the use of the bomb was the one option that would maximize their subjective utilities, and they waited until it became evident that the United States would be able to use it against Japan.

The limited explanatory reach of the compensatory and cybernetic models compels us to find out whether the poliheuristic model can fill the gap. It does to a great extent. As we have noted, the poliheuristic model is designed to integrate both rational and cognitive elements of a decision-making process. It posits that decision-makers engage in a two-step process, the first of which involves cognitive shortcuts and the elimination of alternatives absent in a compensatory framework, followed by a second phase in which the decision-maker applies a rational choice approach when evaluating the remaining alternatives. Truman and Byrnes valued greatly how Americans would respond to their decisions vis-à-vis Japan. They were determined to protect and enhance their political stand and that of the Democratic Party. Both leaders estimated that if the public were to learn that the United States could have ended the war by dropping a couple of highly destructive nuclear bombs on Japan but instead chose to either resort to an invasion,[152] alter the terms of surrender, or impose a long-term blockade, the two, along with the Democratic Party, would pay a very high political cost. Though neither leader outright dismissed any of the other three options while the solution of the nuclear bomb remained indefinite, they did the moment the bomb became operational. Can we argue that they cast off all other options solely for domestic political reasons? Clearly not, but domestic politics played an important role. How important? It is difficult to ascertain.

In sum, we conclude that none of the identified models captures fully Truman's approach to decision making, though we think the cybernetic and poliheuristic models, jointly, provide the best explanations. Both the president and Byrnes never obstructed the discussion of options. Moreover, while Truman waited to hear from the scientists as to whether they had succeeded in their drive to create a nuclear bomb, he allowed the consideration of other options, including the idea of altering the terms of surrender. It is clear, however, that both he and Byrnes were committed to using the bomb if it were to become available. In their minds, it was the one alternative that would enable them to maximize their preferred goals, and in Truman's mind, it was the option that Roosevelt would have favored. Was the decision arrived at via the rational process? If by rational process we mean that both leaders weighed carefully each of the available options and assigned probability values to each one of them, we would have to conclude that it was not fully rational. On the other hand, when their decision is compared to the other proposed options

and one gauges the likelihood that any of them would have maximized the preferred goals of the two leaders, it is clear that none would have.

As explained earlier, intuition can be as effective in decision making as an analytical approach. Its level of effectiveness, however, depends greatly on the decision-maker's degree of expertise on the subject. The last qualifier is critical. Truman placed tremendous trust in his intuition, but such trust was unjustified, mainly because he had little expertise in foreign policy. As we shall see in the next chapter, his deep reliance on his intuition did not generate the results he hoped.

CHAPTER 2

Harry Truman and the Decisions to Intervene in the Korean War and to Cross the 38th Parallel

Introduction

A crisis decision involves "a response to a high threat to values, either immediate or long range, where there is little time for decision under conditions of surprise."[1] North Korea's surprise decision in June 1950 to cross the 38th parallel dividing it from South Korea placed the administration of Harry Truman in a crisis mode. It compelled the president to make two distinct decisions. Shortly after the invasion, Truman had to decide whether to assist South Korea militarily. His decision to help led to the implementation of a UN military counterattack under the leadership of General Douglas MacArthur. After the UN forces pushed the North Korean troops to retreat to their homeland, Truman faced a second critical decision: Whether to allow MacArthur's forces to cross the 38th parallel in an attempt to unify the Korean peninsula under a regime friendly to the United States. Despite being forewarned by China that it would not tolerate such an act, Truman authorized MacArthur and his forces to march into North Korea. China responded with a massive attack. A costly war of attrition ensued. On July 27, 1953, the parties involved in the conflict signed an armistice agreement. The two Koreas remained divided.

We begin the chapter with a brief account of the history of the Korean peninsula, including the partition of the Korean isthmus at the 38th parallel in 1945 into two rival political regimes. We describe the Korean conflict, from the outbreak of hostilities on June 25, 1950, through the beginning of China's involvement and its massive attack on US and South Korean forces in late November 1950 in North Korean territory. We follow with an examination of Truman's FPDM process, at which time we focus on the mindsets that

influenced Truman's definition of the problems generated by North Korea's invasion. During this part of the analysis, we examine the intelligence Truman and his top advisors relied on to define the problems, the quality of the information, the number of alternatives they reviewed, and whether they assessed the potential consequences of each option systematically. As part of our analysis, we consider the structure of the FPDM body that counseled the president and establish whether its members were free to exchange views openly and to promote ideas and options that differed from those he favored. At the end of the chapter, we present the model that in our view best explains Truman's decision to intervene militarily in Korea and to cross the 38th parallel. Finally, we assess the quality of each FPDM process.

The Cold War and the Korean War

Late in the summer of 1945, Harry Truman's administration had concluded that Franklin Roosevelt's goal of establishing a long-term association with the Soviet Union was unattainable. Secretary of State James Byrnes summarized the change in attitude as follows: "There is too much difference in the ideologies of the US and Russia to work out a long term program of cooperation."[2] By the end of 1947, the leaders of both the United States and the Soviet Union concurred with Byrnes's assessment. American leaders had accepted Winston Churchill's pronouncement that "[f]rom Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the continent" and that all the countries behind that line "lie on the Soviet sphere and all are subject in one form or another not only to Soviet influence but to a very high and increasing measure of control from Moscow." In turn, the leader of the Soviet Union, Joseph Stalin, had concluded that the United States' "monopolistic capital" was "striving for world supremacy."[3]

At the start of the 1950s, as the US public and Congress labored to accept that the United States no longer held a monopoly over nuclear weapons and that China had moved into the Communist camp, Truman ordered the reexamination of the United States' security objectives and strategic plans. In April, Paul H. Nitze, who had replaced George Kennan as director of policy planning at the Department of State, and his associates produced a document that would be referred to as National Security Council Report 68 (NSC-68).

"The Kremlin," noted the writers, "regards the United States as the only major threat to the achievement of its fundamental design. There is a basic conflict between the idea of freedom under a government of laws, and the idea of slavery under the grim oligarchy of the Kremlin . . . The idea of freedom moreover, is peculiarly and intolerably subversive of the idea of slavery. But the converse is not true. The implacable purpose of the slave state to

eliminate the challenge of freedom has placed the two great powers at opposite poles. It is this fact which gives the present polarization of power the quality of crisis."[4]

The writers of the document went on to argue that the insecurities experienced by the United States manifested themselves both physically and psychologically. Though Washington had to remain vigilant concerning Soviet attempts to alter existing military and economic distributions of power, it also had to be alert concerning Moscow's worldwide efforts to humiliate and intimidate the United States and to undermine its credibility. Ultimately, the survival of the United States depended on the recognition by its government, "the American people, and all free peoples, that the cold war is in fact a real war in which the survival of the free world is at stake."[5] With this perspective as its foundation, NSC-68 called for a vast increase in the number and variety of interests the United States should be prepared to protect and the amount of resources it would need to invest in order to succeed. Truman did not approve the document immediately. He did so shortly after the start of the Korean War.

In July 1945, while meeting at the Potsdam Conference, Truman, Churchill, and Joseph Stalin agreed that after Japan's defeat, the United States and the Soviet Union would jointly occupy Korea. The three leaders did not set up territorial boundaries, but they concurred that the United States would occupy the southern half of the country and the Soviets the northern half. It did not take long for Moscow to take advantage of the absence of clearly defined borders. After overrunning Japanese forces in Manchuria, the Soviets crossed the Korean border and began their drive down the peninsula. At the Pentagon, officials concluded that without a demarcation line the Soviets would continue their drive southward, overrunning all of Korea before US troops could intervene. In a hastily produced agreement, Washington and Moscow divided the country at the 38th parallel.

Below the 38th parallel, relations between the US forces and the South Koreans became tense. The supreme commander of the forces in the Far East, General Douglas MacArthur, had appointed General John R. Hodge to administer South Korea on behalf of the United States. Hodge soon proved to be an ineffective administrator, and conditions in the south deteriorated rapidly. In an attempt to restore stability, MacArthur called on the exiled leaders of Korea's independence movement to return to their homeland and lead the country. In October 1945, Syngman Rhee was named South Korea's anti-Communist leader. Above the dividing line, the North Korean Communist Party formed the Interim People's Committee under the leadership of Kim Il Sung.[6]

In an attempt to meet the South Korean people's desire for reunification, the foreign ministers of Korea's original trusteeship set up a Soviet-American

Joint Commission to "form a provisional democratic government for all of Korea and draw up a plan, tentatively discussed at Yalta, for a four-power, five-year trusteeship."[7] With Americans seeking integration of the north and south and the Soviets encouraging the continuation of separation, the Joint Commission failed. Talks were suspended temporarily on February 5, 1946, and were reopened twice, only to conclude that the stalemate between American and Soviet interests could not be broken.

In the spring of 1947, the United States presented to the UN General Assembly a proposal to hold a UN-supervised election throughout Korea as the first step to creating a national government. The Soviet leaders claimed that in taking the issue to the United Nations, the United States had violated the Moscow Agreement. In response, they called for a unification conference by the North Korean People's Committee that ultimately issued a communiqué calling for "the withdrawal of all foreign troops and leaving Korean affairs to the Korean people."[8]

Shortly after the communiqué was issued, UN-sponsored elections were held in South Korea. The new National Assembly adopted a constitution and elected Rhee as president. On August 15, 1948, MacArthur declared the existence of the Republic of Korea, promising that the 38th parallel division would be "torn down."[9] In response, on September 9, 1948, the Soviets declared the existence of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea headed by Kim Il Sung, who immediately claimed that he had jurisdiction over the entire country.

After the Second World War, the US Congress pressured the Department of Defense to reduce its armed forces. In light of this development, President Truman ordered the Department of State and the Department of Defense to assess US commitments in Korea, estimate the peninsula's military value to the United States, and determine the feasibility of withdrawal. In September of 1947, the Joint Chiefs of Staff reported that from "the standpoint of military security, the United States has little strategic interest in maintaining the present troops and bases in Korea."[10] They cited the forces in Korea as a military liability that could not be maintained "without substantial reinforcement prior to the initiation of hostilities." Pentagon officials added that the 45,000 US servicemen stationed in Korea could be utilized elsewhere, and their withdrawal from Korea would not threaten the United States' military position of the Far East Command.

Thus, in September 1947, members of Truman's cabinet recommended the immediate removal of US forces from the peninsula. George Kennan, in a memorandum to W. Walton Butterworth, the director of the Division of Far Eastern Affairs, contended that "our policy should be to cut our losses and get out of there as gracefully as possible."[11] Indeed, the National Security

Council (NSC) maintained that US objectives in the region could remain the same even in the face of troop withdrawal. The United States, according to the NSC, should continue to seek to create a unified, self-governing Korea; guarantee that Korea adopt a truly representative form of government; and support the country's economic development.[12]

On September 19, 1948, the Soviet Union announced that its own forces would leave North Korea by the end of the year. It did so by Christmas day and requested that the UN General Assembly call for the withdrawal of US forces from South Korea. At that time, approximately 16,000 American servicemen were still present in the country. Although General Omar N. Bradley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, worried that a full extraction could prompt North Korea to launch an invasion, most of the US forces left South Korea by June 29, 1949. President Truman stated: "I have always believed that there is nothing that more easily creates antagonisms than the presence of unwanted soldiers."

The removal of Soviet and American forces from the peninsula generated a power disparity. The United States left 500 military advisers in South Korea to help train the Republic of Korea (ROK) Army.[13] South Korea's military force was understaffed. It was heavily dependent on US aid, but, due to President Rhee's repeated statements that he was determined to unify Korea by force, the US Congress decided to curtail assistance to the ROK Army for offensive combat. Thus, by June 1950, the ROK Army was devoid of heavy artillery, tanks, antitank weapons, and air power. Its combat troops numbered only 65,000 men, and the country did not possess a sizable navy.[14] In contrast, the North Korean People's Army (NKPA) was fully armed with both materiel and men. It totaled 135,000 troops, many of whom had fought in the Chinese Communist and Soviet armies during the Second World War.[15]

Despite the decision to remove its troops from South Korea, the United States continued to monitor North Korea. As US forces pulled out, McArthur ordered General Charles Willoughby to set up a secret intelligence office in Seoul known as the Korean Liaison Office. Its task was to monitor troop movements in North Korea and guerrilla activities in South Korea.[16]

During this period, the Truman administration did not convey a clear message concerning its degree of commitment vis-à-vis South Korea. In January of 1950, the secretary of state presented a qualified interpretation of the US foreign policy interests in Korea. In a speech to the National Press Club, Dean Acheson articulated the official definition of the White House's "Pacific defense perimeter." He indicated that its borders allowed the United States to "establish [itself] in the Western Pacific rather than in the Central and Eastern Pacific as [we had] before the war."[17] Acheson added: "So far as the military security in the other areas of the Pacific is concerned, it must be clear that no

person can guarantee those areas against military attack . . . But should such an attack occur, the initial reliance must be on the people attacked to resist it and then upon the commitments of the entire civilized world order under the Charter of the United Nations."[18] The day after his speech, Acheson repeated his earlier assertions in front of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and added that the South Koreans could "take care of any trouble started solely by North Korea."[19] According to Acheson, "[S]hould war arise in Korea, the United States military would not resist with military force *unless such action was part of a UN response*."[20]

The last part of Acheson's sentence is consistent with an earlier commitment voiced by the president. In March 1949, Truman approved NSC Memorandum 8/2. The memorandum stated that the Soviet Union intended to dominate all of South Korea and that such an act would pose a direct threat to the interests of the United States in the Far East. In May, Truman sent a message to Congress stressing that the United States would not "fail to provide the aid which is so essential to Korea at this critical time,"[21] and requested a substantial increase in military assistance to South Korea.[22] The message did not stipulate that the United States was ready to intervene militarily if the need arose.

Disagreement emerged as to whether South Korea could independently suppress a North Korean invasion. Defense Department officials concurred with reports that claimed that the ROK Army would be able to repel any attack from North Korea. This contention was questioned in June of 1950 by the US ambassador to Korea, John Muccio. In a letter to Congress he stated:

> Although the threat of North Korean aggression seems temporarily at least to have been contained, the undeniable material superiority of the North Korean forces would provide North Korea with a margin of victory in the event of a full-scale invasion of the Republic. Such superiority is particularly evident in the matter of heavy infantry support weapons, tanks, and combat aircraft with which the USSR has supplied and continues to supply its Korean puppet. It has been aggravated also by the recent Communist successes in China, which have increased considerably the military potential of the North, particularly by releasing undetermined numbers of Korean troops from the Chinese Communist armies for service in Korea. The threat to the Republic will continue as long as there exists in the North an aggressive Communist regime desiring the conquest and domination of the south.[23]

The Department of State challenged Ambassador Muccio's statement.

Between January and late June 1950, the North Koreans prepared for a full-scale attack on South Korea. Intelligence reports throughout this period indicated that North Korea was deploying heavy military equipment and units

close to the 38th parallel.[24] In a Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) memorandum written in May of 1950, analysts noted: "Trained and equipped units of the Communist 'People's Army' are being deployed southward in the area of the 38th Parallel. 'People's Army' and Border Constabulary units there equal or surpass the strength of southern Korean Army units similarly deployed. Tanks and heavy artillery have also been moved close to the Parallel in recent months."[25] As skirmishes between the two factions grew in numbers, so did the alerts. On May 10, "[T]he Korean Defense Minister announced that the ROK Army had been on invasion alert during the night of May 7," signifying their knowledge of the potential for attack.[26] Other reports, however, indicated that there was "no buildup of North Korean military forces along the 38th Parallel at the present."[27] Moreover, intelligence analysts doubted, despite recent buildups, that the North Koreans would move away from their policy of "guerrilla and psychological warfare" to achieve their goals, and therefore were not terribly concerned.[28] Several other regions throughout the world were plagued by potential Soviet-sponsored Communist aggression, and analysts claimed it was impossible to determine which front would be struck first, or if an attack would actually take place. A June 6 CIA report indicated that all East Asian senior Soviet diplomats had been recalled to Moscow for consultations. The CIA inferred that the purpose of the recall was to design a new plan to counter anti-Communist efforts in the region.[29]

Subsequent CIA assessments continued to suggest that the North Koreans had the potential to transition from isolated raids below the 38th parallel to full-scale attacks.[30] Indeed, Rear Admiral Roscoe H. Hillenkoetter, director of the CIA, testified in front of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on June 26, just after North Korea had launched the attack, that the CIA had been aware that conditions "existed in Korea which could have meant an invasion this week or next."[31] The agency had passed on such intelligence to the necessary officials but did not warn that an imminent threat existed. The intelligence community nonetheless had noted that there was "a sense of growing tension in the international environment and even a 'hunch' that something important was about to happen somewhere along the Soviet periphery."[32] MacArthur's intelligence agency, G-2, reported "significant NKPA border movements, forward stockpiling of weapons, and border evacuations of civilians."[33] Ambassador-at-large Philip C. Jessup completed a three-month "Asian inspection tour," that included a visit to the 38th parallel, and announced in a radio report to the American public that there "is constant fighting between the South Korean Army and bands that infiltrate the country from the North. There are very real battles."[34]

On June 20, the CIA produced a study that concluded that North Korea possessed the capability to invade South Korea at any time.[35] The analysis

was submitted to Truman, Acheson, and Secretary of Defense Louis A. Johnson. Still, on Saturday, June 24, Truman traveled to his hometown of Independence, Missouri. During that same period, Johnson and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Omar N. Bradley were returning from an inspection tour of the Far East. The administration recognized that the situation in Korea was serious, but, as explained later by Acheson, intelligence analysts did not believe that [an] "attack would take place at that time." He added, the "view was generally held that since the Communists had far from exhausted the potentialities for obtaining their objectives through guerrilla and psychological warfare, political pressure and intimidation, such means would probably continue to be used rather than overt military aggression."[36]

The inference was faulty. At four o'clock in the morning on June 25, seven North Korean assault divisions crossed the 38th parallel into South Korea, overwhelmed ROK troops, and quickly overtook several ROK Army positions.[37] Consensus as to the nature of the attack was not quickly arrived at; cables sent out indicated that the attacks could be isolated or incredibly widespread. News of the invasion first reached US officers in Seoul, who immediately notified MacArthur in Tokyo. By 6:30 AM, news of the invasion had spread throughout the region, making it possible for cables to be sent to the Department of State.

By the time US officials began learning about the invasion, MacArthur was already making independent decisions. After being informed by Colonel William H. Wright, the commander of the US forces posted in South Korea, that the ROK Army would run out of ammunition in ten days, MacArthur ordered the Eighth Army to provide the necessary supplies, effectively making the decision to "help defend South Korea without Washington's consent."[38]

At 10:00 AM Eastern Daylight Time, Assistant Secretary of State Jack Hickerson informed Acheson of the attack. Hickerson informed the secretary of state that some officials within the Department of State had suggested that the UN Security Council design a resolution requesting all parties in Korea to return to their respective sides of the 38th parallel and cease further aggression. Acheson agreed; shortly thereafter the Department of State extended the request to UN Secretary-General Trygve Lie.[39] On the evening of June 25, Acheson phoned Truman to inform him about the invasion. The secretary of state recommended that the United States ask for a meeting of the UN Security Council in an effort to seek a resolution to bring aggressions in the region to an end. Acheson convinced the president to remain in Independence until more intelligence from the Far East became available.

Throughout the night, the US Embassy in Seoul informed Washington of further significant developments in Korea. During that same time, the Department of State finalized the draft of the request for the meeting of the

Security Council. Ambassador Muccio addressed the American community in the Far East through Seoul's English-speaking radio station, alerting the population of the situation but noting that the severity of the attacks was not yet known and that alarm was not necessary.[40]

By Sunday morning, the US Mission to the UN was working to prepare for an early afternoon meeting of the Security Council. Many of the US officials feared that the Soviets would veto an American resolution, thus stalling progress toward a ceasefire. Additionally, US officials could not decide whether the resolution was to take the tone of an order or a recommendation; eventually they settled for the common UN phraseology of "calls upon" language.[41]

At 10:30 AM, Washington received a cable from Ambassador John Foster Dulles and Mr. John M. Allison in Japan, stating:

> It is possible that the South Koreans may themselves contain and repulse the attack and, if so, this is the best way. If, however, it appears that they cannot do so, then we believe that United States force should be used . . . To sit by while Korea is overrun by unprovoked armed attack would start a disastrous chain of events leading most probably to world war. We suggest that Security Council might call for action on behalf of the organization under Article 106 by the five powers or such of them as are willing to respond.[42]

Given the content of the report and that President Rhee had decided to move his government south to Suwon as a result of the destruction in Seoul, officials in Washington finally agreed that a full-scale invasion was in progress in Korea and that the military situation was worsening.

Acheson updated Truman via telephone that afternoon. The secretary of state shared with the president the text of the draft resolution that would be presented to the Security Council, expressing little hope that North Korea would comply with the requests of the resolution. Truman decided to return to the capital immediately, as "some decision would have to be made at once as to the degree of aid or encouragement which our government was willing to extend to the Republic of Korea."[43] Within two hours of his conversation with Acheson, Truman was en route to Washington.

At the airport, before boarding his plane, the president suggested to reporters that they avoid being alarmist, as the nature of the situation was not yet fully known to the international community. Despite his own call for calm, one of his aides privately told a reporter, "The boss is going to hit those fellows hard."[44] Such an observation was more than mere speculation. As the president's plane flew east, Truman was already thinking about how "the German, Italian, and Japanese aggressions that had led to World War II" would

inform his decision regarding Korea.[45] Acheson, Johnson, and Undersecretary of State James Webb met Truman at the airport. In their drive to Blair House, the president immediately made it clear that the United States had to meet this challenge. He added: "By God, I am going to let them have it." Johnson concurred, but Webb asked for a careful analysis of the situation before making a decision. The undersecretary of state stressed that his staff had prepared three recommendations and that the president should consider them. Truman's response was: "Well, OK, of course, but you know how I feel."[46]

During this period, the UN Security Council was meeting at Lake Success, New York. Absent from the meeting was Ambassador Yakov A. Malik, thus precluding a Soviet veto. Participants discussed the situation unfolding in Korea, the resolution put forth by the United States, and the role likely held by the Soviet Union as part of North Korea's attacks. Although clear evidence of Moscow's involvement in the attacks did not exist, many agreed with the criticism voiced by Edward W. Barrett, assistant secretary of state for public affairs. In his remarks he referred to the relationship between the Soviet Union and the North Koreans as being similar to that between "Walt Disney and Donald Duck," stating that the North Korean attack illustrated the "rank hypocrisy of the Kremlin's so-called peace offensive."[47] After hours of deliberation, the Security Council adopted a revised version of the US resolution. The new version called on North Korea to withdraw back to the 38th parallel and requested assistance from all members of the Security Council in the execution of the resolution. Despite the fact that few believed the North Koreans would heed their appeals, nearly all members in attendance thought that the language of the resolution struck the necessary balance between diplomacy and coercion.

As members of the Security Council left for the evening, the first Blair House conference was just about to begin. At Blair House, Webb met alone with Truman and presented the three options Acheson would propose at the meeting. The options were as follows:

1. Instruct the air force to destroy as many North Korean tanks as possible in order to slow down their advance and enable Americans to evacuate from Seoul.
2. Deploy the Seventh Fleet near Formosa.
3. Introduce US military forces into South Korea to help stop the North Koreans.

Having been forewarned by Webb what Acheson intended to state, Truman addressed the group of thirteen top diplomatic and military leaders and noted

that he was prepared to listen to their opinions with an "open mind" and that he did not plan to make any crucial decision that evening.[48]

Acheson and Johnson guided the conversation. Because the fighting had commenced only thirty-three hours earlier, "piecemeal reports" did not facilitate a complete understanding of the military developments in the region.[49] By then it had been determined that the North Korean Army had pushed ten to twenty miles past the 38th parallel, initially paralyzing the South Koreans. However, because the ROK Army had managed to mobilize quickly, the president and his advisers assumed that "the South Koreans could probably contain the attack unless the North Koreans had received extensive outside assistance."[50] Such an observation opened the discussion on the Soviet Union's role in the North Korean attack.

Nearly all in attendance agreed that the North Korean invasion had been "inspired and controlled by the Soviet Union."[51] What was unknown at the time was how such action would fit into the Soviet "world strategy." Was the USSR ready to wage a global war? Was it a matter of time until more Communist invasions occurred at the periphery of the Soviet bloc? Was a Chinese Communist invasion of Formosa imminent? The US embassy in Moscow had already attempted to gain answers to these questions by requesting assurances from the Kremlin that the USSR would try to convince North Korea to retreat from the Republic of Korea. By the time of the Blair House meeting, the Kremlin had yet to respond.

Acheson presented the recommendations originally delineated by Webb to the president. Everyone supported them, and Truman quickly approved the secretary of state's recommendations. They agreed to the following:

1. Authorize MacArthur to "furnish the South Koreans with whatever arms and equipment he could spare from the stocks of the Far East Command"[52] and to use air and naval forces to assure the delivery of such equipment.
2. Evacuate American civilians from Korea, with naval and air units of the Far East Command protecting their departure.
3. Permit the forces protecting the American evacuation to attack North Korean tanks and airplanes if they challenged the withdrawal mission.[53]
4. Give US support of the Republic of Korea in the name of the United Nations. As emphasized by the president, the United States was "working for" the United Nations, and it would take no further action until the North Koreans disregarded the Security Council resolution.

Members of the first Blair House conference left with mixed feelings. First, they agreed "immediately, strongly, and unanimously" that the North Korean

attack was a clear case of aggressive action, and hence that a challenge of some sort had to be mounted. Second, they were distressed by the absence of useful information, which prevented them from properly deciding whether the United States should involve itself militarily to ward off the North Korean assault.[54] Whether that challenge would ignite a third world war remained unclear. For some, what remained undecided was whether the United States should deploy ground forces. Several of the participants favored it, while others preferred action by the US Air Force and Navy and questioned the provision of ground forces. The president, however, did not seem to have any doubts about what was likely to ensue in the near future. In his mind it was clear that whatever "had to be done to meet this aggression had to be done. There was no suggestion from anyone that either the United Nations or the United States could back away from it."[55]

On Monday, June 26, Soviet intentions were discussed throughout Washington. During an afternoon meeting, Counselor George F. Kennan asserted that the North Korean invasion was a "local affair," not connected to a wider strategy and not "indicative" of Soviet desires to initiate a third world war.[56] The House and Senate expressed great concern with the "Russian Bear" that seemed to be asserting itself throughout the Far East. Senator William E. Jenner of Indiana spoke with Truman and told him to be attentive to the fact that "the same sell-out-to-Stalin statesmen, who turned Russia loose, are still in the saddle, riding herd on the American people."[57]

Apprehension mounted within the Truman administration when it learned that the North Koreans were not likely to accept the resolution passed by the Security Council. In the meantime, while the People's Army continued its incursion and started to enter Seoul's suburbs, the world waited for an American response, with mixed signals emerging from both the press and government officials. A member of the Truman administration initially told reporters that, given its low strategic interest to the United States, Korea "had to be written off."[58] During this same period, Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Forrest P. Sherman noted to the commander of the Seventh Fleet that US "forces would definitely be committed in Korea."[59]

At Blair House, a second meeting began with a discussion of MacArthur's most recent appraisal of the military developments in Korea. MacArthur had reported: "South Korean units unable to resist determined Northern offensive. Contributory factor exclusive enemy position of tanks and fighter planes. South Korean casualties as an index to fighting have not shown adequate resistance capabilities or the will to fight and our estimate is that a complete collapse is imminent."[60]

MacArthur's report generated a sense of urgency. Historical analogies dominated the thinking of several participants. Truman reminded his advisers

that appeasement had permitted Hitler, Mussolini, and Japan to wreak havoc on the world throughout the first half of the twentieth century. Appeasement, he stressed, was not an option in Korea. In his memoir he wrote: "In my generation this was not the first occasion when the strong had attacked the weak. I recalled some earlier instances: Manchuria, Ethiopia, Austria. I remembered how each time that the democracies failed to act it had encouraged the aggressors to keep going ahead. Communism was acting in Korea just as Hitler, Mussolini, and the Japanese had acted ten, fifteen, and twenty years earlier."[61] His comment reinforced what he had said earlier on to an aid. "If we are tough enough now," he said, "if we stand up to them as we did in Greece three years ago, they won't take any next steps. But if we just stand by, they'll move into Iran and they'll take over the whole Middle East. There's no telling what they'll do, if we don't put up a fight now."[62] Acheson and Assistant Secretary of State Dean Rusk shared Truman's view. As explained by Rusk: "The North Korean attack seemed a direct challenge to the entire concept of collective security won at such cost during World War II."[63]

By the end of the conference, Acheson had submitted to Truman five recommendations.

1. The navy and air force must give full support to the South Korean forces, but such support must be limited to the area south of the 38th parallel.
2. The Seventh Fleet must prevent an attack on Formosa, the Chinese Nationalist Government must be instructed to desist from operations against the mainland, and the fleet must ensure compliance of the latter order.
3. US forces in the Philippines must be strengthened and so must military assistance to the Philippine government.
4. A military mission to Indochina must be dispatched.
5. Ambassador Warren R. Austin, chief American delegate to the United Nations, must be instructed to report any action taken under the above recommendations to the United Nations.[64]

As in the previous meeting, Truman approved the recommendations almost immediately. A sense of harmony emerged in which participants felt their decisions contributed to the dominant goals to be achieved: resist military aggression and uphold the interests of the United Nations.[65]

Following the meeting, the decisions were communicated to MacArthur. No written directives were sent, but a Pentagon official attempted to clarify the general's orders with the following statement: "Your mission is to throw the North Koreans out of South Korea." He also emphasized that MacArthur

was authorized to use the US Air Force to attack North Korean military targets south of the 38th parallel.[66] Upon receiving the go-ahead, MacArthur set to work immediately.

The president, his advisors, and members of the cabinet spent June 27 notifying the American public and US allies of the decisions they had reached the previous night at the second Blair House conference. The US Congress expressed its support and agreed that the course of action Truman had adopted was the only option, given the conditions in Korea. Additionally, it supported the president's assertion that the United States would be acting in Korea on behalf of the United Nations.

That same afternoon the Soviets rejected the claims included in the note from the US embassy. Moscow insinuated that the South Koreans had instigated the attack and stated that responsibility for bringing the conflict to an end belonged to those who supported the Republic of Korea. Acheson viewed the Soviet response favorably, as it indicated the Soviet Union's intention to "disengage" from the invasion and avoid responsibility.[67]

Members of the UN Security Council agreed with the Truman administration that armed assistance was integral to repelling the North Korean invasion. The Security Council met that afternoon without the participation of the Soviet Union's delegate, Ambassador Malik. The council approved a new resolution recommending "[m]embers of the United Nations to furnish assistance to the Republic of Korea as may be necessary to repel the armed attack and to restore international peace and security in the area."[68]

June 28 saw the first strains of discontent with Truman's decision to come to the aid of the Republic of Korea. In the Senate that afternoon, Senator Robert A. Taft, Republican of Ohio, openly opposed the "bungling and inconsistent foreign policy" of the administration.[69] He cited the contradictory nature of the administration's actions in first withdrawing American armed forces in the region, setting forth the Pacific defense perimeter, and then reversing its initial policy. But his voice did not carry the day; later on, senators debated the idea of military involvement north of the 38th parallel and agreed that such future action would be justified. Shortly thereafter, the Senate unanimously passed a bill that extended the Selective Service Act, thus effectively supporting Truman's decisions.[70]

The fact that the US Congress had supported Truman's decision did not suggest that such support would remain unchallenged, as Acheson noted that afternoon at the National Security Council's first meeting since the outbreak of hostilities. The decisions made regarding Korea, he stressed, had the potential to commit the United States to an all-out war, something that the American people were not prepared for in the wake of the Second World War. Although the president hoped the military situation would settle quickly,

he understood the need for proper intelligence gathering and information dissemination. In light of these necessities, General Hoyt S. Vandenberg, air force chief of staff, was sent to Tokyo to "familiarize General MacArthur with the latest thinking in Washington." The hope was that personal contact with MacArthur would help "avoid mistakes." During the meeting Truman also noted that if the Korean conflict "was prolonged [he] would want to see General MacArthur."[71]

Across the world, MacArthur was already taking critical steps. While the general flew from Tokyo to Korea to complete a personal reconnaissance of the fighting front, he discussed with his crew the difficulties facing the US Air Force in Korea. One of them was the order that the air force not strike at enemy positions north of the 38th parallel. MacArthur's thinking was that if the North Koreans were able to maintain an air sanctuary where Communist forces could mobilize, he would not be aiding the South Koreans in the manner that the UN had directed. Thus, he authorized the extension of operations into North Korea. His decision was conveyed in the form of a message that read: "Stratemeyer to Partridge: Take out North Korean Airfield immediately. No publicity. MacArthur approves."[72]

MacArthur's unauthorized decision did not generate costly consequences. By Thursday, June 29, reports sent to the Department of Defense from general headquarters in Tokyo indicated that the military situation in southern Korea was so grave as to warrant another meeting of the NSC. After conferring with his military advisers on the subject of US ground troops in Korea and Soviet intentions in the region, Truman approved the following directive to MacArthur: "You are authorized to extend your operations in Northern Korea against air bases, depots, tanks, farms, troop columns, and other purely military targets, if and when this becomes essential for the performance of your missions . . . Special care will be taken to insure that operations in North Korea stay well clear of the frontiers of Manchuria or the Soviet Union . . . The decision to commit United States air and naval forces and limited Army forces . . . does not constitute a decision to engage in war with the Soviet Union."[73]

By the next day, the policy of using US ground troops solely for protective purposes was altered. MacArthur informed the Pentagon that based on reconnaissance he had concluded that the "only assurance of holding the Han river line and to regain lost ground would be through the commitment of United States ground combat forces into the Korean battle area."[74] He then requested that Truman send him the appropriate authorization as soon as possible. "Time is of the essence," wrote MacArthur, "and a clear-cut decision without delay is essential."[75] Army Chief of Staff General J. Lawton Collins sent the request to Truman. The president approved the use of one regimental

combat force immediately but added that he would have to confer with his advisors as to the feasibility and advisability of further ground commitments. Following a meeting that afternoon with his top advisers, Truman authorized MacArthur to "use the forces available to him at his discretion."[76] Although MacArthur felt restricted as a result of his limited manpower, he launched an offensive in earnest.

Throughout July, MacArthur's troops worked hard to repel the NKPA. By July 20, the Far East Air Force (FEAF) had "established air superiority over Korea" as MacArthur continued to request additional troops from the Joint Chiefs. He was already in command of all UN forces as dictated by the Security Council resolution of July 7.[77] Still, the North Koreans continued to push southward, forcing MacArthur to develop a new plan to stop their movements. In mid-July MacArthur began preparations for an amphibious landing at Inchon. This step merits a brief analysis.

MacArthur designed the operation without input from Washington. Upon learning of the plan, the Joint Chiefs of Staff voiced their doubts. It was known among military analysts that the

> tides on the shores of Inchon were some of the worst in the world, averaging a difference of twenty-nine feet between high and low tide. This fact alone made the timing of the invasion practically impossible. If the troops did not converge upon the beach at precisely the right moment, they could face crippling mud and be trapped as perfect targets for the enemy. A city of about 250,000 people, Inchon had many large buildings that could be used as enemy bunkers from which sniper fire or assaults could be launched.[78]

In an attempt to dissuade MacArthur, the Joint Chiefs sent General Collins and Admiral Forrest Sherman to Tokyo. They were not successful. As noted by Acheson, "General MacArthur was almost alone in favoring the risky Inchon operation."[79]

MacArthur's experience during the Second World War determined his decision. He had relied on a surprise amphibious assault during his first counteroffensive maneuver against Japan in New Guinea in 1943. On that occasion he had moved with a weakly armed force against a strong enemy protected by a well-defended port. His reliance on surprise brought him a great victory. He was aware of the odds he faced at Inchon. As he noted: "Inchon is a 5000 to 1 gamble, but I am used to taking such odds . . . We shall land at Inchon and I shall crush them."[80]

Eventually Washington gave MacArthur the necessary approval for the operation. Their consent came, at least partially, as a response to the fact that the Eighth Army had successfully defended the Pusan Perimeter throughout

July and August.[81] MacArthur's gamble paid off. On September 22, just seven days after US forces began their assault on Inchon, the North Korean troops abandoned Yongdong, their hold a mere two miles from Seoul.[82] Exactly one week later, on September 29, Seoul was restored to the South Koreans and "with the capture of Uijongbu on October 3 by the 7th Marines, the war in South Korea was over," at least temporarily.[83]

Despite the successful return of Seoul to the South Koreans, the Korean conflict was not over. Throughout the month of September, Truman came under intense political pressure to allow US forces to cross the 38th parallel and to pursue a policy of liberation and reunification. American newsmen such as Walter Lippmann, and many Republican officials, including Senator Joseph R. McCarthy of Wisconsin, criticized the government's acceptance of a divided Korea, claiming that stopping at the 38th parallel would be an "appeasement of communism."[84] Three weeks into the war, Truman met with his advisors to discuss whether at some point he might have to consider authorizing MacArthur to cross the 38th parallel. According to Truman's advisors, the UN resolution did not present any legal obstacles, for it called for the restoration of peace and security in the area, which could be interpreted to include North Korea. Their greatest concern was whether the Chinese or the Russians would view the act as a direct threat to their own security. Many feared the crossing of the parallel would evoke a major reaction from Moscow, possibly by encouraging Beijing to send its forces into North Korea. In short, Truman's top advisors initially believed it was too risky to cross the border and did not view it as a necessary ingredient for victory.[85]

By this time, the intelligence agencies had agreed that it was the intent of the Soviet Union to eliminate Anglo American influence in Europe and Asia[86] "[and] that the North Korean Government [was] completely under Kremlin control and there [was] no possibility that the North Koreans acted without prior instruction from Moscow."[87] In response to the political pressure he was facing, on September 1 Truman stated in a foreign policy speech that the Koreans deserved the right "to be free, independent, and united," and the United States, under UN guidance, would play an important role in achieving that end. Yet, there was still no consensus among members of the Truman administration as to whether the United States should cross the 38th parallel. Lower level officials in the State Department and the Pentagon remained hopeful that the United States could turn the tide in Korea. A clear victory over the North Koreans, they argued, might bring about the complete reunification of Korea as a non-Communist state[88] and challenge "the Chinese Communist regime . . . to question their exclusive dependence on the Kremlin. Throughout Asia, those who foresee only inevitable Soviet conquest would take hope."[89] Department of State Far East specialist John M. Allison

argued that the time to be bold had come and that the United States should "take more risks than [it had] already taken." Warren Austin, US ambassador to the United Nations, also favored marching north, as did the Pentagon. They argued that MacArthur would "not be restrained at the 38th parallel" and that all of Korea "should be occupied and guaranteed free elections." On the other hand, Department of State staffer Charles Bohlen feared that a move into North Korea could prod either the Chinese or the Soviets into war. Kennan was concerned that a move into North Korea would place UN forces at a major disadvantage.[90] The CIA voiced its own set of concerns. In August 1950, it warned that although "an invasion of North Korea by UN forces, could, if successful, bring several important advantages to the US, it appears at present that grave risks would be involved in such a course of action. The military success of the operation is by no means assured." Britain's Chiefs of Staff were also doubtful of the wisdom behind the action but voiced little concern or opposition.[91]

The warning voices did not dissuade MacArthur and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. MacArthur had expressed his preference shortly after he received the United Nations' July 7 authorization to come to the aid of Korea. During a conversation with Generals Collins and Hoyt Vandenberg, he said: "I intend to destroy and not to drive back the North Korean forces. I may need to occupy all of North Korea."[92] The Joint Chiefs of Staff concurred. On September 7, they told Secretary of Defense Johnson that they believed that after

> the strength of the North Korean forces has been broken, which is anticipated will occur south of 38 degrees North, that subsequently operations must take place north and south of the 38th Parallel. Such operations should be conducted by South Korean forces since it is assumed that the actions will be of guerrilla character. General MacArthur has plans for increasing the strength of the South Korean forces so that they should be adequate at the time to cope with the situation.[93]

Truman received the Joint Chiefs of Staff recommendation on September 9. Despite the fact that his top advisors believed that the United States could achieve victory by offering surrender terms the moment it became evident that the North Koreans would be defeated, Truman approved the Joint Chiefs of Staff request without modifications.[94] Over a week later, the Joint Chiefs of Staff sent a directive to MacArthur stating:

> Your military objective is the destruction of the North Korean Armed Forces. In attaining this objective you are authorized to conduct military operations, including amphibious and airborne landing or ground operations north of the

> 38th Parallel in Korea, provided that at that time of such operation there has been no entry in North Korea by major Soviet or Chinese Communist Forces, no announcement of intended entry, nor a threat to counter our operations militarily in North Korea.[95]

On September 29, George Marshall, who had replaced Johnson as secretary of defense, wrote MacArthur the following message: "We want you to feel unhampered tactically and strategically to proceed North of the 38th parallel."[96]

As the prospect of US activity north of the 38th parallel increased, China monitored carefully Washington and MacArthur's actions and began to strengthen its troops on the Manchurian border. Beijing did not attempt to conceal its concern. China's foreign office repeatedly warned that Beijing would not stand by quietly as the United States neared its border. The Chinese "would always stand on the side of the Korean people" and would "not tolerate seeing their neighbors being savagely invaded by the imperialist" nor would they "sit back with folded hands and the let the United States come up to their border."[97] On October 2, Chinese leaders passed a resolution that authorized the crossing of Chinese forces into North Korea.[98] Perhaps hopeful that China's determination would not be underestimated, its foreign minister, Chou En-Lai, met with India's ambassador, Kavalam Madhava Panikkar, on October 3 and told him that if the Americans "crossed the 38th Parallel, China would be forced to intervene in Korea . . . American intrusion into North Korea would encounter Chinese resistance."[99] The ambassador made sure the message was communicated to the British and then to the Americans. Both the Americans and the British interpreted the threat as a bluff.

Notwithstanding China's early warnings, the United States submitted a resolution to the UN General Assembly recommending that all "appropriate steps be taken to ensure conditions of stability throughout Korea."[100] On October 7, the resolution was passed. Ambassador Panikkar was troubled by Washington's decision. The United States, he concluded, had "knowingly elected for a war," for they were "well aware that the Chinese would intervene decisively in the fight."[101] Two days later, MacArthur's forces crossed the 38th parallel. Prior to that he demanded that the North Korean forces surrender, but, rather than wait for a reply, he ordered the Eighth Army to cross the parallel.

MacArthur did not share the Indian ambassador's concern. During his meeting with Truman on October 15 in Wake Island, MacArthur told the president it was unlikely that China would enter the war.[102] The Chinese, explained the general, did not have the necessary capabilities to become

involved in North Korea. The CIA substantiated MacArthur's assessment. It informed the president that China's "most favorable time for intervention had passed."[103]

None of these estimates was accurate. On October 19, MacArthur's forces captured Pyongyang, but as the ROK and American forces continued their move, China was secretly deploying 130,000 forces of its own inside the North Korean theater. It was not long before the Chinese forces experienced their first victories against ROK outfits. MacArthur and his intelligence analysts continued to assume that the number of Chinese forces in North Korea was small.

Back in Washington, optimism prevailed, but it was not a unanimous sentiment. On October 27, Acheson acknowledged for the first time that he feared Chinese intervention. He was beginning to wonder whether the United States should have been more attentive to the warning passed on by the Indian ambassador to the United States and Britain. His advisors disagreed. They remained convinced that China's involvement was limited. The CIA reiterated its earlier estimate. In an October 30 memo, it acknowledged the presence of Chinese forces but added that the number remained small.[104]

As November arrived, concern in Washington grew. The aggressive march of MacArthur's forces deep into North Korean territory led some of Truman's advisors to wonder whether it was wise to give the general so much freedom of action. And yet, no one seemed prepared to advise the president that he should monitor closely the steps being taken by the military. We knew "something was badly wrong," noted Acheson, but "muffed" the chance to correct it. Acheson did not dare to advance military recommendations that members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff opposed, and the Joint Chiefs continued to adhere to the doctrine of protecting the theater commander's authority. As a result, everyone stood transfixed "until the last chance was lost."[105]

By then MacArthur himself was beginning to realize that he might have been overly confident. In a November 6 memo he wrote to the Joint Chiefs that men and material were coming across the bridges over the Yalu River from Manchuria and requested that he receive immediate authorization to bomb the bridges. Failure to act could lead to the destruction of the UN forces. Upon receiving the request, Truman extended the authorization but ordered that the bombing be limited to the Korean end of the bridges.[106]

A month later, the Chinese proved MacArthur and intelligence analysts wrong. In a November 24 report, the CIA wrote, "[T]here is no evidence that the Chinese Communist plan major offensive operations in Korea." MacArthur and his staff estimated that the Chinese could have not crossed more than 30,000 troops without detection by the US Air Force and the intelligence apparatus. That same day MacArthur had declared that the US forces

"would be home by Christmas." It was not to be. On November 25, some 300,000 Chinese forces launched a massive attack on the US Eighth Army and the ROK II Corps, forcing both to retreat, eventually all the way back to the other side of the 38th parallel. On November 28, MacArthur cabled Washington the following message: "We face an entirely new war." "The failure to detect the true size of the enemy forces," wrote the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Omar Bradley, "was our greatest battlefield intelligence blunder since the Bulge."[107]

Analysis: Two Poorly Designed Foreign Policy Decision-Making Processes

Truman committed the United States to the Korean conflict in four escalating steps. First, he provided air and naval support to protect the withdrawal of Americans from South Korea; second, he ordered air and naval action against NKPA forces south of the 38th parallel; third, he commanded American ground forces into the combat zone; and finally, he extended ground, air, and naval action north of the 38th parallel.[108]

When analyzing the Truman administration's foreign policy decision-making process that led to the initial involvement of the United States in the Korean conflict, it becomes clear that the rational process was hindered on all levels, and it began with the interpretation of US intelligence. In the wake of the Second World War, the US government had a myriad of both domestic and foreign policy matters to manage. Prior to the outbreak of hostilities in Korea, the Truman administration was attending primarily to issues involved in rebuilding Europe, strengthening the Democratic Party, addressing the China/Formosa cleavage, and coping with the Cold War.[109] The newly formed Central Intelligence Agency was responsible for developing its capabilities and proving its reliability. Although the agency issued countless statements indicating the possibility of invasion, it never alerted the president that a North Korean attack was *imminent*. It was the responsibility of the top US leadership to follow up on such warnings. However, with their attention focused elsewhere, Truman and his advisers were surprised by the North Korean invasion and scrambled to react.

In addition, and possibly more important, "[T]he United States was caught by surprise because, within political and military leadership circles in Washington," the perception was that North Korea would not attack unless it was authorized by the Soviets. The Soviets, many in Washington inferred, would not authorize such an attack because it would mark the prelude to another world war, and Moscow was not prepared to take such step. Washington assumed that North Korea was "a firmly controlled Soviet satellite that

exercises no independent initiative and depends entirely on the support of the USSR for existence." Such assistance would not be extended because Moscow hoped to avoid a general war. Moreover, as explained later by Acheson, the common view was "that since the Communists had far from exhausted the potentialities for obtaining their objectives through guerrilla and psychological warfare, political pressure and intimidation, such means would probably continue to be used rather than overt military aggression."[110] MacArthur and his staff concurred. Their perception was that no Asian troops would dare to stand up to the US military.[111]

While some of the actions of the Truman administration prior to the outbreak of hostilities in Korea are not directly related to the decision-making process that began on June 25, 1950, they are indicative of Truman's reluctance to reevaluate his policies when necessary. As we have discussed, prior to January 1950, Truman and his advisors had constructed a policy of limited responsibility for the Republic of Korea. The policy allowed the United States to distance itself militarily from the newly formed nation. As intelligence reports began to acknowledge the potential for aggression in the region, however, such a policy of limited relations was not reconsidered.

Scholars of decision-making theory who have studied the relationship that emerges between decision-makers and their intelligence analysts have come to the conclusion that "though it is impossible to predict what action the foreign policy-maker will take, it is very likely that he will be suspicious of or will outright reject the intelligence analyst's conclusions if they challenge some deeply rooted preconceptions or question an existing policy."[112] Had Truman heeded the warnings of the intelligence community in the spring of 1950, he would have been compelled to ask his advisors to review the United States' policy toward South Korea and its preconceptions regarding the relationship that existed between the Soviet Union and North Korea. Such a review might have required a subsequent change in policy. Perhaps the United States would have deemed it necessary to commit itself to the protection of the region in order to deter attacks on South Korea. Perhaps it would have begun to arm and train the ROK Army and provide increased economic assistance to the government. Either of these alternative policies would have altered measurably the existing policy toward Korea, possibly at a high cost. Given Washington's focus at the time on rebuilding Europe and managing the Cold War, the United States simply did not have the time, energy, money, or material to implement new policies in the Far East. Truman's behavior corroborates the contention that a decision-maker "will choose to change his policy only if he can find another that in his estimation will have a greater expected utility, at an acceptable level of risk."[113] Truman's reluctance to reevaluate existing policies when presented with new information clearly manifested itself prior to the North Korean invasion and was recurrent throughout the conflict.

Given the Truman administration's disregard of CIA warnings and resulting lack of substantial information, any decision reached immediately following the invasion would have been based on extensive speculation. Without sufficient information regarding the Soviet Union's role in the attack, Truman and his advisors could not determine the real nature of the problem they were attempting to address. Was the United States responding to North Korea as the aggressor, or was it responding to the greater power—the Soviet Union? Lacking an answer to this question, officials could not ascertain whether they were becoming embroiled in a limited conflict in Korea or risking a wider war by responding militarily to the leader of the Communist world. Reports arriving in Washington were inconclusive. Dulles and Allison cabled from Tokyo that North Korea had launched an all-out attack. But this information arrived not long before Truman was to meet for the first time with his advisors at Blair House.[114]. Another report, however, indicated that the Republic of Korea might have the potential to ward off the North Korean attack. Moreover, the intentions of other nations had not yet been established. In short, the United States possessed little firsthand intelligence.

The process of defining practical solutions to the problem unfolding in the Far East was largely ignored. Immediately upon deciding that the North Koreans must be stopped, military action was identified as the choice response by the members of the Truman administration and by MacArthur and his staff. The design and discussion of alternative solutions barely took place; attempting to engage North Korea with diplomacy and negotiations outside of UN resolutions was never suggested. While a note was sent to Moscow requesting that the Soviets try to convince the North Koreans to retreat, this was the only attempt at nonmilitary interaction with those suspected of being involved in the attack. Most notably, the notion of inaction was forsaken altogether.

Rationality is dictated by a decision-maker's response to the ranking of his *own* values. When a decision-maker makes a decision that contradicts his original ranking, it is sensible to inquire whether he changed the ranking, and if he did, why. Beginning in 1947, Truman and his administration started to signal that the United States would not continue to support the Republic of Korea as steadfastly as it had been doing. The Joint Chiefs of Staff stated in September of that year that, from "the standpoint of military security, the United States has little strategic interest in maintaining the present troops and bases in Korea."[115] The US troop withdrawal from the region, which was completed by June 1949, reaffirmed the original claim made by the Pentagon.

Shortly thereafter, Truman informed Congress that his administration was prepared to aid South Korea in moments of crisis, but did not specify what form of assistance he would be willing to extend. His commitment

was vague, as was the commitment voiced by his secretary of state. During a January 1950 speech at the National Press Club, Acheson indicated that the United States was limiting its responsibility for South Korea. He delineated a Pacific defense perimeter that clearly excluded southern Korea. Most importantly, when questioned about US intentions regarding South Korea and the possibility of aggression on behalf of North Korea, Acheson made clear that should war arise in Korea, the US military would not assist with military force unless such action was part of a UN response.

Although the US action following the outbreak of hostilities was conducted in the name of the United Nations, it is clear that, contrary to the stated policy, the United States was prepared to take military action in the region on its own if necessary. Indeed, Truman admitted that he was prepared to commit American troops even in the absence of UN authorization, a position that was in direct contrast to Acheson's statements. Additionally, throughout the course of the entire conflict, the United States carried the major burden of the war, supplying most of the air units, naval forces, troops, and equipment.[116] Thus, given the definition of *rationality* set forth above, Truman's deviation from such an existing set of values for a number of years leads one to question the quality of the decision-making process.

Truman and his advisors responded within the parameter of severe time constraints. The president felt he had been dealt a situation that required a crisis decision, or "a response to a high threat to values, either immediate or long range, where there is little time for decision under conditions of surprise."[117] The need for a swift response makes it difficult for political leaders to conduct a comprehensive analysis of information and of multiple options. But it is in such instance that leaders must do everything they can to slow down the process to ensure that their decision does not generate unwanted consequences.

Truman chose not to decelerate the process. On the short flight from Independence back to the capital, Truman observed that, if the free world sat idly by and allowed the Communists to take over South Korea, "no small nation would have the courage to resist threats and aggression by stronger Communist neighbors."[118] He reiterated his determination to respond with force to Acheson, Johnson, and Webb during the automobile ride from the airport to Blair House.

To understand Truman's reaction to the Korean crisis, we must address issues that the compensatory, cybernetic, and poliheuristic models cannot address effectively. As we have already noted, the solution to a problem entails more than ranking a set of values and searching for that option from a number of alternatives that has the best chance to maximize the decision-makers preferred goals; the solution is also a function of the way the problem is

interpreted. By the end of 1947, US leaders had accepted Winston Churchill's pronouncement that "[f]rom Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the continent" and that all the countries behind that line "lie on the Soviet sphere and all are subject in one form or another not only to Soviet influence but to a very high and increasing measure of control from Moscow." By the start of the 1950s, much of the US public and Congress had become convinced that Moscow's basic intent was to humiliate and intimidate the United States and to undermine its credibility. The survival of the United States, it was commonly believed, depended on the recognition by its government, "the American people, and all free peoples, that the cold war is in fact a real war in which the survival of the free world is at stake."[119] This viewpoint would remain unchallenged for years to come and would influence measurably the way in which future presidents would define critical foreign policy problems.

In addition to the socially constructed mindset, it is important to comprehend Truman's own idiosyncrasies as a decision-maker. Schema theory asserts that whenever burdened by limited time or energy, a decision-maker will rely on cognitive shortcuts in order to simplify the decision-making process.[120] Leaders often use historical analogies to understand new problems. Truman acknowledged that he repeatedly relied on history to make decisions. In his memoirs, he wrote: "I had trained myself to look back into history for precedents, because instinctively I sought perspective in the span of history for the decisions I had to make . . . Most of the problems a President has to face have their roots in the past."[121]

Throughout the course of the Korean conflict, especially at its outset, Truman intuitively used historical analogies to form an image of the situation unfolding in the Far East. He linked North Korea's surprise attack to Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor and to Germany's aggressive actions in Europe. Such connection enabled Truman to claim that an immediate response was imperative. In his estimation, a speedy reaction was the only way to avoid destruction similar to that witnessed during the Second World War.

Truman's preoccupation with relating the Korean attack to the stated historical analogies confirms his reluctance to reevaluate his own deeply rooted preconceptions. By refusing to consider the possibility that the North Korean attack might not have signified the onslaught of Soviet expansion, Truman depicted the situation as worse than it might have actually been. The president failed to question the validity of his historical analogies, because had he done so he would have been compelled to reconsider his response to North Korea. Additionally, by maintaining an opinion that perpetuated the accuracy of said historical analogies, he evaded the challenge of having to engage in cognitive complexity.

Truman's aversion to cognitive complexity manifested itself also in his tendency to base his foreign policy justifications on moral language and instinct. When reflecting on his decisions throughout the Korean conflict in later years, Truman stated that "it was always the same . . . The strong got away with attacking the weak, and I wasn't going to let this attack on the Republic of Korea . . . go forward. Because if it wasn't stopped, it would lead to a third world war, and I wasn't going to let that happen. Not while I was President."[122] Such a statement, while valiant, represents Truman's reliance on "right versus wrong" to formulate policy. His "determination to resist Communist aggression" throughout the world, as well as his commitment to South Korea's right to self-determination, prevented him from analyzing the situation from a strictly unbiased position.[123] His determination corresponded with the mindset that defined Washington's, and much of the United States', thinking environment.

When discussing his approach to decision making, Truman went so far as to declare he made "jump decisions." Indeed, he admitted that when making "big decisions" he would "immediately make a decision when things [were] put up to [him] and [he] didn't want to tell anybody that [he had] made that decision." He would then gather the information necessary, claiming that: "[You] get all those facts and put them together and in the long run, if your heart's right and you know the history and the background of these things, it'll be right."[124]

As explained in the previous chapter, intuitive decision making entails a process in which information acquired through associated learning and stored in long-term memory is accessed by the decision-maker unconsciously to arrive at a judgment or make a decision.[125] Reliance on intuition is not uncommon, particularly when a decision-maker has little time to make a decision. But as analysts have argued, a decision-maker should not to take his intuition at face value. A gut feeling must be taken as an important data point that the decision-maker must then consciously and deliberately evaluate.[126] The problem with Truman's reliance on his gut feeling was that in the Korean case, his intuition was not built on any solid knowledge about the enemy. His lack of knowledge about North Korea, its history, and its culture undercut the utility of his instincts.

Noncompensatory theory best explains Truman's decisions to involve the United States in the Korean conflict. He and his advisors did not carefully evaluate and compare various alternatives across different dimensions. Instead, they adopted or reject alternatives on the basis of very few criteria. As inferred by Truman, adopting a policy of direct military intervention in Korea earned his administration political advantages both domestically and internationally. Shortly after the start of the war, Americans became convinced of

the need to oppose Communism whenever possible and understood that, as Europe was preoccupied with rebuilding itself after the war, the burden fell largely on the United States.

A good example of Truman's readiness to act precipitously was his Friday, June 30, decision. The day before, during the National Security Council meeting, the Joint Chiefs of Staff recommended that units of the army be deployed to Korea for offensive use. The president was reluctant to accept their advice. "He was particularly disturbed by the thought of committing ground troops anywhere in Korea."[127] He worried of becoming overcommitted in Korea and being incapable of meeting "important contingencies which might develop elsewhere."[128] Despite their failure to conduct a full analysis of the potential implications of the recommended policy, the meeting adjourned. On the morning of the thirtieth, the Pentagon received a cable from MacArthur recommending the use of ground forces to resist "the rapidly deteriorating military situation." The general requested that the president approve the use of two divisions to launch a counteroffensive.[129] During a telecom discussion with MacArthur, the chief of staff of the army, General Collins, explained that based on "the reluctance to commit ground forces which the president had exhibited less than twelve hours earlier during the meeting of the National Security Council," he believed Truman would need to consult with his advisors before authorizing "the employment of American infantrymen in combat."[130] MacArthur insisted that time was of the essence and demanded an immediate response from the president. The general's unyielding sense of urgency was conveyed to Truman at 4:57 in the morning. The president, without discussing the request with his advisors, immediately approved the use of one regimental combat team and promised to get back to MacArthur regarding the additional requested units.[131] Had he postponed the decision for four hours, Truman could have engaged in a comprehensive analysis of the full ramifications of US troop involvement.

The decision to cross the 38th parallel and pursue a policy of forcible reunification rather than a policy of containment was also void of thoughtful analysis. The United States possessed intelligence that indicated that China would not tolerate the presence of US forces in North Korea. Most US leaders refused to take seriously China's October 3 warning that if the UN forces led by MacArthur "crossed the 38th parallel, China would be forced to intervene in Korea . . . American intrusion into North Korea would encounter Chinese resistance."[132] In essence, the decision to cross the 38th parallel did not represent an intelligence failure due to lack of information. Rather, it was a case in which members within the Truman administration, along with MacArthur and his staff, chose to ignore the warnings coming from China's foreign office and to focus on the benefits the unification of the peninsula

would generate for the United States. They assumed that Beijing shared their belief that the "right time" to become involved in the conflict had passed and it was in its best interest to avoid a war with a much more powerful entity.

What prevented Truman from reviewing the policy to cross the 38th parallel? Truman denied the value of halting at the 38th parallel by emphasizing the negative consequences of such a policy. He silently conceded to Washington's mindset that claimed that such a course of action would be deemed as "appeasement of Communism," a judgment that was unacceptable politically, especially given the upcoming November congressional elections. The adoption of such a policy would alienate moderate Republican voters and would strengthen the power of the China lobby, which spent the fall of 1950 accusing Truman of being "soft on Communism."[133] This aspect of Truman's decision concurs with the hypothesis that political leaders "review alternatives in light of a political dimension and reject all alternatives that may damage them politically."[134] Truman chose to ignore the negative consequences of the alternative—consequences that would not be as readily felt as a loss of the Democratic majority in the November elections. The ignored consequences included an extended war in which US forces would be spread too thin and the continued loss of lives.

Finally, we must focus on the distorting impact of groupthink. Groupthink, as explained earlier, leads members of a decision-making group to partake in a process of self-censorship, whereby they only express opinions that concur with the overriding impression or beliefs of other group members. Additionally, it leaves members of the group prone to "conduct poor information searches, consider only the information that confirms their beliefs and expectations, and carry out an incomplete survey of objectives and alternatives."[135]

Several groupthink characteristics were present both within Truman's inner circle and at the operational level in MacArthur's advisory group. First, in both groups, their respective leaders dominated the decision-making process. During the first meeting held at Blair House, Truman set the tone of the discussions and continued to do so during subsequent deliberations. He conveyed the notion that world Communism in general and the Soviets in particular were testing US resolve: "I told my advisors . . . the Reds were probing for weakness in our armor; we had to meet their thrust without getting embroiled in a world-wide war."[136] Likewise, MacArthur's conviction about assuring the destruction of the Communist threat in North Korea, his assessment that China would not intervene, and his confidence in US military power influenced the views and analyses of his key subordinates. Truman and MacArthur's leadership styles, rather than generating openness among their subordinates and the belief that alternative options could be openly

shared, limited the number of alternatives discussed, biased the analysis of information, increased their willingness to take risks, and diminished the consideration of the potential consequences of each decision.

Second, each group showed considerable unity. Truman's group of advisors early on developed a high degree of solidarity based on their common values, belief in the correctness of their action, and determination to contain Communism. Similarly, faith in MacArthur's leadership, along with shared military education and values, and confidence in the US military, helped generate tremendous cohesion among the general's closest subordinates. No one in either group expressed concerns or doubts about the way they defined the problem, their assumptions about their adversary's intention and capabilities, or the course of action favored by the president or MacArthur. Of the two instances in which concerns arose, in only one—when the members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff feared that MacArthur's plan to land at Inchon was too risky—did the generals take steps to stop him. Ultimately, however, they adhered to their tradition of allowing their commander on the ground to choose his tactic. In the second case, as MacArthur marched deep into North Korea, Acheson feared that the general's actions might incite the Chinese to intervene militarily, but chose not to voice his concern. Acheson's silence was to be expected. He was not prepared to alienate the president and the chiefs of staff who had voiced complete confidence in MacArthur's actions.

Lastly, members of both groups developed a strong sense of invulnerability. They assumed that intervention by China was unlikely, that if China chose to intervene it would do so in small numbers. More importantly, both groups were convinced that China could not match the power of the United States. Irving Janis said it best when he wrote:

> One of the dominant stereotypes shared by all members of Truman's advisory group was that Red China was a weak nation, whose main source of potency in world affairs came from its affiliation with the Soviet Union, which meant that China's foreign policy was largely dominated by Russia. The members failed to take account of obvious indications that this over-simplified conception might not apply to Red China's possible responses to American troops in Korea. It contributed to their miscalculation of the risk of provoking a full-scale military response if the United States attempted to use its military power to gain control over China's neighbor and ally. The group members' failure to scrutinize their preconceived notions and to consider alternative hypothesis concerning Red China's capabilities and intentions is a prime symptom of groupthink.[137]

At the operational level, US commanders adhered to the same stereotype. They believed that the Chinese infantry forces would be no match for US

ground and air power. They underestimated the Chinese numerical strength and their mobility, and they did not expect the Chinese-style night attacks.[138]

Before we close, those who have read the previous chapter and compared it to this one might want an answer to the following question: Did Truman's approach to decision making vary in the five-year period that separated the decisions to drop the atomic bombs on Japan and to intervene militarily in the Korean conflict?

There were a few critical differences between 1945 and 1950. In 1945 Truman was a new president who had been in power for less than four months before he authorized the dropping of the nuclear bombs. During that period, numerous individuals from different bureaucracies advised Truman; he was relatively well informed about the status of the war in the Far East, progress in the development of the nuclear bomb, and the activities of the Japanese. He knew that there was no consensus as to how his administration should bring the war against Japan to an end. By 1950, the number of individuals counseling the president directly had been reduced, and the decision-making process had changed measurably. The small group that met at Blair House the first time continued to be the core of the president's advisory group dealing with Korea. Thereafter, the process changed little. Acheson would present his recommendations, a short group discussion would follow, and then Truman would extend his approval.[139] Near the end of the third week of July 1950, Truman formally changed his approach to foreign policy. Though the change had ensued earlier, around that time the president informed his staff that he planned to modify his advisory group's structure of operation. From there on, he decided not to accept policy proposals by different bureaucracies; such proposals would come to him through the NSC.

As a result of the restructuring, "[T]he critical debate over whether to cross the 38th parallel, and the formulation of the policy paper requested by Truman took place not within the president's inner circle, but between NSC staffers from the State and Defense departments. Neither Truman nor Acheson were involved or had input into this policy debate at the lower level." The end result was the emergence of a false policy consensus. In the case of Korea, such consensus failed to disclose, "(a) the potential problems or criticisms of the recommended policy approach, (b) the nature of the policy debate that had occurred between advocates and opponents at lower staff levels, or (c) the existence of multiple policy options (including that of *not* crossing the border) that were available for consideration."[140]

This analysis serves to illustrate that Truman and his advisors repeatedly demonstrated their refusal to evaluate systematically existing information, analyze the relationship between pertinent goals and the possible conflict between them, compare a number of alternatives, reevaluate the

decision-making environment in which they were working, and adapt their policies to match new information. Truman's reliance on incongruous historical analogies to assist in the simplification of the foreign policy decision-making process in a crisis situation was misguided and illuminates his lack of cognitive complexity. Noncompensatory theory helps explain both Truman's recurrent emphasis of the positive results of his proposed policies and his stressing of the negative outcomes of alternative solutions. Despite the constant assertions that assisting the Republic of Korea in June of 1950 was "right" and "just," the decision was void of a systematic analysis.

CHAPTER 3

Dwight Eisenhower and the Decision to Intervene Covertly in Guatemala

Introduction

On June 18, 1954, President Dwight Eisenhower, convinced that Communists were overtaking the Guatemalan government, ordered the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to overthrow it. The CIA carried out the president's order and succeeded. Guatemala became the first "prototype area for testing means and methods of combating communism."[1]

Throughout the chapter we examine the mindsets that influenced the way Eisenhower defined the problems posed by the Guatemalan government, the information he and his advisors relied on to define the problem, and the quality of the intelligence they used. We discuss the president's goals and his ranking of them, the number of alternatives he reviewed, and whether he compared them thoroughly before arriving at a final decision. We consider the president's responsiveness to different points of view. We close the study with a discussion of the model that best explains Eisenhower's foreign policy decision-making (FPDM) approach and with an assessment of the quality of the process.

The Genesis of the Guatemalan Challenge

As the Second World War came to a close, Washington was compelled to turn its eyes toward Guatemala. In 1944, Guatemalans, after being ruled for nearly thirteen years by Jorge Ubico, forced him to resign and elected Jose Arévalo as their new president. In March 1945, at his inaugural speech, Arévalo announced that he intended to free Guatemala from Washington's control. He proposed a new program called "spiritual socialism." The plan was predicated on the assumption that the government had to create conditions that would facilitate each individual's psychological development and moral liberation. Arévalo disavowed both Marxism and individualistic capitalism.

He posited the idea that, by viewing the individual as an economic animal and by prescribing class struggle, Marxism undermined the individual's spiritual foundation. In turn, individualistic capitalism, with its emphasis on the individual over collective interests, weakened the structure of society.[2]

Washington took Arévalo's ascent to power seriously. Upon evaluating Guatemala's new constitution, the Department of State initially concluded that it was free of Communist dogma. The Department of State wrote:

> Like other recent constitutions in Latin America and elsewhere, the Guatemala charter heavily emphasized the responsibility of the state with respect to economic and social matters and asserted its concern for the welfare of the underprivileged. It formulated ambitious economic goals; it spelled out extensive social reforms; it called for a more equitable distribution of the national income. It specifically provided the basis for the emergence of a protected labor force and for land reform legislation.[3]

Washington, however, did not assume that because the Guatemalan government was free of Communist dogma, it was free of Communist influence. Foreign policy–makers became concerned that Communists were beginning to play an important role in the design of Arévalo's regime policies. In 1945, the Arévalo government voiced its support of the Caribbean Legion, a Latin American organization committed to ousting dictatorships, by force if necessary. Moreover, between 1946 and 1947, the new Guatemalan government instituted social security and labor code laws that threatened the investments of United Fruit, which had been occupying a leading political, economic, and financial position in Guatemala and other Central American and Caribbean countries for decades.[4]

These developments persuaded Washington that it needed a representative in Guatemala who would speak bluntly about US concerns and interests. In 1948, President Harry Truman appointed Richard Patterson, known for his anti-Communist sentiment and recent work in Yugoslavia, as US ambassador to Guatemala. Patterson wasted little time in expressing his country's discontent with the policies of the Arévalo government. At a dinner hosted in his honor in January 1949, Patterson warned the Guatemalan president that his job as ambassador was to promote US interests in Guatemala and that the relations between both countries would suffer if the host country did not stop undermining them. A year later, the US ambassador went so far as to demand that Arévalo dismiss seventeen government officials, all of whom were denounced as being Communists.

By 1950, the Truman administration had concluded that the Communists in Guatemala were taking advantage of the country's free processes and

institutions to expand their own power and destroy freedom. The president, however, was still unwilling to take a major stand against the government. In fact, Truman acquiesced when Arévalo demanded that Patterson be removed from his post as ambassador following his demand that Guatemalan officials be dismissed. This action did not reflect an absence of commitment on the part of the Truman administration to stop the growth of Communism in Guatemala. Instead, the administration echoed the hope by some Department of State officials that, under the leadership of a newly elected president, Guatemala would be more responsive to US concerns.

Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán was sworn in as Guatemala's new president in March 1951. Perceptions among US officials about Arbenz prior to his inauguration varied. Edward Miller, the assistant secretary of state for the Office of Inter-American Affairs, and Milton Wells, the first secretary at the US embassy in Guatemala, believed that Arbenz, because of his military background, would change Guatemala's pro-Soviet course and veer toward the center. Department of State official Tapley Bennett and Ambassador Patterson, on the other hand, were convinced that the Soviet Union had approved Arbenz's candidacy, that all Communist-controlled organizations in Guatemala supported him, and that the new president was committed to following a Communist policy.

These differences became inconsequential by the middle of 1952. Thomas Mann, who as deputy secretary of state for the Office of Inter-American Affairs had led the US delegation to Arbenz's presidential inauguration, returned from the trip convinced that the Soviets had finally succeeded in placing a Communist in power.[5] His argument was bolstered by the Guatemala Labor Court's January 1952 order that the American-owned United Fruit Company rehire 4,500 Guatemalan employees who had been laid off for three years and pay them $650,000 in back wages and by the fact that five months later the Arbenz administration instituted an agrarian reform bill that called for the division and redistribution of idle land exceeding 223 acres, including land owned by foreign corporations.[6]

Impressed by Mann's argument, Truman considered launching a covert paramilitary invasion to overthrow Arbenz. On the advice of Secretary of State Dean Acheson, Truman decided against such a measure for fear that an invasion would undermine the reputation of the United States in Latin America.[7] Arbenz, anticipating Washington's concerns, paid a visit to the new US ambassador to Guatemala, Rudolf C. Schoenfeld, in September 1952 and asked whether the United States regarded the Guatemalan government as Communist. The ambassador responded that the US government "saw Communists holding key positions in various agencies and institutions and many evidences of Communist activity . . . [and] that this denoted a serious

degree of Communist infiltration in the country and a tolerance for it." In a report to Washington, Schoenfeld noted that Arbenz had been interested and attentive at their meeting but that "he gave no hint that he planned to take any action" to limit the activities of the Communists.[8] A few months after Truman had canceled the covert paramilitary plan, a new administration arrived in Washington.

By the time Eisenhower assumed the presidency, the CIA had filed a number of reports delineating the activities of the Communists in Guatemala. In one report, released a few months before the new president installed himself in the White House, its creator, writing from Guatemala, presented a nuanced argument. He posited: "Although President Arbenz appears to collaborate with the Communists and extremists . . . I am quite certain that he personally does not agree with the economic and political ideas of the Guatemalan or Soviet Communists, and I am quite certain that he is not now in a position where they can force him to make their decisions in their favor." The same writer then provided a series of justifications for his argument. Among them were his contentions that Arbenz's "social reform ideas stem from the US New Deal rather than from Soviet Communism"; that Arbenz was fully aware of Guatemala's economic dependence on the US; that, rather than setting up a Communist state, Arbenz desired to "establish a modern democracy"; and that Arbenz's "idol [was] FDR." He then concluded that though Communists

> have enjoyed considerable success in capturing key positions among important groups in Guatemalan society, they have not yet gained substantial consistent popular support . . . On the higher levels they must face the fact that the economic groups [that] subscribe to the principles of the Revolution of 1944 are not extremists and that many pro-Communist allies are primarily opportunists.[9]

Despite such nuanced assessment, the common sentiment in Washington was that Communist activities throughout Guatemala were in some measure orchestrated by Moscow.

Eisenhower moved into the White House in early 1953, convinced that Communism posed the greatest threat to international stability and that the United States had a moral obligation to use military, political, and economic means to contain it. His belief that the United States had a responsibility to act was rooted in the conviction "that the Kremlin intended to dominate and control the entire world."[10] Any attempt on the part of the United States "to sit at home and ignore the rest of the world" in the face of such a threat, would lead to "destruction."[11] This attitude also colored Eisenhower's perception of

Latin America. After lamenting during a National Security Council (NSC) meeting that the United States, due to its commitment to "raising standards of all peoples," was inhibited from assigning "whatever proportion of national income" it so desired to warlike purposes, the new president emphasized that in the case of Latin America his administration would have to design policies to "secure the allegiance of these republics to our camp in the cold war."[12] Secretary of State John Foster Dulles shared Eisenhower's belief that the Kremlin was determined to dominate the world. Dulles also emphasized that as a Christian nation the United States had a moral obligation to act aggressively, if necessary, to prevent the spread of Communism.

By the summer of 1953, the common sentiment among officials at the Department of State, the CIA, and the Pentagon was that if the United States did not rely on more aggressive measures, the Communists would soon overtake Guatemala. Earlier in May, Raymond G. Leddy, the Department of State's officer in charge of Central American and Panamanian affairs, had argued that the "trend toward increased Communist strength [remains] uninterrupted." Three months later, the Bureau of Inter-American Affairs claimed that the Communists were using land reform to "produce social upheaval and gain control of Guatemalan politics." It added: "Ultimate Communist control of the country and elimination of American economic interests is the logical outcome, and unless this trend is reversed, is merely a question of time."[13]

Eisenhower wasted no time in responding to the concerns voiced by officials in his administration. He ordered the Department of State to draw up a plan designed to control Soviet expansion in Central America. Within a short time, Adolf Berle submitted a report in which he analyzed three alternatives. One possibility—US armed intervention against Guatemala—Berle deemed too risky in that it would generate hemispheric complications for the United States. A second alternative—covert intervention led by Nicaragua, with support from Honduras, Costa Rica, and El Salvador—he argued could not be properly assessed for lack of adequate information. As a result, Berle proposed that the United States form a coalition with the nations surrounding Guatemala to mount political and economic pressure on its government. Berle estimated that Arbenz would not be able to resist the pressure for more than eighteen months and would be forced to either expel the Communists or resign. The coalition would also protect surrounding nations from Guatemala.[14]

During this period, Eisenhower asked his brother Milton to visit the region. Upon his return in July 1953, the president's brother reported that Guatemala had "succumbed to communist infiltration."[15] Milton Eisenhower's account, substantiated by the continued redistribution of land owned by

the United Fruit Company, along with the assessments from different US government officials regarding developments in Guatemala, led the president to direct his advisors to revise the United States' strategy to fight the Cold War worldwide. The result of their discussions, known as the "Solarium Talk," was a proposal composed of a series of alternatives, including the greater use of covert action. The president, convinced that the Cold War was entering a period "of protracted, low-level conflict," favored the use of clandestine operations as responses to "Communist penetration of peripheral areas like Guatemala."[16] On August 12, the staff of the NSC concluded that the government of Arbenz posed a sufficient threat to "the national security of the United States to warrant covert action against it." A few days later, the NSC added that a "policy of non-action would be suicidal since the Communist movement, under Moscow's tutelage will not falter nor abandon its goals."[17] As a result, Eisenhower ordered the CIA to prepare a covert paramilitary operation to overthrow the Guatemalan government.[18] Because of its central role in the overthrow of the government of Prime Minister Mohammed Mossadegh of Iran, Eisenhower gave the CIA the primary responsibility for organizing the toppling of the Arbenz regime and authorized it to use up to $3 million to prepare the operation.[19] At about this time, the president appointed a new ambassador to Guatemala, John Peurifoy. Peurifoy, while serving as US ambassador to Greece, had been instrumental with the CIA in preventing Communist participation in the government. His primary task in Guatemala would be to help coordinate the CIA's covert operation against the Arbenz regime.

For the next year, Washington limited its interaction with the Arbenz government, but its ambassador in Guatemala did not. Upon his arrival in Guatemala City in October, Peurifoy made it clear to Guatemala's president and top officials that the United States did not approve the government's decision to implement agrarian reforms. Putting into effect the agrarian reform, stated Peurifoy, was a manifestation of a country's commitment to Communism. The US ambassador used developments in China to justify his conclusion.[20] Aware that relations between his government and Washington were rapidly deteriorating, the Arbenz regime sought to persuade the US representatives in Guatemala that the United Fruit Company had invented the Communist issue and that there was no truth to it. In February 1954, the Guatemalan president proposed the appointment of a neutral commission to arbitrate Guatemala's dispute with the company. Washington rejected the offer, and, when two months later the Arbenz administration offered United Fruit $1,185,000 in compensation, the US government countered with a demand for $15,854,849.

At about this time, the Arbenz government intercepted a letter from Carlos Castillo Armas, the Guatemalan national appointed to lead the covert

invasion, to Anastasio Somoza Garcia, Nicaragua's ruler. In the letter, Castillo Armas informed Somoza, albeit indirectly, that Washington had finally decided it was time to overthrow the Guatemalan government. "I have been informed by our friend here," he wrote, "that the government of the North, recognizing the impossibility of finding another solution to the grave problem of my country, has taken the decision to permit us to develop our plans."[21] In hopes of protecting his regime from this threat, Arbenz asked the United States to lift its arms embargo on Guatemala. Washington refused and pressured its European allies not to accept any requests for arms by Guatemala. With nowhere else to turn, Arbenz approached members of the Soviet bloc.

Arbenz's decision unwittingly afforded the United States leverage. In mid-May 1954, 2,000 tons of Czechoslovakian arms arrived in Guatemala. The cargo, discovered by CIA agents before it arrived, generated a political uproar in Washington. Congressional leaders called the shipment "part of the master plan of World Communism" and asserted that the weapons "were to be used to sabotage the Panama Canal."[22] The Eisenhower administration did not allow the opportunity to escape. The president authorized the CIA to put into action its plan to overthrow the Guatemalan regime. Mindful that his presidency was in jeopardy, Arbenz requested a meeting with Eisenhower. Peurifoy declined the request and made it clear that the United States was not concerned about the fate of the United Fruit Company but of Communism in Guatemala. Secretary of State Dulles endorsed Peurifoy's remarks on June 8, when he emphasized that, even if the United Fruit matter were settled, the presence of Communism in Guatemala would still remain a problem.[23] Moreover, in a secret cable to various diplomatic offices, Dulles noted that "a Soviet thrust into Western Hemisphere by establishing and maintaining Communist-controlled state between US and Canal Zone would represent [a] serious setback to [the] free world. It would represent [a] challenge to Hemispheric-security and peace as Guatemala has become increasingly instrumental of Soviet aggression in this hemisphere."[24] On June 18, 1954, Castillo Armas and a small number of paramilitary forces, financed and trained by the CIA, entered Guatemala. Upon realizing that Guatemala's armed forces would not defend his government, Arbenz resigned.

Analysis: The Influence of an Unfounded Mindset

The analysis of the Eisenhower administration's decision to topple the Arbenz regime is divided into two stages. In the first stage, we analyze the quality and quantity of the information available to the Eisenhower administration and how its members used the data to define the challenge they believed the

Arbenz regime generated. In the second phase, we focus on the discussion of alternatives and the decision to order the CIA to launch the operation.

What evidence did Eisenhower rely on to authorize the design of a covert plan to overthrow the Arbenz regime? He had been given the following information:

1. The Arévalo and Arbenz regimes had expropriated large portions of unused land controlled by United Fruit.
2. Both regimes had increased the power of labor unions, actions that United Fruit claimed undermined its economic interests.
3. On June 17, 1952, Guatemala's National Assembly passed its most radical agrarian reform bill ever, known as Decree 900, designed to remake Guatemala's agricultural sector and help subsidize the country's industrial development.[25] Officials in the United States, however, had considered earlier reforms implemented by the Guatemalan government to be moderate, constructive, and democratic in its aims.[26]
4. Arbenz's ruling coalition held fifty-one seats in the sixty-one-member Congress, most of whom were moderates, while the Guatemalan Labor Party (PGT)[27] had only four seats.
5. Not a single Communist held a cabinet position in Arbenz's administration, while only six or seven held significant subcabinet posts.
6. The Arévalo regime did not sign the September 2, 1947, Rio Treaty, which the United States had advocated as a means of promoting continental solidarity in the face of foreign aggression. Arévalo would have signed it if a provision stating that Guatemala "refuses to recognize British sovereignty over Belize" had been included.[28]
7. The Arbenz regime withdrew from the five-nation Organization of Central American States, claiming that its neighboring states were acting aggressively against Guatemala.[29]
8. On March 26, 1954, Guatemala refused to sign the "Declaration of Solidarity for the Preservation of the Political Integrity of the American States against International Communist Intervention" resolution introduced by Secretary of States Dulles in Caracas, Venezuela, at the Tenth Inter-American Conference of the Organization of the American States. The resolution stated that Communism should not be allowed to control any state in the Western Hemisphere and that, if it were to succeed, the act should be treated as a threat to peace. Argentina and Mexico abstained and Costa Rica was absent, but the remaining Latin American countries and the United States signed it.[30]
9. In mid-May 1954, 2,000 tons of Czechoslovakian arms arrived in Guatemala.

Was the evidence available sufficiently strong to warrant Eisenhower's claim that Moscow was manipulating Guatemala and that the Communists would soon overpower the Arbenz regime? The answer is no. Secretary of State Dulles acknowledged as much when he noted on May 11, 1954, shortly before the operation was implemented, that it would be "impossible to produce evidence clearly tying the Guatemalan government to Moscow . . . the decision must be a political one based on the deep conviction that such a tie must exist."[31]

The deep conviction referred to by Dulles did not take form instantaneously. During much of the time Arévalo was Guatemala's president, Washington was willing to give his government the benefit of the doubt. Under the Truman administration, Washington initially inferred that there was a relationship between the extent to which Guatemala's regime associated with Communists and implemented economic and agricultural reforms and the degree to which Communists controlled it. It was the start of the Korean War that helped convinced officials in the Department of State, the CIA, and the Pentagon that all Communists were Soviet agents.[32]

To explain how Washington came to the conclusion that the changes that were ensuing in Guatemala indicated that control of the country by Communists and the elimination of American interests was the only logical result, we must first focus on the role of analogies in decision making. Schema theory, as explained in this book's introduction, suggests that the decision-maker attempts to shorten and simplify the decision-making process. The need for shortcuts may stem from sheer laziness, lack of time, or even shortage of information. Schema theory's driving assumption is that decision-makers reason analogically.

Analogies are schemas, or cognitive scripts, stored in memories in the form of structured events that tell familiar stories. Cognitive scripts are either episodic or categorical. The foreign policy–maker infers an episodic script by analyzing a single experience defined by a sequence of events. A categorical script is a generalization of an episodic script. A categorical script need not be the result of several past experiences: one impressive incident can spur a decision-maker to transform an episodic script into a categorical form. The decision to store a script in memory and to use it is a function of the foreign policy–maker's beliefs and values. A foreign policy–maker commits to memory only those scripts that are politically, socially, economically, or morally important to him or her. This means not only that the choice of scripts is subjective but also that the content of the scripts stored from any one experience can differ from one individual to another.[33]

Analysts have argued that a foreign policy–maker uses the same cognitive script to address similar problems until he or she encounters a situation in

which the employment of the same script results in costly consequences. We agree with the postulate, but we add an important qualifier. Analysts have also proposed that a decision-maker's willingness to accept information or an analysis from a second party is to a large extent a function of whether the source is considered suitable. If the source is believed to be reliable, one of two outcomes can ensue. When the decision-maker and the source agree, their relationship is termed "positively balanced." Under this condition, the decision-maker does not need to modify his or her stand. When the decision-maker disagrees with the source, the relationship is termed "positively imbalanced." Under this condition, the decision-maker is forced into a trade-off situation. He or she either has to sacrifice his or her own perspective and accept that of the source, or vice versa.[34]

Events in China, prior to and after Mao Zedong's Communist Party became its sole political force, influenced measurably Washington's interpretation of developments in Guatemala. In a book titled *The Yenan Way* published in 1951, Eudocio Ravines described the way the Chinese Communists allied themselves with middle-class politicians and ambitious army officers and worked themselves into positions of power in local communities. The results of these steps, noted Racines, "were the Labor Code, agrarian reform, and eventually strict censorship." He then suggested the Communist Chinese model may apply to Latin America.[35]

Officials in the United States readily acknowledged the value they placed on the Chinese analogy and soon transformed what could be referred to as an episodic script into a categorical script by applying Ravines's analysis to Guatemala. Leddy, during a testimony before the House of Representatives' hearing on Communist aggression, proposed that the "Guatemalan Way" represented an improvement over the "Yenan Way" for the Communists because it taught them ways to deal with the situation in Central America more effectively.[36] Secretary of State Dulles made a similar argument during his Senate confirmation hearing. [C]onditions in Latin America are somewhat comparable to conditions as they were in China in the mid-thirties when the Communist movement was getting started." He then added, the "time to deal with this rising menace in South America is now."[37] Ambassador Peurifoy also relied on the Yenan Way analogy. Upon his arrival in Guatemala, he warned its foreign minister that the parallels between the Guatemalan problem and the Chinese problem had portentous implications. "Agrarian reform has been instituted in China . . . and . . . today China is a communist country."[38]

From the intelligence collected by the Eisenhower administration before its leaders authorized the CIA to implement its plan to overthrow Arbenz, it is evident that in a different political environment the intelligence could have

generated different interpretations. First, as we already noted, Dulles himself acknowledged that the United States did not have the information necessary to prove that Moscow was the puppeteer directing the behavior of Guatemala's Communists. Second, the number of Communists in Guatemala was very small, as was the number of those occupying governmental positions or seats in Congress. And third, it was common among analysts, even among CIA officers, to contend that the agricultural and labor reforms that the Arbenz regime was implementing were not radical and that they were similar to the ones that US officials had recommended Japan and Formosa apply. But with the Communists becoming China's sole political force and in the aftermath of the Korean War, no one in the Eisenhower administration would have had the mettle to forward an alternative interpretation. Not only had Eisenhower and Dulles made it palpably clear that they were determined to fight Communism, but the belief that the Kremlin was determined to achieve world domination was deeply rooted in the minds of most Americans, including US government officials. Anyone positing an alternative interpretation of what was ensuing in Guatemala would have been, if not expelled from his post, ridiculed. By then, the "Red Scare" mindset had gained such momentum that almost no one in Washington was prepared to risk his future as a politician or as a government official to argue that events in Guatemala were not indicative of an attempt by the Communists to take over. Put more bluntly, groupthink—a group's need to engage in self-censorship, to develop feelings of invulnerability, and to be intolerant to contrary viewpoints as its members seek to consolidate unanimity—became Washington's leading impediment to alternative thinking.

To assert that the Eisenhower administration interpreted developments in Guatemala analogically is not to contend that it relied on the same methodology to decide how to prevent the creation of a Communist regime in Guatemala. Under the Truman administration, the United States sought to persuade Guatemala's political leaders to alter its course via diplomatic and economic pressure. By the time the Truman administration relinquished its seat at the center of power, most of its officials had acknowledged that their attempts had not paid the dividends they had intended. New in office, Eisenhower asked Department of State official C. D. Jackson to study how to best control Soviet expansion in Central America. Jackson delegated the responsibility to Adolf Berle, who concluded that overt armed intervention was too risky and that covert intervention led by Nicaragua could not be properly assessed for lack of adequate information. Berle's final recommendation was that the United States form a coalition with countries surrounding Guatemala and that jointly they apply intense political and economic pressure on Guatemala. Berle estimated that Arbenz would not be able to resist the

pressure for more than eighteen months and would ultimately be forced to either expel the Communists or resign. However, as demonstrated by efforts initiated by the Truman administration, such a policy had not generated the wanted results. Convinced that Washington had run out of options and that Arbenz was not about to acquiesce to US pressure, Eisenhower gave the CIA the go-ahead.

Of the various models discussed in our first chapter, the poliheuristic one is the most applicable, but with a critical modification. In Alex Mintz's poliheuristic model, the decision-maker typically engages in a two-step process. In the first step, the policy-maker uses cognitive shortcuts to reduce the number of alternatives he or she will consider. Typically, the leader will discard options that would undermine him or her domestically. In the second step, he or she relies on a quasi-rational approach to select from the remaining alternatives.

The information-gathering process under the Eisenhower administration was severely restricted by the deep-seated belief that the Kremlin was managing Communists throughout the world. Cognitive consistency—the tendency to ignore information incompatible with earlier images and beliefs and to pay immoderate attention to information consistent with beliefs[39]—generated a mindset that prevented Eisenhower and his advisors from contemplating the possibility that, though Guatemala's Communists advocated the labor and land reforms implemented by the Arbenz regime, such information did not necessarily indicate that Guatemala was on its way to becoming a Communist state.

As the poliheuristic theory would have prophesied indirectly, the outrage voiced by the US Congress when it learned the Arbenz regime had purchased weapons from a Soviet bloc country further enhanced the appeal of trying to destabilize the Guatemalan government. Stated differently, though domestic politics might not have been the leading impetus behind Eisenhower's decision to intervene, failure to act could have undermined his domestic political stand.[40] Chained by his own and Washington's mindset to a restricted interpretation of developments in Guatemala, the president and his advisors analyzed a few options and concluded that a covert paramilitary intervention would produce the intended result at a minimum cost. That the president had relied on covert actions during the Second War and that his administration had used it effectively to topple the Iranian government reaffirmed his belief that he could rely on it one more time. His intuition might have actually led him to order the CIA to rely on covert means to overthrow the Guatemalan government.

CHAPTER 4

Dwight Eisenhower and the Suez Canal Crisis of 1956

Introduction

On October 24, representatives of the governments of Israel, France, and Great Britain held a secret meeting in Paris, where they decided to attack Egypt to reverse President Gamal Nasser's nationalization of the Suez Canal Company. At the meeting, the three parties agreed that Israeli forces would advance toward the Suez Canal Zone, after which France and Britain would issue an ultimatum demanding that Israel and Egypt stop fighting and accept the occupation of the canal zone by forces from the two European countries. Certain that Cairo would reject the demand, Britain and France would then launch an air attack on Egypt, followed by an invasion. On that same day, Egypt, Syria, and Jordan decided that, if one of them were to be attacked, it would be understood as an attack upon all three. Were such a situation to unfold, the three would form a unified command to repulse the attack. As these two separate covenants were being settled, the Soviet Union ordered tens of thousands of its troops to march into Budapest to end the student demonstrations that had started the day before against the Hungarian government and its Moscow-imposed policies.[1]

Israel, Britain, and France carried out the attacks on Egypt as planned. By November 2, Egypt's air force had been destroyed, and thousands of Egyptians had been either killed or captured. Three days later, French and British forces landed in Egypt. Soon thereafter, Moscow warned British, French, and Israeli leaders that it was prepared to send Soviet air and naval forces to protect Egypt and restore peace. Moscow simultaneously proposed to Washington that the Soviet Union and the United States join forces "to restore peace and tranquility" in the Middle East and cautioned that continued fighting could lead to another world war.

President Dwight Eisenhower and Secretary of State John Foster Dulles had been monitoring the interactions between Israel, France, Great Britain,

and Egypt, as well as the Soviet Union's involvement from the sidelines, for more than a year; nevertheless, the two US leaders were surprised by the attacks. Eisenhower responded with two warnings. He informed Moscow that the United States would use force if necessary against any nation that attempted to violate the United Nations' plan for procuring a cease-fire. He also ordered the Joint Chiefs of Staff to be ready to carry out emergency war plans. The president warned London and Paris that the United States might abrogate its obligation under NATO rules to come to Britain and France's defense were they to find themselves at war with the Soviet Union. Though Eisenhower was prepared to stand by the two European allies, he purposely projected ambiguity about his willingness to help, hoping to persuade them to adhere to the United Nations' cease-fire conditions. Eisenhower and Dulles failed to prevent Israel, France, and Great Britain from implementing their plan. Nevertheless, ultimately the three aggressors caved in to pressures emanating from the United Nations, the United States, and the Soviet Union and agreed to a cease-fire and to the removal of their forces from Egypt. By then the US president, who during the year leading to the 1956 presidential election had experienced two major health problems, had been reelected by a landslide.

In this chapter, we conduct an empirical analysis designed to capture the nature of Eisenhower's foreign policy decision-making (FPDM) process prior to and during the Suez Canal Crisis. We start with a brief analysis of the events that led to the crisis. We then examine the mindsets that influenced Eisenhower's definition of the problems generated by Egypt's decisions and Great Britain, France, and Israel's responses to them. During our investigation, we identify the domestic and international goals that guided Eisenhower's decision, ascertain whether any contradictions arose between the goals, assess the quality of the intelligence provided to Eisenhower and his closest advisors, analyze their interpretations of the information, and examine the interactions between the president and his counselors as they sought to formulate responses to the threat emanating from multiple sources. Finally, we isolate the FPDM model that best captures Eisenhower's response to the steps taken by the various external actors and evaluate the quality of the president's approach to FPDM.

The Inception of the Suez Canal Crisis

Eisenhower's thinking regarding the Middle East was defined by one general idea and bounded by two major concerns. From the day he assumed the presidency in early 1953, Eisenhower adhered to the mindset dictated by the Truman Doctrine: In order to maintain world peace, the United States

must contain the Soviet spread of Communism. To restrict the enlargement of Moscow's influence throughout the Middle East, the United States had to focus on two critical issues: Britain's relationship with Egypt and the festering tension between Egypt and Israel.

As the source of the world's largest identified crude oil reserve, the Middle East was essential to the survival of Western Europe's economy. To assure Western Europe's continued access to petroleum, the United States, under Harry Truman's presidency, had joined Great Britain and France in a Tripartite Declaration in July 1950. The agreement, which did not include participation from states from the Middle East, outlined the determination of Washington, London, and Paris to protect the status quo in the region and prevent Moscow from spreading its reach throughout the area. By then, however, several Arab states had decided they would start defining their own destinies. In July 1951, Iran's prime minister, Mohammed Mossadegh, ordered the nationalization of the British Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (AIOC). His decision was supported by the democratically elected Iranian parliament. In October of the same year, the Egyptian government abrogated the 1936 Anglo-Egyptian Treaty, which had granted Britain a lease on the canal for twenty additional years. Washington responses to the two challenges varied.

In 1953, Eisenhower, using the Tripartite Agreement as his rationale and with strong British encouragement and backing, ordered the CIA to remove Iran's prime minister from power. Mossadegh's overthrow, which Eisenhower framed as a Communist-combating measure, generated a great deal of anti-American sentiment in Iran and throughout the Middle East in general. With regard to the Suez Canal, however, Britain's leaders and Eisenhower did not see eye to eye.

Following Egypt's abrogation of the 1936 Anglo-Egyptian treaty, London refused to relinquish control of the canal and sought to protect its interests militarily. In 1952 Mohammed Naguib and Gamal Abdel Nasser dethroned the king of Egypt and created an Egyptian republic. Two years later, Nasser removed Naguib from power and became Egypt's new president. The restructuring of Egypt's constitutional system changed the dynamics of the relationships between Cairo, London, and Washington.

Anthony Eden, who by then had become Great Britain's new prime minister, postulated that his country would have to retain full control of the Suez Canal. Eisenhower, on the other hand, argued that, though he considered the Suez Canal "the most important waterway in the world," it "would be undesirable and impracticable for the British to retain sizable forces permanently in the territory of a jealous and resentful government amid an openly hostile population."[2] Ultimately, London had no choice but to acquiesce to Washington's pressure. In October 1954, Cairo and London agreed to the

phased evacuation of British troops from the Suez area. Great Britain, however, would retain control of the canal until November 1968.

The temporary resolution of the Suez Canal problem did not help to diminish the tension that had been mounting between Egypt and Israel since the two had signed an armistice agreement in 1949.[3] During the first half of the 1950s, leaders of the two states tried to design a peace covenant. Frequent attacks on Israel by fedayeen groups entering the country through the Egypt-controlled Gaza Strip, along with the discovery of an Israeli spy ring in Egypt, marred their relations. The February 28, 1955, Israeli killing of twenty-eight Egyptians and Nasser's September 1955 decision to sign a Soviet-Egyptian arms agreement after he had been rebuffed by Washington reminded Eisenhower of his earlier claim that one of the United States' principal objectives in the Middle East should be to develop "a definitive peace between the Arab states and Israel."[4] News about the Soviet-Egyptian treaty, however, could have not come at a worse time for the United States. On the night of September 24, 1955, Eisenhower suffered what his doctor described as a "mild anterior coronary thrombosis."

With Eisenhower physically incapacitated, Washington was immediately confronted with two major challenges. Upon learning that the Soviet Union had reached an arms agreement with Egypt, Israel began to aggressively lobby for its own arms deal with the United States. Foster Dulles repeatedly rejected Israel's request, convinced that such an arrangement would engender an arms race between Israel and Egypt. Eisenhower concurred. On November 9, the Eisenhower administration released a statement noting that the United States had no intention of contributing "to an arms race competition in the Middle East."[5]

For some time, Nasser had been expressing great interest in constructing a massive dam at Aswan that would increase Egypt's arable land significantly. A major problem facing the Egyptian president was the estimated cost of the project—a monumental $1.3 billion. Negotiations with the United States and Great Britain on the funding of the dam began in 1953. The Jewish lobby, along with many of the leading members of the US Senate and House of Representatives, opposed the granting of the loan. They received strong support from American Southerners, who feared that the building of the dam would increase Egypt's cotton production and create greater competition for Southern cotton. Nevertheless, on November 21, 1955, the major parties, under the guidance of the president of the World Bank, Eugene Black, met in Washington to see whether they could formulate an accord. On December 1, after being warned by Eden that failure on the part of London and Washington to reach an agreement with Egypt could lead Cairo to accept a financial offer from the Soviet Union, Eisenhower announced during a National

Security Council (NSC) meeting that he favored the granting of funds. On December 16, Herbert Hoover Jr., acting on behalf of the United States, informed Black and members of the Egyptian delegation that his country was prepared to offer $54 million for the initial stages of the project. Hoover also noted that the aid would be extended only if construction contracts were issued on a competitive basis and that Eisenhower expected Egypt to take major steps to resolve its differences with Israel.[6]

Initially Nasser expressed dissatisfaction with the agreement. Nonetheless, in January 1956 he accepted the offer. His acceptance did not ease Washington's fears. In March, Eisenhower voiced concern that "the Arabs were absorbing major consignments of arms from the Soviets," were "daily growing more arrogant," and were "disregarding the interests of Western Europe and of the United States in the Middle East region."[7] Later that same month, Foster Dulles suggested to Eisenhower that the United States should let Colonel Nasser "realize that he cannot cooperate as he is doing with the Soviet Union and at the same time enjoy a most-favored-nation treatment from the United States." At the same time, Dulles stressed that Washington should not break its relationship with Cairo, for such an act would "throw Nasser irrevocably into a Soviet satellite status."[8] Eisenhower approved Dulles's recommendation and suggested to the Department of State that it start building "up some other individual as a prospective leader of the Arab world," possibly the king of Saudi Arabia.[9]

In the midst of trying to decide how to handle Nasser's intransigence and attempting to reduce the tension between Israel and Egypt, Eisenhower voiced concern about how the United States could best prepare itself for the aftermath of a nuclear war. During an NSC meeting on January 12, the president informed its members that he had ordered a confidential study on "the human effects of a thermonuclear weapon." He noted that if in a war the involved parties were to use thermonuclear weapons, there would be no winners, and the destruction that would result might be so extensive that the human race "might have ultimately to go back to bows and arrows." Months later, when Eisenhower had a chance to read the results of the study, he learned that none of the possible scenarios augured a bearable outcome. Though the estimates indicated that the Soviet Union would experience much greater losses than the United States, Americans would find themselves literally digging themselves "out of the ashes, starting again." This type of concern was not unrelated to developments in the Middle East. As noted by David A. Nichols, Eisenhower became "increasingly convinced that the Middle East was a potential flashpoint for Armageddon."[10]

By the middle of May, the initial agreement reached by the major parties regarding the construction of the Aswan Dam had lost much of its viability.

Nasser did not help his cause when he officially recognized the People's Republic of China on May 16. Washington viewed Nasser's decision as an Egyptian pro-Communist endorsement and as a direct stab at the Western countries' national interests. On June 20, Black flew to Cairo to present Nasser a final offer. According to Black, his conversation with Nasser went well. The president of the World Bank stressed that proceeding on with the project would be in the best interests of the United States.[11] In the meantime, congressional support for the Aswan Dam project, which had never been strong, diminished, and in mid-July the Senate Appropriations Committee recommended that "no further aid be extended to Egypt for construction of the Aswan Dam without prior approval of the committee."[12]

On July 19, Eisenhower met with Secretary Dulles to discuss whether the United States should help Egypt finance the construction of the Aswan Dam. After pointing out many of the economic challenges Egypt would face were it to build the dam, Dulles recommended that the United States withdraw its offer. Eisenhower concurred and authorized Dulles to pass on that information to the Egyptian ambassador. Dulles met with Ambassador Ahmed Hussein that same afternoon and told him that the United States was formally withdrawing its support for the construction of the Aswan Dam. In a press release later that day, Dulles stated, "The United States has concluded that it is not feasible in present circumstances to participate in the [Aswan Dam] project."[13] Dulles's statement was released publicly before Hussein had been able to inform Nasser of the United States' withdrawal of support. The following day, the British government relayed the same message to the Egyptian ambassador to Great Britain.

Washington's decision to withdraw support for the construction of the dam was summed up by George Allen, the assistant secretary for Near Eastern, South Asian, and African affairs, as follows:

1. 1956 was an election year, and "pro-Israeli lobbyists had been exerting pressure" on executive and legislative branches.
2. Southern congressmen, representatives from cotton-producing states, feared competition in the textile-producing market.
3. Many leaders were still irate at Nasser's official recognition of the People's Republic of China.
4. Egypt had voiced criticism of the Israeli-Arab disputes, with Cairo denouncing the Israeli position. [14]

Infuriated at Eisenhower and Eden for their decisions, Nasser announced on July 26 that Egypt was nationalizing the Suez Canal Company. That same day Washington learned that Moscow had agreed to extend a cash loan of

$200 million for a twenty-year period at 2 percent interest to build the Aswan Dam. Nasser's announcement marked the beginning of the Suez Canal Crisis of 1956.

The day after Nasser announced the nationalization of the Suez Canal, Eisenhower summoned acting Secretary of State Herbert Hoover (Foster Dulles was in Peru on a Latin American tour); the director of the CIA, Allen Dulles; and the president's staff secretary, General Andrew Goodpaster, for an informal discussion. The 8:30 AM meeting began with reviews of Nasser's announcement of the nationalization of the Suez Canal and the recently received memorandum from the British embassy regarding the British response to Nasser. The body of the dispatch conveyed that "[the British] Cabinet takes an extremely grave view of the situation and very strong feelings were expressed, especially by Eden, to effect that Nasser must not be allowed to get away with it." After reading the cable and reviewing the Egyptian president's speech, Hoover pointed out that "Nasser's speech is a sustained invective in the most violent terms against the United States and its officials containing many inaccuracies." Eisenhower concurred with Hoover's assessment and ordered that the inaccuracies be formally and publicly challenged.[15]

Shortly after they adjourned, the White House received a telegram from Eden, in which the prime minister reiterated the British response to Nasser's announcement. In the cable, Eden suggested a tripartite meeting between the United States, Great Britain, and France to "exchange views, align our policies and concert together how we can best bring the maximum pressure to bear on the Egyptian Government." Eden also noted that, because he doubted economic pressure would compel Nasser to modify his earlier decision, "we [presumably Great Britain, the United States, and France] must be ready, in the last resort, to use force to bring [the Egyptian leader] to his senses."[16] Upon receiving the latest message, Eisenhower asked Hoover to return to the White House to discuss Eden's recommendation. Both the president and Hoover concurred that it would be premature to use force and that such an act by the United States would require that Congress be called back into session. Hoover also noted that were Britain to pursue a military option, its leaders would convey the appearance that they were doing so to protect their country's 400,000 shares of stock.[17]

The last telegram, alongside a number of exchanges between Eisenhower and Eden over the next two weeks, highlighted the disparity in viewpoints regarding the Suez situation, with Great Britain and France advocating the use of force and the United States contending it would be an unwise act. On July 31, the US embassy in London sent a telegram to Foster Dulles stating that the British government was determined to use military force "to drive

Nasser out of Egypt." It also noted that Great Britain's leaders hoped that the United States "would be with them in this determination, but if we could not they would understand and our friendship would be unimpaired." The communiqué added that Britain's leaders doubted that the Soviet Union would intervene.[18]

Later in the day, Eisenhower met with his top civilian and military advisors to assess the message and decide on a response. Foster Dulles expressed the view that it would be wrong for Great Britain to resort to force without first suggesting a conference or a counterproposal from Egypt. Such an act, argued Foster Dulles and Allen Dulles, would inflame the entire Arab world. The president amended their assertion with the claim that the "whole Muslim world" would be outraged. When the president asked Admiral Burke to express the opinion of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the chairman made it clear that his colleagues believed that it was imperative to break Nasser, that ultimately the only way such a goal might be achieved was militarily, and that if Great Britain chose to rely on force, the United States should support the action. (He did not indicate that the United States should participate with armed force.). Eisenhower closed the meeting by stressing that though the United States "must not let Nasser get away with this action," it was imperative to let the British know they would be committing a grave error were they to rely on force before trying other means and that they were wrong in assuming that their action would not stop the flow of oil from the Middle East.[19] Before the day was over, Eisenhower wrote a detailed letter to Eden conveying his administration's stand. The president made it clear that he thought it would be a mistake to employ force without first trying to convince Nasser and other parties to participate in a conference designed to find a reasonable solution, one that would guarantee the "efficient operation of the Canal." Eisenhower reminded Eden that the United States could not use force without "positive action on the part of Congress" and that such a request could be made only after "showing that every peaceful means of resolving the difficulty had previously been exhausted." He added: "Without such showing, there would be a reaction that could very seriously affect our peoples' feeling toward our Western Allies." He closed the letter by noting that if the nonviolent attempt he had suggested were not to bring a desirable solution, the world would understand that they "had attempted to be just, fair, and considerate, but that we [the United States, France, and Great Britain] simply could not accept a situation that would in the long run prove disastrous to the prosperity and living standards of every nation whose economy depends directly or indirectly upon East-West shipping."[20] That same day, Eisenhower wrote a letter to France's prime minister, Guy Mollet, stating an argument similar to the one he had conveyed to Eden.

During this same period, members of the intelligence community in the United States released a comprehensive assessment of the problems and opportunities generated by Nasser's decision to nationalize the Suez Canal. Its central points were as follows:[21]

1. Nasser's action had increased his standing in the Middle East and had strengthened anti-Western, anticolonial, and nationalist trends throughout the area.
2. Great Britain and France on the one hand, with Nasser on the other, have taken positions from which they are unlikely to retreat.
3. The latest developments served Soviet interests very well, for they had created a wider gulf between Egypt and the West, between the Arab world and the West, and possibly even among Western nations.
4. Were the West to resort to military action, the Soviet Union would make every effort to avoid direct involvement, but it might provide military advisors and specialists.
5. Israel views with satisfaction the widened rift between its principal Arab adversaries and the West.
6. An international conference might force Egypt to accept its solution if the Western powers, the Soviet Union, and the major shipping powers reach an agreement.

Foster Dulles travelled to London in early August, hoping to persuade the governments of Great Britain and France to adopt the Eisenhower administration's recommendation that together they call for a conference designed to seek some treaty arrangement. He succeeded. On August 2, the three governments issued a joint statement inviting parties that used the canal regularly to meet in London on August 16. Neither the British nor the French were pleased with the decision but agreed to accept, at least temporarily, the United States' lead. Moreover, both London and Paris were quite convinced that Nasser would not accept the outcomes of the conference. The British and French governments' prediction was confirmed two days after the issuing of the joint statement when the US ambassador to Egypt reported that during a meeting with Nasser, the Egyptian president remarked that he could not "accept participation in the proposed conference," nor could he accept "international control."[22] His decision did not diminish Washington's commitment to move forward.

As Eisenhower and Foster Dulles waited for the start of the conference, they met with other members of the NSC to discuss possible scenarios. During an August 9 consultation, Foster Dulles spoke at length of the challenges Nasser's actions had generated for Western Europe and the United States. He

noted that in his book *Revolution,* published in 1952*,* Nasser had argued that without Middle Eastern oil "the machinery of Western Europe would grind to a stop." Foster Dulles then proposed that seizure of the canal was one of a series of steps Nasser was taking to build his power in Egypt and throughout the Arab world.[23] The secretary of state continued with his discourse by posing a series of questions that did not lead to easy responses. What would the United States do "if the Conference fails to agree or if its proposals are rejected by Nasser?" He remarked that if such were to be the case, the United States' two Western allies would resort to force. If they did, would Israel become embroiled in the conflict? What would the United States do then? At minimum, continued Foster Dulles, Great Britain and France expected moral and economic support, and, if the Soviet Union were to overtly participate, London and Paris would assume that the United States would "move in full force." Foster Dulles added another wrinkle to his argument when he reminded everyone that, since the Eisenhower administration had publicly stated that it would provide assistance to any victim of aggression, did that mean it would come to Egypt's aid if it were to be attacked by Washington's two Western allies? On that note, Eisenhower ordered the Department of State and the Department of Defense to develop contingency plans for each possible scenario. He closed the meeting by stating that Europe could not be expected to survive at the "mercy of a dictator," and that if Nasser were successful there would be chaos in the Middle East for a very long time.[24] The next day, Eisenhower received two notices of concern. First, a Department of State study indicated that economic sanctions on Egypt would impose stresses on the Nasser regime that would then force its leader to rely almost totally on the Sino-Soviet Bloc for economic support. Second, though Moscow announced that it intended to attend the conference, it also declared that it opposed internationalizing the control of the Suez Canal.[25]

On August 12, Eisenhower held a small meeting in the White House with his key aides to discuss the attendance of senators at the upcoming London Conference, the potential success and failures of the conference, the North Atlantic Trade Organization's (NATO) allies, and the preexisting 1888 treaty governing the Suez Canal. The president began by stating that he was "troubled by the position in which the Western world would find itself if Nasser continued to insist on the fact that he was going to keep the canal open." Dulles responded that in the full-scale bipartisan assembly following the current meeting, he would remind legislative leaders that the British and French would not expect the United States to commit any of its armed forces. The presidential bipartisan congressional meeting at the White House followed the small-scale gathering. At the outset, Eisenhower warned that things "were not going so well as to give 'unbounded hope' for a peaceful solution"

and that "Egypt probably would not attend the London Conference." He expressed hope that one senator from each party would accompany Foster Dulles to the London Conference. Eisenhower brought the meeting to an end by stressing the confidentiality of the discussed material, especially the military planning on the part of the United States.[26]

The August 16 conference in London began without envoys from Egypt. Twenty-two countries sent representatives. The attendees considered two options. The United States recommended the establishment of a public international authority to regulate the Suez Canal. India suggested that the canal be controlled by Egypt, with an international board serving as advisors to help resolve differences between Egypt and parties using the canal. During the conference, Foster Dulles held separate private conversations with British and French representatives. In a report to Eisenhower, the secretary of state noted that the critical issue would be whether the international board representing the various nations using the canal would have "supervisory authority" or "operating authority." Foster Dulles suggested that such an organization be granted operating authority, because that would be the only way the British and French governments would accept an agreement. Eisenhower, on the other hand, argued that Nasser would find it very difficult to accept a board that would "actually operate, maintain and develop the Canal."[27]

On August 21, eighteen states, including the United States, signed a formal declaration demanding the establishment of a new international agency to take over the administration of the affairs of the canal. The Soviet Union did not sign. The signees formed a delegation, headed by the prime minister of Australia, Robert Menzies, to present the proposal to Nasser. Most participants were convinced that Nasser would reject it. Two days later, Britain's foreign minister, Selwyn Lloyd, warned Foster Dulles that the Eden government would resort to force if Egypt failed to comply with the demands presented by the delegation. The secretary of state reiterated the United States' opposition to military action.[28]

Upon his return to Washington, Dulles met with the president on August 29 and told him that Great Britain would be prepared to resort to military action if Nasser failed to accept the proposed plan by September 10. Eisenhower asked what he could do to encourage Nasser to accept it. The secretary of state suggested that the president issue a statement. After drafting it, Foster Dulles read it at a news conference. The president's comment—that the Suez Canal had been "internationalized by the Treaty of 1888"—elicited a powerful protest from the Egyptian ambassador, Ahmed Hussein. The ambassador, during a meeting with Foster Dulles, noted that the Suez Canal had always been Egyptian territory under Egyptian sovereignty. Two days later, Eisenhower tried to clarify his remarks read by Dulles by emphasizing that

his statement was not designed to claim that other nations owned the canal. Instead, it was designed to convey his strong belief that Egypt should not jeopardize the rights of nations to use the Suez Canal.[29]

By early September it had become evident that Menzies's diplomatic mission to Cairo would not achieve its intended goal. On September 4, Eisenhower and his secretary of state hastily discussed the potential of a second London Conference to create a Suez Canal Users Association—an alliance that would facilitate the collective bargaining of rates and fees on the canal.[30] Shortly thereafter, Eden reaffirmed his government's determination to use military force if Nasser did not accept the proposal extended by Menzies. In a September 6 message to Eisenhower, the British prime minister depicted Nasser as another Hitler who was treating the Suez Canal takeover as "the opening gambit in a planned campaign designed . . . to expel all Western influence and interests from Western countries."[31] Oddly enough, the day before, the CIA had provided the president a National Intelligence estimate that stated that if Britain and France were to use military force against Egypt "it will probably be after they are confronted with another direct and major challenge—such as Egyptian denial of their transit rights through the canal or violence against nationals."[32]

Disturbed by Eden's resolve to use force, Eisenhower sent the prime minister a carefully structured reply. The president stressed that the world was now following the quarrel closely and that "we [the United States, France, Great Britain, and possibly Israel] can expect the Arabs to rally firmly to Nasser's support in either of two eventualities." The first instance would be if the West were to resort to force without first showing that Nasser was "the actual aggressor." At the moment, the West lacked any evidence that Nasser intended to "do more than to nationalize the Canal Company." "Without clear evidence," continued Eisenhower, "all Arabs would be forced to support him [Nasser], even though some of the ruling monarchs might very much like to see him toppled . . . The second [scenario] would be what seemed like a capitulation to Nasser and complete acceptance of his rule of the Canal traffic." Eisenhower then added that the American public was not prepared to accept the use of military force. In their minds, "[T]he United Nations was formed to prevent this very thing." He ended by noting that his administration was not

> blind to the fact that eventually there may be no escape from the use of force . . . But to resort to military action when the world believes there are other means available for resolving the dispute would set in motion forces that could lead, in the years to come, to the most distressing results.[33]

Though Foreign Secretary Selwyn Lloyd had serious misgivings about Dulles's proposal, on September 12 Eden presented the idea of the Suez

Canal Users Association proposed by Foster Dulles as a full-fledged mechanism. The organization would "employ pilots, undertake responsibility for the coordination of traffic through the Canal, and, in general act as a voluntary association for the exercise of the rights of Suez Canal users." Eden added that transit dues would be paid to the association, not to Egypt, and that the association would then pay Egypt for the services and facilities it provided.[34] The prime minister once again warned that if Nasser did not accept the proposed association, Britain was prepared to rely on more aggressive means. By then, US intelligence had learned that both Great Britain and France were still deploying forces in the eastern Mediterranean and were conducting joint exercises off Malta.[35]

The following day, Foster Dulles informed the president that he had received a message from Nasser warning that if the United States wanted "war, it may support the scheme [plan proposed by Eden], but if its desire is to work for a peaceful solution the scheme has to be abandoned."[36] Foster Dulles then volunteered to travel to London to discuss the creation of the Suez Canal Users Association and to alter those conditions that Nasser might have found objectionable. Eisenhower agreed reluctantly. He was concerned about Foster Dulles's health, his judgment under stress, and the realization that Great Britain and France remained committed to force Nasser out of power. The Second London Conference started on September 19 and ended four days later. By then Nasser and the Egyptians were successfully running the canal.

On September 23, London and Paris formally asked the UN Security Council to address the Suez problem. They took the step without first consulting Washington. More importantly and unbeknownst to Washington, three days later Eden and Lloyd travelled to Paris to meet with their French counterparts to discuss a new invasion date. Shortly thereafter, Israeli representatives joined them. In the meantime, Britain's chancellor of the exchequer, Harold Macmillan, paid a visit to the White House, where he sought to project a softer stand regarding the Suez Canal Crisis. His visit was an attempt on the part of the French and the British to mislead Washington about their intentions.[37] Their plan seemed to have the intended effect. On October 3, the CIA reported that, according to their analysis, the "UK and France [did] not intend to resort to force at this time."[38]

Between October 5 and 13, the UN Security Council met daily to discuss "the situation created by the unilateral action of the Egyptian Government in bringing to an end the system of international operation of the Suez Canal, which was confirmed and completed by the Suez Canal Convention of 1888." On the morning of October 5, Foster Dulles met with France's foreign minister Christian Pineau and Britain's foreign secretary Lloyd. The

US secretary of state restated that it was not in the United States' best interest to intervene militarily in Egypt. After noting that there were people in Great Britain and France "who don't understand American policy" and people in the United States "who don't understand your policies," Dulles stated: "It is the military estimate of President Eisenhower, who assuredly is well qualified to have an opinion, that resort to force is a desperate measure [that] is not to be considered until a genuine effort has been made to exhaust all other possibilities." Dulles then emphasized that "contrary to what has been said," Eisenhower was not being swayed by the upcoming elections in the United States. Lloyd, in turn, stated that the British government would "favor economic pressure if it would show results within two weeks," but its members did not find that to be a practical alternative. For his part, Pineau remarked:

> French public opinion on this subject is clear . . . We don't think the United States Government realizes the importance that France and the UK attach to Suez. It is not merely the Canal, but all the Middle East, Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia that are involved. We will play the game in the Security Council but we will not get bogged down in procedure.[39]

By the end of the meeting, Lloyd and Pineau had grudgingly agreed to participate in closed-door discussions with the Egyptians.[40] Following another set of conversations with several foreign high-level officials, Dulles met with Egyptian foreign minister Mahmoud Fawzi. The foreign minister informed the secretary of state that the Egyptian government preferred to negotiate directly with Washington.[41]

On October 8, Eisenhower allowed domestic politics to guide briefly his approach to the Suez Canal Crisis. With the candidate for the Democratic Party, Adlai Stevenson, repeatedly questioning Eisenhower's health and claiming that he was not fully engaged in trying to resolve the Suez Canal Crisis, the president considered issuing a major declaration. As recommended by one of his political aides, Eisenhower pondered whether he should present a step-by-step plan delineating the way he intended to avoid war and whether he should warn the British and French that the United States would not "tolerate or support war, or warlike moves, in the Suez area." Upon learning about his boss's plan, Dulles returned to Washington to see whether he could dissuade him. The secretary of state managed to convince Eisenhower to give the United Nations enough time to address the issues that troubled him.[42]

Initially, Foster Dulles's hopes seemed justified. On October 12, during an NSC meeting at the White House, Hoover stated that he believed that the "British and the Egyptians were now very close to an agreement and that in fact the chief reason why no agreement [had] yet been reached [was]

French opposition."[43] That same day, British, French, and Egyptian representatives agreed on "six principles to implement the administration of the Suez Canal."[44] The UN Security Council adopted them the following day. In the evening, Eisenhower, while participating in a television program, decided to play politics. Though he knew that there was no guarantee that the main parties would ultimately follow through their original agreement, the president stated that Egypt, France, and Great Britain had agreed on a set of principles on which to negotiate and that the crisis seemed to be behind them.[45]

The president's optimism proved to be unfounded—tension in the Middle East continued to intensify. On October 10, Israeli forces had launched a raid across the Jordanian border that resulted in the death of forty-eight civilians. Shortly thereafter, Iraqi forces had sent a limited number of troops in response to an appeal by Jordan. The ensuing dispute between Israel and Jordan placed Great Britain in a curious position, due to the fact that London had a pact with Amman that required Great Britain to defend Jordan in the case of an external attack, which in this case would entail fighting Israel. During a conference at the White House, the president told the secretary of state that he should make it very clear to David Ben-Gurion and the Israelis "that they must stop these attacks against the borders of Jordan."[46]

In the meantime, the CIA produced a report that stressed that its major concern at the moment was the conflict between Israel, Jordan, and Iraq. The CIA stressed that the British, the French, and the Egyptians intended to carry on additional face-to-face discussions for the next two to three weeks and that new concessions by the Western powers might persuade Egypt to sign an agreement.[47] Unbeknownst to the US intelligence organization, on that same day Great Britain's prime minister and foreign minister flew to Paris, where they met in secret with their French counterparts to finalize their war strategy against Egypt—a strategy in which Israeli forces would play a central role.

Because it was an election year, Eisenhower had no choice but to divide his time between campaigning and striving to persuade the United States' two leading Western allies not to attack Egypt. As he campaigned throughout the United States, Eisenhower repeatedly called Foster Dulles to inquire about the Middle East. For his part, the secretary of state worried that the British and the French were keeping the Eisenhower administration in the dark. During a meeting between members of the Department of State and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Arthur Radford speculated that a war was imminent, because Britain and France could not delay action much longer. This conjecture did little to assuage Foster Dulles's fears.[48] And yet, messages coming from Paris and London were conveying a different scenario, at least for the short term. From London, US Ambassador Winthrop Aldrich wrote that he believed that the British government "is disposed to try to promote a solution

through negotiations rather than the contrary. Indeed, it would be unrealistic for them in their present political situation to expect to make political capital in the country out of a solution on any other basis."[49] From Paris, US Ambassador C. Douglas Dillon declared that in his estimation France would not resort to war if the Suez Canal Users Association were promptly established. If such a structure were not created, France would use force but would wait until after the end of the US presidential election.[50] In a subsequent telegram to the Department of State, Dillon reaffirmed his initial estimation that if necessary France would resort to force to resolve the Suez Canal problem.[51]

The messages coming from Paris and London did not coincide with the intelligence U-2 surveillance flights were gathering. U-2 aerial photographs uncovered the presence of sixty French pursuit planes in Israel, thirty-four more than the French had agreed to provide.[52] Across the Atlantic, and unbeknownst to Eisenhower and US intelligence organizations, representatives of France, Great Britain, and Israel met in Sèvres to formulate a plan of action against Egypt. On October 24, the three agreed on a three-step plan:

1. Israeli forces would invade the Sinai Peninsula on October 29, with the aim of reaching the Suez Canal Zone by the following day.
2. Great Britain and France would issue an ultimatum to both Israel and to Egypt to withdraw ten miles from the canal zone and accept a temporary Anglo-French occupation of the zone.
3. Were Egypt to reject the ultimatum, Great Britain and France would begin military operations against Egyptian forces early in the morning of October 31.[53]

On October 26, US military intelligence analysts began to give up on their hopeful estimation. Members of National Intelligence Indications Center "agreed that the likelihood has increased of major Israeli reprisals probably against Egypt in the near future." Nevertheless, they seemed doubtful that such an action would lead to "general hostilities." They added that they had an unconfirmed report that France might be "planning actions in conjunction with Israel against Egypt." Concern that Israel might soon launch a major attack increased during the afternoon, after Washington received another message stating that Israel had initiated a major mobilization of its forces and that the "French might be working with the Israelis."[54] At a meeting at the White House the following day, however, when the president inquired about Israel's mobilization, he was told that in all likelihood its target would be Jordan. At Foster Dulles's urging, Eisenhower wrote a missive to Ben-Gurion stating:

> I remain confident that only a peaceful and moderate approach will genuinely improve the situation and I renew the plea which was communicated to you through Secretary Dulles that there be no forcible initiative on the part of your Government [that] would endanger the peace and the growing friendship between our two countries.[55]

Two days later, the CIA presented an ominous report regarding hostilities between Israel and the Arab countries. The intelligence brought to light "new evidence of heavy Israeli mobilization" that would permit Israel to occupy Jordan, west of the Jordan River; penetrate Syria as far as Damascus and Egypt all the way to the Suez Canal; break the Egyptian blockade of the Gulf of Aqaba; and gain air superiority over Egypt. Most importantly, the CIA report stressed that the "attack will be launched against Egypt in the very near future, under the pretext of retaliation and exceeding past raids in strength," and that the scale of mobilization would be much larger than in past military exploits.[56]

Eisenhower acted immediately. He wrote Ben-Gurion that he was gravely concerned "regarding reports of mobilization in Israel." He renewed his "previous plea that no forcible initiative be taken by Israel which would endanger peace in the Middle East."[57] He also issued a public statement via Foster Dulles, who in turn delivered it to the French and British ambassadors. In the statement, Eisenhower questioned Israeli mobilization in the Middle East and urged nations to refrain from action that "will hinder the [UN Security] Council in its efforts to achieve a peaceful solution."[58] At 5:30 PM, Dulles urged Eisenhower to order the evacuation of Americans in Egypt, Jordan, and Syria. Eisenhower wondered whether the evacuation would aggravate an already delicate situation; Dulles believed it would not.[59] Eisenhower gave the go-ahead, and half an hour later the instructions were sent to the US embassies in Amman, Cairo, Damascus, and Tel Aviv, and to the consulate general in Jerusalem.

The Israeli assault on Egypt began, as planned, on the morning of October 29. Eisenhower, who was campaigning in the South, returned immediately to Washington.[60] Back at the White House, Eisenhower ordered Dulles to send a telegram criticizing Ben-Gurion for his country's aggressive moves against Egypt and stressing that the United States was going to apply sanctions against Israel and would do everything it could "to stop this thing."[61] Concerned about how the Soviet Union would act if the aggression against Egypt were to expand, the president asked Sir John Coulson, the British chargé d'affaires, to come to the White House. The president warned Coulson that he intended to take the Israeli invasion to the UN Security Council

and that he was going to fulfill his pledge that the United States would "assist the victim of any aggression in the Middle East."[62]

On October 30, both London and Paris indirectly revealed their intentions when each sent a message to the Department of State indicating that neither could support a statement that identified Israel as the aggressor. The originators of both messages argued that Israel had acted in self-defense. Eisenhower asked Eden to clarify his argument so that Great Britain and the United States could present a unified front. In his response, Eden claimed that Egypt had to a large extent "brought this attack on herself" and that Great Britain could not afford to see the canal closed. He added that he would communicate with the president shortly after he had met with the French.[63]

Later that same day Eisenhower and his closest advisors discussed the evolving crisis and considered possible US responses. Well into the meeting, the president was informed that Eden was announcing at the House of Commons that Great Britain and France were extending an ultimatum to both Israel and Egypt to cease military action and to accept temporary occupation of the canal zone by Anglo-French forces. In view of the message, the president stressed that it would be necessary for his administration to state publicly that the United States was not "associated with the French and the British in their activities." Eisenhower then voiced concern over the possibility of Soviet intervention.[64]

Soon thereafter, Eisenhower learned of the ultimatum that had been developed in Sèvres several days prior. Deeming the stipulation "unduly harsh and unacceptable to Egypt," Eisenhower sent strongly worded cables to Eden and Mollet. The president once again asserted the US anti-military-force stand. "I must urgently express to you my deep concern at the prospect of this drastic action," wrote the president. "It is my sincere belief that peaceful processes can and should prevail to secure a solution which will restore the armistice condition."[65] In the meantime, the UN Security Council met to discuss the United States' draft resolution. The French and British vetoed the resolution, as well as a similar alternative drafted by the Soviet Union.

As planned, Great Britain and France began their bombing of Egypt on the morning of October 31. Egypt immediately blocked off the canal and severed ties with both aggressors. The president and his secretary of state were shocked by London and Paris's decision. At one point, Eisenhower stated: "It's the damnedest business I ever saw supposedly intelligent governments get themselves into."[66] During a public address to the American people, Eisenhower reiterated the United States' opposition of the use of military force in the Middle East and asserted that London and Paris had failed to consult with Washington prior to the launching of the attacks. Eisenhower's speech garnered him extensive support. As noted by *The New York Times*, "Eisenhower was still the right man in time of crisis."[67]

On November 1, Eisenhower met with members of the NSC to review policy options. After Allen Dulles had discussed the crisis in Hungary, the secretary of state outlined the situation in the Middle East. Foster Dulles made several points. He first noted that the Eisenhower administration had known for some time that both the French and British favored a more forceful approach to the nationalization of the canal. He then underscored that many senior members within the Eisenhower administration suspected that the French and the British were keeping Washington in the dark about their private meetings and agreements. He emphasized that the British and the French had purposely misled the Eisenhower administration with false reassurances. Foster Dulles closed by stating that the release of the British-French ultimatum to Israel and Egypt indicated that the two Western powers had persuaded Israel to strike Egypt, not Jordan, so that they could use it as a rationale for attacking Egypt.[68]

The attacks by the British, the French, and the Israelis, added Foster Dulles, posed several critical challenges to the United States. If Washington chose not to take a strong stand against its two Western allies and Israel in the upcoming UN Security Council meeting, it would be seen as being tied to the Anglo-French colonialist policies. Newly independent countries that had escaped from colonialism might turn toward the Soviet Union. On the other hand, the United States valued its strong relations with France and Great Britain. Ending those ties would affect the three parties greatly and would weaken NATO measurably. Foster Dulles proposed that the United States impose "mild sanctions against Israel"—namely the "suspension of military and economic assistance programs." The main objective, he asserted, was to "find ways and means to shorten the duration and limit the scope of the hostilities" that had developed in Egypt.[69]

During his summation, the secretary of state suggested that the United States had to decide whether the future "lies with a policy of reasserting by force colonial control over less developed nations, or whether [it] will oppose such course of action by every appropriate means." Because France and Great Britain were the United States' most trusted allies, added Foster Dulles, Washington might have no choice but to assist them if they were to become embroiled in a major war. Such a development, however, would be tragic, particularly because the United States was in a position to win a major victory over Soviet colonialism in Eastern Europe.[70]

For the next hour the NSC debated the kind of resolution the United States would present to the UN Security Council. Eventually Foster Dulles made it clear that if Moscow were the first to introduce a cease-fire declaration to the United Nations that "Britain and France were the aggressors, it would win by acclamation, and as a result the United States would lose its

leadership to the Soviet Union."[71] At this point in the meeting, Foster Dulles left to take a phone call. Eisenhower used the opportunity to explain the US position.

> We should state clearly that we are going to suspend arms shipments to the whole Near Eastern region while the UN is considering this crisis. We must not permit ourselves to be blinded by the thought that anything we are going to do will result in our fighting with Great Britain and France. Such a course of action is simply unthinkable, and no one can possibly believe that we will do it.[72]

The president brought the meeting to an end with a warning. If the Soviets intervened in the Middle East, "the fat would really be in the fire."[73]

After the meeting, Eisenhower wrote a memorandum stating that the United States must lead in order to accomplish the following:

1. Prevent immediate issuance by the United Nations of a harshly worded resolution that would put the United States in an acutely embarrassing position, either with France and Britain or with all the rest of the world.
2. Prevent the Soviet Union from seizing a mantle of world leadership through a false but convincing exhibition of concern for smaller nations.[74]

He also noted that the United States "must not single out and condemn any one nation—but should serve to emphasize to the world our hope for a quick cease-fire to be followed by sane and deliberate action on the part of the United Nations." Lastly, he wrote that the United States should be expected to "suspend governmental shipments, now, to countries in battle areas and be prepared to agree, in concert with others, to later additional action."[75]

The UN General Assembly convened at 5:00 PM, at which time Foster Dulles introduced a resolution that called for a cease-fire, the withdrawal of all forces, the withholding of military goods, and the reopening of the Suez Canal. The resolution was passed that night by a 26-5 vote, with six abstentions. The countries that opposed the decree—Great Britain, France, Israel, Australia, and New Zealand—made it clear that France and Great Britain were unwilling to compromise their stand vis-à-vis Egypt.

On November 2, Eisenhower and his senior advisors gathered to discuss the development of an international committee that would return freedom of navigation to the canal. During deliberations they considered whether the president or Jawaharlal Nehru, India's prime minister, who had expressed

interest in working with the United States in developing a solution to the Middle East conflict, should serve as its elder statesmen. Both Foster Dulles and Hoover were wary of the idea. Hoover suggested "not getting into the matter too early because there is still bloodshed ahead."[76] That same day, Egypt's foreign minister Fawzi informed Secretary General Dag Hammarskjold that his government had accepted the UN resolution.

By this time, the possibility of the Soviet Union becoming directly involved in the Middle East conflict had become quite palpable. Foreign Minister Pienau informed the US ambassador to France Douglas Dillon that the Soviet Union planned to station an aircraft on a Syrian base. Though no one at the White House believed that Moscow would engage in a direct war with Great Britain and France immediately, Eisenhower reminded his advisors that "however unlikely, sliding into a nuclear war with the Soviet Union was a real possibility."[77]

Several troubling reports reached the White House on November 3. Intelligence had learned that Syria had blown up British oil pipes that run through its country to the Mediterranean.[78] Eden released an official statement stating that his government, along with France's, rejected the cease-fire because they both believed that "police action must be carried through urgently to stop the hostilities which are now threatening the Suez Canal." In the same statement Eden added that London and Paris would be willing to accept the cease-fire if the Egyptian and Israeli governments accepted a UN-backed force to keep the peace in the canal zone.[79] At approximately the same time, Moscow, which had previously rejected Washington's resolution that the Soviet Union withdraw its forces from Hungary, was preparing to launch a full-scale assault against the Hungarian uprising. Also of great concern to Eisenhower and his advisors was news that Foster Dulles had entered Walter Reed Hospital with abdominal pain, which was diagnosed as colon cancer, and had been operated on immediately.[80]

In the meantime, in New York, Hammarskjöld was working feverishly to resolve the crisis. On November 4 the UN secretary general delineated some of the steps he had taken. He noted the following:

1. Great Britain was "considering urgently his appeal . . . for a cease fire."
2. A number of countries, including Canada and Norway, had agreed to provide forces to the United Nations.
3. The United States was considering his request that it provide troops and help with the airlifting of additional forces into the area.
4. Pay and equipment for the forces would be "furnished by the countries whose forces were involved," while the United Nations would pay for the maintenance.[81]

The crisis in the Middle East continued. In the early morning of November 5, British and French paratroopers landed at Port Said, Egypt. In a letter to Eisenhower, Eden wrote that France and Great Britain had rejected the UN General Assembly's resolution, because they "could not have a military vacuum while the UN force is being constituted and is being transported to the spot." He added that it was also imperative to curb Nasser's ambition.

At the White House, Eisenhower met with several of his advisors. After being informed of Hammarskjöld's UN update, the conversation turned to the question of oil supplies. Acting Secretary of State Hoover noted that oil supplies "from the Middle East [had been] largely cut off" and that the "oil supply of NATO military forces in Western Europe may soon be endangered." Eisenhower suggested putting "heavy tankers and oilers into use immediately," but stressed that the United States should not be too quick in attempting to "render extraordinary assistance to Great Britain and France." When Hoover voiced concern over Moscow's providing military assistance to Syria, Eisenhower asked CIA director Allen Dulles to keep a close eye on the Syrian airfields.[82] After the meeting, Eisenhower drafted a message to Eden in which he expressed his disappointment with "the temporary but admittedly deep rift that has occurred in our thinking" and suggested ways the prime minister could help reduce the tension.[83]

The White House did not have to wait long to learn how Moscow intended to deal with the crisis. On November 5, the Soviet Union took several steps. At the United Nations, the Soviet foreign minister Dmitri Shepilov demanded that its Security Council meet immediately to discuss Great Britain, France, and Israel's failure to comply with the "cease-fire resolutions." In letters to Eden, Mollet, and Ben-Gurion, Soviet Prime Minister Nikolai Bulganin warned that, if their countries did not stop the aggression against Egypt, the conflict could escalate into "a third World War." Bulganin added that the Soviet Union was fully determined to "crush the aggressor and reestablish peace in the [Middle East] by using force."[84] Then, in a letter to the US president, Bulganin suggested that the United States and the Soviet Union join their forces within the framework of the United Nations to "halt the aggression and restore peace."[85]

Once again Eisenhower gathered his advisors at the White House to discuss a possible response. The consensus was that Washington should warn Moscow that the United States would oppose any effort to violate the UN plan. Eisenhower stressed that he was concerned about the possibility of Soviet armed intervention. The Soviets, noted the president, "are scared and furious, and there is nothing more dangerous than a dictatorship in this state of mind." He referred to Hitler's behavior as an example of the idea he was trying to convey. He added that Washington should ask Prime Minister

Nehru to help diminish the tension.[86] Then, in an official news release, the White House referred to the Soviet appeal to form a united military front against Britain and France in order to resolve the "Middle East Question" and demanded that the Soviet Union comply with the nonmilitaristic approach agreed upon in the UN General Assembly.[87]

To ensure that Moscow would not question Washington's resolve and that the United States would be well prepared to respond effectively to any attempt on the part of the Soviet Union to initiate aggressive actions against the British and the French, Eisenhower ordered the Joint Chiefs of Staff to place the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean in full alert. Moreover, in order to signal Moscow that an attack on the British and French navies would signify an attack on the US Navy, the chiefs ordered that US ships be interspersed with the British and French ones.[88]

But not all was gloom. At the United Nations, British and French representatives signaled their willingness to accept the UN resolution if Israel and Egypt accepted UN forces between the two adversaries. Cairo and Tel Aviv responded that they would. Later in the day, the US ambassador to the United Nations used the United States' veto power to ensure that the Security Council would not consider Moscow's resolution.[89]

Election Day began poorly for Eisenhower. Early in the morning he learned that British and French forces had landed in Egypt and that the conflict had intensified. Upon receiving word of the attack, Eisenhower met with Allen Dulles and Hoover to review an intelligence analysis. The report stated that the

> Soviet notes to Eden and Mollet constitute strong threats of military action against the UK, France, and Israel in connection with the Suez crisis. They do not include a definite expression of Soviet intent to take unilateral military action . . . Nevertheless, they are clearly intended to imply that the USSR may act alone.

After appraising the intelligence, Eisenhower remarked that, if the Soviets were to attack the British and French, "We would be in war, and we would be justified in taking military action even if Congress were not in session."[90] Eisenhower then promptly left for Gettysburg to vote. He returned to Washington shortly after he had completed his civic duty.

Before the president's return to Washington, Hoover met with the French ambassador to the United States, Hervé Alphand. The ambassador voiced his fear that the Soviet Union might attack British and French forces. Rather than try to assuage Alphand by telling him that the United States would not abrogate its obligations under NATO to defend France, Hoover stressed

that the only way to resolve the crisis was for Britain and France to accept unequivocally and unconditionally the cease-fire resolution approved by the United Nations. Great Britain's leaders were facing their own set of problems. Two days into the war, Eden's government learned that his country had lost $50 million in reserves, which had generated rampant speculation on the pound. In an attempt to stabilize the economy, Great Britain sought to access its own money from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Determined to compel Eden to agree to a cease-fire, Eisenhower vetoed the returns of the IMF funds.[91] By then, many in Great Britain had started to question the prime minister's decision against Egypt and were beginning to call for his resignation.

Upon Eisenhower's return from Gettysburg, his staff secretary, Goodpaster, told him that US intelligence had not detected Soviet air presence over Syria. Somewhat relieved, Eisenhower ventured to state that the "immediate crisis was over."[92] At the White House, the president and his advisors discussed the military situation. Admiral Redford informed Eisenhower that he and the Joint Chiefs were carefully implementing a series of steps to make sure that the United States would be well prepared if a major war were to erupt. Redford added that he believed that the Soviet Union would find it difficult to intervene militarily in Egypt. Eisenhower had reached a similar conclusion. The president reasoned that geography made "Soviet intervention in Egypt difficult, if not impossible."[93] The meeting was interrupted by a call from the British prime minister, who informed Eisenhower that London had accepted the UN cease-fire. Paris took the same step.

Eisenhower won reelection in a landslide, garnering 10 million more popular votes than Adlai Stevenson and a 457–73 victory in the Electoral College. British and French troops waited until December 22 to remove all their troops from Egypt; Israeli troops delayed their full withdrawal until March 5, 1957.

Eisenhower and the Three-Stage Suez Canal Crisis

For analytical purposes, we divide the Suez Canal Crisis into the pre-crisis phase and the crisis phase. In turn, we divide the crisis phase, into the war-prevention period and the cease-fire stipulation period.

The Pre-Crisis Phase

The Suez Canal Crisis began as the result of a poorly thought-out decision—one whose potential effects were initially pondered by only a few. As already explained, on July 19, 1956, Foster Dulles, after reviewing some of the

economic challenges Egypt would face in its attempt to construct the Aswan Dam, recommended to Eisenhower that the United States withdraw its offer to assist Egypt in the financing. The president concurred and authorized the secretary of state to pass on the information to the Egyptian ambassador.

The decision can be viewed from two perspectives: pragmatic and political. The Eisenhower administration knew that building the dam would be an expensive endeavor and thus demanded certain assurances from the Egyptian government—guarantees that Nasser was not inclined to grant outright. During most of the deliberations with Cairo, however, Eisenhower and Foster Dulles believed that building the dam would help strengthen US-Egyptian relations and might keep the Soviets at bay. "Intervention of the Soviets in this proposition [Aswan Dam]," wrote Eisenhower to Hoover, "would be more or less disastrous."[94] Nevertheless, Eisenhower, who was still recovering from his last operation and was devoting much of his attention to the presidential election, barely participated in the decision-making process. One of the few voices of alarm was that of the president of the World Bank, Eugene Black, who repeatedly warned Foster Dulles that "all hell would break loose" if the United States and Great Britain retracted their loan offers. Black's voice was not powerful enough to counter the opposition that had been building in Washington. The Jewish lobby, with strong support from Southerners who feared that the building of the dam would increase Egypt's cotton production and create greater competition for Southern cotton, opposed the granting of the loan. Many of the leading members of the US Senate and House of Representatives also objected. Initially Dulles sought to persuade them that building the dam would in due course serve the strategic interests of the United States, but resistance remained solid. In the end, the secretary of state, who disliked Nasser immensely and did not trust him, chose the path of least resistance.

As Black had predicted, the Egyptian president responded angrily to the reversal. Shortly after he learned of Washington and London's decision, Nasser delivered a speech in which he rebuked the United States and Great Britain for their "imperialist act" and announced the nationalization of the Suez Canal. Eisenhower never openly acknowledged that his administration made a mistake when it rejected the proposal to help finance the construction of the Aswan Dam. He did wonder, however, whether Foster Dulles could have been more diplomatic in the cancellation of the original loan offer. Whether Washington and London's decision actually precipitated the crisis is difficult to prove. It is reasonable to assume, however, that had the assistance been granted, Nasser would have understood that if he nationalized the Suez Canal, Washington and London would have stopped funding the construction of the dam.

One could blame Eisenhower and Foster Dulles for failing to foresee that their retraction of the Aswan Dam loan offer would compel Nasser to nationalize the Suez Canal. Maybe if Eisenhower's health had not failed him, he would have anticipated that the cancellation would backfire on the United States, particularly since he and his senior advisors knew that Moscow was waiting in the wings, ready to extend the offer both Washington and London had forsaken. Eisenhower, however, cannot be criticized for being unable to dissuade Great Britain, France, and Israel from attacking Egypt.

The Crisis Phase

"The War-Prevention Period"

Eisenhower had become president guided by a mindset no different from the one that had steered Truman's foreign policy for nearly eight years and that still dominated Washington's thinking process. In 1956, no one in the capital questioned the claim that it was the United States' responsibility to contain the spread of the Soviet Union's domain and Communist ideology. As stated in the previous chapter, Eisenhower believed that Communism posed the greatest threat to international stability and that the United States had to contain it. This belief was rooted in the conviction that "the Kremlin intended to dominate and control the entire world."[95] Any attempt on the part of the United States to "sit at home and ignore the rest of the world" in the face of such a threat, would lead to "destruction."[96] Foster Dulles was equally convinced that the Kremlin was determined to dominate the world. Dulles also stressed that, as a Christian nation, the United States had a moral obligation to resort to force, if necessary, to prevent the spread of Communism.

Eisenhower's anti-Communist mindset was not one dimensional. He was prepared to send US forces into harm's way against the Soviets if he became convinced that he had no other choice, but he viewed a war with the Soviet Union as a "last, not a first, resort."[97] In his mind, the use of force against the Soviet Union could lead to a nuclear exchange, which would result in the estimated destruction of 65 percent of the US population and a much larger percentage in the Soviet Union.[98] Armageddon, he liked to remind his advisors, would not produce winners.

Eisenhower's commitment to avoiding a major clash with the Soviet Union was in part connected to the latest developments in the Middle East. In 1953 the US president had agreed with Great Britain's political leaders in the overthrow of Mohammad Mosaddegh to prevent the rise of Communism in Iran and to ensure continuous access to its oil. However, the president believed that the challenges generated by Egypt had to be handled differently. Like Great Britain and France's leaders, the president recognized that Western

Europe's economy would suffer immensely if the flow of oil from the Middle East were interrupted. But such access, he argued repeatedly, could not be sustained through domination, particularly by a former colonial power. As he noted in 1954, when he sought to persuade London to acquiesce to Cairo's demand that Great Britain and Egypt renegotiate the Suez Canal Treaty, "[I]t would be undesirable and impracticable for the British to retain sizable forces permanently in the territory of a jealous and resentful government amid an openly hostile population."[99]

Three mindsets informed Eisenhower that Great Britain's intent of keeping forces in Egypt would be objectionable and unviable. First, the end of the Second World War had marked the beginning of the end of colonialism as an acceptable form of imperial control. "Nasser," Eisenhower argued, "embodies the emotional demands of the people of the era for independence and for 'slapping the White man down.'"[100] Second, any attempt to retain some form of colonial domination would entice the targeted government and population to seek help from the Soviet camp. Eisenhower came to this realization near the end of 1955, as Great Britain and the United States were negotiating with Egypt the conditions under which the two Western powers would extend Cairo a major loan to build the Aswan Dam. Upon learning that Moscow was prepared to make Egypt an attractive offer, Eisenhower remarked, almost admiringly, that the Soviet leaders seemed "determined to challenge [the US] with economic policies."[101] And third, were Great Britain and France to rely on force to impose their will on Egypt and were the Soviet Union to side militarily with Egypt against the two Western powers, Eisenhower knew that he would have no choice but to help the United States' two allies defend themselves. It was this type of scenario that kept Eisenhower awake at night, for he was convinced that ultimately neither Moscow nor Washington would be able to determine a priori how much military force either combatant would be willing to use to protect its interests. If such a scenario became reality, their mutual destruction was a conceivable notion.

Between the moment Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal until Israel launched its attack on Egypt, Eisenhower defined his administration's goals systematically, was always aware of their potential contradictions, repeatedly sought to get better intelligence, and frequently evaluated different options. During that entire period, he went out of his way to make sure that Great Britain, France, and Israel's leaders had no doubts about where he stood concerning their use of force against Nasser. He sought a peaceful alternative via the participation of the United Nations. Lastly, he restrained his secretary of state when he suspected that the latter's brusque tendencies might lead them off course, but never did he attempt to quiet the voices of those who might disagree with him.

The president's tactical goals changed as the crisis evolved. During the weeks immediately after Great Britain and France had announced that they were prepared to use their military to force Nasser out of power and impose a new set of controls over the operation of the canal, Eisenhower's two immediate objectives were to ensure the continuous flow of oil from the Middle East into Western Europe and to keep the Suez Canal open. He was convinced that the use of violence by the two European nations would worsen the crisis, endanger the viability of the Suez Canal and the continuous flow of oil to Western Europe, and boost the Soviet Union's opportunity to play a critical role in Egypt and the Middle East in general. To prevent the further aggravation of the crisis, Eisenhower and Foster Dulles concluded that they had to help create, with UN assistance, an international association responsible for administering the canal and had to persuade Great Britain, France, and Egypt to accept it. Though aware that none of the three was keen on accepting the international association, both the president and the secretary of state believed they had to attempt to persuade them. They reasoned that at minimum the process of trying to set it up would delay the start of the conflict.

The aforementioned goals were not the only ones sought by Eisenhower. The ongoing clashes between Israel and Egypt compelled the president and his secretary of state to attempt to persuade both parties to meet to find a peaceful solution to their differences. In the process, Eisenhower, determined to avert an arms race in the Middle East, refused to provide weapons to either. This decision placed his administration in a somewhat precarious position, in no small measure because the Soviet Union had provided weapons to Cairo, and the Jewish lobby in the United States, along with its supporters in Congress, was demanding that the president offset Moscow's action. In view of the impending presidential elections, Eisenhower could ill afford to alienate his Jewish supporters in the United States. Nor could he alienate voters who did not want the United States to become entangled in another major war yet would be highly critical of the president if he eventually failed to defend their country's leading allies: Great Britain and France. Nevertheless, through August, September, and much of October, the Eisenhower administration refused to provide weapons to Israel.[102]

"The Cease-Fire Demand Period"

The quality of the Eisenhower administration's FPDM process did not experience a downturn during the second stage of the crisis. The attacks on Egypt by Great Britain, France, and Israel distinctly transformed the nature of the crisis. The destruction of Egypt's air force and the killing of thousands of Egyptian soldiers both heightened Nasser's reputation and provoked strong anti-Western sentiments throughout the Middle East. Moscow wasted little time in voicing its "outrage."

In Washington, Eisenhower was worried that if his administration waited to act, the United States might not be able to avert the type of scenario that concerned him. Therefore, he judiciously selected the steps he would take next. Earlier, the secretary of state had received an analysis from his special assistant Francis Russell. According to the analysis, Department of State officials had disagreed for quite some time as to whether Nasser was one of the following:

a. A progressive military dictator attempting to modernize Egypt's political, economic, and social conditions and promote its leadership in the Arab world.
b. A symbol and leader of several centuries of accumulated Arab frustration, resentment, and bitterness.
c. An aspirant for power on a large scale, utilizing the tensions, resentments, and capacities for trouble that exist in the Middle East and Africa, without scruples and without regard to the interests of his own or other peoples.

Russell argued that based on the latest analysis, Nasser was an "international political adventurer of considerable skill with clearly defined objectives that seriously threaten the Western world, though probably with no definitely planned tactics or timetable." He recommended that, because establishing a cooperative relationship with Nasser was no longer possible, the United States should make a major effort to reduce the Egyptian leader's power and should act with Great Britain, and if at all possible with France, to achieve such an objective.[103]

Allen Dulles's assessment of Nasser differed markedly. In an analysis he sent his brother, the CIA director observed that the Egyptian leader was determined to do everything he could to protect his hard-won prestige and that he was hoping to avoid becoming dragged into either the Soviet or Western camp but would be willing to make an arrangement with the West because he did not want to find himself under the Soviet umbrella. He ended his analysis with a warning. "If Nasser feels that the [West] has definitely turned his back on him, he will accept further Soviet aid, if proffered."[104]

Though neither Eisenhower nor Foster Dulles trusted Nasser, they discarded Russell's recommendation. They concurred with the CIA director that if the West rejected Nasser, he would turn toward the Soviet camp if he believed that such an act would enable him to protect his power and prestige in Egypt and throughout the Middle East. Assured by the latest polls that his reelection was not in jeopardy and guided by the knowledge that without the Middle East there was nothing the United States could do to save Western

Europe, Eisenhower and his advisors moved in various directions simultaneously. They did the following:

1. Strongly advocated passage of a UN cease-fire resolution.
2. Repeatedly pressured the belligerent parties to accept the cease-fire.
3. Urged British, French, and Israeli forces to agree to withdraw their forces from Egyptian soil.
4. Rejected London's request to the IMF that it be allowed to withdraw its funds to alleviate its economic ills.
5. Warned Moscow that it would veto any attempt on the part of the Soviet Union to use force to impose the cease-fire in the Middle East.
6. Deployed the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean near the British and French vessels to signal Moscow that an attack on their ships would be equivalent to an attack on the US Navy.

In the end, Eisenhower's strategy paid off. Great Britain, France, Egypt, and Israel agreed to adhere to the cease-fire resolution, and the United States and the Soviet Union averted what could have turned into a highly destructive and costly war. Nasser solidified his power in Egypt and enhanced his reputation throughout the Middle East, while Israel did not fare badly. Though it was never Washington's intent to undermine Great Britain's and France's world standing, that is exactly what happened. By the time Great Britain and France had extracted their forces from Egypt, the common perception was that their days as world powers had come to an end.

Analysis: Two Foreign Policy Decision-Making Models

Two divergent models help explain the Eisenhower administration's FPDM process prior to the start of the crisis and during the progression of the crisis. The noncompensatory model outlines the way Foster Dulles went about deciding to retract the United States' December 1955 offer to help Egypt finance the construction of the Aswan Dam. In turn, the compensatory model explains the way Eisenhower and his advisors tried to prevent the eruption of war in the Middle East and, upon having failed, tried to convince the warring parties to accept a UN cease-fire resolution.

Pre-Crisis Phase

Between the last week of September 1955 and July 1956, Eisenhower's health problems often limited his ability to participate in the FPDM process. Two issues dominated his administration's agenda during this time: the growing

conflict between Israel and Egypt and negotiations concerning the financing of the construction of the Aswan Dam between the United States and Great Britain on the hand and Egypt on the other. Although the president's thinking during that phase was also shaped by his concern over the horrific destruction a thermonuclear war between the United States and the Soviet Union would most likely generate, such apprehension did not afflict the thinking process of the US Congress and influential political figures throughout the United States. Much of their attention was directed to ensuring that the United States would not assist Egypt in building the Aswan Dam.

Despite his attempts to convince Congress, the Jewish lobby, and Southern cotton farmers that construction of the dam would serve the strategic interests of the United States, in due course Foster Dulles accepted that his chances of changing the minds of those who opposed the project were slim. His disliked Nasser intensely, and he believed that in all probability Egypt would encounter tremendous economic problems as it sought to build the dam; these factors helped the secretary of state decide to retract the United States' initial offer to Cairo. Foster Dulles made the decision despite a warning from the president of the World Bank that retraction of the loan would cause major problems. Two models come to mind as one considers the FPDM process during the first stage: the poliheuristic model and the noncompensatory model.

According to the poliheuristic model, a foreign policy–maker—in this particular instance the secretary of state, first rejects any foreign policy option that would negatively affect the president on the domestic front and then selects from the remaining options an alternative that would maximize benefits. Though it is clear that domestic opposition to the construction of the dam was intense, initially Foster Dulles did not renege on the loan offer because of fear over Eisenhower's reelection chances. To begin with, the secretary of state was a strong believer that domestic politics should not be a part of the FPDM equation. And second, early on he tried to persuade those who questioned the proposed policy that the granting of the loan would eventually serve the strategic interests of the United States. As noted earlier, Foster Dulles's decision was dictated by his realization that in all likelihood Congress would reject the extension of the loan, by his loathing of Nasser, and by his belief that Egypt would encounter multiple problems while building the dam. He, like Eisenhower, believed that the United States should not invest its financial resources in wasteful endeavors. The question we cannot answer is whether the Eisenhower administration would have been able to persuade Congress to back the loan had Eisenhower and Foster Dulles mounted a major effort to change its thinking. And this leads us to the second model.

The noncompensatory approach is "non-additive and relies on cognitive shortcuts or heuristics because not all information is reviewed." It contends that if "an alternative has a low score on one dimension, then no other score along another dimension, or dimensions, can compensate."[105] From Foster Dulles's perspective, extending the loan stimulated low scores on at least three dimensions: Nasser's character, likelihood that Egypt would manage to build the dam, and chances Congress would approve the loan. Thus, although earlier Foster Dulles had considered the strategic ramifications of not extending the loan, in July 1956 he engaged in a cognitive shortcut when he disregarded the warning from the president of the World Bank that the secretary of state's decision would engender highly detrimental results. Once Nasser took over the Suez Canal and Great Britain and France started preparing for war, the Eisenhower administration regained its equilibrium.[106]

Crisis Phase

During a presidential election year, a president running for reelection will do his best to return to the White House for a second term. He will try to avoid designing a foreign policy that could generate strong opposition from highly influential constituents. During much of 1955 and throughout 1956, the American Jewish community, with support from Eleanor Roosevelt, Adlai Stevenson, and the Republican senatorial candidate for the state of New York, Jacob Javits, tried to convince the Eisenhower administration to be more attentive to Israel's needs. They were not successful. By then the Eisenhower administration had decided to change their course with regard to the Middle East.

After completing a fact-finding trip to the Middle East in May 1953, the newly appointed secretary of state wrote the president a memorandum delineating the challenges the United States faced in the region. Foster Dulles explained that Britain's reputation had deteriorated, that France was not respected as a political force, and that the position of the United States had also declined, largely because of its support of Israel during Truman's presidency and because it was generally associated with "British and French 'colonial and imperialistic policies.'"[107] From that time on, Foster Dulles decided to ignore the "pressure exercised by Jewish groups," while most US officials both at the White House and at the Department of State viewed Jerusalem, not Arab states, as the "primary impediment to peace in the Middle East."[108]

The issue of whether Eisenhower would allow domestic politics to influence its foreign policy was addressed head-on by the president and the secretary of state during a conversation at the White House on October 15. As he was describing Israel's latest actions toward Jordan, Foster Dulles noted that

the former might be trying to take advantage of the connection among several factors, one of which was "the elections in the United States." He elaborated by stating that he thought that Israeli officials might calculate that the impending elections "would prevent any American reactions against Israel." The president's response was blunt. The position of his administration in this matter "could not and should not be influenced by domestic political considerations." He then added:

> It would be a shame if the American leadership should make its decisions on any basis other than what was right and what was in our overall national interest. [I] would not under any circumstances permit the fact of the forthcoming elections to influence [my] judgment. If any votes were lost as a result of this attitude, that was a situation [that] would have to be confronted, but any other attitude would not permit us to live with our conscience.[109]

It is tempting to accept at face value the president's assertion, but at the same time one should not overlook the fact that three weeks before Americans would decide his political future, Eisenhower's lead over his Democratic rival, Adlai Stevenson, was substantial. We do not know how Eisenhower would have responded to the crisis in the Middle East had the race been closer. His strong standing in the polls and the estimation by political experts that he would win reelection, however, enabled the president and his advisors to distance themselves from domestic politics as they sought to address the ensuing crisis.

As we have explained on a number of occasions, according to the compensatory approach, the decision-maker relies on the same information to assign values to a set of dimensions in each of the alternatives he or she is considering, combines additively the values assigned to the dimensions within each option to produce an overall value, compares the values of each option, and then selects the one with the highest score.[110] The compensatory model acknowledges that, during the analysis of options, political leaders assess potential domestic and political costs, but the model does not take a stand with regard to the contention that if one option carries a high political cost, they will eliminate it straightaway.

A first glance at Eisenhower's strong criticism of Great Britain and France's determination to rely on military action against Nasser might lead some analysts to challenge the previous claim and to argue that the president engaged in some type of cognitive shortcut and, thus, approached the crisis from a noncompensatory perspective. Such an inference would be incorrect. Eisenhower never outright rejected the use of military force. As he repeatedly told the British and French prime ministers, future developments might eventually

compel them to rely on their military, but the immediate use of force without first giving other options a chance would simply exacerbate the crisis. Though it is impossible to determine exactly what values the president assigned to the various dimensions he considered within each option, it is reasonable to infer that he assigned an overall value to each option and then chose the one with the highest score. During the first period of the crisis, he assigned a higher value to the creation of an international association responsible for administering the canal than he gave to the use of military force against Egypt. During the second period, after Great Britain, France, and Israel had attacked Egypt, Eisenhower gave a markedly higher score to the approval of a UN cease-fire resolution and the unconditional acceptance of the decree by the belligerent parties, including Egypt, than he gave to the continuation of the conflict. In both stages, concern that the use of force would encourage the Soviet Union to side with Egypt militarily generated such a high negative value that, in Eisenhower's mind, it automatically negated support for such an option.

Before we close, it behooves us to address, albeit briefly, Rose McDermott's application of prospect theory to the handling of the Suez Canal Crisis by Washington, London, and Paris. As explained in this book's introduction, prospect theory proposes that decision-makers tend to be risk-averse when things are going well and will be more inclined to take risks when they are in the middle of a crisis.[111] When individuals find themselves in the midst of a decision and are appraising possible outcomes, they do not focus on the net assets each outcome might generate; instead they concentrate on deviations from a particular reference point. The framing of a reference point is important, because individuals treat the prospect of gains and losses differently. People value more what they have than what they do not have; hence they are more afraid to lose what they have than interested in winning what they do not possess.[112]

In her application of prospect theory to the Suez Canal, McDermott places the governments of Great Britain and France in the domain of loss and the government of the United States in the domain of gain.[113] When Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal, argues McDermott, the leaders of both Great Britain and France viewed the act as a prelude to "the complete loss of their colonial positions in Africa and Asia" and as an immediate threat to their economies. Concerned by the losses they estimated they would accrue, both chose a policy hindered by high levels of risk. The Eisenhower administration, on the other hand, was in a position of gain. The president's popularity was high, and thus his prospect of being reelected was good. Moreover, the US economy was doing well. She then argues that though the US president could have also used the military to impose his will on Nasser, he chose a moderate

response. Eisenhower's decision was dictated by the belief that, were he to use the military, he might precipitate a larger conflict—a war with the Soviet Union. As a result, the president calculated that by not responding militarily, he would be able to generate small but sure gains in the Third World.

A problem that sometimes arises with prospect theory is that the analyst looking in from the outside cannot always demonstrate the accuracy of his or her interpretations of the risk calculated by the decision-makers being analyzed. Throughout our analysis, we were able to establish that Eisenhower was convinced that were the United States, or for that matter Great Britain and France, to use force, the risk of precipitating a larger war would increase measurably. But did the governments of Great Britain and France concur with Eisenhower's assessment? They did not. To begin with, both estimated that the risk of not responding with force and relying on diplomacy was greater than the risk of using force. Second, they estimated that the risk of the Soviet Union's coming to the aid of Egypt was low. And last, both London and Paris estimated that were they to find themselves in trouble with the Soviet Union, the risk of Washington not helping them was low. In short, though we concur with McDermott's argument that the governments of Great Britain and France on the one hand and the Eisenhower administration on the other were looking at the nationalization of the Suez Canal from different domains, we would argue that London and Paris estimated that the risk of resorting to military force was markedly lower than the risk of resorting to diplomacy. Put differently, we contend that in this case the domain from which each set of actors interpreted the problem did not seem to affect their risk disposition. The fact that Washington's estimation was correct while London and Paris's was not does not invalidate our contention. To suggest that it does would be akin to engaging in Monday morning quarterbacking.

We close our analysis with a brief overview of Eisenhower's qualities as a decision-maker and leader. Two important characteristics differentiated Eisenhower from other political leaders: his first-class strategic intellect and his vast knowledge of foreign and military affairs. As the leader of numerous successful foreign military campaigns during the Second World War, Eisenhower was no stranger to FPDM.[114] One of his subordinates at the White House said it best when he remarked that Eisenhower "knew more than all of us put together" about foreign and military affairs.[115] These two characteristics enabled him to interact openly with a small group of advisors who never feared voicing their opinions, even when they differed from those of their boss. Eisenhower preferred small groups of individuals with whom he could explore the problem in an intimate setting. As he said to his National Security advisor Robert Cutler, "Bobby, I won't have people sitting around just for a free ride . . . this is a place for workers with a significant interest."[116] Because

he encouraged discussion and the voicing of dissenting opinions, groupthink never afflicted the president's advisory group. But when it came to making a decision, "it was Eisenhower's decision." He "was not afraid to make one which went against the consensus opinion of his advisors, especially in foreign policy."[117]

During his handling of the Suez Canal Crisis, Eisenhower demonstrated that he possessed the aptitude to break apart a problem into its various components and to identify their potential incongruities. Eisenhower often relied on analogies to make a point, but in this case he did not allow historical scripts to limit his thinking. In fact, in a letter to Eden, he questioned the prime minister's repeated claims that Great Britain had to act promptly against Nasser because the Egyptian president was another Hitler. The president also disliked Nasser and actually believed that it would be in the United States' interest to diminish the Egyptian president's power, but he did not allow his sentiment to overpower his reasoning as did Eden.

Eisenhower's response to Israel, Great Britain, and France's attack on Egypt reflects his understanding of the extent to which his mindsets could conflict with one another. His leading mindsets were his strong anti-Communist sentiment, his loathing of war, his conviction that Europe could not survive without access to oil from the Middle East, and his readiness to stand by the United States' closest Western allies if their security were threatened by the Soviet Union.

Prior to and following the attack, Eisenhower could have quietly informed London, Paris, and Tel Aviv that his administration would not take a strong stand against their action. He could have inferred, as did London and Paris, that a joint front would have forced Egypt to acquiesce. Instead, he had the prescience to realize that an attack on Egypt by the three Western powers and Israel would inevitably generate a strong anti-Western and anti-Israel sentiment throughout the Arab world, would endanger the uninterrupted flow of oil, would extend Moscow the opportunity to become involved in an area in which it had previously had little success, and would increase the probability of pushing the major powers into war. All the same, Eisenhower knew that a president is not always able to settle contradictions. As Egyptian casualties mounted and as Moscow became more vociferous with its threat to help Egypt defend itself, the president made it clear that, though he was furious with the British and the French for disregarding his warning, he would come to their defense were they to be attacked by Soviet forces.

CHAPTER 5

John F. Kennedy and the Decision to Intervene Covertly in Cuba

Introduction

On June 18, 1954, President Dwight Eisenhower authorized the CIA to launch a paramilitary operation intended to topple the government of Guatemala. The campaign achieved its objective. In February 1960, Eisenhower ordered the director of the CIA to prepare another covert paramilitary campaign, this time to overthrow Cuba's relatively new "Communist" regime. Eisenhower did not order the implementation of the CIA plan, but some three months after he had become president, John F. Kennedy authorized its director to execute a redesigned covert operation. The mission failed.

In this chapter we examine the mindsets that influenced Kennedy's definition of the problem posed by the Cuban regime. We describe the information he and his advisors considered, gauge the quality of the intelligence they had, and determine whether they assessed it thoroughly. We also focus on the president's ranking of his goals, the number of alternatives he considered, and whether he compared his options carefully before arriving at a final decision. In the process we examine the president's openness to different points of views. We bring the study to a close with a discussion of the model that best captures Kennedy's FPDM process and with an assessment of the quality of his approach to FPDM.

Cuba—The Creation of a Disaster

From the moment Fidel Castro and his revolutionary forces marched triumphantly through Havana in the early days of 1959 after toppling the Fulgencio Batista regime, the relationship between Cuba and the United States deteriorated rapidly. Throughout 1959, Castro's regime approved a radical agrarian reform that appropriated all rented lands and estates larger than 402 acres and granted full and free title to their land to tenant farmers cultivating

fewer than 27 hectares. Moreover, aware that the governments of Haiti, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic were unpopular throughout Latin America, Castro sponsored expeditions against them.

Concerned with Castro's policies, in November 1959, Secretary of State Christian Herter submitted a memorandum to Eisenhower. In it, Herter proposed that because "the prolonged continuation of the Castro regime in Cuba in its present form would have serious adverse effects on the United States' position in Latin America and corresponding advantages for international Communism," Washington might have to build up within Cuba a "coherent opposition" that would develop a good relationship with the United States.[1] A month later, the head of the CIA's Western Division, J. C. King, wrote a memorandum to CIA Director Dulles and the Director for Plans Richard Bissell, stating that "violent action" was the only means to overthrow the Castro regime, that it should be carried out within one year, and that the CIA should give serious consideration to the "elimination of Fidel Castro."[2]

Washington's apprehensions intensified in February 1960, when a large Soviet delegation arrived in Havana. By the middle of the month, representatives of the Soviet Union and Cuba announced that they had signed a five-year trade agreement. The CIA, during a briefing to the National Security Council, noted that Moscow had "shifted from cautious attitude to one of active support." It also claimed that opposition to Castro was growing but that "the anti-Castro groups both inside and outside the country [lacked] organization and effective leadership."[3]

Relationships between Cuba and the United States deteriorated further when a French ship carrying ammunitions blew up at a Havana dock. Castro accused Washington of being the culprit. Eisenhower, who had just returned from a trip to South America, did not take kindly to Castro's actions and authorized the CIA to carry out its anti-Castro plan referred to earlier.

As the relationship between Havana and Washington changed from bad to worse during the rest of 1960, the CIA reassessed its initial plan of relying primarily on Cuban national guerrillas to oust the Castro regime. In its revised March 1960 plan, the CIA proposed that it also "begin training a paramilitary force outside Cuba." Eisenhower gave the CIA the go-ahead. The CIA plan underwent another change in the late summer. Fearful that Cuban guerrillas alone would not be able to oust the Castro regime, analysts began to contemplate the idea of launching an amphibious operation composed of some 1,500 men, who would take over an area by sea and air to establish a base for further operations.[4] Shortly thereafter, Eisenhower approved a $13 million budget and the use of Department of Defense personnel and equipment for the covert operation, but ordered that US personnel not be used in combat.

The CIA plan did not generate a sense of confidence on the part of the president. Near the end of November, a little over a month after the Department of State had recalled its ambassador to Cuba, Eisenhower expressed his concerns during a meeting with key officials and demanded that they be prepared to "take more chances and be more aggressive."[5]

On December 8, the CIA completed a document assessing conditions in Cuba. The CIA put the document together with input from intelligence offices of various departments, including State, Defense, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Army, Navy, and Air Force. All the parties involved concurred with the conclusions presented. Some of the conclusions arrived at can be summarized as follows:

1. The Castro regime has placed emphasis on building up the militia, which, though not well trained yet, numbered approximately 200,000. During the next twelve months or so those "units will develop into a reasonably effective security force."
2. The regular armed forces remain disrupted as a result of "successive purges . . . the combat effectiveness of the air force is virtually nil, that of the navy is poor, and that of the army is low." However, the army now has some 32,000 soldiers, and their "combat capability can be expected to improve."
3. Though the "regime's enemies are growing in numbers, no one group or combination of them seems well enough organized or sufficiently strong to offer a serious threat to Castro's authority."
4. During the period of the estimate (the next six months) "Castro's control will be further consolidated," in no small measure because "organized opposition appears to lack the strength and coherence to pose a major threat to the regime." Further deterioration of Cuba's economy or political conditions are not likely to generate a "critical shift of popular opinion away from Castro." If erosion were to ensue, the regime would most likely offset it by increasing the "effectiveness of the state's instrumentalities of control."[6]

Eisenhower continued to monitor the CIA's covert plans even during his final weeks in office. During a meeting held at the White House with the president, his national security advisor, Gordon Gray, described the Cuban exiles in training as the best army in Latin America. The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Lyman Lemnitzer, concurred. Assistant Secretary of State Thomas Mann added that support for Castro had plummeted from approximately 95 percent to about 25 to 33 percent. Though the information seemed to be at odds with the special intelligence estimate produced about a

month earlier, the president commented that he would be prepared to move against Castro if the Cuban leader were to offer Washington a good excuse and that if he did not, the United States could perhaps "think of manufacturing something that would be generally acceptable."[7]

A few days after the meeting with the president, CIA officials outlined the status of the operation.

> [T]he initial mission of the invasion will be to seize and defend a small area . . . There will be no early attempt to break out of the lodgment for further offensive operations unless and until there is a general uprising against the Castro regime or overt military intervention by United States forces has taken place. It is expected that these operations will precipitate a general uprising throughout Cuba and cause the revolt of large segments of the Cuban Army and Militia . . . If matters do not eventuate as predicted above, the lodgment . . . can be used as the site for establishment of a provisional government that can be recognized by the United States . . . *The way will then be paved for the United States military intervention aimed at pacification, and this* will *result in the prompt overthrow of the Castro Government . . . It is considered crucial that the Cuban air force and naval vessels capable of opposing the landing be knocked out or neutralized before amphibious shipping makes its final run into the beach*.[8]

As the president prepared to welcome the newly elected president to the White House, the Department of State and the CIA discussed with representatives of the Joint Chiefs of Staff some of the plan's problems. Though the chiefs of the army, the navy, and air force knew about the scheme, this was the first time that staff at the working level (majors, lieutenant colonels, and colonels) learned about it. Jointly, the participants concluded that the operation might not succeed "in the objectives of overthrowing the Castro regime." The group, as explained by Ambassador Whiting Willauer, also "weighed without coming to a conclusion the advantages of rapid, effective action by direct war in terms of getting matters over without a long buildup of world opinion, [versus] the inevitability of such a buildup under any seven-month program."[9]

The CIA informed Kennedy about its Cuba plan on several occasions during the presidential campaign and shortly after he was pronounced the victor. Additionally, on the day before his inauguration as president, Kennedy and several of his newly appointed officials met with Eisenhower, at which time the departing president made it clear that it would be up to the new administration "to do whatever [was] necessary to bring [the operation against Castro] to a successful conclusion."[10]

The Kennedy administration focused on Cuba immediately. At a meeting at the Department of State on January 22, officials from several departments

briefed several cabinet members, including Secretary of State Dean Rusk, Defense Secretary Robert McNamara, and Attorney General Robert Kennedy. The information they received troubled them. While reviewing the military situation in Cuba, General Lemnitzer stated that its Revolutionary Army had about 32,000 members, the Revolutionary National Police about 9,000, and the militia some 200,000. Cuba, he emphasized, was "an armed camp." The fact that the Castro regime "had received more than 30,000 tons of arms and equipment over the past five or six months" had forced the United States to change its "contingency plans to deal with it." The general concluded his report with the warning that the return to the island of some 100 Cuban pilots being trained in Czechoslovakia added "a new dimension to the problem."[11]

Kennedy did not attend the gathering at the Department of State, but on January 25 the Joint Chiefs of Staff went to the White House, where he asked them what they thought the United States should do regarding Cuba. General Lemnitzer took the lead, and, after repeating that Castro's forces had received a large shipment of heavy military equipment, he stressed that the clandestine forces the CIA was relying on to topple the regime were not strong enough. He added that the United States had to increase the size of this force, which in itself would create difficulties. He recommended that the administration develop a basic expansion plan and that it do so soon, because Castro was tightening "police state controls within the area."[12]

The following day the CIA produced an ambiguous memorandum. It stated the following:

1. The present plan can establish a beachhead on Cuban soil and maintain it for a period of two weeks, possibly as long as thirty days. It will be of sufficient size to enable a provisional government to be introduced and exist without being under small fire.
2. There is a reasonable chance that the success of the above plan would set in motion forces [that] would cause the downfall of the regime.
3. There is a greater-than-even likelihood, however, that although the consolidation of the beachhead would elicit widespread rebellious activities and great disorganization, it will not cause the downfall of the regime.
4. Under the above conditions, there would appear to be a basis for an *overt, open US initiative to institute a military occupation of the island by a composite OAS (Organization of American States) force in order to put a stop to the civil war.*[13]

On January 28, the president convened with the principals of the Departments of State and of Defense and the CIA. The attendees agreed that Cuba

had become a Communist-controlled state and that popular internal opposition to the regime was growing rapidly. Defense Department representatives noted that no course "of action currently authorized by the United States Government will be effective in reaching the agreed national goal of overthrowing the Castro regime." General Lemnitzer added that, though the forces being trained by the CIA might be able to take a small beachhead, Castro's forces would able to counter them soon thereafter. The CIA disagreed; it voiced the belief that the operation could succeed. For his part, the Department of State representative interjected and stated that he feared that any overt action not authorized by the Organization of American States would engender grave political costs throughout the Western Hemisphere. As a result of the discussions, the president ordered the Defense Department and the CIA to review proposals "for the active deployment of anti-Castro forces on Cuban territory" and the State Department to prepare concrete proposals designed to isolate Castro throughout Latin America.[14]

About a week after he had articulated his concerns to the president about the CIA's plan, General Lemnitzer wrote that he and his colleagues believed that the operation was doable. In a February 3 memo to McNamara, Lemnitzer stated that, though the plan had several shortcomings, the "Joint Chiefs of Staff consider that timely execution of this plan has a fair chance of ultimate success and, even if it does not achieve immediately the full results desired, could contribute to the overthrow of the Castro regime."[15]

On February 7, representatives of the main departments and the CIA met to discuss further the CIA's plan and evaluation by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. They failed to reach an agreement. Their differences surfaced again the next day as they voiced their opinions to the president. Bissell was the first to speak. He explained the status of the plan and noted that the JCS believed that the plan "had a fair chance of success—'success' meaning ability to survive, and attract growing support from Cubans." He added that if the operation did not go exactly as hoped, "[T]he invaders should be able to fight their way to the Escambray and go into guerrilla action." Rusk, concerned about the political and diplomatic repercussions the operation could generate, stated that Washington had to preempt the operation with diplomatic steps. Bissell countered by noting that it would be impossible for the United States to "avoid being cast as the aggressor." Kennedy heeded Rusk's advice and "pressed for alternatives to a full-fledged 'invasion.'" Bissell declared that he did not think there was another option to the use of troops, but then acquiesced and remarked that maybe the invading force could "be landed gradually and quietly and make its first major military efforts from the mountains." He agreed that the plan should be studied further.[16] In a memo to the president, his national security advisor wrote that he and Richard Goodwin sided with

the Department of State's position. He noted that they both believed "that there should certainly not be an invasion adventure without careful diplomatic soundings."[17]

A few days later, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., another special assistant to the president, expressed his own concerns. In a memo, he acknowledged that there was great pressure on the US government "in favor of a drastic decision with regard to Cuba," and that one could present a viable case for such an act. But he added that the arguments against it "begin to gain force" as soon as one broadens the scope of the analysis beyond Cuba and includes "the hemisphere and the rest of the world." He also noted that regardless of how "well disguised any action might be, it will be ascribed to the United States," which will then generate "a wave of massive protest and sabotage throughout Latin America, Europe, Asia and Africa."[18]

Four days later, on February 15, Thomas Mann, a Department of State veteran who had been involved in the 1954 covert operation against Guatemala's regime and whose knowledge about Latin American was nearly unmatched throughout the government, sent Rusk a memo criticizing the CIA's plan. After describing it, Mann wrote that it was unlikely that the invasion would prompt a popular uprising in Cuba "of a scale and kind which would make it impossible for the Castro regime to oppose the [invading] brigade with superior numbers of well armed troops." He added: "It therefore appears possible, even probable, that we would be faced with the alternative of a) abandoning the brigade to its fate, which would cost us dearly in prestige and respect or b) attempting to . . . move the brigade into the mountains as guerrillas, which would pose a prolonged problem of air drops or supplies or c) overt military intervention." Mann then enumerated the various UN and OAS violations the United States would be committing if the operation were to be implemented, which would then enable Castro to call on the Organization of American States to assist him in repelling the attack. Near the end of his memo he posited two critical arguments. First, he noted that the "proposal comes closer to being a military invasion than a covert operation of the Guatemala type." And second, Mann emphasized that though time was running out against the United States in Cuba, "*Defense does not currently consider Cuba to represent a threat to our national security.* If later it should become a threat we are able to deal with it."[19]

On February 17, two days after Kennedy met with his top advisors and urged them to come up with a moderate plan, Bissell responded to Mann's memo to Rusk. He continued to favor the invasion, claiming that, if it were to be aborted, Brigade "members" would be angry, disillusioned, and aggressive. Any further delay, stressed Bissell, would eventually force the United States to launch an overt military operation. Bundy submitted Mann and

Bissell's arguments to the president, with the note: "Since I think you lean toward Mann's view, I have put Bissell on top."[20]

On February 27, three officers from the Joint Chiefs of Staff submitted a report in which they evaluated the military effectiveness of the Cuban Expeditionary Force in Guatemala. Their conclusions were stark. First, they estimated that the odds *against* achieving surprise were about 85 to 15. They noted that if surprise were not achieved, the attack against Cuba would fail.[21] It is unknown whether the information was passed on to McNamara or Kennedy.

Despite the conclusion reached by their staff members, on March 10 the Joint Chiefs of Staff informed McNamara that, because a small invasion should retain the initiative until the location of the landing was determined, they expected the operation to "attain initial success." Final success, they added, would depend on whether the assault served "as a catalyst for further action on the part of anti-Castro elements throughout Cuba."[22]

Following a March 11 discussion, during which the president made it clear that he was still not satisfied with the existing anti-Castro plan, the CIA submitted a new one. The revised plan involved an "unspectacular landing" at night in an area that would enable the arriving forces to protect themselves from major attacks and that could also serve eventually as an airfield to provide tactical air support. The overall operation would move at a pace slower than originally intended. The drafters of the plan concluded by noting that the operation would engender some political costs, which the United States must be prepared to absorb; otherwise, the chances of the operation's fulfilling the intended objectives would be reduced measurably. To strengthen their argument, drafters of the new plan argued that the alternative—that is, "the demobilization of the paramilitary force and the return of its members to the United States"—would also involve risks.[23]

The same day that the CIA delivered its alternative plan, the Joint Chiefs of Staff wrote McNamara their assessment of three competing alternatives. After presenting their objections to the first two, they proposed that the option with the greatest chance of success was the one that entailed the "amphibious landing of two infantry companies [between 240 and 300 men] after dark to seize key areas; during the night remainder of Task Force lands; shipping then departs area prior to daylight; aircraft initiate air operations from the airstrips the following day."[24]

On March 16, Dulles and Bissell met with the president to discuss three alternatives. The favored plan at this time was the third one—the Zapata Plan. Kennedy ordered them once again to reshape the plan to make it look as if it were an inside, guerrilla-type operation. That same day, the CIA, determined to persuade the main officials that its Cuba operation would succeed,

released new estimates indicating that fewer than 20 percent of Cubans supported Castro and that 75 to 80 percent of the militia units would defect when they learned that the real fight against Castro had begun.[25]

Still, not everyone within the Kennedy administration was convinced that the CIA's plan was the path to take. Officials at the Department of State continued to voice concern about the operation. In preparation for an April 4 meeting at the White House, Undersecretary of State Chester Bowles wrote a memorandum to Rusk in which he expressed his doubts. He stated:

> In considerable degree, my concern stems from a deep personal conviction that our national interests are poorly served by a covert operation of this kind at a time when our new President is effectively appealing to world opinion on the basis of high principle. [T]he differences [that] distinguish us from the Russians are of vital importance.[26]

He then presented multiple rationales for not carrying out the operation. In addition to concurring with Mann's objections, Bowles noted that those who knew the operation well agreed that the plan had only one chance in three to succeed.

> If it fails, Castro's prestige and strength will be greatly enhanced. The one way we can reduce the risk is by a sharply increased commitment of direct American support. In talking to Bob McNamara and Ros Gilpatric at lunch Tuesday at the Pentagon, I gathered that this is precisely what the military people feel we should do.[27]

Near the end of his memo, Bowles noted: "I realize that . . . a great deal of time and money has been put into [the operation] and many able and dedicated people have become emotionally involved in its success. We should not, however, proceed with this adventure simply because we are wound up and cannot stop."[28]

The meeting referred to by Bowles took place as scheduled at the Department of State. Kennedy asked the involved parties to voice their opinions. As expected, Dulles and Bissell spoke in favor of the renamed operation. Senator J. William Fulbright expressed his strong opposition. The Joint Chiefs of Staff, on the other hand, preferred a more vigorous operation. When Kennedy called for a vote, everyone, with the exception of Rusk, who remained noncommittal, and Fulbright, who as nonmember could not vote, recommended that the operation be carried out. At the end of the meeting, Kennedy asked Schlesinger to tell him what he thought of the plan. The next day the special assistant sent the president a memo in which he repeated his

earlier argument. He added that he would favor the operation if it could remove Castro in a swift, surgical stroke, but as designed it involved many hazards. Regardless of the protective measures the CIA took to conceal the United States' participation, Washington would ultimately be held accountable. Because the Castro regime was strong, the operation would in all likelihood turn into "a protracted civil war" that would give the Soviet Union a "magnificent opportunity to wage political warfare." Schlesinger concluded by noting that it was critical to keep in mind Fulbright's point that Washington could "not afford a post-Castro mess."[29]

Kennedy read Schlesinger's memo and told him that he still had the prerogative of stopping the operation up to twenty-four hours prior to the landing. He then added: "In the meantime I am trying to make sense out of it. We will just have to see."[30] By then, however, the president had made it clear that the US military could not become overtly involved. He also demanded that the rules of engagement indicate that the operation would be terminated if the United States were required to use its forces to protect the brigade's ships from damage and capture.

On April 9, the commanders of the invasion forces in Guatemala were ordered to mobilize. Three days later, Bissell presented to the president and other high-ranking officials the latest changes to Operation Zapata, which had been rescheduled to begin April 17. Kennedy did not extend his final approval yet but knew that he could not delay his decision much longer. Two days later, Kennedy received a cable written by Colonel Jack Hawkins, who had been assigned to the CIA to serve as the operational commander of the invasion. In the cable, Hawkins expressed his complete confidence in the Cuban forces he had been training. He wrote that they "would accomplish not only the initial combat mission but also the ultimate objective of Castro's overthrow."[31]

By then the media was already aware that the United States had been working on a plan to topple Castro. On April 7, Tad Szulc of *The New York Times* reported that invasion plans of Cuba were in their final stages. Kennedy tried to kill the story but with limited success. The story was shortened substantially, but it still appeared on page one. On April 11, James Reston, also of *The New York Times*, wrote that there were substantial differences in opinion as to how far the United States should go to help Cuban refugees overthrow Castro. Kennedy was correct when he remarked that Cubans did not need any spies; all they had to do was read American newspapers. Between early April and mid-April, Fidel Castro, anticipating an invasion, began to concentrate his troops close to the most probable landing areas throughout the island.[32]

On April 13 and 14, Kennedy made two crucial decisions. On the thirteenth he prohibited the use of US troops against Cuba during the Bay of

Pigs operation. On the following day, while calling Bissell to let him know that the air strikes could be carried out, the president learned that the CIA intended to use sixteen planes. Kennedy's response was brisk: "Well," he said, "I don't want it on that scale. I want it minimal."[33]

At dawn on April 15, eight B-26 planes launched attacks on three sites. Cuba immediately filed a complaint against the United States in the United Nations. The US ambassador to the United Nations, Adlai Stevenson, rejected the charges, contending that the United States was not participating in actions against Cuba. The following day, Kennedy approved the landing plan. By nightfall, the president had experienced another change of heart. After being advised by Rusk that the United States should not launch air strikes against Cuba until they could be carried out from a strip within the beachhead, Kennedy asked Bundy to convey the information to the CIA. Troubled by the news, General Charles Cabell, the CIA's deputy director, and Bissell met with Rusk to let him know that the operation would be severely undermined if the strikes were cancelled. Rusk told them that there were serious political factors that needed to be taken into account. Nevertheless, he called the president to inform him of the CIA's objections but also restated his belief that it was imperative not to conduct the air strikes. He offered Cabell and Bissell a chance to speak directly to the president, but both said that they did not think there was any point in doing so.[34]

Three days after the first set of attacks had been launched, it had become clear that the operation had not evolved as hoped. In a memo to Kennedy, Bundy wrote: "I think you will find at noon that the situation in Cuba is not a bit good. The Cuban forces are stronger, the popular response is weaker, and our tactical position is feebler than we had hoped." The national security advisor recommended that the United States rely on "neutrally-painted" US planes to destroy the Castro air force.[35] On the morning of April 19, Allen Dulles had no choice but to acknowledge that everything was lost. During a conversation with former Vice President Richard Nixon he stated: "The Cuban invasion is a total failure." Two days later, during a press conference, President Kennedy admitted the obvious—that the operation had failed miserably.

Analysis: A Senseless Decision

If there is a foreign policy–making case that was void of rationality, the decision to launch a covert operation against Cuba stands as a classic example. It is the responsibility of any incoming administration to review critically the policies or plans inherited from its predecessor. By the start of 1961, Castro's government had nationalized a large number of US-owned banks and

companies, expropriated foreign property without adequate compensation, implemented radical agrarian reforms, authorized the political participation of the Communist party, and established diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union and several Soviet bloc states. According to Eisenhower and Kennedy, the measures initiated by the Castro regime indicated that it posed a direct threat to the national security of the United States. But did it?

The Kennedy administration never tried to analyze whether it did; its members simply accepted the judgment. They agreed with former Secretary of State Christina Herter's belief that "the prolonged continuation of the Castro regime in Cuba in its present form would have serious adverse effects on the United States' position in Latin America and corresponding advantages for international Communism."[36] House and Senate leaders concurred. Castro's actions, they claimed, had undermined substantially the economic and financial interests of a number of US companies in Cuba, and those actions, if left unchallenged, could tempt other countries throughout Latin America to follow suit. An unopposed Cuba, they added, would help persuade Moscow that the Western Hemisphere was fertile ground for Soviet infiltration, an assumption that would clearly affect negatively the security and reputation of the United States. And yet, had the new president and Congress asked the Department of Defense whether the Castro regime posed an immediate, direct threat to the national security of the United States, they would have been surprised by the answer. They would have been told that the Castro regime did not represent a threat to the national security of the United States and that should such a threat emerge in the future, the Department of Defense was certain that it would be able to deal with it without much ado. Oddly, the Department of Defense's assessment did not seem to be widely known, nor did its members voice it openly during their various meetings with the president prior to the launching of the invasion.

Putting aside this misstep and assuming for the sake of argument that it was a pressing threat, the next decision-making blunders committed by the Kennedy administration were also highly detrimental. Whenever a problem arises and leaders concur on its nature and objectives, rationality stresses that they consider a range of options, estimate their respective likelihood of fulfilling the envisioned goals, and evaluate thoroughly the reliability of the intelligence upon which the estimations are built. Much of such a process was hurled by the wayside from almost the very beginning by Kennedy, his senior advisors, the CIA, and, to a lesser extent, the Department of Defense. In every meeting held at the White House in which Cuba was the central issue, despite repeated requests by the president that he be given a range of options, the CIA's alternative was the only one considered. Conflicting opinions about its effects with regard to Cuba and the Western Hemisphere were voiced, but

at no time was the CIA's proposal compared to others. Comparisons were conducted solely and unsystematically in the context of which covert operation had the best chance of ousting Castro and his regime. The Joint Chiefs of Staff at one point argued that the plan proposed by the CIA was not "vigorous" enough and suggested direct intervention by US military personnel. But mindful that Kennedy did not want any direct involvement by US forces, the Pentagon's proposal was discarded almost immediately.

A policy option is only as good as the intelligence that informs the estimations. Success of the covert operation depended on whether the invading forces would be able to: (i) achieve surprise, (ii) lessen considerably the power of Castro's air force, (iii) rouse a popular revolt, (iv) entice members of Castro's army, police, and militia to switch allegiance, and (v) ensure that the United States would come to the rescue if its involvement was actually needed. Given these requirements, it behooves us to inquire whether solid information backed their assessments.

The CIA and the president's first grave mistake was to assume that the invading forces would be able to surprise Castro. A close look at the information that was being disseminated throughout the United States, Guatemala, and Cuba should have warned the CIA's main organizers that its assumption was unfounded. Word that the CIA had been training anti-Castro forces in Guatemala and Florida had spread widely throughout the Miami Cuban community. By the time Kennedy had given the green light to the operation, *The New York Times* had already published articles anticipating its occurrence, with the earliest article appearing on its front page on January 10, 1960.[37] Furthermore, on November 3, 1960, "Friends of the Cuban Revolution" supplied intelligence to the Castro government of anti-Castro activities in Guatemala. Castro and his associates did not disregard the signals. On March 27, 1960, Castro announced that his government was taking the necessary measures to protect Cuba from an invasion. The following month, Cuba's foreign minister, Raul Roa, declared that Guatemala was being used as a bridgehead for an invasion. On October 7, Roa denounced US plans to invade Cuba and pinpointed the exact places where the anti-Castro forces were being trained in Guatemala. On December 31, Castro repeated in public his earlier claim that the United States was preparing to invade Cuba. By March 1961, convinced that the invasion would soon ensue, Castro ordered Cubans to prepare themselves.

The CIA's second grave error was to claim that because Castro's popularity throughout Cuba had plunged, a popular uprising would follow, and members of his army, police force, and militia would begin to switch sides the moment they learned that a serious attack against the regime had been launched. Without access to the information collected by the CIA and other

intelligence agencies, it is impossible to pass judgment on its quality. It is reasonable to assume, however, that none of the intelligence-gathering agencies was ever able to conduct systematic polling. Thus their claim—that less than 20 percent of the population supported the Castro regime and that 75 to 80 percent of the militia units would defect—was guesswork, based, perhaps, on wishful thinking.

Also of some significance was the fact that many in Washington did not share the CIA's belief that a popular uprising and widespread defection would ensue the moment the invaders arrived. On January 26, the CIA's National Board of Estimates, which was unaware that a covert operation was being planned, argued that the Cuban population was not eager to stage an uprising against Castro. It added that, though Castro had lost a great deal of popular support, his regime's strengthened capacity to control everyday life throughout Cuba would more than counterbalance any loss of popular backing.[38] The aforementioned organization was not the only one that questioned the CIA's estimate and inference. On February 15, 1961, Mann warned that the invasion would most likely not inspire a popular uprising and that this lack of popular support would then force the United States to decide whether to abandon the invading forces to their fate or help them move to the mountains. Either alternative, argued Mann, would be costly.[39]

Mann's memo hit a raw nerve. After reading it, Bissell produced a counterargument. If the mission is cancelled, said Bissell, brigade "members will be angry, disillusioned and aggressive with inevitable result that they will provide honey for the press bees and the US will have to face the resulting indignities and embarrassments."[40] Bundy made sure that Kennedy read both position papers.

Two more conditions remain to be assessed—dependence on air strikes to immobilize Castro's air force and dependence on US military support if conditions during the invasion were to deteriorate rapidly.

On March 11, Kennedy asked Bissell and Dulles to present their plan to overthrow Castro. They presented four options, including the one they favored—the Trinidad Plan. Part of the Trinidad Plan involved the use of B-26s to impair Cuba's air force prior to the amphibious landing and to bomb and strafe Cuban troops, barracks, and other military targets during and after the landing. Control of the air, noted Lemnitzer, was absolutely vital. Afraid of the political and diplomatic repercussions the implementation of the proposed mission could generate, Kennedy called the plan too spectacular, too much like a World War II invasion, and ordered that a new one be drafted. Unbowed by the challenge, Bissell went back to the drawing board and came back four days later with a revised version. Operation Zapata would comprise a quiet nighttime landing designed to give the impression

that guerrillas were infiltrating to provide support to existing forces opposing the Castro regime. The landing would take place at the Bay of Pigs, where the invading forces would set up two airstrips. The Joint Chiefs of Staff did not think the new plan would be as effective as the Trinidad Plan, but they approved it. Kennedy weakened the plan further on three separate occasions. On April 14, he called Bissell to authorize him to go forward with the strikes. During their conversation he also told Bissell to cut down the number of planes that would be used during the first raid. At dawn on April 15, eight, instead of sixteen, B-26s left Nicaragua and carried out air strikes at three sites in Cuba. On April 16, the airborne battalion moved from its base camp in Guatemala to Nicaragua. Around midday Kennedy approved the landing plan. That evening, however, Bundy informed CIA Deputy Director Cabell that the dawn air strikes could not be launched until the planes could carry out their mission from an airstrip within the beachhead. Cabell and Bissell informed Rusk that the ships, as well as the landing forces, would be severely endangered if the dawn air strikes were curtailed. Rusk passed on their message to the president but recommended that he not rescind his original decision. Kennedy concurred and then refused to change his mind again when General Cabell extended the request some seven hours later. Finally, on April 19, as Kennedy and several of his top officials learned that the invading forces were experiencing grave losses, the chief of naval operations, Admiral Arleigh Burke, asked the president for permission to use two US jets to destroy the enemy aircraft. Kennedy rejected the admiral's request and reminded him that from the very first day he had made it clear that he would not authorize the use of US forces to combat Cubans.

Kennedy's last comment points out a critical discrepancy between his refusal to utilize US forces and the willingness of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and a few members of the CIA to assume that he would. Kennedy consistently informed and reminded members of his administration, including the CIA and military officials, that they could not use US forces in the operation. He could not have been clearer as to where he stood on this issue than during the meeting he had with McNamara, General Lemnitzer, Dulles, Bissell, and General Cabell on April 4. He demanded that the rules of engagement be spelled out and that the appropriate officials be informed that the operation would be terminated if US forces were required to protect the Brigade's ships from damage or capture. Both the CIA and the Joint Chiefs of Staff were aware of the limits the president had imposed on the execution of the operation, but they assumed, possibly influenced by Eisenhower's willingness "to take more chances and be more aggressive," that in a worse-case scenario Kennedy would authorize the use of US forces.[41] Dulles put it best when he said: "We felt that when the chips were down, when the crisis arose in reality,

any action required for success would be authorized rather than permit the enterprise to fail."[42] Obviously, their assumption was unfounded.

Of no less significance than the severe blunders just enumerated was the CIA's failure to apprise the president and his advisors in a compelling way of the impact that the reduction and, ultimately, cancellation of the air strikes would have on the operation. Though the CIA voiced concern on a number of instances, at no time did any of its representatives say to Kennedy: "Mr. President, if you reduce the airstrikes or cancel them, we can guarantee you the operation will fail."

With so much evidence indicating that the operation would fail, why did the CIA's top leaders refuse to back off? The CIA's failure to be truthful with the president and with itself can be explained from two perspectives.

From an individual perspective, it could be argued, as suggested by Jim Rasenberger, that Richard Bissell, who was the central CIA figure during the preparations, bore some of the blame. He discarded critical information because he, as well as many of his colleagues, thought the operation could "succeed and genuinely wanted it to succeed because he believed its success was important." Rasenberger adds: "Personal pride and ambition too may have encouraged Bissell to accept modifications. His reputation in the CIA and the Kennedy administration was riding on this operation, as was his position as Dulles's heir apparent."[43] Or, as Bissell himself put it, fear

> of cancellation became absorbing . . . It is possible that we in the Agency were not as frank with the President about deficiencies as we could have been. As an advocate for maintaining the President's authorization, I was very much afraid of what might happen if I said: Mr. President, this operation might as well be made open because the role of the United States certainly cannot be hidden.[44]

Put in the context of the cognitive consistency model, one could assert that Bissell downplayed any information that conflicted with his prior images and beliefs and paid attention only to the intelligence that reinforced them.[45]

Bureaucracies are averse to acknowledging powerlessness.[46] They try to protect their "own turf by controlling policy in their area of expertise." The process often affects "which information is presented to the leader."[47] The CIA, an organization that had been formed recently, was determined to further enhance its reputation after proving its worth in Greece in 1949, in Iran in 1953, and in Guatemala in 1954. Though conscious of the plan's shortcomings, which were pointed out by analysts and officials at the Department of Defense, admission by CIA officials that their plan was flawed would have signaled to the president and rival organizations that the agency lacked the expertise or capacity to conduct such an operation. In the aftermath of the

fiasco, that was precisely the conclusion derived. As explained by the Taylor Board of Inquiry, by about "November 1960, the impossibility of running Zapata as a covert operation under CIA should have been recognized and the situation reviewed. If a reorientation of the operation had not been possible, the project should have been abandoned."[48]

The analysis of the CIA's blunders brings us to the role of the president and his advisors. It is not uncommon for competing agencies to draw different valuations, particularly when their inferences are based on inexact intelligence. In instances in which there are fundamental variances, it is the responsibility of the leader of an organization and of his most trusted advisors to ascertain why the deviations are so significant and, if possible, to figure out whose estimate is the most reliable. In this case, there were conflicting opinions as to whether surprise would be achieved, whether Cubans would forsake the Castro regime, and whether members of the militia, army, and police force would switch allegiances the moment they learned that a vigorous invasion was occurring. In spite of these varied views, neither the president nor any of his advisors asked why the estimates differed so noticeably. Equally troubling was the fact that the variances of opinion did not vanish as the implementation date grew closer; instead, they were set aside.

Groupthink, as "a mode of thinking that people engage in when they are deeply involved in a cohesive in-group, when the members striving for unanimity overrides their motivation to realistically appraise alternative courses of action,"[49] was not present during the decision-making process leading to the invasion. Such a phenomenon, as Bissell has acknowledged, might have afflicted CIA analysts and operatives, but it did not define the kind of interaction that ensued between Kennedy's senior and mid-level advisors. During their meetings, the participants did not think collectively, were not afraid to dissent, and did not develop illusions of invulnerability and unanimity, which are the conditions that are typically present when groupthink prevails. President Kennedy, moreover, was not averse to receiving opposing opinions, and his national security advisor never acted as a censor of information or opinions.

If reservations about the CIA plan were widespread and groupthink was not the culprit, then why did dozens of Kennedy's leading advisors vote in favor of moving ahead with the operation at the Department of State on April 4, and why did the president ultimately give his approval?[50]

The daring intervention of one individual with tremendous stature is sometimes all that is required to compel all those involved in the decision-making process to take a strong stand. Fewer than three months after Kennedy and his foreign policy team had moved into their respective offices, they were forced to make a critical decision. With the involved parties having interacted

with one another for a very short time, with the advocates of the CIA operation working assiduously to persuade them that the mission would succeed, and with the Joint Chiefs of Staff claiming that the undertaking was feasible, it is not surprising that compliance resulted. Compliance, as explained by Herbert Kelman, can materialize without members of a group exerting overt pressure on one another. It entails the act of responding favorably to an implicit or explicit request that one finds questionable. Members comply and keep their objections to themselves either because they fear being barred from future participation or because they expect some form of reward.[51]

Dissonance between an alternative and its intended goals can be lethal. Had the overthrow of the Castro regime been Kennedy's sole objective, it is likely that the US government would have found a way to do it. But Kennedy's aim to overthrow Castro was accompanied by his urge to do everything he could not to jeopardize the US world standing, which had improved substantially vis-à-vis the Soviet Union since January 20. The president's critical error was that he failed to consider the possible negative effects his decision to reduce the number of airstrikes could have on the operation. The CIA could have been more assertive when it voiced its objections, but the president knew the plan and should have paid close attention to the possible impact of his decisions. Kennedy's tinkering with the CIA plan ultimately wrecked his chances of attaining what he wanted: to overthrow Castro and to protect the United States' reputation throughout the Western Hemisphere.

As already noted, Kennedy's mistakes were multiple. He accepted at face value the assumption that Cuba posed a major threat to the United States, never demanded that alternatives to aggressive action against Cuba be considered, failed to challenge analysts and advisors when their assessments of Cuba's domestic conditions differed, and ignored the warnings that tampering with the CIA plan would impair its execution. With some form of covert operation the only alternative considered, Kennedy had but two choices: approve it or reject it. His prior pronouncements as a presidential candidate nearly eliminated refusal as an option. Because he had campaigned on his toughness and decisiveness and because Congress and the media had scrutinized his steps, both domestic and international, from the moment he became president, Kennedy could not disown his pledge to "return Cuba to the Cubans." As Bissell warned, Cuban nationals involved in preparation of the operation would have voiced outrage publicly had he cancelled it, and this anger would have provoked strong condemnation at home. In short, for Kennedy, the decision to authorize the operation was extensively dictated by domestic politics.

Which foreign policy decision model best captures the decision-making process that engendered the Bay of Pigs fiasco? Groupthink had an impact

on the CIA's approach to the decision but not on the principal decision-makers. Ultimately, it was up to Kennedy to decide whether to authorize the operation. As I have postulated in the introductory chapter, according to the poliheuristic model, the foreign policy–maker divides the decision-making process into two distinct phases. In the first phase, he or she uses a noncompensatory decision rule to eliminate unacceptable alternatives. In the second stage, he or she relies on a compensatory analysis to select an alternative.

Proponents of the model acknowledge that, though in the making of foreign policies international factors are important, ultimately foreign policy is never independent of domestic politics. According to the model, a political leader first evaluates his or her options based on the potential effects it will have on his or her domestic political standing. Though Kennedy had his doubts about the CIA's proposed operation, he accepted it, in no small measure because he feared that if he did not he would pay a high political price at home. In the second stage, however, the president did not arrive at the decision to approve a particular CIA operation via a compensatory process. A compensatory analysis would have required that he consider the intelligence he was provided with and the likelihood alternative CIA operations would succeed at fulfilling at least two potentially contradictory goals—the successful landing of the Cuban nationals and the concealment of the involvement by the CIA. Had Kennedy engaged in an analysis of the available intelligence, he would have realized the estimates regarding the level of support Fidel Castro had in Cuba varied significantly. Such variance should have alerted him that the available intelligence was unreliable. Moreover, though he was warned that ultimately the United States would not be able to disavow its participation and that the reduction of US air support would diminish the chances of the landing forces staging a successful operation, Kennedy approved the mission, while at the same time ordering that fewer US planes be utilized to support it. His decision increased measurably both the probability that the mission would fail and that its organizers would be exposed. Had he conducted a compensatory analysis, he would have recognized the contradiction between his two goals and that approval of the operation would entail accepting that it would be impossible to conceal who had organized it.

On March 28, Arthur Schlesinger asked the president: "What do you think about this damned invasion?" Kennedy responded: "I think about it as little as possible."[52] The result of his decision corroborates his comment. The president blundered through, hoping for the best. Sunk costs inform us that leaders continue on a certain path even when circumstances change for the worse. In the case of Kennedy, the moment he became president he accepted the idea that at some point he would have to authorize a mission designed to

overthrow the Castro regime; he bought into the idea and thus he engaged in a form of "irrational commitment." The costs of failure were not yet evident, but the costs of disavowing his original commitment were palpable, which seemed to have forced him to disregard those signals that indicated that a failed operation would induce greater costs.

CHAPTER 6

John F. Kennedy and the Cuban Missile Crisis

Introduction

In mid-October 1962, US intelligence analysts, using photographs taken a few days earlier by two U-2 aircraft flying over Cuba, determined that the Soviet Union was installing middle-range ballistic missiles (MRBM) on the island with the capability to deliver nuclear warheads. After discussing the new information with his advisors for two full days, President John F. Kennedy decided that the presence of Soviet missiles in Cuba posed a direct threat to the national security of the United States and, thus, that they had to be removed. To achieve this objective, the president and his advisors narrowed their options to either launching a conventional airstrike on the missile sites followed by an invasion or implementing a naval quarantine on the delivery of offensive weapons. They agreed that were the president to authorize the set up of a blockade, shortly thereafter he might have to order the launching of an invasion followed by an air strike. On Monday, October 22, Kennedy announced on television that he had ordered the US Navy to set up a quarantine around Cuba and had called the premier of the Soviet Union, Nikita Khrushchev, to ask him to "halt and eliminate [the] clandestine, reckless, and provocative threat to world peace." That same day, Kennedy authorized the Pentagon to redeploy US military forces toward the southern parts of the United States in preparation for a direct attack on the Cuban island in case Moscow were not to act as he had insisted. Fourteen days after the discovery of the Soviet missiles, the crisis ended.

In this chapter we analyze the foreign policy decision-making (FPDM) process throughout the Cuban Missile Crisis. We determine the types of mindsets that influenced Kennedy's definition of the problems generated by the Soviet Union's deployment of nuclear missiles throughout Cuba, assess the intelligence provided to Kennedy and his leading advisors, scrutinize the way they interpreted it, and examine the interaction that ensued between

the president and his counselors as they sought to formulate a response. With such an examination as our foundation, we identify the model that best captures Kennedy's FPDM approach and evaluate the quality of the process.

Washington, Moscow, Havana, and Berlin

Long before Kennedy and his advisors reached a decision concerning the missiles, a number of controversial issues had afflicted the relationship between Cuba and the United States. Shortly after the end of the Spanish-American War, the United States compelled Cuba to accept a series of conditions delineated by the 1901 Platt Amendment. Approved by Cuba and the United States in 1903, article 3 encapsulated the Amendment's most egregious demand. According to the article, Washington preserved "the right to intervene for the preservation of Cuban independence, the maintenance of a government adequate for the protection of life, property, and individual liberty, and for discharging the obligations with respect to Cuba imposed by the Treaty of Paris on the United States."[1] Thereafter, the relationship between both countries experienced swings until 1959, when Fidel Castro and his guerrilla movement overthrew the regime of Fulgencio Batista. Following a brief peaceful interlude, Cuba and the United States hardened their stands concerning one another. Havana initiated a series of domestic policies that undermined US economic and financial interests throughout the island and developed a close relationship with Moscow and other countries within the Soviet bloc. Washington opposed the steps initiated by the new Cuban regime and endeavored to topple it. Hopeful that a covert operation against the Castro regime would bring about its demise, President Dwight Eisenhower ordered the CIA to draw up a proposal. Dissatisfied with the CIA plan, Eisenhower relegated the responsibility to topple the Cuban regime to his successor. Kennedy authorized the implementation of a redesigned anti-Castro covert action in April 1961. Poorly planned and implemented, the CIA covert operation failed.

Soon thereafter, Kennedy was compelled to focus on a different crisis thousands of miles away. Since the end of the Second World War, the United States and West Germany had clashed repeatedly with the Soviet Union and East Germany over how to handle a divided Berlin. Kennedy and Khrushchev addressed this issue at a meeting in Vienna in June 1961. During discussions with the Soviet leader, the US president pointed out that West Berlin and Western Europe were vital to the national interest of the United States. A month later, hoping to corroborate his original message, Kennedy declared during a televised speech that he would regard an attack on West Berlin as a

direct act of aggression against the United States. East Germany, with Soviet backing, responded by erecting a barbed-wire barrier between East and West Berlin, which was subsequently fortified with a concrete wall with watchtowers. Kennedy retorted with a warning: In the event of a major confrontation between the two superpowers, he was determined "to go all out" to protect West Berlin, and, if faced with the prospect of a major defeat in Europe, he was prepared to use nuclear weapons.[2]

During this same period, Kennedy revisited the Cuban issue. In November, he ordered the CIA to develop a new anti-Castro campaign. Based in Miami, Florida, and overseen by his brother, Attorney General Robert Kennedy, Operation Mongoose entailed the implementation of a series of covert measures that included political, psychological, intelligence, and sabotage operations, as well as assassination attempts of key political figures, including Fidel Castro. Moscow sought to counterbalance Washington's measures with extensive military and economic assistance to the Cuban regime.

The Cuban Missile Crisis—The Evolution of Multiple Decisions

Soviet military equipment began to arrive in Cuba in the summer of 1960. The flow of arms continued through 1961, slowed considerably in early 1962, but gained momentum in late July 1962. Washington monitored the shipping. On August 24, the director of intelligence at the Department of State, Roger Hilsman, announced during a background briefing that the Soviets had resumed their large-scale deliveries of weapons to Cuba. The cargoes, he noted, comprised large quantities of transportation, electronic, and construction equipment, such as communication vans, radar vans, trucks, and mobile generator units. Hilsman added that some crates might have included surface-to-air missiles (SAMs), and that three to five thousand Soviet military technicians had disembarked on the island.[3]

Republican reaction in Washington was swift. Already displeased with the way the Kennedy administration had responded to the earlier Soviet deployment of military equipment and personnel, several members of the Republican Party called for an invasion of the island or the imposition of an inter-American "peace fleet" to prevent additional deliveries. With an eye on the November congressional elections, Kennedy tried to contain the criticism during an August 29 press conference. The president noted that his administration had been monitoring closely Soviet actions and that it had not uncovered evidence of Soviet troops in Cuba. However, less than a week later, intelligence analysts confirmed the presence of anti-aircraft SAMs and MIG-21 fighter aircraft.[4] The information had been gathered by U-2 flights over Cuba on August 29 and on September 5.[5]

Attuned to developments in Washington, Moscow tried to reassure the Kennedy administration that Soviet assistance was designed to enable Cuba to protect itself from any future attempt by the United States to infringe on the island's sovereignty. To reinforce Moscow's declaration, the Soviet ambassador, Anatoly Dobrynin, informed Attorney General Kennedy that the Soviet Union had not provided Cuba with any ground-to-ground missiles or other major offensive weapons.[6] On September 13, a little over a week after his brother Robert had met with the Soviet ambassador, President Kennedy conveyed two messages during a press conference. He assured the American public that the weapons in Cuba did not constitute a threat to the United States, and he informed Moscow that if it tried to transform Cuba into a Soviet offensive military base, his administration would initiate whatever measures it deemed necessary to protect the security of the United States and its allies.[7] To buttress his forewarning, Kennedy asked Congress to grant him the authority to call up the reserves and ordered the doubling of the frequency of the U-2 flights over Cuba.[8]

On September 19, the US Intelligence Board reassessed the Soviet arms buildup in Cuba. After reconfirming what senior members of the Kennedy administration already knew, the board predicted that the Soviets would not deploy offensive missiles throughout the island. It did note, however, that if such a step were taken, it would alter measurably the strategic balance of power between the East and the West, and thus it urged the US intelligence community to remain alert.[9]

By the first days of October, the Kennedy administration found itself trying to balance two competing pressures. On the one hand, Republican criticism and demands that Kennedy act more forcefully against the Soviet Union and Cuba intensified. On the other hand, European and Latin American leaders, afraid that Washington might opt for a military solution to the ensuing dispute with the Soviet Union and Cuba, urged the Kennedy administration to be prudent. During this period, additional U-2 flights uncovered patterns in the deployment of SAMs that generated concern among intelligence analysts.

Near the end of September, Colonel John Ralph Wright, Jr., of the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), noticed that the trapezoidal form of SAM installations in the San Cristobal area, in the western section of Cuba, resembled patterns found near ballistic missile launch areas in the Soviet Union.[10] The new information, substantiated by human-source reporting, helped strengthen the belief among members of the intelligence community that the Soviet Union had actually deployed, or were getting ready to deploy, offensive ballistic missiles in the same area.

Such concern was not new. Intelligence analysts began to suspect that the Soviets were setting up missile facilities in Cuba as early as August 1962.

During that month, US ground observers sighted Russian-built MiG-21 fighters and Il-28 light bombers. U-2 spy planes photographed S-75 Dvina surface-to-air missile sites at eight different locations. On August 10, CIA director John McCone informed Secretary of State Dean Rusk, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, Deputy Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs U. Alexis Johnson, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Maxwell Taylor, and National Security advisor McGeorge Bundy that he suspected that the Soviets might be planning to deploy medium-range ballistic missiles in Cuban territory. Though it is very likely that Bundy passed on the information to the president, McCone did not express his suspicion directly to Kennedy until August 22. He voiced the same apprehension the following day during a meeting attended by the president and his senior advisors. McCone noted that sending antiaircraft missiles into Cuba "made sense only if Moscow intended to use them to shield a base for ballistic missiles aimed at the United States."[11]

Though initially the White House had been disinclined to accept McCone's conjecture, with the new information it authorized an increase in the frequency of U-2 flights. On October 14, a reconnaissance aircraft photographed the identified area. Shortly thereafter photo interpreters confirmed the presence of middle-range ballistic missiles (MRBMs) in Cuban territory. McGeorge Bundy received the information on the night of the fifteenth but waited until the next morning to apprise the president.[12]

Unaware of the new intelligence, on the afternoon of the fifteenth, McNamara had met with the Joint Chiefs of Staff, dozens of lower level officials, and McGeorge Bundy. McNamara notified the attendees that, though Kennedy had decided not to take any military action against Cuba for the next three months, they should review plans for a massive air strike on Cuba and for an invasion. The president, McNamara, and Bundy believed it was critical to have a contingency plan in case the Soviets chose to defy Kennedy's September 13 warning.[13]

The news that the Soviets were deploying MRBMs in Cuban territory angered the president. Over the previous twenty-two months he and Khrushchev had clashed multiple times, but Kennedy had assumed that the two had finally decided to lower the tone of their dispute.[14] On October 16, the president accepted, as his brother Robert observed, that Khrushchev's comments and reassurances during the previous month "had all been lies, one gigantic fabric of lies."[15] Kennedy was also mindful that virtually no one in Washington, with the exception of McCone and a few intelligence analysts, had expected the Soviets to install offensive missiles in Cuba.

Shortly after receiving the news, Kennedy ordered McGeorge Bundy to set up a secret meeting at the White House. At 11:50 AM, the president started

the consultation by asking Arthur Lundahl, of the National Photographic Interpretation Center (NPIC), to explain the information provided by the photographs. Multiple questions were posed during and following Lundahl's presentation. He could not answer with certainty whether the missiles that were being mounted would carry nuclear warheads, but McNamara and the acting director of the CIA, Marshall Carter (McCone was away), both stated that there was little doubt that they were being installed for that purpose. The president anticipated the question many wanted to pose when he said: "How long have we got? We can't tell, can we, how long before it can be fired?"[16] The experts did not know. McNamara assured Kennedy that it would be almost impossible for the Soviets to "be ready to fire with nuclear warheads on the site without even a fence around it."[17] In order to design a response plan, he needed to know where the warheads were stored and the Soviet's readiness-to-fire capability, so the secretary of defense requested the president's authorization for additional flights over Cuba.[18]

It soon became evident among the participants that the central challenge they faced was whether the United States could get rid of the missiles without commencing a wider war. Throughout the discussions, Kennedy asked his advisors to be candid. Rusk, after delineating the challenges they faced and presenting a number of options, including the initiation of diplomatic steps, narrowed the choices to two. "One, the quick strike; the other, to alert our allies and Mr. Khrushchev that there is an utterly serious crisis in the making here, and that Mr. Khrushchev may not himself really understand that, or believe that, at this point." For Rusk, the issue was narrowed to "whether [the United States does] it by sudden, unannounced strike of some sort or that [it builds] up the crisis to the point where the other side has to consider very seriously about giving in."[19]

McNamara pressed hard for the implementation of military measures. He began with a warning. If the Kennedy administration were to conduct an air strike against the installations, he said, they had to be scheduled "prior to the time [the] missiles sites became operational." The air strike would also have to include as its targets the airfields, the aircraft, and all potential nuclear storages. The air strikes should be followed by an invasion both by air and by sea.[20] Taylor, as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, emphasized the importance of surprise.

During the rest of the meeting, Kennedy and his advisors focused on a wide array of related issues. They discussed several questions: Why would the Soviets want to set up the missiles in Cuba? Might the United States' nuclear superiority or the presence of US missiles in Turkey have induced Moscow to alter the nuclear balance of power by deploying missiles in Cuba? Would it be vital to launch an air strike before the missiles were armed? How long would

the air strikes last and how effective would they be? How long would it take for the US invading forces to achieve control of the island? And what was the likelihood that they would be able to control the information?

Berlin was on nearly everyone's minds. They remembered well that Khrushchev had attempted to force his hand on the issue and that the president had made it clear that he was committed to do whatever was necessary to protect the German city. "Berlin," said Rusk, "is very much involved in this. For the first time, I'm beginning to wonder whether maybe Mr. Khrushchev is entirely rational about Berlin. We've already talked about his obsession with it. And I think we have to keep our eye on that element."[21]

The morning meeting came to an end without a decision but with two broad assignments. The Pentagon was told to determine the resources it would need to launch a quick air strike, followed by an invasion, and the potential consequences of those actions. The Department of State was ordered to analyze the steps the administration would have to take to remove the missiles rapidly and effectively, without surprising and losing the support of the United States' allies in the Western Hemisphere and in Europe.

Early that same afternoon, Kennedy showed the evidence to his ambassador to the United Nations, Adlai Stevenson, and said: "I suppose the alternatives are to go in by air and wipe them out, or to take other steps to render the weapons inoperable." Stevenson objected. "Let's not go into an air strike," he said, "until we have explored the possibilities of a peaceful solution." The ambassador was the first member of the Kennedy administration to recommend that the president seek a diplomatic solution.[22]

The principals gathered again at 6:30 PM. Deliberations centered on the reliability of the information regarding the missiles, the viability of different levels of attack, the best way to deal with Castro, the responses of other Communists throughout Latin America to an air strike, and NATO's stance if the United States made a "far-reaching" decision. Midway through the meeting, the secretary of defense outlined three courses of action that he had discussed earlier with Deputy Secretary of Defense Roswell Gilpatric at the Pentagon.

The first one, referred to by McNamara as the "political course of action," involved an open approach to the problem and would necessitate discussing the issue with Castro, Khrushchev, and US allies. McNamara expressed reservations about the viability of this response. He feared that it would nearly stop the chances of subsequent military action because of the possibility that during negotiations the Soviets would manage to acquire nuclear capability in Cuba. The second course of action entailed declaring that the United States was imposing a blockade straightaway against "offensive weapons entering Cuba in the future" and would "immediately attack the Soviet Union in the event that Cuba made an offensive move against this [the US]

country." The third option included an air attack, which could vary substantially in scope and intensity, followed by an invasion that would demand the involvement of between 90,000 and 150,000 men. Were Kennedy to choose the last option, warned McNamara, he should be prepared for some form of military response by Moscow somewhere in the world.[23]

As a result of McNamara's presentation, Kennedy and his advisors began to assess the pros and cons of informing the world that the United States had uncovered MRBM sites in Cuba. During their deliberations, McGeorge Bundy posed a question that compelled the principals to consider how they intended to define the challenges faced by the United States. He asked: "What is the strategic impact on the position of the United States of MRBMs in Cuba? How gravely does this change the strategic balance?" McNamara reacted quickly. The Joint Chiefs of Staff, he said, claimed it changes "substantially." "My own personal view: Not at all." After a brief exchange, Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Edwin Martin summarized it as follows: "It's a psychological factor . . . The psychological factor of our having taken it." Kennedy interceded by reminding everyone that the previous month he had said he was not going to allow the deployment of Soviet offensive weapons in Cuba. He closed that aspect of the discussion by stating that the problem was a "political struggle as much as military."[24]

As they continued to examine other issues, McNamara forced everyone to think about the challenge they were facing. "I don't think we have considered the consequences of any of these actions satisfactorily," he observed. "I don't know what kind of world we live in after we've struck Cuba and we've started it." He then focused on the potential consequences of launching fifty to a hundred sorties. "How do we stop at that point? I don't know the answer to this," Taylor, speaking for the Joint Chiefs, made sure that the president knew that the military was against a limited air strike. "[T]he Chiefs and the commanders," he said, "feel so strongly about the dangers inherent in the limited strike that they would prefer taking no military action rather than to take limited strike. They feel that it's opening up the United States to attacks which they can't prevent." Kennedy interrupted by pointing out that that the greater the intensity of the operation, the greater the chances the struggle would widen worldwide. He then warned that it was important that his options not be limited by what the military wanted. He specifically pointed out that in his view an air strike would automatically lead to an invasion. Taylor questioned the president's conclusion and said that from his point of view an invasion at that point in time would undermine the United States' position in West Berlin. Kennedy was surprised by Taylor's statement, at which time McNamara reiterated the need to think carefully about potential consequences.[25]

On October 17, various meetings were held throughout Washington. By then the analysis of the photographs "showed several other installations, with at least sixteen and possibly thirty-two missiles of over a thousand-mile range."[26] The new information also indicated that the Soviets were setting up the missile sites quickly. At an early meeting at the Department of State, attended by McCone and Taylor, George Ball voiced his opposition to any form of military action, claiming that he doubted the Soviet leaders grasped the nature of the problem they had engendered. Taylor and McCone disagreed; both were convinced that Moscow had placed the missiles in Cuba to instigate a confrontation in Berlin. In the meantime, Stevenson had sent Kennedy a memo asking him to send personal emissaries to meet with Khrushchev and Castro. He also told the president that a military response would force Moscow to retaliate in Berlin and Turkey. At the Pentagon, the Joint Chiefs remained opposed to any strike limited only to the missile sites and designed an attack plan against five different sets of targets throughout Cuba.[27]

Later in the afternoon, another group met at the Department of State. Robert Kennedy, who was present, had asked former Secretary of State Dean Acheson to participate in the discussion. Acheson stated in no uncertain terms that the "president of the United States had the responsibility for the security of the people of the United States and of the whole free world, that it was his obligation to take the only action which could protect that security, and that that meant destroying the missiles."[28] Other options were discussed, some reflecting subtle differences. By the end of their meeting, they had identified five options:

1. Ultimatum to Khrushchev followed by strike.
2. Limited air strike without prior warning or negotiations but notifying key allies.
3. Political warning followed by a naval blockade and readiness for other actions.
4. Large air strike after some political preparation.
5. Proceeding directly to an invasion.

Once the meeting had come to an end, several officials wrote memos to the president explaining their rationale for supporting one option over another. Ball submitted the most poignant. After explaining why the MRBMs made little difference strategically, he avowed that a sneak attack on Cuba would undermine the moral strength of the United States. In his words, a sneak attack would "alienate a great part of the civilized world," because the United States would be behaving in "a manner wholly contrary to our traditions." He

recommended that Kennedy opt for a blockade.[29] Robert Kennedy shared Ball's concern. He wrote:

> Whatever military reasons [Acheson] and others could marshal, they were nevertheless, in the last analysis, advocating a surprise attack by a very large nation against a very small one. This . . . could not be undertaken by the US if we were to maintain our moral position at home and around the globe. Our struggle against Communism throughout the world was far more than physical survival—it had as its essence our heritage and our ideals, and these we must not destroy.[30]

On October 18 the president and his advisors reviewed the pros and cons of the various options already proposed and considered a possible response by Moscow, particularly vis-à-vis Berlin, if the United States were to kill several hundred Soviet personnel stationed in Cuba. The possibility that the United States would have to remove its missiles from Turkey, and the kinds of effects such a step would have, were also examined. Eventually the conversation focused on the pluses and minuses of warning Khrushchev that the United States would initiate a major attack on Cuba if Moscow did not stop the deployment of military equipment to the island and refused to remove the missiles.

That evening the president met with Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko. The meeting had been scheduled prior to the discovery of the missiles. During their conversation, the Soviet foreign minister warned Kennedy that if the West did not get out of Berlin, Moscow would be compelled to take the necessary steps to force them out. When the discussion turned to Cuba, Gromyko criticized the failed Bay of Pigs attempt. Kennedy acknowledged it had been a mistake but then retorted that in his estimation the Soviet shipment of weapons to the island had altered the dynamics of the situation. When the meeting was over, Kennedy narrated to several of his advisors, including Rusk and Ball, what had ensued during his encounter with the Soviet foreign minister. In this very room, the president said,

> [N]ot over ten minutes ago, [Gromyko] told me more barefaced lies than I have ever heard in a short time. All during his denial that the Russians had any missiles or weapons or anything else, in Cuba, I had the low-level pictures in the center drawer of my desk, and it was an enormous temptation to show them to him.[31]

Near midnight of October 18, Kennedy went into the Oval Office to dictate his interpretation of the agreement he and his advisors had reached. He started by delineating some of their opinions. He then summarized the

consensus he believed they had reached. He noted that most of them believed it would be a grave error not to respond and that inaction would divide the allies and the United States, produce a major split domestically, and lead the world to question the Kennedy administration's willingness to protect Berlin. He ended the recording with the following statement:

> The consensus was that we should go ahead with the blockade beginning on Sunday night. Originally we should begin by blockading Soviets against the shipment of additional offensive capacity, [and] that we could tighten the blockade as the situation requires. I was most anxious that we not have to announce a state of war existing, because it would obviously be bad to have the word go out that we were having a war rather than that it was a limited blockade for a limited purpose.[32]

On the morning of Friday, October 19, the president met with Taylor and members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. They engaged in a contentious discussion. Following a précis in which he discussed the military plan he and his military colleagues favored, Taylor acknowledged that their preferred option could have damaging effects on US allies and noted that they were designing a blockade plan that would help to reduce the international costs the president hoped to minimize. Kennedy voiced his concerns straightaway. He focused on two options, air strike and blockade, and identified the benefits and challenges he expected each one would generate.

> If we go and take them out on a quick air strike, we neutralize the chance of danger to the United States of these missiles being used, and we prevent a situation from arising, at least within Cuba . . . On the other hand, we increase the chance greatly . . . [of] a reprisal from the Soviet Union . . . which leaves me only one alternative, which is to fire nuclear weapons—which is a hell of an alternative—and begin a nuclear exchange . . . On the other hand, if we begin the blockade . . . the chances are they will begin a blockade and say that we started it . . . [T]hey will say . . . that the Berlin blockade has been commenced by our blockade. So I don't think we've got any satisfactory alternatives. [O]ur problem is not merely Cuba but it is also Berlin. On the other hand, we got to do something. Because if we do nothing, we're going to have the problem of Berlin anyway.[33]

Air Force Chief of Staff General Curtis LeMay dismissed Kennedy's apprehension. The United States, he stated, did not "have any choice except direct military action." If the blockade were implemented, "[T]he first thing that's going to happen is the missiles are going to disappear into the woods, particularly your mobiles ones. Now, we can't find them, regardless of what we do,

and then we are going to take some damage if we try to do anything later on." LeMay then switched his attention to Berlin. Brusquely, he said to Kennedy:

> I don't share your view that if we knock off Cuba, they are going to knock off Berlin view . . . If we take military action against Cuba then I . . . don't think they are going to make any reply if we tell them the Berlin situation is just like it's always been. If they make a move, we're going to fight . . . This blockade and political action, I see leading into war . . . This is almost as bad as the appeasement at Munich.[34]

LeMay's military colleagues concurred with his argument; McNamara did not object.

After the president left to attend another meeting, McNamara informed the chiefs that they had to work on two options: a blockade and an air strike. As they left the office, the commandant of the US Marine Corps, General David Shoup, said to LeMay: "You pulled the rug under him [Kennedy]. Goddamn." Shoup then went to say that the only way to resolve the problem was by taking extraordinary measures. "Go in and out and get every goddamn one."[35]

By then it had become quite evident that the advisors were divided between those who backed an air strike and those who favored a blockade. McGeorge Bundy, Acheson, McCone, Taylor, and Secretary of Treasury C. Douglas Dillon argued that an air strike was needed. "Decisive action would confront the world with a *fait accompli,*" stated the secretary of the treasury. McNamara became the leading advocate of a blockade. Robert Kennedy also preferred it, because he believed that a surprise attack a la Pearl Harbor was not in the tradition of the United States. Ball wavered. The two camps started to come together when those championing a blockade emphasized that it was imperative to give Moscow a chance to think carefully about the challenge it faced but also affirmed that a blockade did not need to be the final step. Dillon stressed that a blockade could be a first step, to be followed by aggressive military action if Moscow failed to acquiesce to Washington's demands. In short, a blockade would not impede the subsequent implementation of more aggressive measures. Still, a final agreement remained to be reached.[36]

By the time the president returned to the White House, his advisors had identified four approaches. They were: (i) launch an air strike, (ii) start with a blockade but treat it as an ultimatum that could be followed by an air strike, (iii) commence with a blockade, see how the Soviets responded, and then decide what step to take next, and (iv) open with a blockade and treat it as a first step to negotiations, and possibly offer the idea of a summit meeting.[37]

Despite the emphasis placed by Taylor on the value of launching an air strike, grave concern over the repercussions it would generate were voiced by many of the participants, especially when the secretary of defense noted that the chiefs of staff envisioned some 800 sorties. "Such a strike," explained McNamara, "would result in several thousand Russians being killed, chaos in Cuba, and efforts to overthrow the Castro government." He then noted that he doubted the Soviets would not resort to a major response. Kennedy concurred. As the discussion continued, the president ordered Taylor to provide alternative plans designed to destroy missiles and missile sites, but not the medium bombers and MIGs. The plans, added the president, had to be ready in three days.

By the end of the meeting, the president had made up his mind. He intended to order a blockade, which would be referred to as a quarantine. He did not want to negotiate, at least not yet, for he feared that Moscow would use the time to operationalize the missiles. The blockade, however, would stand as an ultimatum. If Moscow failed to remove the missiles, the United States would launch an air strike. McCone and Dillon were the leading advocates of this option; Robert Kennedy supported it.

After the meeting, the president predicted that his decision would undermine the Democratic Party's standing during the upcoming congressional elections. Some Democrats, he noted during a conversation with his brother Robert, would accuse him of being too warlike, while other voters would claim that the Republicans had been right all along. Across the Potomac, the top military officials expressed frustration when McNamara informed them of the president's decision. The army chief of staff, General Earle Wheeler, best summarized their sentiment when said: "I never thought I'd live to see the day when I would want to go to war."[38]

On October 22, at five in the afternoon, twenty senators and members of the House filed into the Cabinet Room at the White House. Kennedy asked McCone to begin the intelligence briefing. Questions by several of the attendees followed, most of which focused on the range of the missiles, whether they could carry nuclear warheads, when they would become operational, and who would be manning them. With the intelligence summary completed, the senators and members of the House directed their queries to the president and his immediate advisors.

Without any prompting, Kennedy made it clear that in his mind the Cuban and Berlin cases were connected. "[W]hatever we do in regard to Cuba," said the president, "it gives [Khrushchev] the chance to do the same with regard to Berlin." He then informed them that the United States was going to set up a blockade on the shipment of offensive weapons into Cuba and would start preparing for a series of military operations were the situation

to deteriorate. Senator Richard Russell, from Georgia, and chairman of the Armed Services Committee, confronted the president. In his view, the administration "should assemble as speedily as possible an adequate force and clean out the situation."[39] Russell was not reassured by any of the principals' responses. Still, the president repeatedly underscored his determination to follow the course of action he and his advisors had agreed on. After a few additional queries from some of the other participants, Kennedy left to put the final touches on the speech he was scheduled to deliver that evening.

In his televised address on Monday, October 22, Kennedy laid out the challenges the United States faced and described the steps his administration would take. They included the following:

1. Strict naval quarantine on offensive weapons.
2. Increased surveillance and readiness for further action if offensive Soviet preparations continued.
3. Warning that any nuclear missile launched from Cuba against any part of the hemisphere would be treated "as an attack by the Soviet Union on the United States, requiring a full retaliatory response upon the Soviet Union."
4. Reinforcement of the base on Guantanamo and evacuation of dependents of military personnel.
5. Asking support from the Organization of American States.
6. Requesting an emergency meeting of the United Nations Security Council.
7. Calling on Khrushchev "to halt and eliminate this clandestine, reckless, and provocative threat to world peace."

As part of the preparations, Kennedy authorized the Pentagon to initiate major military deployments. Troops were moved into Florida and the southeastern part of the United States, the First Armored Division was deployed out of Texas into Georgia and five more divisions were placed on alert, the Guantanamo Bay base was strengthened, missile crews were placed on maximum alert, the Strategic Air Command initiated a series of critical activities, and on late Saturday night the navy deployed 180 ships into the Caribbean.

As the deployment of forces was taking place, the White House sent a copy of the president's speech to Khrushchev, accompanied by a personal letter. In the missive, Kennedy noted that he hoped they would be able to find a solution through peaceful means. The president also stressed that the he would not tolerate any attempt on the part of Moscow to force him to abandon the United States' responsibilities and commitments in Berlin. His administration "would resist with all the power at its command" if Moscow attempted

to do so. The president then directed his comments to the situation in Cuba and warned Khrushchev that the United States "is determined that this threat to the security of the hemisphere be removed." Near the end of the letter, he noted that although his administration was taking the "minimum steps necessary to remove the threat," Moscow should not misjudge Washington's resolve. Kennedy closed by stating that he hoped the Soviet government would refrain from any action that would deepen the crisis.[40]

For the next couple of days, the Kennedy administration focused on the status of ships that had been steering toward Cuba. Information was mixed. During a meeting at the White House, the attendees learned that twenty-five Soviet ships were still navigating toward the quarantine line, but that several vessels believed to be transporting missiles had stopped, turned around, and were heading back to the Black Sea. Upon receiving the news, Rusk leaned over to McGeorge Bundy and whispered, "We are eyeball to eyeball, and the other fellow just blinked."[41] The moment of relief did not last long. Everyone recognized that it was crucial "not to misjudge, or miscalculate, or challenge . . . or precipitously push" the approaching ships "into a course of action that was not intended or anticipated."[42]

Just as new intelligence came in reporting that new photos taken by U-2 planes indicated that within a few days several of the Soviet launching pads would be ready, McNamara announced that two Russian ships, escorted by a Russian submarine, were within a few miles of the quarantine barrier.[43]As McNamara delineated the military measures the US Navy could take to force the submarine to surface for inspection, the president demanded that extreme precaution be taken to minimize the likelihood of a misunderstanding. "Isn't there some way we can avoid having our first exchange with a Russian submarine—almost anything but that?" The secretary of defense's responded unambiguously. "No, there's too much danger to our ships. There is no alternative. Our commanders have been instructed to avoid hostilities if at all possible, but this is what we must be prepared for, and that is what we must expect."[44] After a brief moment, McCone brought in new information. "Mr. President," said the CIA director, "we have a preliminary report which seems to indicate that some of the Russian ships have stopped dead in the water." This report was soon proven to be correct. It stated that six "ships previously on their way to Cuba at the edge of the quarantine line have stopped or have turned back toward the Soviet Union." A little later, another report added that twenty Russian ships had turned back toward the Soviet Union.[45] Later that evening, the attorney general met Ambassador Dobrynin at the Soviet embassy. When asked by Robert Kennedy whether the Soviet vessels had been ordered to challenge the quarantine, Dobrynin said that they had been.

During the subsequent days, Khrushchev and Kennedy exchanged additional letters. In the first one, the Soviet premier warned the US president that the Soviet Union would adhere to recognized norms of navigation in international waters and would use whatever means necessary to protect their ships if the United States violated those rules. "For this," noted Khrushchev, "we have all that is necessary." The tone of Khrushchev's letter was markedly more hostile than the one he had sent a day earlier, in which he restated the claim that the weapons being sent to Cuba were solely for defensive purposes and asked the president to show prudence and to renounce actions that could lead to catastrophic consequences. On the twenty-fifth, the day after he had received Khrushchev's letter, Kennedy responded with an equally stern warning. After accusing the Soviet premier of duplicity and explaining why the US Navy was implementing the blockade, Kennedy asked that Khrushchev take the necessary steps "to permit a restoration of earlier situation." In the meantime, the president had invited the United Nations' secretary general U Thant to serve as an intermediary between Washington and Moscow. In a letter to the UN secretary general, Kennedy stated that he welcomed U Thant's services and stressed that normalcy could be regained if Moscow agreed to remove the missiles. Mindful that he might have to help Khrushchev save face, Kennedy asked the Department of State to inform Turkey that the United States might have to remove its Jupiter missiles sometime in the near future.[46]

Conditions on the high seas continued to trouble Kennedy and his advisors. On the twenty-fifth, the president was asked whether the navy should stop and board the Russian oil tanker *Bucharest*. Though the intelligence was not solid, it was deduced that the tanker was not carrying missiles. Options were considered. If the ship were stopped, Khrushchev would realize that Kennedy was determined to implement his warning; if it were allowed to continue its course, the Soviet leader would be given more time to reflect on what decision to make next.[47] Kennedy decided not to push Khrushchev and allowed the Russian vessel to go through the quarantine.

On Friday, October 26, McCone apprised the president of the latest intelligence. The Soviet installation of IRBMs and MRBMs, stated the CIA director, was proceeding on schedule. After discussing a number of issues, including the standing of Operation Mongoose, the president compelled his advisors to focus on what they should do next. The blockade, he noted, would not force the Soviets to stop the deployment of the missiles or to dismantle them. McGeorge Bundy then proposed setting up a working group to come up with a new set of recommendations.

During this period, Kennedy kept an eye on the interaction between the US Navy and the approaching vessels. Aware that he had to back up his policy

with action, he authorized the navy to board the *Marucla*. Kennedy arrived to his decision carefully. The president wanted Khrushchev to understand that his administration was determined to enforce the quarantine. But since the vessel was not Soviet-owned, Kennedy hoped that Khrushchev would not take the action as a direct affront to the Soviets, and thus would not be compelled to respond. As Robert Kennedy put it, the action "gave them [the Soviet leadership] more time, but simultaneously demonstrated that the US meant business."[48]

That same day, Kennedy and his advisors were pleasantly surprised by a good piece of information. John Scali, a diplomatic correspondent of the American Broadcasting Company (ABC), received a call from Alexander Fomin. Fomin, whose real name was Alexander Feklisov and who had been posted in Washington as an official of the Soviet embassy, was a colonel in the Committee for State Security (KGB) and a personal friend of Khrushchev. The Soviet official asked Scali to join him for lunch. During lunch, Feklisov asked American journalist to inform his contacts in the Department of State that Moscow would dismantle the missile bases in Cuba and would promise not to ship any more offensive missiles in exchange for a US pledge not to invade Cuba. Scali conveyed the message to Rusk.[49]

Feklisov's proposal was not enough to elate Kennedy, particularly in view of the latest intelligence conveyed by McCone. During an afternoon meeting, the CIA director painted a stark picture—the deployment of missiles was progressing at a rapid pace. Based on the latest report, McCone doubted that the impasse could be resolved politically. Kennedy shared McCone's concern. "There are two ways to do this," said the president, "[o]ne is the diplomatic way. I doubt [it] is going to be successful. The other way is, I think, a combination of an air strike and probably invasion, which means that we would have to carry out both of those with the prospect that they [the missiles] might be fired."[50] By the end of their conversation, they both believed that a final decision had to be made soon. This concern was reaffirmed during the early evening, when the White House released a statement explaining that the latest intelligence indicated that the Soviets had not shown any intention of dismantling or discontinuing work on the missile sites.

A hopeful sign, however, emerged a few hours later, when a long, confidential, four-part message from Khrushchev arrived. Its tone was noticeably conciliatory. Near the end of his letter, Khrushchev stated:

> I propose, we for our part, will declare that our ships, bound for Cuba will not carry any kind of armaments. You would declare that the United States will not invade Cuba with its forces and will not support any sort of forces which might intend to carry out an invasion of Cuba. Then the *necessity for the presence of our military specialists in Cuba would disappear.*[51]

Cautiously optimistic, Kennedy and his advisors retired for the night.[52] As they did, officials at the Department of State stayed up to conduct a thorough assessment of the letter.

Friday's elation was dampened on Saturday, when the White House received another letter from Khrushchev. In the new missive, the Soviet premier reaffirmed that he would remove the weapons from Cuba if the United States vowed not to invade Cuba or become involved in its domestic affairs. But he added a new condition. He pledged to respect the integrity of Turkey if the United States agreed to "evacuate its analogous weapons from Turkey."[53] Rusk viewed the latest piece of communication as "a collective effort, a foreign ministry type of letter."[54]

Khrushchev's new demand backed Kennedy into a corner. Prior to receiving Moscow's latest exigency, the president, who believed that the nuclear sites in Turkey were of limited strategic value to the United States, had considered dismantling them. Due to opposition from Ankara, he had been compelled to withhold action. A decision on his part to dismiss Turkey's objection following Khrushchev's new demand, which the Soviets had made public, would have suggested that the United States had caved in to Moscow's pressure, which in turn would have weakened NATO's containment policy.

To make matters worse, it was around this time that the president learned that two U-2 reconnaissance planes were missing, and one of them was "presumably shot down" over Cuba.[55] Further, there was increasing "evidence that the Russians in Cuba were now working day and night, intensifying their efforts on all the missile sites and on the IL-28s."[56] Though angered by the Soviet premier's latest demand and troubled by the newest pieces of intelligence, Kennedy made it clear that he was not prepared to risk war in Cuba and Berlin over missiles in Turkey. He ordered his advisors to search for a reasonable way out of their predicament.

At their next gathering at four in the afternoon, Kennedy proposed that a note be sent to Khrushchev stating that the United States wanted a clear indication from Moscow in the next twenty-four hours that it would disarm the weapons. Were Moscow to extend such assurance, the United States would be glad to discuss the situation in Turkey with Moscow, but only after consulting "with members of NATO whose interests [were] also involved." Such discussions could not be undertaken until Washington felt "assured that work on these bases in Cuba has halted and the bases themselves, [were] inoperable." It was during these deliberations that a message about the fate of the second U-2 plane reached the cabinet room. It stated that in the morning a U-2 plane "had been hit by a SAM missile, that it had crashed in Cuba, and that (the pilot) had been killed."[57] Taylor called for a retaliation against the SAM

site and an administration announcement that if "any other planes are fired on we will come back and take it."[58]

Taylor's comment was followed by an extensive discussion that focused on Turkey, Cuba, the attack on the U-2s, and a response to Khrushchev's latest letter. Everyone was aware that any attempt on their part to remove the Jupiter missiles from Turkey without consulting Ankara and NATO would trouble European leaders and generate doubts about Washington's commitment to Europe's defense. At the same time, they feared that if Washington authorized a major attack on Cuba, Moscow would use the action to move against Turkey. McNamara summarized their dilemma when he stated:

> If we send 500 sorties in against Cuba, we must be prepared to follow up with an invasion in about seven days. If we start out on that kind of program, it seems to me that the Soviets are very likely to feel forced to reply with military action someplace, particularly if these missiles—Jupiter missiles—are still in Turkey.[59]

As a possible solution, McNamara floated the idea of telling the Turks that the United States was going to invade Cuba and that it would be in their interest to defuse the missiles that same night. To protect Turkey, the United States would then place Polaris submarines along their coast and let the world that it had done so. Such a step, speculated McNamara, would "reduce the pressure on the Soviet Union to attack [Turkey]." Kennedy was not sure that Turkey would accept McNamara's proposal, but at the same time he feared that if something was not done with regard to the missiles in Turkey, the United States might come to regret it. "I am just thinking," said the president, "about what we are going to have to do in a day or so, which is 500 sorties, and seven days, and possibly an invasion, all because we wouldn't take the missile out of Turkey."[60] According to his brother, the president also stated: "It isn't the first step that concerns me," he said, "but both sides escalating to the fourth and fifth step—and we don't go to the sixth because there is no one around to do so. We must remind ourselves we are embarking on a very hazardous course."[61]Shortly thereafter, the president left the room, and the remaining participants continued to voice concerns about what steps to take next.

When Kennedy returned, he was ready to wrap up the meeting. Before he did, Ambassador-at-Large Thompson summarized their two choices: The president announces he will attack Cuba, in which case he is bound to it; or he tries "to get Khrushchev back on peaceful solution, in which case [he] shouldn't give any indication that [he's] going to accept anything on Turkey because the Turkey proposal is . . . clearly unacceptable."[62] By then Kennedy

had reaffirmed in his own mind that his administration could not simply reject the exchange of missiles in Cuba for those in Turkey.

> We can't very well invade Cuba, with all the toil and blood it's going to be, when we could have gotten them [the Soviet missiles] out by making a deal on the same missiles in Turkey. If that's part of the record, then I don't see how we'll have a very good war. But other than that it is really a question of what to say to NATO."[63]

He then called the meeting to an end and requested that they gather again at nine that night to decide whether to send the message and how to respond to the shooting down of the U-2 plane. The message was sent at eight; whether the president consulted again with his advisors before it was sent is unclear.[64]

Kennedy's response to Moscow's latest message sought to delink the Turkish problem from the Cuban one, without leaving Khrushchev empty-handed. It stated that if Moscow removed the missiles from Cuba and halted "the further introduction of such weapons," Washington would "remove promptly the quarantine" and would "give assurances against an invasion." It then addressed the missiles in Turkey without referring to them directly. "The effect of such settlement [the missiles in Cuba] on easing world tension would enable us to work toward a more general arrangement regarding 'other armaments,' as proposed in your second letter which you made public." To make sure that Khrushchev did not misinterpret his readiness to carry out his warning, the president closed with the following statement: "[T]he prolonging of this discussion concerning Cuba by linking these problems to the broader questions of European and world security, would surely lead to an intensification of the Cuban crisis and a grave risk to the peace of the world."[65] That same evening Robert Kennedy visited Dobrynin at the Soviet embassy. The attorney general reiterated what his brother had conveyed in his letter to the Soviet premier. When asked by the ambassador what steps the president was prepared to take regarding Turkey, Robert Kennedy made it clear that there could not be a quid pro quo but that his brother was prepared to address the issue under a nonthreatening condition. He added that he was sure that at a later time the matter could be resolved satisfactorily.[66] By then, the Joint Chiefs of Staff had notified McNamara that they had formally requested the president to authorize a major air strike against Cuba on either October 28 or October 29.[67]

Robert Kennedy returned to the White House from the Soviet embassy at 8:30 PM. After the attorney general delivered a gloomy account of his meeting with Dobynin, two themes dominated the discussions. Everyone voiced apprehension about the plight of the U-2 pilots if they were to continue their

surveillance over Cuba and concern as to how Moscow would respond to Washington's latest missive. Convinced that he was running out of options, the president suggested that if US planes were still fired upon during their flights over Cuba and if Washington did not receive a satisfactory answer from Moscow, the administration should put out a statement noting that it considered Cuba an open territory and would attack all the SAM sites. He then proposed sending a message to U Thant stating: "If they [the Soviets] fire on us, tell them [the Soviet leaders] we'll take them all out [the missiles]."[68] In order to keep the pressure on Moscow, McNamara asked the president to issue an executive order instructing the secretary of the air force to call to active duty twenty-four troop carrier squadrons of the Air Reserve and their associated support units. Kennedy gave the authorization. After further discussions, McNamara once again forewarned everyone of their need to understand the consequences of the steps they may have to take within the next day or two. The Kennedy administration needed to have people ready to create a government in Cuba the moment the Castro regime was toppled and needed to decide how it would respond to the Soviets' action against Europe "because . . . they're going to do something there." As they were getting to leave for the night, Sorensen tried to inject a light touch by stating: "Suppose we make Bobby [Robert Kennedy] mayor of Havana?"[69]

The tension that had been building up steadily for thirteen days declined on the morning of October 29. In a message to Kennedy that had been broadcasted to the world over Radio Moscow, Khrushchev agreed to the terms delineated by the president in his last letter. Robert Kennedy then met with Dobrynin at 11:00 AM. The Soviet ambassador confirmed that "Khrushchev had agreed to dismantle and withdraw the missiles under adequate supervision and inspection; that everything was going to work out satisfactorily; and that Mr. Khrushchev wanted to send his best wishes to the President and to me."[70]

Exhilaration spread throughout the White House, but not at the Pentagon. The Joint Chiefs viewed Khrushchev's message as an attempt "to delay direct action by the United States while preparing the ground for diplomatic blackmail." As a result, they recommended that Kennedy authorize the execution of the air strike, to be followed by an invasion, unless there "was irrefutable evidence" that the Soviets were dismantling their missiles.[71] Kennedy did not authorize the recommended operation, and the tension defused in due time.

Analysis: In Search of a Balanced Solution

Two factors hover over every US FPDM model. First, domestic politics is nearly always on the mind of a president as he devises a foreign policy. When a

president first walks into the White House, he is likely to be guided by his own beliefs, values, and goals, but he is also mindful that there is an environment already defined by a particular set of well-defined expectations, by a mindset that he cannot easily ignore. Second, the solution of a problem entails more than the hierarchical ordering of goals; it first requires a thoughtful interpretation of the problem. In the absence of reliable information, a problem will be construed incorrectly. The presence of reliable information, however, does not guarantee the problem will be interpreted correctly. The mindset that dominates Washington's thinking process at any one time can easily send off course the president and his advisors as they try to define the problem.

Three international challenges awaited Kennedy and his team of advisors in early 1961; two would become tightly intertwined. Berlin had become a major bone of contention since November 1958, when Khrushchev demanded that the Western powers withdraw from the former German capital and make it a free demilitarized city. Thereafter, noted the Soviet premier, the East German government would be the city's sole ruler. Washington and its Western allies contested Moscow's demand. On the other side of the globe, the ascension of Mao Zedong in China and France's capitulation in Vietnam persuaded the Eisenhower administration that without US vigorous involvement all of Indochina would be overtaken by the Communists, and a domino effect would overtake Southeast Asia soon thereafter. Closer to US shores, Fidel Castro's socialist experiment in Cuba, along with Moscow's readiness to extend substantial economic and finical assistance, generated deep concern throughout Washington. Kennedy and his foreign policy counselors knew that Washington would not tolerate any further Communist infringement on the power of the United States.

The April 1961 Bay of Pigs fiasco changed palpably the way Kennedy would be judged from then on. The president inferred that, though the American public was inclined to forgive him for failing once and might have attributed the misstep to his youth and inexperience, they would not tolerate another costly foundering. As the Bay of Pigs debacle receded slowly in the minds of most Americans, Kennedy, his counselors, and intelligence analysts kept a close watch over the Atlantic and Cuban harbors. A conspicuous increase in the number of Soviet and Soviet bloc vessels destined for Cuba and of heavy cargoes being unloaded on its ports prompted White House, Pentagon, and Department of State officials to observe and analyze future developments closely.

Throughout 1961 and the first half of 1962, the common supposition within the Kennedy administration was that Moscow would not install nuclear missiles in Cuba—it had never done so, and the Soviet leaders knew that Washington would not tolerate their presence. The Kennedy administration,

however, did not overcommit to this deduction. Washington monitored carefully activities in Cuba, and, in late July 1962, US intelligence detected an increase in the rate of Soviet bloc ships crossing the Atlantic and of equipment being disembarked on Cuban shores. Careful analysis of photos taken by U-2s over the Caribbean island and additional information gathered by human sources gradually alerted intelligence analysts, along with the president and his advisors, that they needed to discard their initial assumption.

With little ado, Kennedy and his advisors triangulated the problem. One of the first questions they posed was whether the deployment of nuclear weapons altered the strategic balance of power. Several members admitted that if they were to focus exclusively on the "actual" material distribution of power, the deployment of nuclear weapons on Cuban territory did not augment Moscow's nuclear capability. Moreover, the shortening of the missiles' flight time from Cuba to the United States would not modify the outcome of a nuclear exchange. However, the Kennedy administration concluded it could not just cast off the psychological cost of the presence of Soviet nuclear missiles on Cuban soil. The president was convinced that failure on his part to stand firm against the Soviets could result in his impeachment and generate incalculable political costs for the Democratic Party. His brother concurred. Furthermore, the Kennedy brothers and the president's advisors agreed that the prestige of the United States would be severely damaged if they accepted Moscow's belligerent challenge. Throughout the globe, Washington's fortitude and readiness would be questioned.

The implementation of a foreign policy rarely generates a single effect, as Kennedy and his counselors knew too well. Foremost in their minds during the missile crisis was the following question: What action would Moscow initiate vis-à-vis Berlin if Washington were to implement hostile measures against Cuba? They disagreed with General LeMay's claim that the Soviets would not move aggressively against Berlin. Furthermore, they did not want to find themselves testing the general's claim that the United States had the means to inflict heavy costs on the Soviets if they were to move aggressively against Berlin. Thus, Kennedy's priorities were to determine the best way to handle the Soviet placement of nuclear missiles on Cuban territory, while trying to curtail his domestic political liability and without endangering Berlin.

Generally, foreign policy making entails "a sequential and interactive process of decisions by at least two countries responding to each other's decisions."[72] Because the definition of the problem and the steps taken by the Kennedy administration did not remain static, it behooves us to pause briefly to gauge the quality of its decision-making process during the early stages.

Intelligence analysts began to suspect that the Soviets were setting up missile facilities in Cuba in early August 1962. As noted earlier, during that month,

US ground observers sighted Russian-built MiG-21 fighters and Il-28 light bombers. U-2 spy planes photographed S-75 Dvina surface-to-air missile sites at eight different locations. On August 10, McCone met with Rusk, McNamara, Johnson, Taylor, and McGeorge Bundy and informed them that he suspected that the Soviets might be planning to deploy medium-range ballistic missiles on Cuban territory. McCone delivered the information directly to Kennedy on August 22. He presented the same analysis the following day during a meeting attended by the president and his senior advisors. Though initially Kennedy showed concern, additional U-2 flights failed to discern anything that would give credence to McCone's suspicion. Nevertheless, throughout the rest of August and September, McCone repeatedly voiced his concerns and stressed the need to monitor carefully Soviet activities on the high seas and Cuba.

Despite doubting that Khrushchev would dare to deploy offensive missiles in Cuba, Kennedy ordered that the surveillance of the island be sustained and warned the Soviet premier not to place offensive weapons on Cuban soil. McCone's misgivings increased after September 5, when a U-2 flight enabled analysts to note that the trapezoidal pattern of SAM installations in the San Cristobal area resembled those the Soviets deployed to protect their offensive missiles on their own territory. Evidence that such missiles would be installed, however, remained a conjecture, because the ship carrying the MRBM warheads did not leave the Soviet Union for Cuba until September 15 and arrived at its destination on October 4. Its arrival did not go undetected. On that same day, observers informed Washington that they had noticed unusual activities in Pinar del Rio, on the western end of Cuba. After the first September U-2 flight, three more U-2s flew over the island.[73] Based on new intelligence, Kennedy authorized additional reconnaissance flights on October 9. Bad weather delayed their departure until October 14. The following day, photo analysts confirmed their suspicions.

Kennedy and his advisors' disbelief that Moscow would install nuclear missiles in Cuba did not affect their preparedness. They closely monitored Soviet and Cuban activities and forewarned Moscow that they would not tolerate the presence of offensive missiles in Cuba, and when confronted with unchallengeable evidence they redefined the problem. Had Kennedy and his advisors accused Moscow of lying and initiated a belligerent military act before the arrival of the missiles, they would have widened the scope of the problem and enabled the Soviets to prove that the attack was unjustified. In short, from early on, the president showed a "high cognitive need for information."[74] Furthermore, groupthink never encumbered the president's advisory body—its members were free to voice their opinions openly, without fear of being ostracized.

As we move on to the second phase of our analysis, two distinct decision-making theories require our attention: poliheuristic and prospect theories. Poliheuristic theory captures the initial stages of Kennedy's foreign policy decision-making process. Early on, the president concluded he could not accept the presence of Soviet middle-range missiles on Cuban territory because such an act would have hindered his political future and that of his party. His brother concurred. However, during this same period he and most of his advisors concluded that the interests of the United States would be severely undermined worldwide if they did not attempt to compel Moscow to remove them. It is difficult to ascertain which of the two concerns impacted the president the most. But were they independent of one another? It seems reasonable to assume that had the president stated to his advisors that he was willing to tolerate the presence of the Soviet missiles in Cuba, many would have objected vociferously, especially members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Congress would have mounted a major campaign to force him to alter his policy. This action would have undermined Washington's ability to deal with the challenge mounted by Moscow.

As the analysis moves on to the second stage, the president and his advisors originally narrowed their options to three, but then decided to combine them sequentially. The three alternatives were negotiation, quarantine, and air strike followed by an invasion. From early on they decided that negotiation alone would not compel the Soviets to remove the missiles. Kennedy and his counselors were convinced that during negotiations the Soviets would continue to deploy the weapons, and by the time they had armed them they would have no reason to compromise, much less to remove them. An air strike followed by an invasion would have generated a different type of high risk. The common calculation at the White House and the Department of State was that such a response would compel the Soviets to take drastic steps against Berlin, and possibly Turkey. If such a scenario were to evolve, then, as Kennedy acknowledged, the risks of neither side being able to prevent the further spread of the conflict would have been too high. The quarantine, thus, became the first option.

Kennedy and his advisors eventually concluded that the quarantine alone would not stop the arming of the Soviet offensive weapons already in Cuba. Consequently, they alerted Moscow that, if the missiles were not removed promptly and cargo ships carrying equipment were not ordered to return to their home port, the United States would have no choice but to engage its forces against Cuba. Determined not to force Moscow's leaders into a corner, Kennedy decided that the exchange of carefully written letters explicating his administration's position and the painstaking consideration of Khrushchev's ideas and requests was an option that he could not dismiss. In short, the

various choices considered were not entirely independent of one another. Kennedy began with a quarantine, but he made it clear that if Moscow did not respond, he was prepared to launch air strikes against Cuba, and possibly follow with an invasion. He conveyed his determination to intensify the threat via a letter, a means that he also used to help negotiate the settlement of the crisis.

An analytical impasse could emerge when one attempts to apply prospect theory to the Cuban Missile Crisis. The options considered by the Kennedy administration generated different types of risks; thus the analyst studying the case must try to decipher which option the president believed generated the worst and the most tolerable risks.

The risk calculations conducted by the president can be encapsulated as follows:

1. Abiding by the Soviet decision to deploy Soviet missiles on Cuban soil would generate two types of risks—one political, the other strategic. Domestically, acceptance would result in his impeachment, accompanied by condemnation of the Democratic Party in the course of the forthcoming congressional elections. Internationally, consent would bring about a loss in US prestige, along with a change in the psychological balance of power between the United States and the Soviet Union.
2. Negotiation would cause fewer risks in the short run than those engendered by acceptance of the Soviet missiles on Cuba soil, but not necessarily in the long run. Initially it would lower the tension between both entities, but it would also afford the Soviets the opportunity to continue with the installation of their missiles and with the shipping of additional offensive weapons. The end result of this policy would differ little from the consequences shaped by the first option. Such an occurrence would most likely provoke a call for the president's impeachment and weaken the repute of the Democratic Party.
3. Launching an air strike followed by an invasion would spawn its own set of distinct risks. The dual actions would occasion the deaths of thousands of Soviet soldiers and technicians, which would then force Moscow to move against Berlin and possibly launch an air attack on Turkey. Such a response would compel Washington to come to the aid of both allies, thus increasing the probability that the war between both powers would spin out of control.
4. Quarantine would spawn the lowest political and strategic risks in the short run, but not necessarily in the long term. It would contain but not fully muffle criticism from Congress and the American public, it

> would forewarn the Soviets that the United States would not accept the presence of aggressive weapons on Cuban territory, and it would extend Moscow the chance to reconsider its initial action. But this option also carried long-term risks if not accompanied by the warning that stricter measures would follow, such as the threat of an air strike and an invasion. And yet, the operationalization of the threat was fraught with risks of the highest dimension possible: an all-out nuclear war between nuclear powers.

Kennedy's behavior during the Cuban Missile Crisis substantiates the contention that "political leaders are risk averse with respect to changes in the political capital."[75] The two options that could have generated the highest domestic political risks for the president were accepting the presence of Soviet missiles on Cuban soil and negotiations. Both options would have given way to a new international status quo, one in which the psychological balance of power would have tilted in favor of the Soviet Union, and the prestige of the United States would have diminished substantially. But in either case the likelihood of both superpowers engaging in a major war would have been quite low. The probability of a war between both entities would have been at its highest level had the Kennedy administration opted for the policy advocated by the Joint Chiefs—an air strike followed by an invasion. The implementation of such an option would have most likely forced Moscow to counter in form. A quarantine did not place the adversaries on the path of immediate conflict; it provided both a chance to resolve their difference via negotiation. Nonetheless, because a negotiated settlement could ensue only if Kennedy increased the threat, he elevated the prospect for a major war the moment he ordered preparations for an air strike and conveyed to Moscow his resolve to carry out the operation.

In a sense, by refusing to accept the presence of Soviet nuclear missiles in Cuba or to negotiate with the Soviets without first imposing a quarantine, Kennedy prioritized his own political well-being and the prestige of the United States over the welfare of millions of people. To suggest that he should have placed less value on his political future is to propose that he should not have been what he was, a politician. At the same time, to disparage him for prioritizing the prestige of the United States is to propose that he should have challenged Washington's mindset. As Ralph Hawtrey once noted: "In a diplomatic conflict the country which yields is likely to suffer in prestige because the fact of yielding is taken by the rest of the world to be evidence of conscious weakness."[76] In the 1960s, the protection and promotion of the prestige of the United States, particularly if Moscow was the initiator of the dare, was paramount. In the eyes of Washington's leading actors, another

failure in Cuba, a newly created Communist state, would have damaged demonstrably the United States' prestige and, as a result, weakened its power. When all was said and done, Kennedy equated his reputation with the prestige of the United States. In his mind, the two did not exist independently of one another.

CHAPTER 7

Intuition, Rationality, Mindsets, and Foreign Policy Decision-Making Models

It is experience that changes mindsets, not the other way around.[1]

Introduction

We completed several tasks in this book. In addition to describing the foreign policy decision-making (FPDM) processes of three US presidents and assessing the care each political leader extended to trying to resolve two international problems, we tested the explanatory value of various models. As we demonstrated, though several models explained important aspects of the FPDM process, none addressed the issue that sets up the boundaries of the options decision-makers will consider—the definition of the problem. Hence, in our concluding chapter, as we reevaluate the various models we tested, we discuss ways the inclusion of the factors that affect the way decision-makers define international problems can improve the FPDM models' explanatory value. During this portion of our analysis, we also discuss the quality of the FPDM processes relied on by Presidents Harry Truman, Dwight Eisenhower, and John F. Kennedy.

Definition of Problem

Two elements affect the way a president interprets a problem: the type of cognitive system he relies on to try to resolve it and the mindsets that guide his thinking and the thinking of Washington's leading political actors.

As we noted in this book's introduction, studies have demonstrated that under certain conditions, people who rely on their intuitions formulate better decisions than those who conduct systematic analyses.[2] In the rational

system, reasoning "is conscious, verbal, abstract, analytical, affect free, effortful, and highly demanding of cognitive resources."[3] For individuals who trust their intuition to define a problem and make decisions, the input is provided mostly "by knowledge stored in long-term memory that has been primarily acquired via associative learning. The input is processed automatically and without conscious awareness."[4] Valid intuitions develop when individuals "have learned to recognize familiar elements in a new situation and to act in a manner that is appropriate to it."[5]

Two of the presidents discussed throughout this volume made decisions intuitively. Harry Truman admitted that, though he sought advice, he generally arrived at a decision without engaging in purposeful thinking and before listening to the opinion of others. Having intuitively defined the problem and decided the path he would take, he would then search for historical cases and information that would justify his interpretation and choice. Dwight Eisenhower, who, according to one of his advisors, was better informed about international and military matters than all of his advisors put together and who engaged in extensive consultations before making a decision, intuitively shied away from using military force to resolve the crisis emanating from the Middle East. But in that case, Eisenhower's intuition was backed by many years of experience, which had informed him that, because it is difficult to predict how a war will evolve after it has been started, one ought not to resort to military means unless all other possible means have been exhausted. Whether Truman's and Eisenhower's intuitions led them to design effective or ineffective foreign policies is an issue we need not address at this moment. It is worth repeating, however, that when a problem is defined intuitively, the quality of the characterization depends on the sample used by the decision-maker to derive a judgment. To arrive at a fairly accurate definition, the decision-maker must refer to prior experiences implicitly stored in his or her memory that are applicable to the case he or she is considering. The judgment is likely to be faulty if the sample from which he or she is deriving the information is either inapplicable or very small.[6]

As we explained earlier, in decision-making theory *mindset* refers to beliefs, assumptions, and rules of behavior adhered to by one or more individuals, groups of people, a community, or a nation. A broadly shared mindset can create a powerful incentive to accept an existing definition of a problem, behavior, choice, or tool, and in turn to prevent the consideration of alternative definitions, behaviors, choices, or tools. Depending on the circumstances, mindsets can solidify and protect a system of social dominance, or they can lead to its destruction. The origins of mindsets vary, but regardless of their roots every president who walks into the White House for the first time could be influenced by one or more mindsets—his own, his predecessor's, Washington's, and possibly, in a broader sense, America's. Theoretically, these mindsets could differ; in practice they are seldom totally at odds with one another.

Procedural Rationality as a Standard

As we noted in this book's introduction, to assess the quality of various FPDM processes, we use the procedural rationality model as our standard. We recognize that the realization of rationality does not guarantee success and that intuitive responses often generate better decisions. Still, though rationality is no panacea, it does reduce the room for error. The model is built on the assumption that the decision-maker engages in a holistic approach to FPDM[7] and carries out the following tasks:[8]

a. Identifies the problem by cataloging the imperiled interests and values.
b. Gathers information.
c. Identifies and ranks goals.
d. Examines a wide range of options. Conducts assessment of the consequences and the human and material costs each option is likely to generate and estimates the likelihood that each option will produce his or her favored goals.
e. Selects the option with the best chance of fulfilling his or her most favored goals.
f. Implements the selected option.
g. Observes and assesses.

The use of procedural rationality as criteria enables the analyst to identify which presidents designed FPDM processes that were close to being rational and which ones opted for processes that discarded a few or several of the tasks identified above. During the Suez Canal Crisis, for instance, Eisenhower was thorough in the definition of the challenges the United States faced and in the identification of the interests at stake. He was attentive to the goals he was determined to fulfill and the contradictions that his administration might generate as it sought to realize them. His only major shortcoming during this period was that he inferred Nasser's motives without trying to develop a better understanding of the kind of leader he was. Despite this failing, Eisenhower repeatedly demanded additional information, was aware that the intelligence he was being provided was not always accurate, and suspected that London, Paris, and Tel Aviv were trying to keep his administration in the dark. He conducted the option selection process in a fairly systematic way, cognizant that in all likelihood Egypt would reject the idea of an international association operating the Suez Canal and that in the long run he would fail to persuade London and Paris not to attack Egypt.

At the opposite end of the spectrum stands Harry Truman's decisions: first, to respond militarily to North Korea's attack of South Korea and second, to authorize General Douglas MacArthur to march into North Korea in an

attempt to defeat its regime and unify both Koreas. As explained in chapter 2, during the first decision-making period, Truman opted for a military response intuitively, involved a small number of advisors in the decision-making process, and demonstrated little interest in carrying out thoughtful discussions regarding available intelligence and ways to interpret the problem and resolve it. His approach to the second decision reflected a similar pattern. He viewed things in black and white, did not favor rational analysis of complex problems, and tended to dismiss attempts to alter his policy after he had decided on one.

Markedly more problematic is the categorization of FPDM processes that fit between the two extremes just identified. Sometimes, instead of taking the time to break up a problem into its major components, decision-makers rely on an existing mindset to define it. In other instances, they allow their preconceptions to dictate the way they will interpret the existing intelligence or the kind of information they will accept and discard. Lastly, it is not uncommon for a decision-maker to focus on a very narrow range of options, without first attempting to ascertain whether the exclusion of certain alternatives could induce unwanted costly effects.

We begin our evaluation by focusing on those presidents we consider to have engaged in FPDM processes that are close to the procedural rationality ideal, and then on those who are "least rational" procedurally. We complete the analysis by focusing on those between both ends. We purposely chose not to categorize decision-makers in terms of their levels of rationality, because their processes sometimes varied from one case to the other. Harry Truman's FPDM process during the war against Japan was markedly different from the one he generated during the Korean War. Also different were Eisenhower's in the Guatemalan and the Suez Canal cases, and Kennedy's in the Bay of Pigs fiasco and the Cuban Missile Crisis. As we conduct our analysis, we identify the model that in our estimation best explains each president's FPDM process. We also discuss how the inclusion of mindsets, along with the type of cognitive system a president relied on as he tackled an international problem, can enhance an analyst's capacity to determine which model will best delineate a president's FPDM process.

Virtually Rational Foreign Policy Decision-Making Processes

Dwight Eisenhower, the Suez Canal Crisis, and the Compensatory Model

As noted multiple times, the compensatory model suggests that a leader identifies a set of options, considers each option individually by focusing on a number of dimensions, assigns values to each dimension, and then aggregates the

assigned scores. He or she uses the same information to apply the same analysis to the other options. Using a simple arithmetic comparison of the aggregate values, the decision-maker then chooses the alternative with the highest score.

Though it is not possible to determine exactly what values Dwight Eisenhower assigned to the various dimensions he identified within each option as he sought to decide how to respond to the Suez Canal Crisis, it is reasonable to infer that he gave an overall value to each alternative he considered and then chose the one with the highest score. During the first period of the crisis, the overall value he allocated to the creation and implementation of the international association responsible for administering the canal was higher than the score he gave to using military force against Egypt. During the second period, after Great Britain, France, and Israel had attacked Egypt, Eisenhower gave the approval of a UN cease-fire resolution and the unconditional acceptance of the decree by the belligerent parties, including Egypt, a score markedly higher than the one he gave to the continuation of the conflict. In both stages, concern that the use of force would encourage Moscow to side with Egypt militarily generated such a high negative value that, in Eisenhower's mind, it automatically negated support for such an option.

As we argue in chapter 4, two important characteristics differentiated Eisenhower from most of his advisors: his first-class strategic intellect and his vast knowledge of foreign and military affairs. These two features enabled him to interact openly with a small group of advisors who never feared voicing their opinions, even when they differed from their boss's. Eisenhower preferred small groups of individuals with whom he could explore the problem in an intimate setting. Because he encouraged discussion and the voicing of dissenting opinions, groupthink was never a condition that afflicted his advisory group. During his management of the Suez Canal Crisis, Eisenhower demonstrated that he possessed the aptitude to break apart a problem into its various components and identify their potential incongruities. Eisenhower often relied on analogies to make a point, but in this case he did not allow historical scripts to confine his thinking.

Eisenhower's leading mindsets were his strong anti-Communist sentiment, his loathing of war, his conviction that Europe could not survive without access to oil from the Middle East, and his readiness to stand by the United States' closest Western allies if their security were threatened by the Soviet Union. His response to Israel, Great Britain, and France's attack on Egypt reflects his understanding of the extent to which his mindsets could conflict with one another. Prior to and following the attack, Eisenhower could have quietly informed London, Paris, and Tel Aviv that his administration would not take a strong stand against their action. He could have inferred, as did London and Paris, that a joint front would have forced Egypt to acquiesce.

Instead, he had the prescience to realize that an attack on Egypt by the three Western powers and Israel would inevitably generate a strong anti-Western and anti-Israel sentiment throughout the Arab world, endanger the uninterrupted flow of oil, extend Moscow the opportunity to become involved in an area in which it had previously had little success, and increase the probability of pushing the major powers into war. All the same, Eisenhower knew that a president is not always able to resolve contradictions. As Egyptian casualties mounted and as Moscow became more vociferous with its threat that it would help Egypt defend itself if asked, Eisenhower made it clear that, though he was furious with the British and the French for disregarding his warning, he would come to their defense were they to be attacked by Soviet forces.

Least Rational Foreign Policy-Making Processes

John F. Kennedy, the Bay of Pigs Fiasco, and the Noncompensatory Model

John F. Kennedy, along with his advisors and the CIA, committed multiple errors as he considered whether to authorize the launching of a covert operation against the Cuban regime of Fidel Castro. Intelligence agencies repeatedly provided unsubstantiated estimates of expected results. A few members of the State Department and the Defense Department questioned the evaluations, but Kennedy and most of his closest counselors rarely voiced concerns. Those who expressed doubts were seldom given a proper hearing. Furthermore, the president committed a series of blunders during the final stages of the FPDM process. Though top CIA officials feared that the last-minute steps taken by the president would jeopardize their mission, they never articulated it forcefully enough to ensure that the president would pause to reassess his decision. During this period, Kennedy failed to recognize the inherent contradictions between his multiple goals. He did not realize that by trying to conceal the United States' involvement in the operation he was increasing the probability the mission would fail to accomplish its intended goal. Moreover, he did not understand that the resulting failure would weaken the United States' reputation worldwide, strengthen the Soviet Union's standing in the Western Hemisphere, and, lastly, damage his own political position at home. Worried about cancelling a mission in which many people had invested substantial time and resources, he failed to recognize that he was committing to a set of goals that were inherently contradictory. Wishful thinking afflicted both the president and the CIA.

In short, Kennedy's FPDM process to authorize the covert invasion of Cuba was devoid of thoughtful analysis. The president never considered

cancelling the invasion altogether or launching a large-scale, overt military invasion. He discarded both options because, as the noncompensatory model proposes, in the president's mind each one had a very low score—the first one domestically, the second one internationally. A methodical analysis on the part of Kennedy would have entailed comparing the domestic and international short- and long-term benefits and costs of the following: doing nothing, launching a carefully designed covert operation, or operationalizing a major and forceful overt military invasion. His shortcomings can be in part explained by the mindset that guided his actions.

Before Kennedy became president, the CIA informed him that Eisenhower had ordered the agency to design a covert operation to overthrow Fidel Castro's Cuban regime. This information was reinforced by Eisenhower when, upon his departure, he told Kennedy to "do whatever [was] necessary to bring [the operation against Castro] to a successful conclusion." Inherent in Eisenhower's comment was a sense of urgency, as well as a recommendation to complete the operation.

The following set of beliefs defined Washington's mindset regarding Cuba:

1. Cuba's leaders posed a direct threat to the national security of the United States.
2. Failure to constrain the power of Fidel Castro's regime would enhance significantly the power and prestige of the Soviet Union in the Western Hemisphere.
3. Castro's prolonged leadership in Cuba would undermine measurably the power and prestige of the United States in the Western Hemisphere.
4. Failure on the part of the United States to resolve the Cuban problem in a satisfactory way would strengthen Communism internationally.

Adherence to the above beliefs, and thus to the mindset they structured, influenced Kennedy's decision not to evaluate whether the overthrow of Castro's regime was a policy worth pursuing. Paradoxically, though throughout preparations for the operation, the president's intuition made him question the decision others expected him to make, in the end he discarded his instinct and concluded that he had no choice but to authorize the invasion. The Washington mindset dictated that failure to overthrow Fidel Castro would lead to the rapid expansion of Communism throughout Latin America, and would strengthen the Soviet Union's power and reputation in the region. This mindset was so strong that it compelled the new president to discard his intuition and other options and carry on with the operation he inherited from Eisenhower, albeit in a poorly redesigned form.

Harry Truman, the Korean War, and the Noncompensatory Model

In our analyses of Truman's decisions to aid South Korea in its early struggle against North Korea and then to authorize General Douglas MacArthur to carry out his military mission across the 38th parallel, we argue that the president's decisions were void of systematic analyses in both instances. Among the factors that led him to focus almost exclusively on a military response to North Korea's invasion of South Korea were the following: domestic political pressures, severe time constraints, groupthink, his propensity to view the world in terms of "right versus wrong," and his inclination to refer intuitively to historical analogies and then to search for information that would help him justify his decision.

Two mindsets and Truman's intuition played decisive roles during the Korean crisis. The first mindset influenced Truman's definition of the problem generated by North Korea's invasion. The second one, which mirrored the thinking process of Washington's political movers and shakers, helped sway Truman to authorize General Douglas MacArthur's forces to cross the 38th parallel.

During the first half of 1950, the CIA repeatedly warned the president and his core associates that military activities north of the 38th parallel signaled that Pyongyang might be contemplating an attack on South Korea. Though Truman did not dismiss the notices, he assumed that North Korea, as a Soviet satellite, would not move into South Korea without Moscow's authorization. He also believed that, since it was not in Moscow's interests to spawn a war between the two Koreas, Pyongyang would not act in any way that would jeopardize Soviet assistance.

By 1950, few in Washington were prepared to dispute Winston Churchill's 1946 pronouncement that an iron curtain had descended on Europe. Moscow's near-complete domination of Eastern Europe, the Soviet announcement that its scientists had successfully developed a nuclear bomb, and the Chinese Communist Party's completed ascension to power convinced Washington that the United States was the only entity capable of preventing the further spread of Communism. This mindset became activated the moment Truman's advisors ascertained that North Korea had invaded South Korea. By the time the president and his team gathered at Blair House to determine how they would respond to the evolving crisis, nearly all agreed that the invasion had been "inspired and controlled by the Soviet Union." No one adhered more strongly to this mindset than the president himself. Though he was determined to avert a direct confrontation with the Soviet Union, his intuition informed him that Moscow had backed Pyongyang's action, and he decided without any further analysis that he would not tolerate such

intrusion. Instinctively, Truman accepted the mindset that failure on his part to respond would further encourage Moscow to spread Communism worldwide.

Before we examine the effects of the second mindset, we must revisit our earlier discussion concerning the relationship between the mindset of a president and that of Washington's core political figures. Theoretically the two mindsets can exist independent of one another. In 1950, both shared common beliefs about Communism and the Soviet Union, but a few differences existed. Though most Americans were convinced that the Soviet Union was animated by a fanatic ideology and that Moscow was striving to impose its authority over the rest of the world, the US Congress opposed spending billions of dollars to militarize the United States and strengthen its position worldwide. The start of the Korean War erased the contradiction temporarily. Over 80 percent of the American public supported Truman's decision to aid South Korea in its battle against North Korea. When the time came to decide whether to cross the 38th parallel, the US Congress and public firmly supported the decision and also favored a major increase in the US military budget. Washington's mindset at that time was guided by the belief that not crossing the divide would undermine the prestige of the United States, for it would be deemed as "appeasement of Communism."

The mindset during that period was so powerful that it stifled the voices of those with the capability and information to question it. Dean Acheson, who feared that a decision by the United States to march into North Korea would force China to intervene, chose not to voice his doubts, because he knew that he would be challenging the mindset of the White House, the Pentagon, General MacArthur, the US Congress, and the American public. Fewer than three months after Truman had authorized MacArthur to march into North Korea, and after it had become evident that US political and military leaders had wrongly assumed that China would not dare to stand up to the power of the United States, two-thirds of the American public believed that US forces should leave the Korean peninsula. By then, 50 percent of the American public had decided that the Truman administration had made a mistake when it decided to become involved in the conflict between the two Koreas.[9] As noted, at the beginning of this chapter, experience changes mindset, not the other way around.

As we have shown, the proposed solution to a problem is also shaped by the cognitive system relied on by the president. The suitability of an intuition is determined by the relevance of the sample relied on by the decision-maker to derive his or her judgment. In the Korean War case, Truman's tendency to decide intuitively also directly affected his decision to choose a policy. Truman's sample, however, was limited. His critical reference points were

the Soviet Union's actions vis-à-vis Eastern European states. He intuitively assumed that the transgressions committed by Moscow in one part of the globe would ensue in a different part of the globe. Whether such an inference was justified, he never tried to ascertain.

Abridged Foreign Policy Decision-Making Processes

The categorization of FPDM processes that fit between the two extremes just identified is markedly more difficult. The shortcomings may emerge during the definition of the problem, when instead of breaking up a problem into its major components, decision-makers simplify it by relying on an existing mind-set. In other instances, complications arise when decision-makers allow their preconceptions to dictate how they will interpret the existing intelligence or what information to accept and what information to discard. Lastly, difficulties can also appear when instead of identifying a range of options, decision-makers focus on a very narrow range of alternatives and fail to ascertain whether the exclusion of certain options could induce unwanted costly effects.

Harry Truman, the Use of the Nuclear Bomb against Japan, and the Cybernetic and Polihueristic Models

The FPDM process that evolved as Harry Truman was trying to end the war against Japan could at first light be depicted as *virtually rational.* As we shall attempt to demonstrate in the analysis that follows, a few critical factors compelled us to place it in the lower category.

Harry Truman became president determined to end the war against Japan as rapidly as possible, to conform to Franklin Roosevelt's terms of surrender, and to use the nuclear bomb, if it became operational before the war had ended, to force Japan to capitulate. The new president calculated that use of the nuclear bomb would enable him to fulfill multiple goals. The goals were as follows:

1. End the war against Japan as rapidly as possible.
2. Minimize the number of American lives lost in the operation.
3. Avert the Soviet Union's participation in the war.
4. Procure additional funds for future atomic research.
5. Position the United States as the international system's leading power.
6. Maintain the political support of the American public.

The cybernetic model helps to explain important aspects of Truman's approach to the FPDM process. The model contends that decision-makers

circumvent the calculations and exhaustive processes posited by the compensatory model. It argues that instead of engaging in a comparative analysis of multiple options by assigning specific weights to each one of them, the decision-maker begins by establishing whether a pertinent policy may already be in place. If one exists, he or she, while keeping an eye on the international, domestic, and political environments, focuses on a narrow range of options, filters off extraneous information, and relies on feedback data that tend to substantiate his or her preferred alternatives. Whatever modification the decision-maker performs, he or she carries out gradually. The process takes on "the appearance of a programmed response."[10]

Truman was *not* the original designer of the decision. Franklin Roosevelt had already set up its foundation when he decided he would use the nuclear bomb against Germany, if necessary. Following Germany's defeat, Truman continued to adhere to the original decision but against a new target: Japan. In his first address as president to Congress, Truman declared his commitment to carrying out his predecessor's policies. Truman's pledge to preserve Roosevelt's foreign policy toward Japan ultimately served as a framework through which the new president demarcated his goals and executed his decisions. Nearly every goal identified above was connected to Roosevelt's vision of the atomic bomb. Roosevelt had intended to use the bomb against Germany to accelerate the end of the war and limit the number of American casualties experienced during the process; Truman's goal vis-à-vis Japan was the same. With the development of the atomic bomb and its use, Roosevelt hoped to protect and strengthen both the viability of atomic research and the United States' standing worldwide. So did Truman, and, like Roosevelt before him, he was determined to protect his domestic political standing.

Truman's commitment to following the path designed by Roosevelt, but which now pertained to Japan, was cogently explained by Barton J. Bernstein when he wrote:[11]

> Acting on the assumption that the bomb was a legitimate weapon, Roosevelt initially defined the relationship of American diplomacy and the atomic bomb. He decided to build a bomb, to establish a partnership on atomic energy with Britain, to bar the Soviet Union from knowledge of the project, and to block any effort at international control of atomic energy. These policies constituted Truman's inheritance—one he neither wished to abandon nor could easily escape. He was restricted politically, psychologically, and institutionally from critically reassessing this legacy.

Bernstein's last words are central to our argument. As the author notes, Truman was "politically, psychologically, and institutionally" restricted by the mindset he had inherited from Roosevelt. Truman could have chosen to

disregard the former president's mindset had he really wanted to, but he was convinced that if he attempted to do so, he and the Democratic Party would pay a high political price. The poliheuristic model explains this aspect of the FPDM process. Truman was convinced that the need to defeat the Japanese as soon as possible and at the lowest possible cost was so deeply ingrained in the minds of most Americans that he would be punished politically if he dared to disregard it. Moreover, because he shared with the American people such a mindset, it is difficult to imagine that he would have chosen a different option.

In short, the mindset passed on by Roosevelt delineated the narrow boundaries within which Truman would confront the challenge posed by Japan and the kinds of options to which he was prepared to give serious consideration. As Truman waited to find out whether the bomb would work, he allowed others to voice alternatives to its use, but he never paused to compare how any of those options stood vis-à-vis the use of the bomb.

Lastly, if we also take into account that the new president was an intuitive decision-maker, the inclusion of Roosevelt's mindset as the guiding principle provides a simpler and yet more persuasive explanation of Truman's FPDM process. Though the cybernetic model does not address directly the definition issue, it does so when it acknowledges that a decision-maker or a group of decision-makers, instead of conducting reevaluations and self-analysis, almost intuitively follows the path designed earlier and simply makes changes at the margins, if necessary. As we noted in chapter 1, the main shortcoming with the cybernetic model is that it proposes that decision-makers generally search for a satisficing alternative, not an optimal one. In this case, Truman was not a utility satisfier; he was a maximizer.

John F. Kennedy, the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Poliheuristic Model, and Prospect Theory

Upon learning that the Soviet Union had deployed nuclear missiles in Cuba, John F. Kennedy dismissed any option that in his estimation would generate high domestic political risks—a decision predicted by the poliheuristic model. The president, however, also kept a close eye on the international environment, which was inextricably linked to domestic politics. So committed was the president to preserving the image and prestige of the United States and his own reputation at home, that he risked forcing Moscow to respond in a way that could have generated devastating effects worldwide.

By 1962, the Cold War mindset was deeply embedded in the minds of most Americans. The common sentiment was that the United States had to monitor Moscow's actions everywhere. Failure to respond to Soviet

challenges, especially in areas of great strategic and economic significance to the United States, would only encourage Moscow to take riskier steps in the future. Part of the mindset was influenced by the nature of nuclear rivalry that had intensified since the Soviet Union had tested its first nuclear weapon in 1949. The aforementioned mindset did not dictate the kind of option Kennedy chose to force Moscow to remove its nuclear missiles from Cuba, nor the risk he was prepared to assume. It did, however, shape the president's belief, shared by his advisors, that he had no choice but to demand that the Soviet missiles be removed and to warn Moscow that failure to comply would force him to take drastic measures.

Prospect theory is also partially applicable to this case. As proposed by the theory, people are less likely to select a risky option when things are going well and more inclined to choose a high-risk alternative when they find themselves facing a crisis. Because the Bay of Pigs fiasco had placed Kennedy in a domain of losses both at home and abroad, prospect theory would have predicted that the president, upon learning that the Soviets had deployed nuclear missiles, would have chosen a high-risk policy. His riskiest option would have been to launch a major air attack on Cuba, followed by an invasion. Such a decision would have generated, at least initially, a positive response at home; but it would have also increased the pressure on Moscow to counteract aggressively, either directly against the United States or against one of Washington's allies. Kennedy estimated that, although a blockade was not risk-free, it at least gave the Soviets a chance to back off honorably, and it provided his administration the opportunity to balance his two priorities.

In short, during the Cuban Missile Crisis, Washington's dominant mindset dictated that Kennedy respond credibly to the challenge initiated by Moscow. But he refused to allow the instincts of some of his advisors to dominate his thinking process. Though he rejected any option that could cost him politically, he also discarded the suggestion made by some of his senior military advisors that he resort to an air attack followed by an invasion. Kennedy took a risk when he chose the blockade. It was a risk he could not have taken without first conducting a comparative analysis of the costs and benefits of a number of options. In other words, the dominant mindset narrowed his options, but the option he ultimately chose, he selected analytically.

Dwight Eisenhower, the Covert Operation against the Guatemalan Government, and the Poliheuristic Model

The poliheuristic model explains Eisenhower's decision to intervene covertly to overthrow the Guatemalan regime of Jacobo Arbenz. It accounts for Eisenhower's initial shortcut and for his subsequent decision to compare a

number of options before deciding which one would most likely generate his preferred objective. Domestic politics per se did not dictate Eisenhower's decision; nevertheless, to justify his decision, he took advantage of the US Congress's strong anti-Guatemalan-government sentiment.

As exemplified by our earlier discussion of Truman's decision regarding Japan, presidents often have difficulty breaking away from past thinking. Eisenhower's decision to intervene covertly in Guatemala was affected by a general mindset that helped define his thinking and that of Truman and of Washington's political elite. The following set of beliefs defined the general mindset:

1. All hostile actions that threaten the interests of the United States are dictated by the Soviet Union.
2. Regional developments relating to land appropriation and labor policies are direct extensions of Moscow's intent to globalize its Communist ideology.
3. The implementation of said political, economic, and social reforms are certain to engender a brand of Communism that is designed to undermine US interests and benefit the Soviet Union.

The mindset was set in motion by the Truman administration. By the time Eisenhower became president, the mindset was so institutionalized and powerful that it engulfed the beliefs of lawmakers and the American public. Thus, even if Eisenhower had wanted to question it, he would have had great difficulty challenging it.

Of no less significance was the effect generated by Eisenhower's cognitive system on the initial stage of the FPDM process. The president was known for being a thoughtful analyst, one who chose an option only after gauging whether it had a very good chance of producing the result he wanted. And yet, though he lacked the evidence necessary to prove that Moscow was dictating the behavior of the Arbenz regime, he intuitively assumed that what was ensuing in Guatemala was similar to what had happened in China in the 1930s.[12] In this case, the dominant mindset and Eisenhower's instinct nourished one another. Shortly after the invasion, it became evident that the instinct that led Eisenhower and his advisors to use the China prism to interpret developments in Guatemala was baseless. The Soviet Union's interest in Guatemala never extended beyond a brief period during which time Moscow inquired whether it could purchase bananas from the Central American country.

In sum, the inclusion of the all-dominant mindset enables analysts to understand why domestic politics became, albeit indirectly, such a critical

factor in the early stages of the decision. Though in the Guatemalan case the state mindset did not undermine US strategic interests, at least in the short term, its existence helped generate costly results in a subsequent case. What is particularly significant about this case is that the reach of the dominant mindset was so broad and powerful that in all probability it would have suppressed any attempt by someone within the Eisenhower administration to present a nonintuitive analysis that questioned the inferences derived by the president and his closest advisors.

Conclusion

As analysts have repeatedly noted, domestic politics plays a major role in the FPDM process. We concur, but this axiom engenders a peculiar dilemma. Do presidents habitually dismiss any option that induces high domestic political costs, as suggested by the poliheuristic model, or do they view the protection of their own political standing as a goal to be evaluated along with others, as proposed indirectly by either the cybernetic or the compensatory model?

Our studies suggest that the answer must be divided into three parts. When deciding on a foreign policy, presidents will not consider any foreign policy option that they estimate will generate high domestic political costs for an extended period. They will adopt a policy that is likely to engender domestic political costs initially if the international stakes are very high, if they calculate that the domestic costs will not accumulate for a lengthy period, and if in time the costs will be offset by benefits. Moreover, presidents are likely to tolerate substantial domestic political costs if a foreign policy option has been in place for quite some time. This "irrational escalation of commitment" as we have noted, is referred to as "sunk costs." Having spent extensive human and material resources on a particular foreign policy, presidents will continue to implement it in the hopes that their fortunes will change.

Second, no single model successfully explained the FPDM processes of each president. This conclusion should not come as a surprise. Presidents demonstrated different problem-solving aptitudes and attitudes. Moreover, as we have stated repeatedly, one of the critical weaknesses of the models is their failure to consider the way in which each president defines a problem. These two findings are not independent of one another, and they ultimately affect the explanatory reach and applicability of the various models.

The way a president represents a problem sets up restrictions on the types of alternatives he will consider. Two factors affect a president's attempts to resolve an international problem: the mindsets that dominate the thinking of the president and of Washington's leading political figures and the president's cognitive system. The two components are related, but not always in an obvious way.

Most US presidents have their own mindset. They refer to their personal mindset involuntarily when they are required to define a major problem. A president's mindset does not exist in a political vacuum. In matters of international affairs, a mindset, sometimes two, also shapes the thinking process of Washington's principal political leaders. The extent to which a president's mindset corresponds with the one that guides the reasoning of Washington's principal political leaders can also help determine how a problem is defined. If the two mindsets are in agreement, a president will intuitively let his mindset guide his definition of the challenge arising from the international arena. Ironically, if his mindset differs from the mindset of Washington's leading political figures, he might be reluctant to promote an alternative vision for fear that he will suffer politically. His reluctance to challenge the predominant mindset could lead him to take cognitive shortcuts that could produce a poorly defined problem. A president might have a better chance of defining a problem correctly if neither he nor Washington's principal political leaders are ardent supporters of any particular mindset. In such an instance, the president would be compelled to keep an open mind to grapple with the existing evidence.

A second factor that can influence a president's definition of a problem is his cognitive system. Though individuals are inclined to define problems and search for solutions either intuitively or via a measured analytical process, many of those who are predisposed to dealing with problems rationally will address some of them intuitively. Such a configuration is likely to emerge if the leading "rational" decision-maker has extensive foreign policy experience and is guided by a deeply seated mindset. Eisenhower's interpretation of the challenges generated by the leader of Guatemala in 1954 is a good example of the conditions under which an experienced "rational" leader will allow his intuition to influence his definition of a problem. In this case, however, Eisenhower's mindset did not correspond with Guatemala's international and domestic reality.

Analysts constructed the models discussed throughout this study in order to portray and explain FPDM processes. In the course of determining which model best explains the FPDM process of a particular president, we demonstrated that it was feasible to establish a priori which one would provide the best fit, but only if the analyst possessed certain information. Prior knowledge of the cognitive system a president favors, the mindsets that dominate the thinking process of the president and Washington's leading political figures, and the degree to which the mindsets correspond with one another can help anticipate the form a president's FPDM process will assume.

The types of permutations one can derive using the aforementioned factors are multiple. The variations would be further enlarged and encumbered

were one to include the two features that often affect FPDM processes: the intensity of the international threat and the time available to respond to it. It has been argued that decision-makers are likely to experience high levels of stress when they believe that the existing threat is very high and that they have little time to address the challenge. High levels of stress lead decision-makers to oversimplify the problem, disregard information, and consider fewer alternatives. However, it has also been suggested that acute stress brought on by a deadline crisis sometimes forces decision-makers to be more focused in their analysis, as was the case during the handling of the Cuban Missile Crisis by Kennedy.[13]

Two of the many possible permutations that could be derived from the consideration of the various factors identified are the following:

1. A president's response to an international challenge is likely to assume a noncompensatory form regardless of the level of threat generated by the problem and of the amount of time he has to respond, if he generally addresses international problems intuitively and is committed to a mindset shared by Washington's leading political figures.
2. A president's response to an international challenge is likely to assume a compensatory form if the level of threat generated by the problem is very high, he has little time to respond, he generally approaches the problem rationally, and neither he nor Washington's leading political figures have a major commitment to a particular mindset.

Delineating all the possible permutations between the factors just identified lies beyond the scope of this study. However, the positing of two propositions informs us that to develop predictive FPDM processes, we must determine a priori the cognitive system of the leading decision-maker, the mindsets that guide him or her during the definition of a problem, the level of threat he or she faces, and the time frame he or she has to address it. Put differently, if we are to argue that a noncompensatory model explains Harry Truman's FPDM process during the Korean War quite well, but not Dwight Eisenhower's FPDM process during his handling of the Suez Canal Crisis, should we not try to understand why? Moreover, what kind of a FPDM process would follow from a situation in which a president—one who generally responds to international problems rationally and who shares with Washington's leading political figures a deep commitment to a particular mindset—is confronted by a major crisis that requires a rapid solution? Can we assume that the process would be destabilized by cognitive shortcuts, or should we conclude that it would proceed along a rational mode? At present, these questions remain unanswered.

As we close, our last question compels us to travel briefly along a path very different from the one we had designed for ourselves. Analysts and proponents of FPDM models have made it a practice to avoid passing ethical judgment. Too often they assume that objectivity requires the setting aside of ethical criteria. We disagree, strongly.

Our task as analysts and educators must transcend explaining and theorizing about FPDM. Our knowledge imposes on us an ethical responsibility. We know that baseless or antiquated mindsets, adhered to and advocated by presidents with limited understanding of international affairs and who pride themselves on making decisions intuitively, are recipes for disaster. We recognize that valuing his own political future may be in every president's DNA, but it ought not to be tolerated when it places at risk the lives of thousands of American soldiers and of innocent civilians abroad. Equally inexcusable is the defining of a problem by a president who lacks the information to back up his assertion but remains so convinced he is right that he refuses to reexamine his definition. Such an act might generate comfort among those who concur with his preconception, but it ultimately undermines the welfare of those who have to venture to foreign countries to protect the interests of the United States and of those who become the target of the ill-conceived definition.

In the United States we have accepted the axiom that war is the pursuit of politics by other means. But we should not forget that since the end of the Second World War the United States has been one of the most violent actors in the world arena, has repeatedly intervened in the domestic affairs of other sovereign actors, and has inflicted on others more casualties than any other international actor. No one questions that the protection of the United States' security is the core responsibility of every president. With that said, should we not demand that he, and maybe in the near future she, also be attentive to the appalling consequences a president can generate throughout the world if he misrepresents a problem, disregards information that challenges his preconceptions, limits his analysis only to those options he intuitively favors, and quiets the voices of those who question him? How much longer will we ask men and women to sacrifice their lives in vain because their leaders failed to engage all of their intellectual resources to devise a foreign policy based on ethical reasoning?

Notes

Introduction

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18. Herbert Simon, *Models of Man* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1957).
19. Charles F. Hartmann's work remains the pioneering study on the stress-inducing effects of international crises on foreign policy making. See Charles Hartmann, *Crises in Foreign Policy: A Simulation Analysis* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1969).
20. See Alex Roberto Hybel, *How Leaders Reason: U. S. Intervention in the Caribbean Basin and Latin America* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990), 22; and Deborah Welch Larson, *Origins of Containment* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 34–7.
21. See Hybel, *Power Over Rationality*, 22–3; Hybel, *How Leaders Reason*, 6–8; and Larson, *Origins of Containment*, 50–7. The literature on the use of historical analogies by policymakers is extensive. Here only some of the best-known works are identified. Ernest May, *"Lessons" of the Past: The Use and Misuse of History in American Foreign Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973); Robert Jervis, *Perceptions and Misperceptions in International Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976); Richard E. Neustadt and Ernest R. May, *Thinking in Time: The Uses of History by Decision Makers* (New York: The Free Press, 1986); Scott Macdonald, *Rolling the Dice: Historical Analogies and Decisions to Use Military Force in Regional Contingencies* (New York: Greenwood Press, 2000); and Jeffrey Record, *Making History, Thinking History: Munich, Vietnam, and Presidential Uses of Forces from Korea to Kosovo* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2002).
22. Hybel, *How Leaders Reason*, 22.
23. For an extensive discussion of attribution theory, schema theory, and cognitive consistency theory, see Hybel, *How Leaders Reason*, chapter 2.
24. Mintz and DeRouen, Jr., *Understanding FPDM*, 28.
25. See George, *Presidential Decisionmaking in Foreign Policy*, chapter 8; and John Burke and Fred Greenstein, *How Presidents Test Reality* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1991), 23.
26. See Alex Mintz, Nehemia Geva, and Karl DeRouen, Jr., "Mathematical Models of Foreign Policy Decision-Making: Compensatory vs. Noncompensatory," *Synthese*, vol. 110, no. 3 (September 1994): 441–60. In my discussion of the rational, cybernetic, and poliheuristic models, I rely extensively in the arguments posited by the authors of the article. In the view of this writer, the authors present one of the clearest articulations of the assumptions upon which the rational, cybernetic, and poliheuristic models are built and of their differences. However, as the reader might have noticed, we concur with Frank Zagare's argument that it is important to differentiate between an instrumental or a procedural perspective. Since our focus is on the FPDM process, we decided that the term *procedural rationality* describes the nature of the model better than the term *rational actor.*
27. See also Greg Cahsman, *What Causes War? An Introduction to Theories of International Conflict* (New York: Lexington Books, 1993), 77–8.
28. Ibid., 446.
29. Alex Mintz, "The Decision to Attack Iraq: A Non-Compensatory Theory of Decision Making," *Journal of Conflict Resolution,* vol. 37, no. 4 (December 1993): 598.
30. Ibid., 449.

31. John Steinbruner, *The Cybernetic Theory of Decision* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1974).
32. Mintz, Geva, and DeRouen, Jr., "Mathematical Models of Foreign Policy Decision Making," 445.
33. See Rose McDermott, *Risk-Taking in International Politics—Prospect Theory in American Foreign Policy Making* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998).
34. Jack Levy, "An Introduction to Prospect Theory," *Political Psychology,* vol. 13, no. 2, (June 1992): 171.
35. Brent Durbin, "Bureaucratic Politics Approach," in *Encyclopedia of Governance,* ed. Mark Bevir (Sage Publications, 2007).
36. Thomas Preston and Paul 't Hart, "Understanding and Evaluating Bureaucratic Politics: The Nexus Between Political Leaders and Advisory Systems," *Political Psychology* vol. 20, no. 1 (March 1999): 52–3.
37. See Amos Tevrsky and Daniel Kahneman, "The Framing of Decisions and the Psychology of Choice," in *Science,* 211 (January 1981): 453–58.
38. Donald A. Sylvan attributes the statement to Aviv Sharon. See Robert Mandel, "Psychological Approaches to International Relations," in *Political Psychology*, ed. Margaret Hermann (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1986); Ole Holsti, *Crisis, Escalation, War* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1976); and Irving Janis and Leon Mann, *Decision Making: A Psychological Analysis of Conflict, Choice, and Commitment* (New York: Free Press, 1977), 3.
39. See Timothy D. Wilson, *Strangers to Ourselves: Discovering the Adaptive Unconscious* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).
40. Seymour Epstein, "Intuition From the Perspective of Cognitive-Experiential Self-Theory," in *Intuition in Judgment and Decision Making*, ed. Henning Plessner, Cornelia Betsch, and Tilmann Betsch (New York: Routledge, 2010), 25.
41. Ibid., 24.
42. Tilmann Betsch, "The Nature of Intuition and Its Neglect in Research on Judgment and Decision Making," in *Intuition in Judgment and Decision Making*, ed. Plessner, Betsch, and Betsch, 4.
43. See Tversky and Daniel Kahneman, "The Framing of a Decision and the Psychology of Choice," 453–58.

Chapter 1

1. Martin J. Sherwin, "The Atomic Bomb and the Origins of the Cold War: US Atomic-Energy Policy and Diplomacy, 1941–1945," *The American Historical Review,* 78, no.4 (Oct., 1973): 946.
2. David McCullough, *Truman* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992), 379.
3. Ibid., 358.
4. Ibid., 345.
5. Gar Alperovitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb and the Architecture of an American Myth* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995), 39. Truman spoke to the US Congress on April 16, 1945.

6. Harry S. Truman, *Memoirs of Harry S. Truman: Years of Decisions,* vol. 1 (New York: Doubleday and Company, 1955), 243.
7. McCullough, *Truman,* 372.
8. Alperovitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb*, 113–17.
9. Ibid., 175.
10. Henry Stimson, "Memorandum on the Political Aspects of the S-1 Performance, 25 April 1945," http://www.doug-long.com/stim425.htm.
11. By the time the meeting between Stimson and Truman took place, the president had already been aware that the United States and Britain were developing a powerful weapon. James Byrnes, Truman's future secretary of state, but then a private citizen, had explained to the president on April 23 how the possession and possible use of such a powerful weapon would put the United States in a position to dictate its own terms at the end of the war. During the briefing Truman asked whether Roosevelt intended to use the bomb to end the war with Japan. At the time Roosevelt's only available commentary regarding the bomb's use on Japan was recorded in the joint agreement with Churchill, made at Hyde Park. The statement merely expressed Roosevelt's desire to utilize the weapon to expedite the war.
12. The secretary of war is referring to the use of the atomic bomb. See Truman, *Memoirs of Harry S. Truman,* vol. 1, 87.
13. Stimson, "Memorandum on the Political Aspects of the S-1 Performance, 25 April 1945," http://www.doug-long.com/stimson2.htm.
14. Robert A. Strong, *Decisions and Dilemmas: Case Studies in Presidential Foreign Policy Making Since 1945* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1998), 2.
15. Alperovitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb,* 119.
16. Ibid., 39.
17. Ibid., 42.
18. Ibid., 43.
19. Strong, *Decisions and Dilemmas,* 21.
20. Alperovitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb,* 176.
21. Henry Stimson, *Diary and Papers*, 10 May 1945. http://www.doug-long.com/stimson3.htm.
22. Ibid.
23. At Yalta, Churchill and Roosevelt had agreed to give the Soviet Union territory in exchange for their entrance into the Pacific War.
24. Stimson, *Diary and Papers,* 13 May 1945.
25. S-1 was the term used by members of the Roosevelt and Truman administrations for the atomic bomb.
26. Alperovitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb,* 156.
27. Stimson, *Diary and Papers*, 15 May 1945.
28. Truman, *Memoirs,* vol. 1, 235.
29. Ibid., 416.
30. Alperovitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb,* 518. There has been much debate over what the casualty estimates were for a conventional land invasion.

The only reliable source is the Department of Defense's records, as cited by Alperovitz. After the fact, members of the administration threw around numerous estimates. A week after the atomic bomb was dropped, Churchill stated in front of the House of Commons that the bomb saved a million American lives by avoiding a land invasion. Likewise, Byrnes, in *Speaking Frankly,* claimed that the military experts estimated a land invasion would cost at least a million casualties, an estimate that he relayed to Truman in the Interim Committee Report. Harvey Bundy, on September 25, 1945, also claimed that the bomb was used because it saved "thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands of American soldiers." Conant in an *Atlantic Monthly* article (Dec. 1946) would also claim that the use of the atomic bomb saved hundreds of thousands, if not a million, lives. Stimson, also claimed that that a land invasion would cost over a million casualties to the American forces alone. Alperovitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb,* 104, 106.

31. Alperovitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb,* 113.
32. McCullough, *Truman*, 391.
33. Ibid.
34. Alperovitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb,* 44.
35. Harold F. Gosnell, *Truman's Crises: A Political Biography of Harry S. Truman* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1980), 242.
36. Alperovitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb,* 45.
37. Ibid., 46. See also Joseph C. Grew, *Turbulent Era*: *A Diplomatic Record of Forty Years 1940–1945* (Philadelphia: Ayer Publishing, 1952), 1431.
38. Strong, *Decisions and Dilemmas*, 4.
39. Alperovitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb*, 186.
40. McCullough, *Truman,* 396.
41. Strong, *Decisions and Dilemmas*, 4.
42. Alperovitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb*, 50.
43. Ibid., 417.
44. Ibid., 54.
45. Stimson, *Diary and Papers*, 29 May 1945.
46. Ibid., 31 May 1945.
47. Alperovitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb,* 171.
48. Ibid., 158.
49. Ibid., 164.
50. Ibid., 167.
51. Ibid., 164.
52. Strong, *Decisions and Dilemmas*, 20.
53. McCullough, *Truman,* 391.
54. Alperovitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb,* 146.
55. Ibid., 178.
56. Ibid., 148.
57. Ibid., 121.
58. Strong, *Decisions and Dilemmas*, 4.
59. Ibid., 5.

60. Alperovitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb,* 188.
61. Two problems arose with the idea of conducting a demonstration. First, on an uninhabited desert or on the ocean, the destruction caused by the detonation would not have been obvious from ten miles away. Second, sacrificing a plutonium capsule for the demonstration was quite risky. The first plutonium capsule arrived at Alamogordo on July 12, 1945. The second capsule arrived at Tinian in the Mariana Islands on July 26, 1945. The third plutonium capsule was to be shipped to Tinian on August 11, 1945. That shipment was stopped; the bombs were intended to be used on August 17 or 18 if the Japanese had not surrendered. The United States had six plutonium capsules by December 1945 and nine plutonium capsules in June 1946.
62. Recommendations of the Scientific Panel on the Immediate Use of Nuclear Weapons, June 16, 1945. http://www.dannen.com/decision/scipanel.html. See Alperovitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb,* 188.
63. Arthur H. Compton to Col. K. D. Nichols, July 24, 1945, in Alperovitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb,* 189.
64. Alperovitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb*, 63.
65. Ibid., 65.
66. Ibid., 518.
67. Ibid., 123.
68. Ibid., 6. See also United States Department of Defense*, The Entry of the Soviet Union into the War Against Japan: Military Plans, 1941–1945* (Washington DC: US Government Printing Office, 1955).
69. Alperovitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb,* 65.
70. Ibid., 66.
71. Ibid., 62.
72. Ibid., 70.
73. Ibid., 74.
74. Ibid., 75.
75. Stimson, *Diary and Papers,* 25 July 1945.
76. Strong, *Decisions and Dilemmas*, 7. See also Alperovitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb,* 224.
77. McCullough, *Truman,* 399.
78. Alperovitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb,* 76.
79. Ibid., 77.
80. Ibid., 78.
81. Ibid., 304.
82. McCullough, *Truman*, 400.
83. Stimson, *Diary and Papers*, 3 July 1945.
84. Alperovitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb*, 234.
85. Ibid., 227.
86. Ibid., 233.
87. Ibid., 232.
88. Ibid., 238. See also Robert H. Ferrell, ed., *Off the Record: The Private Papers of Harry S. Truman* (New York: Harper and Row, 1980), 53.

89. Alperovitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb*, 234.
90. Strong, *Decisions and Dilemmas*, 3.
91. Ibid., 8.
92. Alperovitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb*, 235.
93. Ibid., 236.
94. Ibid., 238.
95. Ibid., 241.
96. Ibid., 242. See also Robert Ferrell, ed., *Dear Bess: The Letters from Harry to Bess Truman, 1910–1959.* (New York, 1983), 519.
97. McCullough, *Truman,* 427.
98. Stimson, *Diary and Papers,* 17 July 1945.
99. Alperovitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb*, 243.
100. Ibid., 243.
101. Ibid., 244.
102. Stimson, *Diary and Papers,* 18 July 1945.
103. Ibid.
104. Ibid.
105. Ibid., 19 July 1945.
106. Alperovitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb*, 191.
107. Ibid., 190.
108. "A Petition to the President of the United States, July 17, 1945" in Ibid., 189.
109. Ibid., 190.
110. Ibid., 191.
111. McCullough, *Truman,* 428.
112. Ibid.
113. Alperovitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb,* 250.
114. McCullough, 496. See also McGeorge Bundy, *Danger and Survival*, (New York: Vintage, 1990), 80–8.
115. Alperovitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb*, 260.
116. Ibid., 261.
117. Ibid., 261.
118. Ibid., 271.
119. Ibid., 271.
120. Ibid., 274.
121. Ibid., 270.
122. Ibid., 264.
123. McCullough, *Truman*, 442.
124. Ibid., 438.
125. Alperovitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb*, 227.
126. McCullough, *Truman,* 439.
127. Alperovitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb*, 305.
128. Ibid., 274.
129. Ibid.
130. McCullough, *Truman*, 391.
131. Alperovitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb,* 407.

132. McCullough, *Truman*, 448.
133. Alperovitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb*, 412.
134. Ibid.
135. In the atmosphere, the energy partition of a nuclear detonation is generally described as about 50 percent blast, 35 percent thermal, and 15 percent nuclear radiation. The 15 percent can be divided between prompt and delayed fallout, based on whether the fireball intersects the target. For Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the height of burst was about 2,000 feet. The burst height was selected to maximize the area covered by a few PSI shockwaves. Nuclear radiation was not a factor. The maximum radius of the fireball was about 1,300 feet. As the fireball did not reach the ground, there was not much solid material picked up. Therefore, fallout favored large-area versus local-area distribution. This means that blast and burns caused most of the deaths and injuries.
136. McCullough, *Truman,* 459. In a book published in 2005, Tsuyoshi Hasegawa argues that the Soviet invasion of Manchuria, which began on August 9, 1945, the same day the United States dropped its second atomic bomb on Japan, and the rapid defeat of Japan's Kwantung Army played a much more important role at convincing Tokyo to surrender than the use of the atomic bomb. Many scholars have contested the argument, but for our purposes such differences are of no relevance, since our sole interest here is to determine what developments influenced Truman's and Byrnes's decisions. See Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy: Stalin, Truman and the Surrender of Japan* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005).
137. Dennis Merrill and Thomas Peterson, eds., *Major Problems in American Foreign Relations: Since 1914.* (Boston: Wadsworth, 2009), 213.
138. Alperovitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb,* 167.
139. McCullough, *Truman*, 394.
140. Alperovitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb,* 167.
141. Ibid., 172.
142. James Carroll, *House of War: The Pentagon and the Disastrous Rise of American Power* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2006), 51.
143. Quoted in *Nuclear Files.org.* http://www.nuclearfiles.org/menu/timeline_page.php?year=1945.
144. Ibid.
145. See Charles W. Ostrom Jr. and Brian Job, "The President and the Political Use of Force," *American Political Science Review*, vol. 80, no. 2 (June 1986): 541–66; and Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and David Lalman, "Domestic Opposition and Foreign War," *American Political Science Review*, vol. 84, no. 3 (September 1990): 747–65.
146. Mintz and DeRouen Jr., *Understanding Foreign Policy Decision Making*, 78–9.
147. Ralph E. Weber, *Talking with Harry: Candid Conversations with President Harry S. Truman*, (Wilmington, Delaware: 2001), 320.
148. Cornelia Betsch, *Intuition in Judgment and Decision-Making* (New York: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2008).

149. See interview with Daniel Kahneman and Gary Klein, "Strategic Decisions—When Can You Trust Your Gut?" www.mckinseyquarterly.com.
150. Weber, *Talking With Harry,* 320.
151. Barton J. Bernstein, "Roosevelt, Truman, and the Atomic Bomb, 1941–1945: A Reinterpretation." *Political Science Quarterly*, vol. 90, no. 1, Spring 1975: 23–4.
152. Needless to say, both also wanted to limit as much as they could the number of American lives that would be lost in the process of bringing the war to an end.

Chapter 2

1. Glenn D. Paige, *The Korean Decision: June 24–30, 1950* (New York: The Free Press, 1968), 276.
2. Quoted in Daniel Yergin, *Shattered Peace* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1978), 119.
3. See Ronald Suny, *The Soviet Experiment: Russia, the USSR and the Successor States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 352–3. As Suny notes, the Soviet ambassador in Washington had also sent his own "long telegram" to Moscow in which he states that the United States was striving for "world dominance."
4. "A Report to the President Pursuant to the President's Directive of January 31, 1950," in *Documentary History of the Truman Presidency*, vol. 7, ed. Dennis Merrill (University Publications of America, 2001), 333.
5. Ibid., 386–9.
6. Dennis D. Wainstock, *Truman, MacArthur and the Korean War* (New York: Enigma Books, 1999), 4.
7. Ibid., 5.
8. Ibid.
9. Courtney Whitney, *MacArthur: His Rendezvous with History* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1956), 330–1.
10. Harry S. Truman, *Memoirs, Vol. 2: Years of Trial and Hope* (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1956), 267.
11. Ronald McGlothlen, "Acheson, Economics, and the American Commitment in Korea, 1947–1950," in *Pacific Historical Review*, vol. 58, no. 1 (1989): 34.
12. Russell D. Buhite, "Major Interests: American Policy toward China, Taiwan and Korea, 1945–1950," in *Pacific Historical Review,* vol. 46, no. 3 (August 1978): 446.
13. Wainstock, *Truman, MacArthur and the Korean War,* 6.
14. Ibid., 7.
15. Ibid.
16. P. K. Rose, "Two Strategic Intelligence Mistakes in Korea, 1950," *Central Intelligence Agency,* https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csi-studies/studies/fall_winter_2001/article06.html.
17. Merle Miller, *Plain Speaking: An Oral Biography of Harry S. Truman* (New York: Berkley Publishing Corporation, 1973), 268.

18. Ibid.
19. McGlothlen, "Acheson, Economics, and the American Commitment in Korea, 1947–1950," 45.
20. Much has been written about the intent and impact of Acheson's speech. It is not our intent to engage in the debate. Regardless of its intent and whether Soviet and North Korean leaders paid much attention to it, Acheson's speech reflected, in some measure, the attempt on the part of Washington and MacArthur to concentrate their resources on Japan. Italics added.
21. Robert J. Donovan, *Nemesis: Truman and Johnson in the Coils of War in Asia* (New York: St. Martin's-Marek, 1984), 18.
22. James I. Matray, "Truman's Plan for Victory: National Self-Determination and the Thirty-Eight Parallel Decision in Korea," in *The Journal of American History*, vol. 66, no. 2 (September 1979): 316.
23. John J. Muccio, "Military Aid to Korean Security Forces," *Department of State Bulletin,* XXII (June 26, 1950), 1.
24. William Whitney Stueck, Jr., *The Road to Confrontation: American Policy Toward China and Korea, 1947–1950* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1981), 153.
25. "Current Capabilities of the Northern Korean Regime," *Central Intelligence Agency*, 19 June 1950, http://www.foia.cia.gov/docs/DOC_0000258828/DOC_0000258828.pdf.
26. Paige, *The Korean Decision*, 72.
27. O. H. P. Kin, *Tail of the Paper Tiger* (Caldwell, Idaho: The Caxton Printers, 1961), 331.
28. Wainstock, *Truman, MacArthur and the Korean* War, 17.
29. P. K. Rose, "Two Strategic Intelligence Mistakes in Korea, 1950."
30. Truman, *Memoirs,* vol. 2, 331.
31. Quoted in Shigeto Tsuru, *Japan's Capitalism: Creative Defeat and Beyond* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 61.
32. Paige, *The Korean Decision*, 75.
33. Wainstock, *Truman, MacArthur and the Korean War,* 17.
34. Paige, *The Korean Decision*, 75.
35. P. K. Rose, "Two Strategic Intelligence Mistakes in Korea, 1950."
36. Matray, "Truman's Plan for Victory," 317.
37. Wainstock, *Truman, MacArthur and the Korean War,* 15.
38. Ibid., 19.
39. Ibid.
40. Paige, *The Korean Decision*, 101.
41. Ibid., 107.
42. Truman, *Memoirs,* vol. 2, 336.
43. Ibid., 332.
44. Paige, *The Korean Decision*, 114.
45. Ibid., 115.
46. Preston, *The President and His Inner Circle*, 48.
47. Quoted in Paige, *The Korean Decision*, 118.

48. Ibid., 126.
49. Ibid., 128.
50. Ibid., 130.
51. Ibid., 132.
52. Ibid., 137.
53. Ibid., 139.
54. Ibid., 143.
55. Truman, *Memoirs*, vol. 2, 335.
56. Paige, *The Korean Decision*, 147.
57. Ibid., 154.
58. Paige, *The Korean Decision*, 160.
59. Ibid., 161.
60. Quoted in Robert J. Donovan, *Tumultuous Years—The Presidency of Harry S. Truman*, *1949–1953* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1982), 216.
61. Truman, *Memoirs,* vol. 2, 333.
62. Barton Bernstein, "The Truman Administration and the Korean War," in *The Truman Presidency,* ed. Michael J. Lacey (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 442.
63. Dean Rusk, *As I Saw It* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1990), 162.
64. Paige, *The Korean Decision*, 164.
65. Ibid., 179.
66. Ibid., 181.
67. Wainstock, *Truman, MacArthur and the Korean War,* 24.
68. Quoted in Paige, *The Korean Decision,* 205. United Nations Document S/1508 Rev. 1, June 27, 1950.
69. Paige, *The Korean Decision*, 216.
70. Ibid., 219.
71. Ibid.
72. Quoted in Ibid., 231.
73. Directive sent by Secretary of Defense George C. Marshall. Quoted in Ibid., 251.
74. Ibid., 254.
75. Quoted in Ibid., 255.
76. Ibid., 260.
77. Wainstock, *Truman, MacArthur and the Korean War,* 34.
78. Christen L. Tomlinson, "Decision Making and the Invasion at Inchon," file:///Users/ccuser/Desktop/Decision%20Making%20and%20the%20Invasion%20at%20Ichon.html#ChristenTomlinson96_12.
79. Dean Acheson, *Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1969), 447.
80. D. Clayton James and Anne Sharp Wells, *Refighting the Last War: Command and Crisis in Korea 1950–1953* (New York: The Free Press, 1993), 169.
81. Wainstock, *Truman, MacArthur and the Korean War,* 49.
82. Ibid., 55.
83. Ibid., 57.
84. Ibid., 52.

85. "Crossing the Parallel: The Decision and the Plan." http://www.history.army.mil/books/PD-C-10.HTM.
86. Memorandum by the Central Intelligence Agency: "Conclusions Regarding a Possible Soviet Decision to Precipitate Global War," 12 October 1950, *FRUS*, vol. 7, Korea, 937.
87. Intelligence Estimate Prepared by the Estimate Group, Office of Intelligence Research, Department of States." 25 June, *FRUS*, vol. 7, Korea, 148–9.
88. Neustadt and May, *Thinking in Time: The Uses of History for Decision Makers*, 45.
89. "Crossing the Parallel: The Decision and the Plan." http://www.history.army.mil/books/PD-C-10.HTM.
90. Wainstock, *Truman, MacArthur and the Korean War*, 52.
91. Ibid., 59.
92. Quoted in "Crossing the Parallel: The Decision and the Plan." http://www.history.army.mil/books/PD-C-10.HTM.
93. Quoted in James F. Schnabel, *United States Army in the Korean War: Policy and Direction, the First Year* (Washington DC: US Government Printing Office, 1972), 179–80.
94. Ibid., 180.
95. Quoted in "Crossing the Parallel: The Decision and the Plan." http://www.history.army.mil/books/PD-C-10.HTM.
96. Quoted in Winstock, *Truman, MacArthur and the Korean War*, 54.
97. Ibid., 57.
98. Ibid.
99. Kavalam M. Panikkar, *In Two Chinas: Memoirs of a Diplomat*, (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1955), 110.
100. "United Nations Resolution 346," October 7, 1950, in *FRUS*, vol. 7, 904–05.
101. Panikkar, *In Two Chinas: Memoirs of a Diplomat,* 111.
102. Wainstock, *Truman, MacArthur and the Korean War,* 71.
103. Ibid., 64.
104. Robert L. Beisner, *Dean Acheson: A Life in the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).
105. Ibid.
106. Wainstock, *Truman MacArthur and the Korean War,* 78.
107. Ibid., 84.
108. Ibid., 29.
109. After Mao Zedong and the Chinese Communist Party gained control of mainland China in 1949, Chiang Kai-shek and his Nationalist followers relocated to Taiwan, known informally in English as Formosa.
110. Matray, "Truman's Plan for Victory," 317.
111. P. K. Rose, "Two Strategic Intelligence Mistakes in Korea, 1950."
112. Hybel and Kaufman, *The Bush Administrations and Saddam Hussein*, 48.
113. Ibid., 58.
114. Truman, *Memoirs,* vol. 2, 336.
115. Ibid., 267.

116. Wainstock, *Truman, MacArthur and the Korean War,* 137.
117. Paige, *The Korean Decision,* 276.
118. Wainstock, *Truman, MacArthur and the Korean War,* 19.
119. "A Report to the President Pursuant to the President's Directive of January 31, 1950," in *Documentary History of the Truman Presidency*, vol. 7, ed. Merrill, 386–9.
120. Hybel and Kaufman, *The Bush Administrations and Saddam Hussein,* 13.
121. Truman, *Memoirs,* vol. 2, 1.
122. Ibid., 274.
123. Wainstock, *Truman, MacArthur and the Korean War,* 19.
124. Weber, *Talking with Harry: Candid Conversations with President Harry S. Truman*, 320.
125. Betsch, *Intuition in Judgment and Decision-Making*.
126. See interview with Kahneman and Klein, "Strategic Decisions—When Can You Trust Your Gut?" www.mckinseyquarterly.com.
127. Eric F. Goldman, *The Crucial Decade: America 1945–1955* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1956), 166–7.
128. Paige, *The Korean Decision*, 250.
129. Ibid., 255.
130. Ibid.
131. Ibid., 256.
132. Panikkar, *In Two Chinas: Memoirs of a Diplomat*, 110.
133. Wainstock, *Truman, MacArthur and the Korean War,* 138.
134. Mintz, "Integrating Cognitive and Rational Theories of Foreign Policy Decision Making: A Poliheuristic Perspective," 599.
135. Janis, *Groupthink*, 68. See also Phillip M. Johnson, "Effects of Groupthink on Tactical Decision-Making," A Monograph. (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: School of Advanced Military Studies, United States Army Command and General Staff College, 2001).
136. Johnson, "Effects of Groupthink on Tactical Decision-Making."
137. Janis, Victims of *Groupthink*, 59.
138. Johnson, "Effects of Groupthink on Tactical Decision-Making."
139. Preston, *The President and His Inner Circle,* 48.
140. Preston and Hart, "Understanding and Evaluating Bureaucratic Politics: The Nexus Between Political Leaders and Advisory Systems," 50–51.

Chapter 3

1. Quoted in Nicholas Cullather, *Operation PBSUCCESS: The United States and Guatemala, 1952–1954*. (Washington DC: History Staff, Center for the Study of Intelligence, Central Intelligence Agency, 1994), 22.
2. See Richard H. Immerman, *The CIA in Guatemala—The Foreign Policy of Intervention* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1982), 48; and Hybel, *How Leaders Reason*, 53.
3. US Department of State, "A Case History of Communist Penetration: Guatemala." (Washington DC: US Government Printing Office, 1957), 17.

4. See Immerman, *The CIA in Guatemala*, 68–79.
5. Hybel, *How Leaders Reason*, 57–8.
6. Ibid., 58–9.
7. See Stephen G. Rabe, *Eisenhower and Latin America* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 49.
8. "Memorandum of Conversation by the Ambassador in Guatemala" (Schoenfeld), Guatemala City, 25 September 1952, US Department of State, Office of the Historian, Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), 1952–1954. *The American Republics*, vol. IV, 1040. http://images.library.wisc.edu/FRUS/EFacs2/195254v04/reference/frus.frus195254v04.i0025.pdf.
9. FRUS, 1952–1954, Retrospective Volume, Guatemala, Document 27. http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54Guat/d27.
10. Statement made by Eisenhower during a meeting of the National Security Council on April 30, 1953. Quoted in Richard D. Challener, "The National Security Policy from Truman to Eisenhower: Did the 'Hidden Hand' Leadership Make Any Difference?" in *The National Security: Its Theory and Practice, 1945–1960*, ed. Norman A. Graebner (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 57.
11. Quoted in Richard A. Melanson, *Reevaluating Eisenhower: American Foreign Policy in the 1950s* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1987), 43.
12. Quoted in Rabe, *Eisenhower and Latin America*, 30.
13. Cullather, *Operation PBSuccess*, 22.
14. Immerman, *The CIA in Guatemala*, 130–31.
15. Ibid., 133.
16. Cullather, *Operation PBSuccess*, 23.
17. Ibid., 25.
18. By May 1953, the Arbenz government had redistributed some 740,000 acres.
19. Cullather, *Operation PBSuccess*, 25.
20. Immerman, *The CIA in Guatemala*, 136–8.
21. Quoted in Immerman, *The CIA in Guatemala*, 136.
22. Ibid., 152.
23. Ibid., 165.
24. FRUS, *The American Republics,* IV, 1123.
25. Immerman, *The CIA in Guatemala*, 64–5 and 77–8.
26. Cullather, *Operation PBSuccess*, 13.
27. El Partido Guatemaltesco de Trabajo (PGT), which claimed to be the party of the proletariat based on Marxism-Leninism, was formed in the early 1950s.
28. Immerman, *The CIA in Guatemala*, 55.
29. Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Mandate for Change, The White House Years, 1953–1956* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Co., 1963), 421–26.
30. Ibid., 421–26.
31. Quoted in Bryce Wood, *The Dismantling of the Good Neighbor Policy* (Austin, TX: University Texas of Press. 1985), 157.
32. Cullather, *Operation PBSuccess*, 16.
33. Hybel, *How Leaders Reason,* 23–9.

34. For a discussion of different types of cognitive theories, see Theodore M. Newcomb, *Theories of Cognitive Consistency* (Chicago. IL: Rand McNally. 1968).
35. See Immerman, *The CIA in Guatemala*, 105.
36. Ibid., 105.
37. Quoted in Stephen G. Rabe, "Dulles, Latin America, and Cold War Anticommunism," in *John Foster Dulles and the Diplomacy of the Cold War,* ed. Richard H. Immerman (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), 160.
38. Quoted in Immerman, *The CIA in Guatemala*, 138.
39. See Mints and DeRouen Jr., *Understanding Foreign Policy Decision Making*, 98. See also Hybel, *How Leaders Reason*, 22.
40. As Mintz and DeRouen Jr. note, a key premise of poliheuristic theory is that political leaders try to avoid policies that are likely to affect them negatively domestically. See Mintz and DeRouen Jr., *Understanding Foreign Policy Decision Making*, 78–9.

Chapter 4

1. David A. Nichols, *Eisenhower 1956* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2011), 188–9.
2. Ibid., 5.
3. Other countries that signed the agreement were Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon. The agreement brought to an end the 1948 Arab-Israeli War.
4. The policy is in the July 23, 1954, secret Middle East Doc. referred to as NSC 5428. See Nichols, *Eisenhower 1956,* 15.
5. Quoted in Ibid., 40.
6. Cole C. Kingseed, *Eisenhower and the Suez Canal Crisis of 1956* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana University Press, 1995), 34. See also Nichols, *Eisenhower 1956,* 47 and 52.
7. See Robert H. Ferrell, ed., *The Eisenhower Diaries,* (New York: Norton, 1981), 318–19.
8. "Memorandum From the Secretary of State to the President," US Department of State—Office of the Historian, Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), 1955–1957, vol. XV, Arab-Israeli Dispute, January 1–July 26, 1956, Doc. 223. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V15/D223.
9. "Diary Entry by the President," FRUS, 1955–1957, vol. XV, Arab-Israeli Dispute, January 1–July 26, 1956, Doc. 226. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V15/D226.
10. See Nichols, *Eisenhower 1956,* 58, 54, and 65.
11. "Telegram From the Embassy in Egypt to the Department of State," FRUS, 1955–1957, vol. XV, Arab-Israeli Dispute, January 1–July 26,1956, Doc. 406. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V15/D406.
12. See Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, vol. XIV, no. 29 (Washington DC, 1956), 883.
13. See "Department of State Press Release 401," July 19, 1956, in *US Department of State Bulletin*, no. 892 (July 30, 1956), 188.

14. In Kingseed, *Eisenhower and the Suez Crisis of 1956*, 40.
15. "Memorandum of a Conference," FRUS, 1955–1957, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 3. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/D3.
16. "Message From Prime Minister Eden to President Eisenhower," FRUS, 1955–1957, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 5. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/D5.
17. "Memorandum of a Conference with the President," FRUS, 1955–1957, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 6. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/D6.
18. "Telegram From the Embassy in the United Kingdom to the Department of States," FRUS,1955–1957, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 33. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/D33.
19. "Memorandum of a Conference with the President," FRUS, 1955–1957, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31,1956, Doc. 34. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/D34.
20. "Letter From President Eisenhower to Prime Minister Eden," FRUS, 1955–1957, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 35. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/D35.
21. "Special Intelligence Estimate," FRUS, 1955–1957, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 40. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/D40.
22. "Telegram From Embassy in Egypt to the Department of State," FRUS, 1955–1957, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 59. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/D59.
23. "Memorandum of Discussion at the 292nd Meeting of the National Security Council," FRUS, 1955–1957, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 72. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/D72.
24. Nichols, *Eisenhower 1956*, 150.
25. Ibid., 150–1.
26. "Memorandum of a Conversation at the White House," FRUS, 1955–1957, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 78. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/D78.
27. "Message From the Secretary of State to the President," FRUS, 1955–1957, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 97. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/D97. See also "Message the Secretary of State to the President," FRUS, 1955–1957, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 100. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/D100.
28. Nichols, *Eisenhower 1956*, 159.
29. Ibid., 161.

30. "Editorial Note," FRUS 1955–1957, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 166. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/D166. See also Kingseed, *Eisenhower and the Suez Canal Crisis of 1956,* 73.
31. Quoted in Nichols, *Eisenhower 1956,* 164.
32. "Special Intelligence Estimate," FRSU, 1955–1957, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 175. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/D175.
33. "Message From President Eisenhower to Prime Minister Eden," FRUS, 1955–1957, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 192. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/D192.
34. "Editorial Note," FRUS, 1955–1957, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 212. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/D212.
35. Nichols, *Eisenhower 1956,* 167–8.
36. "Memorandum of a Conversation between Egyptian Ambassador (Hussein) and the Secretary of State," FRUS, 1955–1957, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 216. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/D216.
37. Nichols, *Eisenhower 1956,* 171.
38. "Annex to Watch Committee Report No. 322," FRUS, 1955–1957, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 294. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/D294.
39. "Memorandum of a Conversation, Secretary Dulles's Suite," FRUS, Waldorf Astoria, New York, 1955–1957, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 300. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/300.
40. Nichols, *Eisenhower 1956,* 173.
41. "Message From the Secretary of State to the President," FRUS, 1955–1957, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 302. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/302.
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43. "Memorandum of Discussion at the 300th Meeting of the National Security Council," FRUS, 1955–1957, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 332. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/332.
44. See Kenneth Love, *Suez: The Twice Fought War* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1969), 445.
45. Nichols, *Eisenhower 1956,* 179.
46. See Ferrell, *The Eisenhower Diaries*, 331.
47. See Nichols, *Eisenhower 1956,* 182; and "Memorandum for the Record for the President," FRUS, 1955–1957, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 345. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/345.
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49. "Telegram From the Embassy in the United Kingdom to the Department of State," FRUS, 1955–1957, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 356. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/356.
50. "Telegram From the Embassy in France to the Department of State," FRUS, 1955–1957, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 357. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/357.
51. "Telegram From the Embassy in France to the Department of State," FRUS, 1955–1957, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 359. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/359.
52. See Kingseed, *Eisenhower and the Suez Canal Crisis of 1956*, 83.
53. See Nichols, *Eisenhower 1956*, 188.
54. "Memorandum From the Director of the National Indications Center to the Intelligence Advisory Committee," FRUS, 1955–1957, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 381. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/381. See also "Editorial Note," FRUS, 1955–1957, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 382. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/382.
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59. See Kingseed, *Eisenhower and the Suez Canal Crisis of 1956*, 88.
60. Ibid.
61. Nichols, *Eisenhower 1956*, 203.
62. Ibid., 206.
63. "Message From Prime Minister Eden to President Eisenhower," FRUS, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 421. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/421.
64. "Memorandum of a Conference with the President," FRUS, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 419. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/419. See also Nichols, *Eisenhower 1956,* 206.
65. "Message From President Eisenhower to Prime Minister Eden and Prime Minister Mollet," FRUS, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 430. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/430. See also Nichols, *Eisenhower 1956,* 207.

66. Emmet Hughes, *The Ordeal of Power* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), 219.
67. See *The New York Times*, November 2, 1956.
68. "Memorandum of Discussion at the 302nd Meeting of the National Security Council," FRUS, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 455. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/455.
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70. Ibid.
71. Ibid.
72. Ibid.
73. See Nichols, *Eisenhower 1956,* 220.
74. "Memorandum by the President," FRUS, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 461. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/461.
75. Ibid.
76. "Memorandum of a Conference with the President," FRUS, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 470. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/470.
77. Nichols, *Eisenhower 1956,* 224–5. The words between quotation marks are Nichols's own words.
78. Nichols, *Eisenhower 1956,* 232.
79. "Statement by Prime Minister Eden," FRUS, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 476. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/476.
80. Nichols, *Eisenhower 1956,* 233.
81. "Telegram From the Mission at the United Nations to the Department of State," FRUS vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 494. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/494.
82. Memorandum of a Conference With the President," FRUS, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 500. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/500.
83. "Draft Message From President Eisenhower to Prime Minister Eden," FRUS, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 502. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/502.
84. Nichols, *Eisenhower 1956,* 244.
85. "Telegram From the Embassy in the Soviet Union to the Department of State," FRUS, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 503. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/503.
86. "Memorandum of a Conference With the President," FRUS, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 509. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/509.
87. "White House News Release," FRUS, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 512. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/512.

88. Nichols, *Eisenhower 1956,* 246–7.
89. Ibid., 247.
90. "Memorandum of a Conference with the President," FRUS, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 518. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/518.
91. Nichols, *Eisenhower 1956,* 251.
92. See Kingseed, *Eisenhower and the Suez Canal Crisis of 1956,* 124.
93. Nichols, *Eisenhower 1956,* 254.
94. Ibid., 99.
95. Statement made by Eisenhower during a meeting of the National Security Council on April 30, 1953.
    Quoted in Challener, "The National Security Policy from Truman to Eisenhower: Did the 'Hidden Hand' Leadership Make Any Difference?" 57.
96. Quoted in Melanson, *Reevaluating Eisenhower: American Foreign Policy in the 1950s*, 43.
97. Nichols, *Eisenhower 1856*, 4.
98. Ibid., 58 and 65.
99. Ibid., 5.
100. Quote appears in Ibid., 140.
101. Ibid., 48.
102. France supplied Mirages to Israel.
103. "Paper by the Secretary of State's Special Assistant (Russell)," FRUS, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 62. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/62.
104. Quoted in Henry Williams Brands, Jr., "What Eisenhower and Dulles Saw in Nasser: Personalities and Interests in US Egyptian Relations," in *Middle East Policy Council,* http://mepc.org/journal/middle-east-policy-archives/what-eisenhower-and-dulles-saw-nasser.
105. See Mintz and DeRouen Jr., *Understanding Foreign Policy Decision Making*, 34–5.
106. Here I have reworded slightly Nichols's argument. See Nichols, *Eisenhower 1956,* 283.
107. Edward R. Drachman and Alan Shank, *Presidents and Foreign Policy: Countdown to Ten Controversial Decisions* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1997), 57–8.
108. See David Verbeeten, "How Important Is the Israel Lobby?" *Middle East Quarterly* Fall (2006), 37–44. See also Steven L. Spiegel, *The Other Arab-Israeli Conflict: Making America's Middle East Policy, from Truman to Reagan* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1985), 54.
109. "Memorandum of a Conversation," FRUS, vol. XVI, Suez Canal Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, Doc. 344. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57V16/344.
110. Ibid., 446.
111. See McDermott, *Risk-Taking in International Politics—Prospect Theory in American Foreign Policy Making*, chapter 6.

112. Levy, "An Introduction to Prospect Theory," 171.
113. See McDermott, *Risk-Taking in International Relations: Prospect Theory in Post-War American Foreign Policy*, chapter 6.
114. See Kingseed, *Eisenhower and the Suez Canal Crisis of 1956,* 6.
115. Nichols, *Eisenhower 1956,* 3.
116. See Robert Cutler, *No Time for Rest* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1966), 403.
117. By now the idea that Foster Dulles was the brain behind all the major foreign policy decisions while he served as secretary of state no longer resonates among analysts of the Eisenhower administration. Though the secretary of state was deeply involved in all major decisions until he was hospitalized, rarely did he act without first seeking the president's approval. The one time he acted without consulting the president, he helped generate the results that Eisenhower had been trying to avoid throughout much of the first half of 1956: a crisis in the Middle East. Eisenhower put it best when he said: "The fact remains that he [Dulles] just knows more about foreign affairs than anybody I know. In fact, I'll be immodest and say that there's only one man I know who has seen more of the world and talked with more people and knows more than he does—and that's me." See Preston, *The President and His Inner Circle*, 71.

Chapter 5

1. See Hybel, *How Leaders Reason,* 86–9.
2. See *The Bay of Pigs—40 Years After*, http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/bayofpigs/chron.html.
3. See "CIA, Briefing, Cuba, February 17, 1960," *The Bay of Pigs—40 Years After*, http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/bayofpigs/chron.html.
4. See *The Bay of Pigs—40 Years After*, http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/bayofpigs/chron.html.
5. "Memorandum of Meeting with the President," (November 29, 1960), *The Bay of Pigs—40 Years After,* http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/bayofpigs/chron.html.
6. "Special National Intelligence Estimates," FRSU*, 1958–1960,* vol. VI, Cuba, Doc. 613, December 8, 1960. http://history.state.gov/historicalDoc.s/FRUS1958-60v06/d620.
7. "Memorandum of Meeting with the President," (January 3, 1961), *The Bay of Pigs—40 Years After,* http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/bayofpigs/chron.html.
8. "CIA Memorandum for Chief WH/4, Policy Decisions Required for Conduct of Strike Operations against Government of Cuba," (January 4, 1961), *The Bay of Pigs—40 Years After,* http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/bayofpigs/chron.html. Italics do not appear in the text of the memorandum; they were inserted by the author of this chapter.
9. "Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency," Washington, January 19, 1961. (Planning an invasion of Cuba) FRSU*, 1961–1963,* volume X, Cuba, 1961–1963. https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/baypig2.htm.

10. "The White House, Meeting in the Cabinet Room, 9:45 AM, January 19, 1961" in *The Bay of Pigs—40 Years After*, http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/bayofpigs/chron.html.
11. "Memorandum of Conversation—Cuba." US Department of State—Office of the Historian, *Foreign Relations of the United States* (FRUS), vol. X, Doc. 24, January 22, 1961. http://history.state.gov/historicalDoc.s/FRUS1961-63v10/d24.
12. "Memorandum of Conference with President Kennedy," FRUS, vol. X, Doc. 26, January 25, 1961, http://history.state.gov/historicalDoc.s/FRUS1961-63v10/d26.
13. "Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Office," FRUS, vol. X, Doc. 26, January 26, 1961. Italics added by this writer. http://history.state.gov/historicalDoc.s/FRUS1961-63v10/d27.
14. "Memorandum of Discussion on Cuba [at the White House]," FRUS, vol. X, Doc. 30, January 28, 1961. http://history.state.gov/historicalDoc.s/FRUS1961-63v10/d30.
15. "Memorandum from the Joint Chiefs of Staff to Secretary of Defense McNamara," FRUS, vol. X, Doc. 35, February 3, 1961. http://history.state.gov/historicalDoc.s/FRUS1961-63v10/d35.
16. "Memorandum of Meeting with President Kennedy," FRUS, Doc. 40, February 8, 1961. http://history.state.gov/historicalDoc.s/FRUS1961-63v10/d40.
17. "Memorandum from the President's Special Advisor for National Security Affairs (Bundy) to President Kennedy," FRUS, vol. X, Doc. 39, February 8, 1961. http://history.state.gov/historicalDoc.s/FRUS1961-63v10/d39.
18. "Memorandum from the President's Special Assistant (Schlesinger) to President Kennedy," FRUS, vol. X, Doc. 43, February 11, 1961. http://history.state.gov/historicalDoc.s/FRUS1961-63v10/d43.
19. "Memorandum from the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (Mann) to Secretary of State Rusk," FRUS, vol. X, Doc. 45, February 15, 1961. http://history.state.gov/historicalDoc.s/FRUS1961-63v10/d45.
20. "Memorandum from the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy) to President Kennedy," FRUS, vol. X, Doc. 47, February 18, 1961. http://history.state.gov/historicalDoc.s/FRUS1961- 63v10/d47.
21. *The Bay of Pigs—40 Years After*, February 27, 1961. http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/bayofpigs/chron.html.
22. "Memorandum from the Joint Chiefs of Staff to Secretary of Defense McNamara," FRUS, vol. X, Doc. 56, March 10, 1961. http://history.state.gov/historicalDoc.s/FRUS1961-63v10/d56.
23. "Paper Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency—Revised Cuban Operation," FRUS, vol. X, Doc. 61, March 15, 1961. http://history.state.gov/historicalDoc.s/FRUS1961-63v10/d61.
24. "Memorandum from the Joint Chiefs of Staff to Secretary of Defense McNamara," FRUS, vol. X, Doc. 62, March 15, 1961. http://history.state.gov/historicalDoc.s/FRUS1961-63v10/d62.
25. *The Bay of Pigs—40 Years After*, March 16, 1961. http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/bayofpigs/chron.html.

26. "Memorandum from the Under Secretary of State (Bowles) to Secretary of State Rusk," FRUS, vol. X, Doc. 75, March 31, 1961. http://history.state.gov/historicalDoc.s/FRUS1961-63v10/d75.
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid.
29. "Memorandum from the President's Special Assistant (Schlesinger) to President Kennedy," FRUS, vol. X, Doc. 81, April 5, 1961. http://history.state.gov/historicalDoc.s/FRUS1961-63v10/d81.
30. Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *A Thousand Days—John F. Kennedy in the White House* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1965), 240.
31. *The Bay of Pigs—40 Years After*, April 13, 1961. http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/bayofpigs/chron.html.
32. Ibid, early and mid-April, April 7, and April 11, 1961. http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/bayofpigs/chron.html.
33. Ibid., April 14, 1961. http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/bayofpigs/chron.html.
34. *The Bay of Pigs—40 Years After,* April 16, 1961. http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/bayofpigs/chron.html. See also, "Memorandum from Deputy Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (Cabell) to General Maxwell Taylor—Cuban Operation," FRUS, vol. X, Doc. 108, May 9, 1961. http://history.state.gov/historicalDoc.s/FRUS1961-63v10/d108.
35. "Memorandum from the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy) to President Kennedy," FRUS, vol. X, Doc. 119, April 18, 1961. http://history.state.gov/historicalDoc.s/FRUS1961- 63v10/d119.
36. See Hybel, *How Leaders Reason,* 86–9.
37. See Neustadt and May, *Thinking in Time,* 154.
38. *The Bay of Pigs—40 Years After,* January 27, 1961. http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/bayofpigs/chron.html.
39. *The Bay of Pigs—40 Years After*, February 15, 1961. http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/bayofpigs/chron.html.
40. For Bissell's memo and the CIA's final assessment of conditions in Cuba see *The Bay of Pigs—40 Years After*, February 17, and March 16, 1961. http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/bayofpigs/chron.html.
41. Lawrence S. Kaplan, Ronald D. Landa, Edward J. Drea, History of the Office of the Secretary of Defense—The McNamara Ascendancy 1961–1965, vol. 5 (Historical Office, Office of the Secretary of Defense, 2006), 176.
42. Richard Reeves, *President Kennedy: Profile of Power* (New York: Touchstone, 1994), 673.
43. Jim Rasenberger, *The Brilliant Disaster: JFK, Castro, and America's Doomed Invasion of Cuba's Bay of Pigs* (NY: Simon and Schuster, 2011), 141.
44. Richard M. Bissell, *Reflections of a Cold Warrior: From Yalta to the Bay of Pigs* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 173.
45. For an explanation of the cognitive consistency model see Mintz and DeRouen, Jr., *Understanding Foreign Policy Decision Making,* 98.
46. When designing a new operation, standard operating procedures generally guide an organization's process. A problem arises, and the organization searches for

guidelines on how to resolve it by looking at some a priori related event. Any changes that need to be made from the previous case are typically made incrementally. One of the potential costly affects of relying solely on standard operating procedures is that the framers of the operation overlook critical distinctions between the problem at hand and the one they are using for guidelines. The CIA operation against Castro was aimed to produce not a military defeat but the demoralization of his forces and the destabilization of his regime; so had been the operation planned to topple the Arbenz regime. In the second case, the CIA failed to accept that the challenges the two cases generated differed markedly.

In the Guatemalan case the military had imposed heavy losses on the invading forces, and, after a number of days, it had managed to reduce the threat measurably. Ultimately, however, Guatemala's top-ranking officers ultimately decided to abandon the president. They walked out on him because they feared that if they were defeated in the CIA-backed mission, the United States would feel compelled to intervene militarily. Arbenz shared their fear and resigned.

Such a scenario had a nearly zero probability of developing in Cuba. Castro came to power after battling the Fulgencio Batista regime for years. He was backed by a hardened group of men and women who had struggled for too long to give up. As predicted by several Department of State and Department of Defense officials and analysts, by the time the invading forces had arrived, Castro's power hold had tightened considerably.

47. Quoted in Mintz and DeRouen, Jr., *Understanding Foreign Policy Decision Making*, 71.
48. See quote in *The Bay of Pigs—40 Years After*, June 13, 1961. http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/bayofpigs/chron.html.
49. Janis, *Victims of Groupthink*, 9.
50. Secretary of State Rusk remained noncommittal.
51. See Herbert Kelman, "Compliance, Identification, and Internalization: Three Processes of Attitude Change." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, vol. 1, 1958: 51–60.
52. Quoted in "Bay of Pigs," http://www.historycentral.com/JFK/bio/Bayofpigs.html.

Chapter 6

1. *Platt Amendment*, http://www.latinamericanstudies.org/cuba/platt-amendment.htm.
2. Ernest R. May and Philip D. Zelikow, eds., *Kennedy Tapes: Inside the White House during the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Cambridge: The Bleknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1997), 34.
3. Roger Hilsman, *To Move a Nation* (New York: Doubleday and Co., 1967), 170.
4. Alex Roberto Hybel, *The Logic of Surprise in International Conflict* (Lexington, MA: DC Heath and Company, 1968), 117.
5. Ibid., 140.

6. Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 798.
7. Ibid., 799; see also Hybel, *The Logic of Surprise*, 118.
8. Hybel, *The Logic of Surprise,* 118.
9. Hilsman, *To Move a Nation*, 172.
10. John T. Hughes with A. Denis Clift, "The San Cristobal Trapezoid," 44–5, in www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/kent-csi/vol44no4/pdf/v44i4a09p.pdf.
11. Graham Allison and Philip Zelikow, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (New York: Addison Wesley Longman, 1999), 92. See also "CIA Documents on the Cuban Missile Crisis," http://www.allworldwars.com/Cuban-Missile-Crisis-CIA-Documents.html.
12. According to McGeorge Bundy, he did not alert Kennedy that same night because he decided that the best preparation for the challenge that laid ahead for him would be a good night's sleep. See May and Zelikow, *The Kennedy Tapes*, 46.
13. May and Zelikow, *The Kennedy Tapes,* 46.
14. Michael Dobbs, *One Minute to Midnight: Kennedy, Khrushchev, and Castro on the Brink of Nuclear War* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2008), 6.
15. Kennedy, *Thirteen Days*, 5.
16. May and Zelikow, *The Kennedy Tapes,* 48.
17. Ibid., 49.
18. Ibid., 51.
19. Ibid., 56.
20. Ibid., 57–8.
21. Ibid., 61.
22. Ibid., 77. During an earlier discussion with the president and his advisors, Dean Rusk identified diplomacy as a possible option, but the secretary of state immediately contended that it would not be a viable alternative.
23. Ibid., 86–7.
24. Ibid., 89–92.
25. Ibid., 93–8.
26. Kennedy, *Thirteen Days,* 13.
27. May and Zelikow, *The Kennedy Tapes,* 118–9.
28. Kennedy, *Thirteen Days,* 16.
29. May and Zelikow, *The Kennedy Tapes,* 120.
30. Kennedy, *Thirteen Days,* 17.
31. May and Zelikow, *The Kennedy Tapes,* 169.
32. Ibid., 72.
33. Ibid., 176.
34. Ibid., 177–8.
35. Ibid., 188.
36. Ibid., 189–90.
37. Ibid., 191.
38. Ibid., 203.
39. Ibid., 259.

40. Ibid., 281–2.
41. Dean Rusk, *As I Saw It* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1990), 237.
42. Kennedy, *Thirteen Days*, 41.
43. Ibid.
44. Quoted in Sean M. Lynn-Jones, Steven E. Miller, and Steven Van Evern, *Nuclear Diplomacy and Crisis Management* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1990), 174.
45. Kennedy, *Thirteen Days,* 49 and 40.
46. May and Zelikow, *The Kennedy Tapes,* 420 and 421.
47. Kennedy, *Thirteen Days*, 51.
48. Ibid., 60.
49. Rusk, *As I Saw It,* 238.
50. May and Zelikow, *The Kennedy Tapes,* 476.
51. Ibid., 490.
52. Rusk, *As I Saw It,* 239.
53. May and Zelikow, *The Kennedy Tapes,* 506.
54. Rusk, *As I Saw It,* 239.
55. Bundy, *Danger and Survival*, 405.
56. Ibid.
57. Kennedy, *Thirteen Days,* 75.
58. May and Zelikow, *The Kennedy Tapes,* 572–3.
59. Ibid., 543.
60. Ibid., 547–8.
61. Kennedy, *Thirteen Days,* 76.
62. May and Zelikow, *The Kennedy Tapes,* 599.
63. Ibid., 602.
64. Ibid., 528–9.
65. Ibid., 604. For years, analysts had referred to Robert Kennedy's claim that he proposed that the president disregard the second letter and respond to the first one. Dean Rusk attributed the suggestion to Llewellyn Thompson. If one relies on the content of the letter sent by Kennedy, it is evident that the president *did not disregard* the content of Khrushchev's second letter. As quoted here, a portion of the letter reads: "The effect of such settlement [the missiles in Cuba] on easing world tension would enable us to work toward a more general arrangement regarding 'other armaments,' as proposed in your second letter which you made public." The "other armaments as proposed in your second letter" refer specifically to the Jupiter missiles in Turkey.
66. Ibid., 608.
67. Ibid., 518–9.
68. Ibid., 612.
69. Ibid., 628.
70. Kennedy, *Thirteen Days,* 88.
71. May and Zelikow, *The Kennedy Tapes,* 635.
72. Mintz and DeRouen Jr., *Understanding FPDM*, 16.
73. May and Zelikow, *The Kennedy Tapes*, 680.

74. Preston *The President and his Inner Circle*, 99.
75. Ibid, 84.
76. Quoted in Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in International Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 32.

Chapter 7

1. Jo Nesbo, *The Leopard* (New York: Vintage Books, 2011), 632.
2. See Wilson, *Strangers to Ourselves: Discovering the Adaptive Unconscious*.
3. Epstein, "Intuition From the Perspective of Cognitive-Experiential Self-Theory," 25.
4. Betsch, "The Nature of Intuition and Its Neglect in Research on Judgment and Decision Making," 4.
5. Daniel Kahneman, *Thinking Fast and Slow* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2011), 12.
6. Christian Unkelbach and Henning Plessner, "The Sampling Trap of Intuitive Judgments," in *Intuition in Judgment and Decision Making*, ed. Plessner, Betsch, and Betsch, 286–7.
7. See Mintz, Geva, and DeRouen, Jr., "Mathematical Models of Foreign Policy Decision-Making: Compensatory vs. Noncompensatory": 441–460. In my discussion of the rational, cybernetic, and poliheuristic models, I rely extensively in the arguments posited by the authors of the article. In the view of this writer, the authors present one of the clearest articulations of the assumptions upon which the rational, cybernetic, and poliheuristic models are built and of their differences. However, as the reader might have noticed, we concur with Frank Zagare's argument that it is important to differentiate between an instrumental or a procedural perspective. Since our focus is on the foreign policy decision-making process, we decided that the term *procedural rationality* describes the nature of the model better than the term *rational actor.*
8. See also Greg Cahsman, *What Causes War? An Introduction to Theories of International Conflict* (New York: Lexington Books, 1993), 77–8.
9. See "Survey Finds 8 out of 10 Voters Approve US Help to Korea," *Washington Post,* July 2, 1950, M1. George Gallup, "Public Favors Withdrawing From Korea by Nearly 3 to 1," *Washington Post*, January 21, 1951, M1.
10. Mintz and DeRouen Jr., *Understanding Foreign Policy Decision Making,* New York, 69.
11. Barton J. Bernstein, "Roosevelt, Truman, and the Atomic Bomb, 1941–1945: A Reinterpretation," *Political Science Quarterly*, vol. 90, no. 1, Spring 1975: 23–4.
12. As we noted in chapter 3, many in Washington were adhering to the idea that what was ensuing in Guatemala was similar to what had happened in China in the 1930s, when the Communists allied themselves with middle-class politicians and ambitious army officers and worked themselves into positions of power in local communities. The results of these steps were the implementation of a Labor Code, agrarian reform, and the imposition of strict censorship.

13. See Mandel, "Psychological Approaches to International Relations"; Holsti, *Crisis, Escalation, War;* Janis and Mann, *Decision Making: A Psychological Analysis of Conflict, Choice, and Commitment*; and Rose McDermott, *Political Psychology in International Relations* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 2004), 173–7.

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Index

The Index is divided into two parts. The first part focuses on the various foreign policy decision-making models used throughout the study, and their respective terms. The second part is divided according to administrations, and under each administration there are two subheadings, each one named for one of the two cases it addressed. Under the *Harry Truman Administration* the two subheadings are *Korean War* and *War Against Japan.* Under the *Dwight Eisenhower Administration* the two subheadings are *Covert Operation Against the Guatemalan Regime* and *Suez Canal Crisis.* Under the *John F. Kennedy Administration* the two subheadings are *Covert Operation Against the Fidel Castro Regime* and *Cuban Missile Crisis*. Readers will find the pertinent concepts and decision-makers by searching under the respective categories. In many instances the same term will appear in different subcategories, but will refer to different foreign policy decision-makers. For instance, the term "mindset" will appear for each of the presidents considered throughout the study.

Foreign Policy Decision-Making Models and Concepts

Administrations and Cases

Eisenhower Administration

Covert Intervention in Guatemala

Suez Canal Crisis

Kennedy Administration

Covert Intervention in Cuba

Cuban Missile Crisis

Truman Administration

Korean War

War against Japan