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CRISIS DECISION-MAKING IN THE EISENHOWER AND
KENNEDY ADMINISTRATIONS: THE APPLICATION
OF AN ANALYTICAL SCHEME

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CRISIS DECISION-MAKING IN THE EISENHOWER AND
KENNEDY ADMINISTRATIONS: THE APPLICATION
OF AN ANALYTICAL SCHEME

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A fundamental need exists today in the field of political science for more effective and more explicit conceptualization techniques which will assist the researcher in the development of meaningful analyses of political behavior. This need is particularly acute in the field of international relations for, as the actions and interactions of nation states have grown more complex and inexplicable in this, the nuclear age, it has become increasingly difficult for political scientists to collect, analyze and relate data relative to the actions of these states and their leaders. The researcher is faced with such an overwhelming mass of data concerning the behavior of nation states that even the organization of this material becomes a staggering task.

It has been apparent for some years that the traditional historical method of explaining nation state behavior, through the building up of a body of narrative concerning specific events, is no longer adequate. New techniques are needed for organizing data and for explaining and predicting state action in terms of the complexities of a new age of

international politics. The historical approach still has a place in the study of international relations and there is no doubt that the great mass of data collected and set forth utilizing historical methods of analysis has added, and continues to add, immensely to our general store of knowledge about world politics. However, the historical method needs supplementation, for if it is used exclusively, it may well result in a sterile discipline which explains events and the behavior of nation states only in effectual terms, leaving causality to surmise and conjecture.

What is clearly needed then, in the field of international relations, is an approach which utilizes the historical method in conjunction with scientific techniques of organization and analysis. For, it is largely from such a combination of the rules of scientific procedure, imagination, and empirical knowledge that fruitful concepts are derived.

Objectives

The present study represents an attempt to apply the techniques suggested above to a specific area of international relations, that of foreign policy decision-making.

The approach to be utilized in the study is a conceptual scheme which provides a frame of reference within which to organize material and study decision-making at the state level.

Taken in its broadest perspective, the study has the objective of learning more about state action in general and American foreign policy making in particular. More specifically, the paper represents an effort to explain certain decisions -- those made by President Dwight D. Eisenhower relative to the Hungarian and Suez crises of 1956 and by President John F.

Kennedy in the Cuban crisis of 1962 -- through the application of an analytical scheme. In addition, the study seeks to compare the decision-making actions of Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy in crisis situations and to demonstrate the feasibility of utilizing the decision-making approach as an analytical device for the study of American foreign policy-making.

In its application, the study is both descriptive and analytical. It is descriptive in the sense that the events which transpired during the course of the crises will be recounted, and it is analytical in that the actual decisions which were made will be subjected to critical scrutiny and analysis to determine why the specific decisions were made in each case.

Approach

The decision-making approach being tested here is one devised by Richard C. Snyder, H. W. Bruck and Burton Sapin.¹ It has been modified by the author to suit the purposes and objectives of the present study.

Basically, the approach is an ordering device, or a frame of reference, which conceives of state action as resulting from the way identifiable official decision-makers define the situation of action in order to arrive at a decision. The scheme focuses inquiry on these decision-makers, called "actors," in an attempt to determine why a particular decision is made rather than some other. It postulates that decision-making behavior takes place in a complex organizational setting and can be

¹Richard C. Snyder, H. W. Bruck and Burton Sapin, Foreign Policy Decision-Making (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1962).

accounted for by the interrelation of three clusters of variables: spheres of competence, communications and information, and motivation. The basic assumption is that all factors which influence the results of a decision can be accounted for by these variables. Two different perspectives are included in the scheme: the properties of the decision-maker, defined as the intellectual setting, and the properties of the system within which he operates, defined as the organizational setting. Ultimately, the theory holds that, if a sufficient number of factual propositions on the behaviors and activities implied by these variables can be established, the interrelationship of these three sets of propositions becomes the empirical foundation for the explanation of a decision.

Spheres of Competence

Under the heading of spheres of competence is included the "office" and "role" of the decision-maker. The term competence is used as an inclusive device to take in the totality of the activities of the decision-maker relevant and necessary to the achievement of the organizational objective. The decision-maker's interpretation of his role and the manner in which he structures his relationships with his advisers is considered part of his competence. Both formal and informal relationships are included within the context of the decision-maker's competence. The manner in which the decision-maker conceives of his role or office, both in terms of explicitly prescribed rules and conventional norms, is also classified under this heading. Inasmuch as we are dealing with interaction of the decision-maker and his competence, a consideration of his value system, his prior experience, and his learned behavior are likewise considered

relevant and are thus included in the overall consideration of competence.

Each of the major determinants of decision-making suggest questions to be answered. Some of the questions arising out of a study of the decision-maker's competence might be: what kinds of values or ideologies does he bring to the interpretation of the latitude given him in the performance of his office? how are the rules making up his competence oriented in terms of these values and ideologies? how does his interpretation of his role affect his perception of the situation requiring action? what effect does the manner in which he structures his staff have on the way decisions are made? what bearing does his delegation of authority have on the decisions which are made?

Obviously, these questions are suggestive of others, however, those postulated should be sufficient to characterize the types of answers which might be derived from a study of the decision-maker's competence.

Information and Communications

Classified under information-communications are data which refer to the system or network of communications by which information is channeled to the decision-maker, as well as to the information which is actually available to him when he makes his decision. Considered in these terms, the entire organizational or decisional system may be looked upon as a communications "net." The net serves three basic functions: first, it supports or confirms the structure of authority; second, it makes possible the circulation of orders and directives; and third, it enables the decision-maker to define the situation in terms of relevant information. The entire system then, has a direct bearing on the

decision-maker's authority relationships and his perception of situations requiring action.

A study of information-communications data may reveal the answers to such questions as: what is the source of specific information? how is information brought to the attention of the decision-maker? is information filtered through a number of subordinates before it reaches the decision-maker? where does information enter the system? how is it considered by the decision-maker?

The answers to such questions may enable the researcher to determine, for example, how the interpretation of the relevancy of information by a subordinate influenced a decision-maker's perception of the situation requiring action -- thus influencing the decision. Or perhaps, how the lack of information by a decision-maker resulted in inaction on his part.

Motivation

Most conceptual schemes which endeavor to probe the minds of decision-makers tend to assume motivation and do not treat it as a specific entity. This is largely due, of course, to the many difficulties inherent in the determination of an individual's motives. Despite the difficulties involved, however, Snyder includes an analysis of motivation as an integral part of his scheme and notes, "to assume motivation begs many of the most significant questions which arise in the study of international politics."²

Implicit in the study of motivation is the assumption that the actions of a decision-maker cannot be explained in terms of a single motive. Therefore, multiple motives are assumed and these are treated as constituting

²Ibid., p. 139.

a system in which they relate to one another and are expressed in related actions.

It is important to note that motives are not behaviors, but rather they are inferences drawn from behaviors. Consequently, they are indirectly inferred, not directly observed. As Snyder suggests, "motives are postulated as a basis of understanding and are verified by observing behavior."³ The present study of the decision-maker's motivation centers around this concept in an effort to determine, from the actor's behavior, what inner drives, needs, and goals motivated him to action. Necessarily included is a study of the decision-maker's personality, attitudes, perceptions, norms, values, role expectations, and intellectual skills. The search is for the answers to "why" questions: why did the decision-maker act as he did? why did action take the particular form that it did in a particular situation? why did the decision-maker perceive of the situation as one requiring action? In short, what inner tendencies of the decision-maker prompted him to take action, and how did these affect the type of action which was taken.

Connection Between the Variables

It has been noted that the variables which constitute the determinants of decision-making are interrelated. The task confronting the researcher then, after isolating the major determinants, consists of logically connecting the variables and showing how their summation led to the decision made. Such a linkage is suggested by the paradigm in Figure 1. It is intended that the model will serve as a general outline

³ibid.

of the theory and more explicitly conceptualize the interrelationship of the variables. The paradigm suggests that knowledge and information must be communicated to the decision-maker who then perceives of the situation in terms of this information+motives+competence. The aggregation of the three sets of variables takes place in the organizational and intellectual setting of the decision-maker and a desired course of action then results from this summation. Thus, there is an input and an output function; the decision which is eventually made --output--can be explained in terms of the summation and interrelation of the three variables--input.

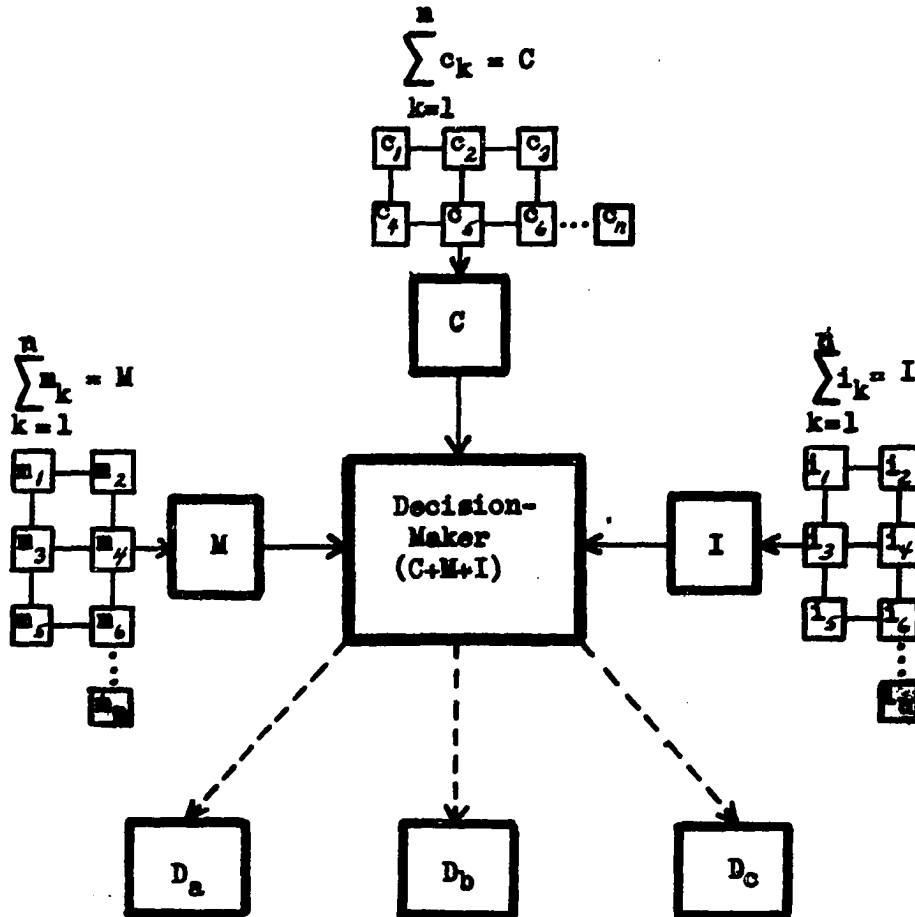
Scope

As noted earlier, the present study focuses on specific decisions made by Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy in an effort to both explain those decisions and draw substantive conclusions as to the similarities and dissimilarities of the foreign policy decision-making actions of the two Administrations. The decisions which will be analyzed were chosen as the primary focus chiefly because they were major foreign policy decisions and because they had similarities conducive to analysis and comparison. The decisions which have been chosen for the study, together with the reasons for the choice, are described below.

Hungarian and Suez Crises: 1956

The Hungarian revolt which began on October 23, 1956, created a situation which had to be handled with the utmost discretion and finesse by the President of the United States. The problem of how to handle the Hungarian situation without provoking World War III was aggravated by the

A DECISION-MAKING PARADIGM



Given: The decision-maker and the necessity to act.

Where: C = Decision-maker's sphere of competence.
 M = Decision-maker's motivation.
 I = Decision-maker's information-communication.
 c_n = Variables which determine sphere of competence.
 m_n = Variables which determine motivation.
 i_n = Variables which determine information.
 D_a = Possible decision.
 D_b = Possible decision.
 D_c = Possible decision.

Then: $\sum_{k=1}^n c_k = C$, $\sum_{k=1}^m m_k = M$, $\sum_{k=1}^i i_k = I$

And: $C+M+I$ = The decision taken (D_a , D_b or D_c).

the British and French invasion of Egypt on October 31. The peace of the world depended upon the decisions made by the President of the United States in his role as the key decision-maker.

While intervention by the United States in Hungary could very possibly have led to war with Russia, it is also possible that the Soviets may have tolerated intervention if they had no other avenue of escape from the debacle. However, when the Suez invasion took place it created the diversion which the Soviets needed to carry out their suppression of the revolt. The uprising in Hungary represented an attempt on the part of the Hungarian people to free themselves from their Soviet masters and, while this gave the Soviet Government a motive for violent reprisal, the simultaneous invasion of Egypt provided them with a unique opportunity to carry out their suppression with impunity. The resulting overlapping crises in Hungary and Egypt presented the key decision-makers in the United States with a situation of unexampled complexity and danger and gave humanity one of its most harrowing moments in years.

The necessity for United States action to meet the twin crises created a dilemma for President Eisenhower and his advisers who evidently felt that the United States could not denounce the Soviet's action in Hungary without also condemning the British and French for their surprise invasion of Egypt. President Eisenhower, in his speech to the nation on October 31, 1956, voiced this conviction when he said, "There can be no peace without law and there can be no law if we were to invoke one code of international conduct for those who oppose us and another for our friends. . . ."⁴

⁴"Address by President Eisenhower over radio and television, October 31, 1956," Department of State Bulletin, XXXV (November 12, 1956), 756.

It is evident that President Eisenhower believed that the decision which he made to bring the Hungarian and Suez disputes before the United Nations for settlement was the course of action which would avert war. However, it is not enough merely to state that the President "believed" that the course of action he chose was the correct one. Other factors may have exerted a stronger influence. This apparent reversal of the "brinkmanship" policy followed during the first four years of the Eisenhower Administration may have been due in part to the fact that these double crises occurred during a Presidential campaign, or to a changing public opinion. It may have been due to the illness of Secretary of State Dulles during this period, or to any one or a combination of various factors. The many diverse factors which could have influenced the decision make the analysis of the decision both interesting and exciting. More importantly, the complexity of the determinants which influenced the decision offer a unique opportunity to apply an analytical scheme as a frame of reference within which to isolate and evaluate these factors.

Cuban Crisis: 1962

The Soviet introduction of long range missiles into Cuba during the months of September-October, 1962 presented President John F. Kennedy with what was without a doubt the most important decision he was called upon to make during his less than three years as President of the United States.

Certainly Kennedy must have interpreted the Soviet action as a challenge to his leadership of the United States and of the free world. It was a challenge which, in one sense at least, he might have welcomed. The destruction of the United States' backed Cuban exile brigade at the

Bay of Pigs in April, 1961 had tarnished Kennedy's image as a decisive and resourceful leader. Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev's subsequent actions; his hard line at the Vienna Summit Conference, his wall across Berlin, his precipitation of another Berlin crisis, and his explosion of a fifty-seven megaton bomb, had all served to strengthen Khrushchev's position and weaken Kennedy's. Clearly, the President of the United States needed an opportunity to reassert himself and re-establish his leadership of the West. The Cuban crisis gave Kennedy this chance and it is in this sense that he might have welcomed it.

In a larger, more important sense, however, Kennedy could not have looked upon the crisis with a feeling of relief. He was well aware that any positive action response which he might order -- ranging from air strikes to invasion to blockade--would bring the world its first major missile confrontation between the Soviet Union and the United States and could, conceivably, result in a nuclear holocaust.

The decision finally made by President Kennedy to blockade Cuba was truly a crisis decision and it, like the Hungarian and Suez decisions of Eisenhower, offers the researcher interested in the analysis of foreign policy decision-making a vital and challenging medium on which to focus inquiry.

Reasons For Choosing These Decisions

The reasons for choosing the decisions are, for the most part, obvious in that they were crisis decisions. However, other more subtle considerations are important as well and will be discussed here briefly.

Since one of the objectives of the study is to compare the decision-making activities of the two administrations, major policy

decisions with similarities are desirable. The decisions relative to Cuba, Hungary, and Suez have a number of factors in common which may not be readily apparent. Some of these are listed below:

1. Each decision had to be made in a relatively short period of time.

2. Each decision involved the national interest of the United States either directly or indirectly.

3. Each decision involved the President of the United States as the ultimate decision-maker. Thus, they were what could be called "top-level" decisions.

4. In each case the necessity for a decision was created by a change in the external environment rather than by changes from within the foreign policy-making structure.⁵

5. The decision in each case was unprogramed in that there was no clearly formulated long-range policy for dealing with the situations which arose.

6. Each crisis erupted just before a national election in the United States.

7. In each case the United States and the Soviet Union were the major protagonists in the sense that, even though other nations were involved, the threat to peace hinged on the actions of the two major world powers.

⁵In the case of Suez and Hungary, it should be noted that some observers are of the opinion that both the Hungarian revolt and the Suez invasion were precipitated by the policies of Secretary of State Dulles. Herman Finer, for example, in his excellent book, Dulles Over Suez (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1964), contends that such was the case. In this sense then, and if the assertions are true, the Hungarian-Suez crises could be said to have been inspired from within the foreign policy-making organization.

The implications of these common characteristics will become apparent during the course of the study, but a few words should be said here regarding the major dissimilarity of the decisions made relative to the crises.

The major dissimilarity involved the nature of the response taken to meet each crisis. Eisenhower's response to the Hungarian and Suez disputes--referral to the United Nations for settlement--was diametrically opposed to the positive action response of Kennedy in blockading Cuba. Leaving other factors such as the differences in the world situation aside, the decisions taken in regard to the Hungarian, Suez, and Cuban crises could be said to have been the result of the differences of the determinants of decision-making as they influenced the two men. The differences in response reflected a difference in the men themselves and in the way they perceived of the situation requiring action. Thus, provocative--though unanswerable--questions are suggested: what would Kennedy have done in regard to Hungary and Suez? what would Eisenhower have done in regard to Cuba?

With the above considerations in mind then, the reasons for selecting these specific decisions as the central focus of the study become fairly obvious. The fact that these were crisis decisions where the wrong decision on either issue could have led to World War III, lent a great deal of urgency to the decision-making environment and presents an opportunity to apply the analytical frame of reference to a decision-making body in time of extreme stress. Also, since information and communications played such an important role in each situation, the influence of this determinant can be studied more fruitfully. Information

in each case is vitally relevant because it was a lack of adequate intelligence data at the outset of each crisis which had an important bearing on when the decision was made as well as which response was selected.

As far as Hungary and Suez are concerned, the fact that the Suez invasion took place while the decisions relative to Hungary were still being formulated was an important consideration in the choice of the Hungarian and Suez crises as a point of focus. The situation in the case of Hungary and Suez offers an opportunity to consider the interaction of a decisional unit when presented with the need for two important decisions simultaneously. It might be possible, for example, to discover how the decision in one situation was determined by the decision in the other.

Still another facet of these cases which might prove worthwhile concerns the national election campaigns which were in progress during the Hungarian-Suez affair and the Cuban crisis. The "political role" of the decision-makers can be studied to determine if this role had any effect upon their decisions.

Finally, and most important as far as research is concerned, the crises were of such major proportions that they were well publicized at the time of their occurrence as well as in the months afterwards. As a result, even though much of the official documentary is lacking, a reasonably exact reconstruction of what transpired during the crises was possible.

Methodology

In general, the methods followed in the collection of data for the reconstruction of the policy decisions in question were traditional and

the sources utilized were of the usual types. The categorization or coding of data, provided for as part of the frame of reference, was more novel, however, and will be described later.

Newspaper and magazine articles written at the time of each crisis constituted a major source of information regarding the events in the decisional period. Articles in the New York Times were especially helpful in the task of reconstructing both the Suez and Hungary events and the Cuban crisis happenings. By pooling information from newspaper and magazine sources and checking this data with what documents and official accounts were available, relatively accurate accounts of what took place in the top-level decisional unit during the crisis periods were reconstructed. Surprisingly enough, it would seem that in a study such as the present one, newspaper sources can be a highly reliable research tool if used judiciously.

Documents printed in the United States Department of State Bulletin, in various United Nations publications, and in several books of collected documents, constituted much of the primary material used in the study. These sources were used extensively to gather data pertaining to the pre-decisional period in each case. Other primary sources consisted chiefly of books and articles written by individuals involved in the decisions and, while such materials were not abundant, those which were available proved quite helpful. Theodore Sorensen's book, Decision-Making in the White House,⁶ for example, was extremely valuable in that it offered many insights into the Kennedy way of arriving at a decision. Collections

⁶Theodore Sorensen, Decision-Making in the White House (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963).

of documents relative to the Cuban crisis were also available and access to these facilitated research greatly.⁷

An attempt was made to supplement the published materials through the use of questionnaires which were sent to such key decision-makers as: Dwight D. Eisenhower, Richard M. Nixon, Henry Cabot Lodge, Allen W. Dulles, Robert D. Murphy, and Herbert Hoover, Jr., all of whom took part in the Hungary and Suez decisions. This avenue of investigation, however, proved rather fruitless and a different approach was utilized in the case of the Kennedy group. A copy of the draft reconstruction of the decisional events in the Cuban crisis was sent to Theodore Sorensen, President Kennedy's special assistant at the time of the Cuban affair, and he was asked to examine the draft and note any discrepancies. Again, as with the Eisenhower group, assistance was not forthcoming and consequently, still another method was employed to gather information--this time from journalists.

In order to corroborate some of the better newspaper and magazine articles, a number of journalists who wrote articles dealing with the Cuban crisis were contacted. Fletcher Knebel of Look magazine, Stewart Alsop of the Saturday Evening Post and Max Frenkel of the New York Times were extremely helpful in this regard and supplied information as to their sources of information in writing their articles. Knebel, for example, gave a rather full account of his informants and their relative degree of accuracy and co-operativeness in supplying him with information. As it

⁷See David L. Larson, The Cuban Crisis of 1963: Selected Documents and Chronology (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1963), and Henry M. Pachter, Collision Course: the Cuban Missile Crisis and Coexistence (New York: F. A. Praeger, 1963).

turned out, this device proved to be quite useful for verification purposes since the journalists who were contacted had talked to many of the key decision-makers in the Cuban crisis.

Once material was selected for research, the data coding method implicit in the scheme facilitated research considerably. This was especially true in regard to a vital area of reconstruction dealing with the formulation of the decision-maker's perception of the situation requiring action. The task in this case involved making the concept of the definition of the situation into a useful tool for organizing and interpreting data. A suggestion of Snyder's⁸ was used in this regard and proved extremely useful. The method consisted of working back and forth between the concept and the data until certain component elements of the decision-maker's definition of the situation evolved. During the process, data was coded into various categories such as: experience and existing "givens," generalized values, perceived relevancies, established goals, and the assessment and selection of one combination of available means and goals. Later, these categories of data were joined together to construct a picture of the decision-maker's perception.

The usefulness of such coding techniques was further demonstrated in analyzing statements by the decision-makers in an effort to establish motivation and competence. Throughout the course of the study the author found that the coding technique led to parsimony in the collection of data and greatly reduced unnecessary research.

In the collection of data and in the presentation of the material

⁸Snyder, op. cit., p. 225.

a general format was developed which, the author believes, facilitated research and enhanced understanding.

In general, the methods of research and the organization of the material consisted of six distinct steps. First, the historical background of each crisis was recounted and placed at the beginning of each case study. These descriptive surveys were undertaken to give the interested reader an overview of the situation and, more importantly, to enable the researcher to gain an insight into the environment the decision-makers occupied prior to the time when the need for a decision presented itself. Second, the decisional events, consisting primarily of what the decision-makers said and did during the crisis, were reconstructed and presented in the form of a day-to-day account. Third, analyses of the chief decision-makers in terms of the three determinants of decision-making were undertaken and the findings summarized as general characteristics.⁹ Fourth, in order to explain each decision, the decisions themselves were analyzed utilizing the findings of the study up to that point. Fifth, a comparison of the two Presidents and their decision-making activities was made and differences as well as similarities of the two administrations pointed out. Finally, both substantive and methodological conclusions were drawn regarding the usefulness of the scheme being tested.

⁹It should be noted here that in the case of the Hungary and Suez decisions the analysis included both President Eisenhower and Secretary of State Dulles, while in the Cuban case an analysis was made only of President Kennedy. The reasons for the differing approaches will be explained later.

CHAPTER II

THE HUNGARIAN REVOLUTION: 1956

The actual fighting which marked the beginning of the Hungarian revolution on October 23, 1956 was a spontaneous occurrence brought about by the events that took place on that day. The seeds of the revolt, however, were sown much earlier and can be traced back to the autumn of 1944 when the Soviet Army arrived on Hungarian soil.

The Communist Party of Hungary had been active since 1918 but did not gain substantial power until Soviet occupation authorities gave them strong support after World War II.¹ The general elections which were held in Hungary in November, 1945, resulted in a five party coalition in Parliament. At that time the Communist Party was not the major party but, with the help of the Soviets, the influence and power of the Party grew until, by 1948, the leaders of the non-communist parties were silenced and the Communist Party reigned supreme. The confirmation of Hungary's satellite status to the Soviet Union came in 1949 when Hungary was officially declared a People's Democracy. The real power at the time was in the hands of Matyas Rakosi, a Communist trained in Moscow.²

¹Ernst C. Helmreich (ed.), Hungary (New York: F. A. Praeger, 1957), p. 115.

²"United Nations Report of the Special Committee on the Problem of Hungary." Supplement #18 to the Official Records of the 11th General Assembly (Document #A/3592, June 20, 1957), p. 5.

The years following the Communist Party's rise to power in Hungary adhered to the usual pattern of complete domination of the political, social, economic, and cultural affairs of the country as was common in the other countries of Eastern Europe which are generally described as Soviet satellite states. Democracy, as interpreted by the Soviets, departed widely from the form of government to which that term is applied in the West. Deviation from the dominant political doctrine was punished by stern retribution and many who opposed the regime were imprisoned or forced to leave the country. As in other communist states, the police forces represented the chief weapon utilized by the party to consolidate and retain their power.³

The first protests against the dictatorial regime of the Communist Party came from certain Hungarian writers who, as early as the autumn of 1955, published articles criticizing the doctrine of the party. The Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the USSR held early in 1956 encouraged the dissident groups composed of writers and intellectuals. The new anti-Stalin line and the apparent promise of more democratization, national independence, and relaxation of police rule espoused at this Congress seemed to promise changes and improvements in the internal conditions in Hungary and the other satellite countries.⁴ When the expected reforms were not forthcoming and, following the Polish revolt in June-July, 1956, various groups began to openly call for more liberalization. Chief among these groups was the Petofi Club⁵ which was formed

³Helmreich, op. cit., p. 135.

⁴United Nations Document #A/3592, op. cit., p. 5.

⁵Named for the poet Sandor Petofi (1823-1849), hero of the 1848 Hungarian revolution.

in the summer of 1956 by writers and young intellectuals. The Petofi Club served as a forum for discussion and debate and in the fall of 1956 its members called upon the Hungarian people to follow the example set by the Poles and rise against their Soviet masters.⁶ The Hungarians were intoxicated by the apparent Russian concessions in Poland and meetings were held in Hungary to discuss various courses of action. The most noteworthy of these gatherings took place on October 22, 1956 at the Building Industry Technological University and at the Writer's Association headquarters in Budapest. As a result of these meetings it was decided to stage a silent demonstration expressing sympathy with the Polish movement. In conjunction with the demonstration it was decided that a list of sixteen demands requesting various reforms would be presented to the Hungarian Government.⁷ The demonstration was to take place on October 23 in front of the statue of General Bem--a hero of the first Hungarian revolution of 1848. Since General Bem had been a Pole the demonstrators reasoned that such a display would better express their sympathy and admiration for the Polish struggle for independence.⁸ The sixteen demands which were drawn up included: a request for the immediate withdrawal of all Soviet troops, a reconstitution of the government under Imre Nagy, free elections, freedom of expression, re-establishment of political parties, and sweeping changes in the conditions of both workers and peasants.⁹

⁶Emil Lengyel, 1,000 Years of Hungary (New York: John Day Co., 1958), p. 262.

⁷United Nations Document #A/3592, op. cit., p. 6.

⁸Melvin J. Lasky (ed.), The Hungarian Revolution (New York: F. A. Praeger, 1957), p. 72.

⁹United Nations Document #A/3592, op. cit., p. 6.

The Government at first prohibited the assemblage but, finally, early on October 23, granted permission for the demonstration. The demonstrators--about 50,000 strong--assembled in Bem Square and listened to a manifesto read by Peter Vires of the Hungarian Writer's Union. After several hours in the square the crowd marched across the Danube river bridge to the Hungarian Parliament building to present their demands. They gathered supporters as they moved along and by the time they reached the Parliament building the marchers numbered between 200,000 and 300,000. At the same time a delegation was sent to the Budapest Radio building to have their demands read over the air.¹⁰ At this time the crowd was still orderly and well-behaved. Then, several incidents occurred which changed the temper of the demonstration.

First, Erno Gero the Hungarian Communist Party leader, spoke over Radio Budapest denouncing the demonstration. Gero's statements infuriated the crowd. Then, a rumor spread through the gathering that the delegation which had been sent to the Radio Building had been arrested and shot.¹¹ The demonstrators began to move toward the Radio building shouting anti-Russian slogans as they marched. When they arrived at the building they demanded to know what had become of their delegation which had been sent with the sixteen demands. The demonstrators were given no information regarding the fate of their delegation and, shortly after 9 P.M., tear gas bombs were thrown into their midst. Almost immediately after the tear gas bombs were thrown, AVH¹² men began firing into the gathering

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Allamvedelmi Hatóság--the State Security Authority.

killing and wounding a number of people.¹³

A special committee formed by the United Nations to study the Hungarian situation reported that this was the beginning of the uprising and noted that:

In so far as one moment can be selected as the turning point which changed a peaceful demonstration into a violent uprising, it would be this moment when the AVH, already intensely unpopular and universally feared by their compatriots attacked defenseless people. The anger of the crowd was intensified when white ambulances, with Red Cross license plates drove up. Instead of first aid teams, AVH police emerged, wearing doctor's coats. A part of the crowd attacked them and in this way acquired their first weapons.¹⁴

Hungarian Army troops were rushed to the Radio building after the first fighting broke out but, after hesitating momentarily, the troops sided with the crowd. Other demonstrations were taking place at this time in various parts of Budapest as well. At the huge statue of Stalin demonstrators were at work tearing the hated symbol down--it was toppled at 9:30 P.M.¹⁵ At the offices of the Communist newspaper, Szabad Nep, the AVH guards opened fire on unarmed demonstrators. Later, the insurgents obtained arms from sympathetic Hungarian Army soldiers and overcame the AVH men at the newspaper offices.¹⁶

Fighting between the demonstrators and the AVH men continued on through the night of October 23 and by 2 A.M. on the morning of the 24th the first Soviet forces had begun fighting in Budapest. The time element is important in establishing just when Soviet forces began fighting in Budapest because, at 8:30 A.M., Radio Budapest announced that Imre Nagy

¹³New York Times, October 24, 1956, p. 1.

¹⁴United Nations Document #A/3592, op. cit., p. 6.

¹⁵Randor Heller, No More Comrades (Chicago: H. Renery, 1957), p. 15.

¹⁶United Nations Document #A/3592, op. cit., p. 6.

had been recommended to be the next Chairman of the Council of Ministers.¹⁷ Then, thirty minutes later, it was announced that Soviet military aid had been requested under the terms of the Warsaw Pact. The timing of the two announcements was evidently intended to give the impression that Nagy had requested Soviet aid and thereby weaken his position with the people. As already noted, however, Soviet forces actually began fighting before Nagy became Premier.

Another consequence of the announcements regarding the request for Soviet aid was that they created the impression among nations of the Western bloc, who might have intervened in Hungary, that it was an internal affair between the Hungarian Government and the insurgents and that the lawful government was calling for Soviet aid. But evidence gathered by the United Nations Special Committee tends to prove that it was not Nagy --or for that matter any other member of the government--who called for Soviet aid but rather that Soviet authorities had taken steps as early as October 20 to make armed intervention possible, whether or not such aid was requested.¹⁸

Clashes between armed rebels and Soviet tanks marked the fighting that took place on the 24th of October. Bitterness and resentment against the Russians grew as news spread throughout Budapest of unarmed civilians being shot down by Soviet tanks. Such resentment reached its peak on October 25 when a crowd peacefully assembled before the Parliament building to present their demands to Premier Nagy was fired upon by Soviet tanks.¹⁹

¹⁷Paul E. Zinner (ed.), National Communism and Popular Revolt in Eastern Europe (New York: Columbia University Press, 1956), p. 409.

¹⁸United Nations Document #A/3592, op. cit., p. 12.

¹⁹New York Times, October 27, 1956, p. 1.

Although Nagy was being held incommunicado at Communist Party headquarters when the demonstrators in front of the Parliament building were fired upon, this was not known to the people and the incident served to further turn popular support away from him.²⁰

In an attempt to calm the rioters, Mikhail A. Suslov, a member of the Soviet Presidium, and Soviet First Deputy Premier Anastas I. Mikoyan, flew to Budapest on October 25 and replaced Erno Gero as First Secretary of the Hungarian Communist Party with Janos Kadar.²¹ The firing of Gero did not have the desired effect, however, and the revolt spread to the provinces where the next few days saw a transfer of power from the Communist bureaucracy to new "Revolutionary and Workers' Councils." By October 27 the Hungarian rebels held control in Western Hungary along the 160 mile Austrian-Hungarian border.²²

On October 27 Imre Nagy formed a new National Front Government with a majority of the cabinet members of the Communist Party. In an effort to widen his regime and win the confidence of the people Nagy admitted Zoltan Tildy and Bela Kovacs, leaders of the outlawed Smallholder's Party, to his cabinet. Nagy then announced that he would begin negotiations with the Soviets for the withdrawal of Soviet armed forces from Hungary.²³

A cease-fire was ordered by the Nagy government on October 28 and, although a few isolated skirmishes took place during the succeeding days, the cease-fire became fully effective on October 30. On the same day

²⁰United Nations Document #A/3592, op. cit., p. 7.

²¹New York Times, October 27, 1956, p. 1.

²²"The Month in Review," Current History, XXXI (December, 1956), 375.

²³New York Times, October 28, 1956, p. 1.

that he ordered the cease-fire Nagy also announced that he intended to abolish the AVH after the restoration of order. This action was subsequently carried out on the 29th of October and the next day Nagy announced the abolition of the one-party system of government and promised free elections in the near future.²⁴

After the cease-fire became fully effective Soviet forces began to leave Budapest and the people of the city started taking the first steps to clear away the rubble, restore order, and bring life back to normal conditions.²⁵

That the peace was not to last long, however, was evident as early as November 1. On that day Premier Nagy sent the following communication to the United Nations:

. . . Reliable reports have reached the Government of the Hungarian People's Republic that further Soviet units are entering Hungary. The President of the Council of Ministers in his capacity of Minister for Foreign Affairs summoned M. Andropov, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Soviet Union to Hungary, and expressed his strongest protest against the entry of further Soviet troops into Hungary. He demanded the instant and immediate withdrawal of these Soviet forces. He informed the Soviet Ambassador that the Hungarian Government immediately repudiates the Warsaw Treaty and at the same time declares Hungary's neutrality, turns to the United Nations and requests the help of the Four Great Powers in defending the country's neutrality. The Government of the Hungarian People's Republic made the declaration of neutrality on 1 November 1956. Therefore, I request your Excellency to put on the agenda of the forthcoming General Assembly of the United Nations the question of Hungary's neutrality and the defence of this neutrality by the four Great Powers. . . .²⁶

The United Nations Special Committee reported that good progress was being made in the direction of political consolidation after November

²⁴United Nations Document #A/3592, op. cit., p. 8.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶United Nations Document #A/3251, in Department of State Bulletin, XXXV (November 12, 1956), 761.

1 and that, on November 3, the government was again reconstituted. Several Communists were dismissed and three ministerial posts were allotted to the Social Democrats, the Independent Smallholders, and the Communists, as well as two to the Petofi Party. The freedom fighters were amalgamated into the newly formed Hungarian National Guard and it was agreed that everyone would resume work on November 5.²⁷

The beginning of the end for the Hungarian freedom fighters and their hopes for liberty came shortly after 4 A.M. on the morning of November 4 when Soviet tanks moved into Budapest and began operations.²⁸ During the early hours of the morning these Soviet tanks began to move along the main boulevards, firing indiscriminately as they proceeded, in an obvious effort to intimidate the people of Budapest.²⁹ As the day wore on eight Soviet divisions and several fighter squadrons were thrown into the battle.

When it became apparent that the Soviet forces could not be stopped, Imre Nagy and some of his cabinet requested and obtained asylum in the Yugoslavian Embassy in Budapest.³⁰ In effect, this constituted a dissolution of the Nagy Government and Janos Kadar, Secretary of the Hungarian Communist Party, formed a new pro-Soviet Government under the protection of the Soviet Army.³¹ Kadar announced the formation of this new government, called the Hungarian Revolutionary Worker-Peasant Government, and requested, "in the interest of our people, working class, and country,

²⁷United Nations Document #A/3592, op. cit., p. 28.

²⁸New York Times, November 4, 1956, p. 1.

²⁹United Nations Document #A/3592, op. cit., p. 29.

³⁰Albert Camus, The Truth About the Nagy Affair (New York: F. A. Praeger, 1959), p. 34.

³¹New York Times, November 4, 1956, p. 6.

the Command of the Soviet Army to help our nation in smashing the sinister forces of reaction and in restoring order and calm in the country. . . . "32

As the fighting continued throughout the day of November 4, Nagy broadcast an appeal over Radio Free Kossuth for the resistance fighters "not to recognize the occupation forces or the puppet government which may be set up by them as a legal authority."33

At the United Nations on November 4, the Soviet Union vetoed a resolution that had been submitted the day before by United States Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge. The resolution had called on the Soviet Union to "desist from any form of intervention, particularly armed intervention, in the internal affairs in Hungary."34 After the Soviet Union vetoed the proposal, the Security Council voted to call an emergency session of the General Assembly to consider the question. Subsequent meetings of the General Assembly resulted in the adoption of various resolutions calling upon the Soviet Union to cease military operations in Hungary but these were ignored by the Soviets.35

The freedom fighters steadfastly resisted Soviet forces for several days but, although they fought valiantly with what resources they had, they were no match for the superior fire power of the Soviet tanks and planes. By November 8, the battle of Budapest had ended with a Soviet victory. At 4 P.M. on that day Radio Rakoczy at Dunapentele, the last of the free radio stations still operating, broadcast the following appeal:

32United Nations Document A/3592, op. cit., p. 46.

33Ibid.

34Department of State Bulletin, XXXV (November 12, 1956), 757.

35"The Month in Review," Current History, XXXI (January, 1957, 58-59.

"This is our last broadcast. We are being inundated with Soviet tanks and planes. The Hungarian people appeal directly to President Eisenhower for help."³⁶ The plea was followed by a loud crashing noise and then there was silence--the fight for freedom had been lost.

The Special Committee of the United Nations on the problem of Hungary had certain relevant observations which serve to refute the Soviet Union's claim that they intervened in Hungary because they were asked to do so by the legal government of Hungary under the terms of the Warsaw Pact. These observations follow:

It is incontrovertible that the Nagy Government whose legality under the Hungarian Constitution, until it was deposed, cannot be contested, protested against the entry and use of Soviet forces on Hungarian territory, and not only asked that these forces should not intervene in Hungarian affairs, but negotiated and pressed for their ultimate withdrawal. The actions of the Nagy Government give proof of the firm desire of the Hungarians, as long as they could publicly express their aspirations, to achieve a genuinely independent international status for their country.

It is no less incontrovertible that the Nagy Government was overthrown by force. Its successor assumed power as a result of military aid by a foreign state. The Nagy Government neither resigned nor transferred its powers to the Kadar Government. Noteworthy is the acceptance of the Kadar Government, after initial declarations to the contrary, of the continued presence of Soviet forces in Hungary.

There is no doubt as to the aspirations of the immense majority of the Hungarian people. The presence of the Soviet Army on Hungarian territory is for Hungarians the visible attestation of the Hungarian subordination to an outside power and of the impossibility for their country to pursue its own ideals. The aspiration for the withdrawal of the Soviet Armed Forces is based on the deep patriotic feelings of the Hungarians, having their source in their patriotic past. Their will for regaining full international independence is powerful and has only been strengthened by the role played by the Soviet military command in the post war years by the establishment of a political regime patterned after that of the Soviet Union and more recently by the Soviet intervention to guarantee that regime's continuance.³⁷

³⁶New York Times, November 8, 1956, p. 1.

³⁷United Nations Document #A/3592, op. cit., p. 59.

CHAPTER III

THE SUEZ INVASION: 1956

The decision made by the leaders of Great Britain and France to invade Egypt and occupy the Suez Canal zone in late October of 1956 was the culmination of a series of events which had been set in motion by Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser in September, 1955 when he concluded an agreement with Czechoslovakia to trade Egyptian cotton for Czech weapons.

The arms which Nasser subsequently obtained under this agreement were needed by him to carry out his plan to unite the Arab world but, ironically, this arms deal led to the temporary loss of another cherished objective of Nasser's, that of building a high dam at Aswan to harness the Nile river.

The United States, Great Britain and the World Bank had offered Nasser loans and grants-in-aid to build the dam at Aswan but, as a result of the arms deal and the mortgaging of the future cotton crops which the transaction necessitated, the United States did not feel that Egypt could devote enough of her own capital to the building of the dam.¹ Consequently,

¹While the ostensible reason for withdrawing the loan was Egypt's supposed inability to repay it, a more logical explanation is that Secretary of State John Foster Dulles withdrew the loan to chastize Nasser for his flirtation with the Soviet bloc. See Herman Finer's Dulles Over Suez, *op. cit.*, for an excellent discussion of Dulles and his reasons for refusing Nasser the loan.

on July 19, 1956, the United States withdrew the offer of \$56 million for the building of the dam. The next day, following the lead of the United States, Great Britain withdrew her offer of \$15 million for the dam. Then, since neither the United States nor Great Britain would loan Egypt the money, the World Bank withdrew a promised \$200 million advance.²

Nasser's dream of economic revitalization of Egypt was largely dependent upon the building of the Aswan dam and he chose to interpret the withdrawal of the offer of aid as a personal rebuff by the United States designed to weaken his prestige with his people. Inasmuch as the announcement came in the form of an abrupt statement by the United States which was not circulated to the Egyptian Government before being made public, as is the usual practice, Nasser believed it had been timed for a moment when its effect on his position would be most detrimental. With the situation being as it was it was inevitable that Nasser would retaliate in some way.³

In the days after the United States and Great Britain withdrew the loan offers, Nasser's position within Egypt began to deteriorate and he evidently felt that he needed some sort of face-saving maneuver to regain his popularity. Therefore, probably to strike back at the United States as well as to reassert his authority, he officially recognized Red China and then, on July 26, he issued the following decree:

The Universal Company of the Suez Maritime Canal is hereby nationalized. All its assets, rights and obligations are

²Paul Johnson, The Suez War (London: MacGibbon & Kee, 1957), pp. 1-3.

³"Suez Realities," The New Stateman and Nation, LII (August 4, 1956), 124.

transferred to the Nation and all the organizations and Committees that now operate its management are hereby dissolved. . . .⁴

As soon as Nasser made the announcement nationalizing the Canal, Egyptian officials, accompanied by a squad of police, took command of the premises of the Suez Canal Company. Nasser declared that the funds from the operation of the canal would be used to build the high dam at Aswan. In a speech in Cairo on the day of the nationalization announcement Nasser said that a new Suez Canal Company would be formed and operated by ". . . Egyptians! Egyptians! Egyptians!"⁵

Western reaction to Nasser's action was immediate and vociferous. A hurriedly called conference between British, French and American officials resulted in a tripartite statement issued on August 2. The three nations challenged Nasser's right to nationalize the Canal company on the following grounds:

- 1) . . . the Universal Suez Canal Company has always had an international character in terms of its shareholders, directors and operating personnel.
- 2) . . . the present action involves more than a simple act of nationalization. It involves the arbitrary and unilateral seizure by one nation of an international agency which has the responsibility to maintain and to operate the Suez canal. . . .
- 3) . . . the action taken by the Government of Egypt, having regard to the attendant circumstances, threatens the freedom and security of the Canal as guaranteed by the Convention of 1888. . . .⁶

There was pressure at this time in both Britain and France for a military showdown and the leaders of both countries, responding to

⁴Joseph A. Obieta, The International Status of the Suez Canal (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1960), p. 90.

⁵New York Times, July 27, 1956, p. 1.

⁶Obieta, op. cit., p. 90.

these pressures, openly advocated such military action to counter Nasser's move.⁷

Both countries had good reason to desire the re-internationalization of the Canal but perhaps Britain's reasons were most compelling. If traffic through Suez were interrupted and the oil which was vital to Britain's economy cut off, it would have been necessary to impose gasoline rationing within a week and industry would have been seriously affected within two weeks. Britain had to get oil from the Middle East and getting it from the Middle East meant through the Suez Canal. Transporting oil around the Cape of Good Hope would have involved an increase of thirty percent in transport costs. Britain had been planning a three percent increase in her standard of living and the controlling factor in this improvement was increased power output. Such an accretion required fuel and the fuel had to be purchased at normal prices.

Economic factors were not Britain's only reason for being displeased with Nasser; strategic, military and prestige considerations were also compelling. Britain had, yielding to pressure from the United States, withdrawn her troops from Suez early in 1956. When Nasser broke faith with them by seizing the Canal the British saw their already dwindling prestige in the Middle East further decimated. In addition, Nasser's action threatened Britain's strategic position in the Arab nations; a factor which was directly tied to Britain's economy because of the oil reserves in the Middle East which were so vital to British industry.

Certainly, Nasser dangerously miscalculated the national feelings

⁷"Preventing Eden's War," The New Statesman and Nation, LII (August 18, 1956), 173.

of dignity and honor which, coupled with Britain's concern for her economic and power position in the world, were to compel the British to take forceful action to regain the Canal. Indeed, whereas Aswan was Egypt's future, Suez was Britain's.⁸

While Britain's motives for advocating military action were primarily economic, France's reasons were largely political in that the French blamed much of their trouble in Algeria--where rebel factions were fighting the French--on Nasser. French intelligence had been reporting that Egypt was arming, training and directing the Algerian revolt. Naturally, the French felt that if they could overthrow Nasser they would help their cause in Algeria by putting down the rebellion at its source.

In the days following Nasser's nationalization of the Canal, the British and French began a military buildup. By August 2 it was evident that Great Britain had greatly increased her naval and ground forces in the Mediterranean area.

It was at this point that United States Secretary of State John Foster Dulles exerted his talents for personal diplomacy to influence the course of events. Dulles literally talked the British and French leaders out of taking military action. Instead of military intervention he proposed that economic measures be taken in the form of a Suez Canal User's Association. Dulles convinced the British and French that this would be a means of "provoking a showdown" with Nasser and achieving the ends they wanted by peaceful means.⁹ Dulles' proposals caused the British

⁸Johnson, op. cit., pp. 11-12.

⁹New York Times, November 1, 1956, p. 10.

and French leaders to abandon their original plan to go into Suez but, as it turned out, the abandonment of these plans was only a temporary expedient.

During the months of August and September various international meetings were held and negotiations entered into for the implementation of the Suez Canal User's Association. When Nasser rejected the Association's proposals which would have re-internationalized the Canal, the British and French saw this as much less of a "showdown" than Dulles had proposed.¹⁰ Efforts at resolving the Canal dispute through the United Nations organization proved equally futile. On October 13, the United Nations Security Council adopted a resolution outlining the requirements necessary for a settlement of the dispute. The resolution stated:

The Security Council,

Noting the declarations made before it and the accounts of the development of the exploratory conversations on the Suez question given by the Secretary General of the United Nations and the foreign ministers of Egypt, France and the United Kingdom;

Agrees that any settlement of the Suez question should meet the following requirements:

- 1) There should be free and open transit through the Canal without discrimination, overt or covert--this covers both political and technical aspects;
- 2) Sovereignty of Egypt should be respected;
- 3) The operation of the Canal should be insulated from the politics of any country;
- 4) The manner of fixing tolls and charges should be decided by agreement between Egypt and the users;
- 5) In case of dispute, unresolved affairs between the Suez Canal Company and the Egyptian Government should be settled by arbitration with suitable terms of reference and suitable provisions for the payment of sums found to be due.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ "Resolution Adopted by the Security Council," United Nations Security Council Document S/3675, October 13, 1956.

In spite of such United Nations resolutions and regardless of other negotiations, pronouncements, and attempted economic sanctions, by late October the situation in Suez was still untenable as far as Britain and France were concerned. Britain especially, was displeased with the course of events in the Mediterranean. She saw her position in the Arab world crumbling. Disillusionment and bitterness followed the failure of Britain's efforts to chastize Nasser through the United Nations and through economic boycotts. Both the British and French were increasingly annoyed at Dulles for they believed that he had precipitated the crisis in the first place by his abrupt decision to withdraw the Aswan loan. Furthermore, they blamed Dulles for allowing Nasser to go as far as he had in that when the British and French advocated military action immediately after the nationalization of the Canal, Dulles had talked them out of strong measures in favor of economic sanctions. Finally, the Anglo-French leaders believed that the economic measures had failed because Dulles reneged on his implied promise to pay for an economic boycott. As a result, Nasser was now triumphant and unpunished and the prestige of Britain and France in the Middle East was at an all-time low. According to the New York Times:

The plain truth was that the British and French . . . came to the conclusion that Mr. Dulles' policy in the Middle East--his Suez compromise, his 'northern tier of alliances,' his handling of the Czechoslovak-Egyptian arms deal, his promise and then withdrawal of the promise of aid to build the Aswan High Dam--had been a failure.

. . . accordingly Britain and France took measures they thought necessary to protect their interests without consulting the United States.¹²

When all attempts at a peaceful solution failed, the British and

¹²New York Times, November 1, 1956, p. 1.

French leaders decided upon a more aggressive course of action to solve the Suez dilemma. A meeting took place between Britain's Prime Minister Anthony Eden and French Premier Guy Mollet in Paris on October 16.¹³ It was probably at this meeting that an agreement was reached to back an Israeli invasion of Egypt and then occupy the Suez Canal zone on the pretext of protecting it from Israel's attack.

The French had been supplying the Israeli forces with armaments for several months and by the time the attack was finally agreed upon Israel was well supplied with French jet fighters, tanks and small arms. All that remained to be done was to coordinate the efforts of the three countries in their attack on Egypt.

From October 16 until the invasion of Suez the United States was "frozen out" of talks between the French and the British regarding Suez. On October 23, French Foreign Minister Christian Pineau made a hurried trip to London and met with Eden. At this meeting the Prime Minister was probably advised that plans for the Israeli invasion were complete.¹⁴

It is obvious that the Israelis and their allies the British and French chose a time for the attack on Suez which would allow them the best possible chance for success. In addition to the fact that they had

¹³Finer, op. cit., p. 324.

¹⁴It is interesting to note here that Eden may have thought that if Britain and France did use force to seize the canal, the United States would take a neutral stand on the issue. Finer, op. cit., p. 327, mentions this as a strong possibility in that he says Dulles talked with Eden on September 21 and urged the Prime Minister to "play it so that Nasser would be the one to take hostile or obstructive acts against the users before attempting to carry the Suez dispute to the United Nations." According to Finer, Eden had every reason to believe, as a result of this conversation, that the United States would not turn against her allies if Suez were invaded.

the assurance of Anglo-French backing, several other aspects of the world situation favored the Israeli invasion at that time. First, the United States was deeply involved in a Presidential election campaign. Secondly, Russia was immobilized by the Hungarian uprising. Thirdly, Egypt was virtually isolated. Nasser could not count on United States help or Soviet aid.¹⁵

On October 28, the Israeli Government announced that army reserves had been mobilized and stationed along the borders of neighboring Arab states. According to the New York Times, "observers said the mobilization was the biggest since the end of the 1948 Palestine war."¹⁶ The next day, October 29, the Israeli military forces thrust into the Sinai Peninsula and fought their way to within twenty miles of the Suez Canal.¹⁷ It was evident that the swift moving Israeli forces had caught the Egyptians by surprise and could have occupied the Canal zone. This objective, however, probably pursuant to prior agreement, was left for the British and French.

The first British and French involvement in the Egyptian war came in the form of a communication sent simultaneously to Egypt and Israel on October 30. The British and French statement read in part:

The Governments of the United Kingdom and France have taken note of the outbreak of hostilities between Israel and Egypt. This event threatens to disrupt the freedom of navigation through the Suez Canal, on which the economic life of many nations depends. The Governments of the United Kingdom and France are resolved to do all in their power to bring about the early cessation of hostilities and to safeguard the free passage of the Canal. They accordingly request the Government[s] of

¹⁵New York Times, November 1, 1956, p. 2.

¹⁶New York Times, October 29, 1956, p. 1.

¹⁷New York Times, October 30, 1956, p. 1.

Egypt [and Israel]:

(a) to stop all warlike action on land, sea and air forthwith;

(b) to withdraw all . . . military forces to a distance of ten miles from the Canal; and

(c) in order to guarantee freedom of transit through the Canal by the ships of all nations and in order to separate the belligerents, to accept the temporary occupation by Anglo-French forces of key positions at Port Said, Ismailia and Suez.

The United Kingdom and French Governments request an answer to this communication within twelve hours. If at the expiration of that time one or both Governments have not undertaken to comply with the above requirements, United Kingdom and French forces will intervene in whatever strength may be necessary to secure compliance¹⁸

This announcement was, in effect, an ultimatum informing the Egyptians that the British and French intended to occupy the Canal zone one way or another—either by force or with token occupation.

On the same day the ultimatum was issued, the United States and Russia introduced resolutions in the United Nations Security Council calling upon "Israel to immediately withdraw its armed forces behind the established armistice lines" Both resolutions were, however, vetoed by the United Kingdom and France.¹⁹ In addition to the resolution in the United Nations, Eisenhower sent a "vigorous and emphatic" protest to the British and French calling upon them to "reconsider" their ultimatum to Egypt and Israel.²⁰

By the time the ultimatum had been issued, however, the decision had been made and diplomatic protests were nonavailing. On October 31, when the terms of the ultimatum had expired, British and French forces

¹⁸"Communication Addressed by Britain and France to Egypt and Israel, 30 October 1956," Documents on International Affairs (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956), p. 261.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 264.

²⁰New York Times, October 31, 1956, p. 1.

began moving to invade Egypt. The attack began with aerial bombings upon airfields and military bases scattered throughout Egypt. The first day of the military action resulted in the destruction of many of the planes, tanks, and guns that Nasser had obtained from the Soviets.²¹ As later events showed, the first day's action was planned to destroy Egypt's potential to counter the actual occupation of the Canal Zone by the British and French forces later in the week. In addition to incapacitating Nasser's military forces as a prelude to occupation, the British and French viewed this destruction of Nasser's armaments as a demolition of his dream to lead the Arab world on a military crusade in the Middle East.

World reaction to the Anglo-French invasion was one of stunned disbelief and revulsion. Within England itself many denounced the action of Eden's Government. As article in the Manchester Guardian Weekly, on the day after the bombings, reflected this displeasure:

The Anglo-French ultimatum to Egypt is an act of folly, without justification in any terms but brief expediency. It pours petrol on a growing fire . . . and countless other nations will consider Britain and France to be in the wrong.

The Prime Minister sought to justify the ultimatum by saying that we must protect our shipping, our citizens, and 'vital international interests.'! But what possible right have we to attack another country? The British and French military action . . . is flagrant aggression. Protection of shipping--or for that matter of rights of transit through the Suez Canal--is no cause for making war. . . . Nor can an assault on another country be warranted on the ground that we wish to safeguard the lives of British and French citizens. Nothing in the Charter, or in acknowledged international law, permits armed intervention in such a cause. . . .²²

²¹New York Times, November 1, 1956, p. 1.

²²"To War," Manchester Guardian Weekly, LXXV (November 1, 1956), 1.

The New Statesman and Nation, another British periodical, was equally critical of the Government's action:

The British offensive against the Suez Canal Zone is not an action improvised to meet the sudden emergency caused by Israel's invasion of Egypt. In fact it is no more than the original plan to attack Egypt for which the reservists were recalled last summer and which world opinion had hitherto prevented the British and French Governments from carrying out. Using the Israeli invasion as a pretext, Britain and France issued an ultimatum which was totally illegal and which was calculated to aid Israel at the expense of their victim. Then, using Egypt's inevitable rejection of such an ultimatum as a further pretext for the next stage of the operation, Sir Anthony Eden pressed the button to set in motion the prearranged war on Egypt.

. . . the British Government has broken the Charter of the United Nations.

. . . it has shocked its Allies and furnished its enemies with a propaganda weapon which will for years be used to belabour us.²³

In Moscow it was noted that there was a close connection between the Hungarian uprising and the Suez invasion. It was argued that the West had staged the Hungarian revolution in order to divert Russia's attention and be free to act against Egypt. Other pronouncements out of Moscow included a harsh warning to Britain and France with a threat to utilize "rocket weapons" if they did not cease military operations in Egypt.²⁴

On November 1, the United Nations General Assembly met in its first special session to consider the Middle East question and at that time Secretary of State Dulles asked the Assembly to order an immediate ceasefire in Egypt. On November 2, the General Assembly, by a vote of

²³"Britain's Act of Aggression," The New Statesman and Nation, LII (November 3, 1956), 533.

²⁴New York Times, November 1, 1956, p. 1.

cease-fire. The resolution stated:

The General Assembly,

. . . noting that armed forces of France and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland are conducting military operations against Egyptian territory,

Noting that traffic through the Suez Canal is now interrupted to the serious prejudice of many nations,

1) Urges as a matter of priority that all parties now involved in hostilities in the area agree to an immediate cease-fire and, as part thereof, halt the movement of military forces and arms into the area;

2) Urges the parties to the armistice agreements promptly to withdraw all forces behind the armistice lines, to desist from raids across the armistice lines into neighbouring territory, and to observe scrupulously the provisions of the armistice agreements;

3) Recommends that all Member States refrain from introducing military goods in the area of hostilities and in general refrain from any acts which would delay or prevent the implementation of the present resolution. . . .²⁵

The vote on this resolution showed the split that had developed among the three Western powers. While the United States and Russia voted with the majority, Great Britain and France voted against the resolution.²⁶

The British Government replied to the United Nations resolutions regarding a cease-fire in a letter to the Secretary General of the United Nations, Dag Hammarskjöld, on November 3. The letter read in part:

. . . this communication is made in response to the resolution A/3256 adopted by the General Assembly on 2 November 1956

1) The British and French Governments have given careful consideration to the resolution passed by the General Assembly They maintain their view that police action must be carried through urgently to stop the hostilities which are now threatening the Suez Canal, to prevent a resumption of those hostilities and to pave the way for a definitive settlement of the Arab-Israeli war which threatens the legitimate interests of so many countries.

²⁵"Resolution of the General Assembly, 2 November 1956," Documents on International Affairs, op. cit., p. 270.

²⁶"Hungary and the Middle East," The World Today, XII (December, 1956), 482.

2) They would most willingly stop military action as soon as the following conditions could be satisfied:

(a) Both the Egyptian and Israeli Governments agree to accept a United Nations Force to keep the peace;

(b) The United Nations decides to constitute and maintain such a force until an Arab-Israeli peace settlement is reached and until satisfactory arrangements have been agreed upon in regard to the Suez Canal, both agreements to be guaranteed by the United Nations.

(c) In the meantime, until the United Nations Force is constituted, both combatants agree to accept forthwith limited detachments of Anglo-French troops to be stationed between the combatants²⁷

Despite the efforts of the United Nations to bring about a cease-fire, Anglo-French military action continued in Egypt. On November 4, the United Nations General Assembly passed a Canadian resolution which requested the Secretary General to produce within 48 hours a plan for setting up, with the consent of the nations concerned, an emergency international United Nations Force. The force the Canadians asked for would have had the responsibility of securing and supervising the cessation of hostilities in accordance with the Assembly's previous resolutions urging an immediate cease-fire.²⁸ The resolution passed 57 to 0 with the United Kingdom, France, Israel and Egypt abstaining. The British explanation for their abstention was that the resolution went "too far in some respects and not far enough in others."²⁹

On November 5 British and French paratroopers landed at Port Said and occupied the Suez Canal Zone.³⁰ The action was taken in an apparent effort to gain control of the Canal Zone before a cease-fire could be agreed upon. The same day that paratroopers were taking over the Canal,

²⁷"Letter from the Representative of Britain to Mr. Hammarskjold, 3 November 1956," Documents on International Affairs, op. cit., p. 272.

²⁸"Resolution of the General Assembly, 4 November 1956," Documents on International Affairs, op. cit., p. 275.

²⁹"Hungary and the Middle East," op. cit., p. 484.

³⁰New York Times, November 6, 1956, p. 1.

Secretary Dag Hammarskjold informed the British and French Governments that both Israel and Egypt had accepted the proposal for a cease-fire and the United Nations "police force" plan. Hammarskjold called upon the Governments of Britain and France to "recognize the decision of the General Assembly, establishing a United Nations Command, as meeting their condition for a cease-fire" ³¹

In an obvious effort to take advantage of the split between the United States, Britain, and France over the Suez question, Premier Bulganin, on November 5, sent the following communication to President Eisenhower:

The Soviet Union and the United States are permanent members of the Security Council and great powers possessing all modern types of arms, including atomic and hydrogen weapons. We bear particular responsibility for stopping war and re-establishing peace and calm in the area of the Near and Middle East. We are convinced that if the Governments of the USSR and the United States will firmly declare their will to insure peace and oppose aggression, the aggression will be put down and there will be no war.

Mr. President, at this threatening hour, when the loftiest moral principles and the foundations and aims of the United Nations are being put to the test, the Soviet Government approaches the Government of the United States with a proposal of close cooperation in order to put an end to aggression and to stop any further bloodshed.

The United States has a strong navy in the zone of the Mediterranean. The Soviet Union also has a strong navy and powerful air force. The joint and immediate use of these means by the United States and the Soviet Union according to a decision by the United Nations would be a sure guarantee of ending the aggression against the Egyptian people of the Arab East.

The Soviet Government turns to the United States Government with an appeal to join their forces in the United Nations for the adoption of decisive measures to put an end to the aggression

³¹"Aide-memoire from Mr. Hammarskjold to the Governments of Britain and France," Documents on International Affairs, op. cit. pp. 292-293.

The Soviet Government is ready to enter immediate negotiations with the Government of the United States on the practical realization of the above-mentioned proposals so that effective action in the interest of peace might be undertaken³²

A White House statement on President Eisenhower's reply to Bulganin's letter follows:

The President has just received a letter from Chairman Bulganin which had been previously released to the press in Moscow. This letter - in an obvious attempt to divert world attention from the Hungarian tragedy - makes the unthinkable suggestion that the United States join with the Soviet Union in a bipartite employment of their military forces to stop the fighting in Egypt.

The Middle East Question . . . is now before the United Nations. That world body has called for a cease-fire, a withdrawal of foreign armed forces, and the entry of a United Nations force to stabilize the situation pending a settlement. In this connection it is regretted that the Soviet Union did not vote last night in favor of the organization of this United Nations force.

Neither Soviet nor any other military forces should now enter the Middle East area except under United Nations mandate³³

At the same time that the Soviet letter was sent to President Eisenhower, Premier Bulganin dispatched notes to Prime Minister Eden and Premier Mollet. In these notes Bulganin warned the two countries that Russia was determined to "crush aggression and establish peace" in the Middle East with other members of the United Nations. Hints were made by Bulganin of "thousands of volunteers" who were applying to fight on the side of the Egyptians.³⁴

³²"Letter From Premier Bulganin to President Eisenhower," Documents on International Affairs, op. cit., pp. 292-293.

³³"White House Statement on President Eisenhower's Reply to Premier Bulganin's Letter of 5 November 1956," Documents on International Affairs, op. cit., p. 294.

³⁴"Hungary and the Middle East," op. cit., p. 494.

On November 6, with the weight of world denunciation becoming increasingly unbearable, the British and French agreed to a cease-fire. Prime Minister Eden said that, "Her Majesty's Government would agree to stop further military operations" and proposed that technicians accompanying the Franco-British forces begin work at once to clear obstructions from the Canal. In accordance with Eden's announcement the British and French forces ceased fire at midnight on November 6.³⁵

The British, French, Israeli, and Egyptian acceptance of the United Nation's proposal for a cease-fire introduced a somewhat more placid period in the Middle East but the crisis was not yet over. Neither did the cease-fire promise a return to the status quo ante bellum.³⁶

Four days after the cease-fire the USSR renewed its threat to permit Soviet "volunteers" to fight in Egypt because British, French, and Israeli forces were still there. Britain and France then agreed to withdraw their troops as soon as the United Nations forces could take over effectively. By November 13, a week after the cease-fire, the United Nations was still delaying the departure of the first troops to Egypt because of insistence by Britain, France, and Israel that the purpose and length of stay of the police units be definitely stated.³⁷

The first troops of the United Nations International Forces began arriving in the Suez Canal zone on November 15 and during the next few

³⁵Ibid., p. 487.

³⁶Documents on International Affairs, op. cit., p. 309.

³⁷New York Times, November 11, 1956, p. 1.

days British and French forces began their withdrawal. It was not until December 22, however, that the withdrawal of Anglo-French forces was completed and the Israeli evacuation was not terminated until March 8, 1957.

For the purposes of this study the recounting of events in Egypt ends with the British-French agreement to cease military operations and withdraw their troops. By the time the British and French forces withdrew, the crisis situation was virtually over as far as the top-level decision-makers in the United States were concerned. Therefore, the historical events relative to the Suez invasion will not be described further until a description of the decisional situation is undertaken later in this study. The intention has been, in this and in the preceding chapter, to outline the Suez and Hungarian crises in order to present the decisional situation and establish the historical context within which can be shown - in a later chapter - the decisions that were made by the United States' decision-makers and the reasons for those decisions.

CHAPTER IV

THE DECISIONAL EVENTS: HUNGARY AND SUEZ

This section of the study deals with the decisional events relative to the Hungarian revolution and the Suez invasion. The decisional events have been separated from the analysis of the decisions in an effort to, as Snyder suggests,¹ prevent the intrusion of the observer's judgments and speculations as much as possible. While it is true that complete objectivity is impossible, such a method will, it is hoped, minimize subjectivity.

For the purposes of this study the decisional period will be from October 23, 1956, when the Hungarian uprising started, until November 6, 1956, when the British and French agreed to a cease-fire in Egypt.

The description of the events in the decisional period will be confined to statements of things said and done by those connected with the decisions unless some external event which has not already been described has some bearing on the decision.

One difficulty which becomes immediately apparent in attempting such a reconstruction is that many of the meetings and conferences still involve top-secret information which is not available to the researcher.

¹Snyder, op. cit., p. 230.

This fact was pointed out by both Allen W. Dulles and Herbert Hoover, Jr., when they were contacted by the author in an attempt to gather information regarding the decisional period. As a result, the events had to be reconstructed almost entirely from newspaper sources. However, while it is conceded that such sources may not be as accurate, or as thorough, as personal accounts by those who participated in the discussions, they are adequate for the present purposes and in any event, such sources are all that are available and must suffice.

Finally, a day by day account of the decisional period would seem most logical for increasing comprehension, therefore, this approach has been utilized to organize the material.

Tuesday, October 23.--While this was the day on which the Hungarian revolt started, news of the events in Budapest evidently did not reach the White House until late in the evening. No records of any conferences or statements on the Hungarian situation by President Eisenhower or Secretary of State Dulles were discovered.

Wednesday, October 24.--During the morning, Secretary Dulles called on the President and they conferred for about an hour. Regarding the conference Dulles said only, "We were particularly interested today in Poland and Hungary."² James Reston of the New York Times reported that, "The United States Government has been without any contact with its embassy in Hungary since yesterday afternoon. The only reservation in official Washington about the anti-Soviet revolts . . . is that they may be moving too fast. . . ."³

²New York Times, October 25, 1956, p. 1.

³Ibid.

Later in the afternoon, Dulles received a delegation representing the Hungarian American Federation. A spokesman for the delegation later said that they asked Dulles to review the situation in the light of the United Nations Charter and that they were assured by Dulles that the United States Government viewed the situation with "alert interest and attention."⁴

The East European experts in the State Department advised that the best thing to do about the Hungarian uprising at that time was to keep quiet and watch the developments. According to the New York Times, no contact was made with the United States Legation in Budapest at all on October 24.⁵

Thursday, October 25.--President Eisenhower traveled to New York City during the morning to speak at a Republican Rally that evening at Madison Square Garden. After arriving in New York he conferred by telephone with Dulles twice during the day.⁶ The President, after his talks with Dulles, released a statement to the press in which he said:

The United States considers the developments in Hungary as being a renewed expression of the intense desire for freedom long held by the Hungarian people. . . .

The United States deplores the intervention of Soviet military forces which, under the treaty of peace, should have been withdrawn and the presence of which in Hungary, as is now demonstrated, is not to protect Hungary against armed aggression from without but rather to continue an occupation of Hungary by forces of an alien government for its own purposes.

The heart of America goes out to the people of Hungary.⁷

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid.

⁶New York Times, October 26, 1956, p. 1.

⁷Department of State Bulletin, XXXV (November 5, 1956), 700.

Secretary Dulles, in conjunction with the President's statement, challenged the Soviet Union to live up to its thirteen-year-old promise to permit "political and economic security" in Eastern European countries. He said, "the restive nations awaited fulfillment of the pledge."⁸

At the Madison Square Garden rally that night President Eisenhower appeared to rule out military intervention by the United States in Hungary when he noted that the United States' purpose was to "strengthen the love of liberty everywhere — and to do all within our peaceful power to help its champions."⁹

The New York Times reported that "some observers noted that the President's charges of violation of a treaty and of rights guaranteed by the United Nations Charter were of a type that sometimes precede a formal complaint before the United Nations."¹⁰

Friday, October 26.--The State Department disclosed that the United States was consulting with Britain, France and other friendly governments on the "feasibility and advisability of bringing the situation in Hungary before the United Nations."¹¹ One of the major questions under consideration was the legality of the presence of Soviet troops in Hungary under the Warsaw Pact.¹² The State Department was evidently of the opinion that the Soviets did have a legal right to be in Hungary but the legitimacy of the use of their forces to put down an internal

⁸New York Times, October 26, 1956, p. 2.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹New York Times, October 27, 1956, p. 1.

¹²The Warsaw Pact is a Soviet version of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Under the Pact's provisions Soviet troops had remained in Hungary, a member nation, to safeguard her security.

rebellion was questioned.¹³ The State Department was still frustrated at this time by a lack of information from Hungary and had to rely almost entirely on press reports from correspondents in countries adjacent to Hungary.¹⁴

President Eisenhower met with Secretary Dulles and Senator Walter F. George (D - Ga.), in a forty-five minute conference to receive a briefing from Senator George after his return from a tour of NATO installations. It was reported, however, that the "unrest behind the Iron Curtain came up only incidentally during the White House conference."¹⁵

Saturday, October 27.--Secretary Dulles conferred with President Eisenhower during the morning and advised him of a military mobilization in Israel.¹⁶ The President then sent a message to Premier Ben Gurion of Israel in which he charged Ben Gurion to "take no steps endangering peace."¹⁷ Later in the day the President entered Walter Reed Hospital for a physical examination and Secretary Dulles flew to Dallas, Texas to make a speech before the Dallas Council on World Affairs.¹⁸

The First Secretary of the Hungarian Legation, Tibor Zador, was summoned to the State Department and conferred with Deputy Under Secretary Robert Murphy. Secretary Zador defended the use of Soviet troops to put down the revolt in Hungary and said such intervention was "quite legal"

¹³New York Times, October 27, 1956, p. 1.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶John R. Beal, John Foster Dulles (N. Y.: Harper Brothers, 1957), p. 277.

¹⁷New York Times, October 27, 1956, p. 1.

¹⁸Ibid.

under the Warsaw Pact. Murphy closed the conversation by lodging a firm protest about the fact that our diplomatic representative in Hungary was completely cut off from communication with his government."¹⁹

In his speech in Dallas, Secretary Dulles touched on the situation in Hungary and offered economic aid to the "captive people of Eastern Europe."²⁰ However, no hint of military intervention was given. United States Ambassador to the United Nations, Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr., together with the representatives of the Governments of France, Great Britain, and Northern Ireland, presented a letter to the President of the United Nations Security Council requesting an "urgent meeting of the Security Council for the consideration of the Hungarian situation. . . ."²¹

Sunday, October 28.---Intelligence reports reaching the State Department on Sunday indicated that the Israeli mobilization was complete and that military action was imminent. Herbert Hoover, Jr., Acting Secretary of State in Dulles' absence, went to confer with President Eisenhower at Walter Reed and informed him of the latest developments. Hoover returned from his conference with the President with two messages. One was a personal note to Premier Ben Gurion warning him against any "forceful initiative in the Middle East."²² The other contained instructions to arrange for the evacuation of Americans from the potential war area.²³

During a special session of the United Nations Security Council,

¹⁹Department of State Bulletin, XXXV (November 5, 1956), 701.

²⁰Ibid., p. 695.

²¹Department of State Bulletin, XXXV (November 12, 1956), 757.

²²New York Times, October 29, 1956, p. 1.

²³Beal, op. cit., p. 277.

the Soviet representative, Arkady A. Sobolev, charged the United States with fomenting the uprising in Hungary with agents and funds. Ambassador Lodge categorically denied such allegations and said, ". . . the United States has not done one single improper thing in this case at any time."²⁴ Upon returning to Washington from Dallas that afternoon, Secretary Dulles dismissed the Soviet charges as "tommyrot."²⁵ Later that day Dulles called in the Israeli Ambassador to discuss the reasons behind Israel's mobilization. Dulles also conferred with British and French diplomatic officials and informed them that if fighting broke out in the Middle East the United States would probably ask the United Nations to try and stop it. Dulles asked the support of the British and French Governments and the officials promised to request instructions from their foreign offices.²⁶

During the afternoon the President returned from Walter Reed Hospital and conferred with several of his advisers. John Emmet Hughes, one of those to whom the President talked, offers a penetrating insight into Eisenhower's feelings with regard to the Suez situation. Hughes noted that, "The whole Middle Eastern situation obviously [left] him [Eisenhower] dismayed, baffled, and fearful of great stupidity about to assert itself."²⁷ Hughes relates the following comments by Eisenhower:

I just can't figure out what the Israeli think they're up to. . . . Maybe they're thinking they just can't survive without more land. . . . But I don't see how they can survive without coming to some honorable and peaceful terms with the whole Arab world that surrounds them.²⁸

²⁵New York Times, October 29, 1956, p. 7.

²⁶Beal, *op. cit.*, p. 278.

²⁷John Emmet Hughes, The Ordeal of Power: A Political Memoir of the Eisenhower Years (New York: Atheneum, 1963), p. 212.

²⁸Ibid.

Regarding the news that the French were conspiring with the Israelis, Hughes states that Eisenhower said:

Damn it, the French, they're just egging the Israeli on--hoping somehow to get out of their own North African troubles. Damn it, they sat right there in those chairs three years ago, and we tried to tell them they would repeat Indochina all over again in North Africa. And they said, 'Oh, no! That's part of metropolitan France!'--and all that damn nonsense.²⁹

Later in the day when reports came in indicating that the British too were possibly encouraging Israel, Hughes says that Eisenhower's "affectionate regard for the British [made] him incredulous." And the President said:

I can't believe they would be so stupid as to invite on themselves all the Arab hostility to Israel. Are they going to dare us--dare us--to defend the Tripartite declaration?³⁰

The State Department at this time was still basing its estimates of the Hungarian situation on press reports because the United States Legation in Budapest was cut off from direct contact with Washington. The Department did, however, get one message during the day from the United States Legation in Hungary which came via the Hungarian Legation in Washington. The message contained no factual information of the uprising but did say that the Legation was "considering evacuating dependents."³¹

Monday, October 29.--President Eisenhower was in Florida for a round of campaign speeches when the news of the Israeli invasion of

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Ibid., p. 213.

³¹New York Times, October 29, 1956, p. 1.

Egypt reached the White House.³² The President was informed of the Israeli action as he boarded a plane for Richmond where he was scheduled to give another speech. When given the information he commented that "the news was not good but that he would continue to work for peace."³³ While the President was returning to Washington the State Department received further word from the Middle East that the British Mediterranean fleet had set out for Cyprus from Malta. Secretary Dulles immediately called a conference of senior departmental officers and then sent for the British and French charges.³⁴ He informed the two diplomats that the United States desired to take the Israeli situation to the United Nations and asked them to query their governments for approval.³⁵ When President Eisenhower returned to Washington about 7 o'clock in the evening he scheduled an emergency meeting at the White House to discuss the Israeli invasion. The President met with Secretary of State Dulles and six other top officials³⁶ and, after the meeting, the following statement was released by the White House:

³²This refutes Beal's account in his book John Foster Dulles, op. cit., p. 280, where he noted that the President was in Florida on October 30, 1956, and received word of the British-French ultimatum as he boarded a plane for Richmond. The New York Times, October 30, 1956, and Public Papers of the Presidents, 1956, (Washington: Federal Register Division), pp. 277-79, support the contention that the President was in Florida on October 29, rather than the 30th, and that he received the news of the Israeli invasion, not the message regarding the British-French ultimatum, as Beal contends.

³³New York Times, October 30, 1956, p. 1.

³⁴Beal, op. cit., p. 278.

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Others at the meeting were: Charles E. Wilson, Secretary of Defense; Admiral Arthur W. Radford, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Sherman Adams, Assistant to the President; Herbert Hoover, Jr., Under Secretary of State; Allen W. Dulles, Director of the Central Intelligence Agency; and Wilton B. Persons, Deputy Assistant to the President.

At the meeting the President recalled that the United States, under this and prior administrations, has pledged itself to assist the victim of any aggression in the Middle East.

We shall honor our pledge.

The United States is in consultation with the British and French Governments, parties with us to the Tripartite Declaration of 1950, and the United States plans, as contemplated by that declaration, that the situation shall be taken to the United Nations Security Council tomorrow morning.³⁷

Later in the evening, when it was learned that Israeli forces had penetrated seventy-five miles into Egypt, the decision to act without further waiting was taken. At 11:30 P.M. the United States Ambassador to the United Nations, Henry Cabot Lodge, submitted a request for an emergency meeting of the Security Council to deal with the Middle East situation.³⁸

John Emmet Hughes reports that he talked with President Eisenhower at about 5 P.M. The President's conversation with Hughes is important in that it gives a clear picture of the President's thinking at this critical juncture in the decisional period. According to Hughes Eisenhower said:

I've just finished writing an answer to an informative cable from Eden this morning, saying I understand and even sympathize with him on the problem he faces--but just hope he's figured out all the risks. . . . I'm not at all optimistic. I'm afraid the British'll come out of this with more loss of face. What are they going to do--fight the whole Moslem world?³⁹

In regard to the 1950 Tripartite Declaration Eisenhower stated:

I think that problem will take care of itself if the Israeli stop fighting, and I'm pretty sure they will, with

³⁷Department of State Bulletin, XXXV (November 12, 1956), 749.

³⁸New York Times, October 30, 1956, p. 1.

³⁹Hughes, op. cit., p. 216.

this ultimatum from the British. I'm quite confident that'll be over within 24 hours.⁴⁰

When asked whether the United States would join Nasser against the allies if the fighting did not stop, the President said:

Hell, I don't know where we'll be at. . . . You see, London and Paris say now they regard the pledge as void because of Nasser taking arms from the Russians. But that doesn't go in my book. Nobody told me the pledge was void--and if it was, why didn't they say so before this? Well, if the Israeli keep on fighting, we'll be in a hell of a fix. And I suppose the other two powers, Britain and France, don't support the Tripartite Resolution, we would be justified in taking that into account in not supporting it ourselves. . . . I don't know. . . . Maybe we'll just have to get off the hook by talking about Russian arms going to Cairo. I've just never seen great powers make such a complete mess and botch of things. . . . Of course, there's just nobody, in a war, I'd rather have fighting alongside me than the British. . . . But this thing! My God!⁴¹

Tuesday, October 30.--The President was in consultation most of the day with Secretary Dulles. When news of the British and French ultimatum to Egypt and Israel reached the White House the President sent personal messages to Prime Minister Eden and Premier Mollet urging them not to use force until the United Nations had an opportunity to act on the crisis. Secretary Dulles called in the British Charge' d' Affaires, J. E. Coulson, and expressed his "extreme displeasure" about the failure to try to concert British and United States policies in advance.⁴² A statement issued by the White House regarding the ultimatum said in part:

The President expressed his earnest hope that the United Nations Organization would be given full opportunity to settle the items in the controversy by peaceful means instead of forceful ones.

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 217.

⁴²New York Times, October 31, 1956, p. 1.

This Government continues to believe that it is possible by such peaceful means to secure a solution which would restore the armistice conditions between Egypt and Israel, as well as bring about a just settlement of the Suez Canal controversy.⁴³

In the United Nations, the British and French vetoed two separate proposals by the United States and the Soviet Union calling for a cease-fire in Egypt.⁴⁴

Wednesday, October 31.--This was the day on which the British and French began their air attack on Egypt. The President met with Dulles most of the day while they prepared Eisenhower's speech to be given that evening over radio and television.⁴⁵ In New York the United Nations Security Council called an emergency session of the General Assembly to make recommendations on the actions undertaken against Egypt.⁴⁶

Eisenhower delivered a 15 minute speech over radio and television in the evening and pledged no United States involvement in the fighting in Egypt. He said the aim of the United States would be "to do all in its power to localize the fighting and to end the conflict."⁴⁷ In his address the President pinned his major hope for ending the war on the United Nations General Assembly. The United States statement made on Monday, October 29, to come to the aid of those attacked under the Tripartite Agreement of 1950 was not referred to in light of the fact that Britain and France were now involved in the conflict.⁴⁸

⁴³Department of State Bulletin, XXXV (November 12, 1956), 749.

⁴⁴New York Times, October 31, 1956, p. 1.

⁴⁵Beal, op. cit., p. 281.

⁴⁶New York Times, November 1, 1956, p. 1.

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸Ibid.

Thursday, November 1.--Top level discussions proceeded for most of the day on the subject of what actions, if any, the United States should take beyond the United Nations move. The National Security Council met during the morning and Eisenhower conferred later with Dulles. There was no indication from the discussions that the United States would do anything in the way of coming to the aid of Egypt except through the United Nations.

The President asked Dulles to go to the United Nations to present the United States proposal for a cease-fire in Egypt. In his speech that night at the United Nations Dulles said that the United States position had been reappraised "in the highest quarters" and despite the United States ties with Britain, France, and Israel, we could not agree to the use of force except in self-defense or with United Nations authorization.⁴⁹

During the evening, in Philadelphia, the President delivered his final speech of the campaign and touched on both the Hungarian and Suez situations.

Friday, November 2.--Dulles met with the President and Under Secretary of State Hoover after Dulles returned from New York just before noon. From the meeting emerged an offer of \$20,000,000 worth of food and medical supplies to Hungary. Dulles, commenting on his conference with the President, said they had discussed means of "following up" the United Nations action on the Suez crisis. He indicated that "the follow up would be up to Mr. Hammarskjold" and that, while the question was "under very active consideration," no decision had been reached.⁵⁰

⁴⁹New York Times, November 2, 1956, p. 7.

⁵⁰New York Times, November 3, 1956, p. 1.

At the United Nations the United States resolution calling for a cease-fire in Egypt was passed but no decision was reached in the Security Council on a course of action to take in Hungary.⁵¹

Late in the evening Secretary Dulles was stricken ill and taken to Walter Reed Army Hospital where it was determined that he would have to undergo surgery.⁵²

Saturday, November 3.--President Eisenhower conferred with Secretary Dulles by telephone during the morning before the Secretary was operated on at Walter Reed. During the day the President met with Herbert Hoover, Jr. and other top-level advisors to discuss the Middle East situation. After the meetings the White House issued a statement which said:

The United States will today propose to the General Assembly of the United Nations two additional resolutions with respect to the critical Middle Eastern situation.

. . . The additional resolutions which will be presented deal with the necessity of seeking promptly solutions to basic problems which have given rise to the present conflict.

The first resolution will propose a new approach to the settlement of major problems outstanding between the Arab States and Israel

The second resolution will deal with means of finding a solution to the Suez Canal controversy. It will seek the earliest possible opening of the canal and the working out of permanent arrangements for the functioning of the canal.

The resolutions will be presented to the General Assembly by Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge, head of the United States delegation.⁵³

The tone of the resolutions presented indicated that the United States appeared at this time to be taking a more moderate stand on the

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Department of State Bulletin, XXXV (November 12, 1956), 749.

Middle East controversy.⁵⁴

Sunday, November 4.--Early in the morning the Soviets moved new forces into Hungary to crush the rebellion. At the United Nations the General Assembly voted for an investigation of the Hungarian situation.

President Eisenhower conferred with top-level advisers and released the following statement:

I met today with the Secretary of State at Walter Reed Hospital and later with the Acting Secretary of State, some of his staff, the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, and some of his staff to discuss the ways and means available to the United States which would result in:

1. Withdrawal of Soviet troops from Hungary.
2. Achieve for Hungary its own right of self-determination in the choice of its own government.

I have sent an urgent message to Premier Bulganin on these points.⁵⁵

Eisenhower's message to Bulganin read in part:

I have noted with profound distress the reports which have reached me today from Hungary. . . .

I urge in the name of humanity and in the cause of peace that the Soviet Union take action to withdraw Soviet forces from Hungary immediately. . . .⁵⁶

The President, in his statement on Hungary, also discussed the Middle East and noted that "there was a . . . thorough review of the Middle East situation and the measures . . . under way in the United Nations to restore peace in that area and lay the groundwork for constructive solutions to its problems."⁵⁷

Monday, November 5.--The United Nations voted to create an international United Nations Command Force to supervise the cessation of

⁵⁴New York Times, November 4, 1956, p. 1.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 1080.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 1080.

⁵⁷New York Times, November 5, 1956, p. 1.

hostilities in the Middle East. Britain and France announced they would institute a cease-fire after the acceptance of the police force proposal by Egypt and Israel. Egypt appealed to all nations to send arms and volunteers to repel the British, French and Israeli forces. The Soviets responded with the offer of "volunteers" and the United States warned the Soviet Union that it would oppose any effort by them to intervene in the Middle East. Ambassador Lodge again denounced Soviet suppression of the Hungarian liberation movement.⁵⁸

President Eisenhower held conferences with his staff and advisors during the day and Secretary Dulles called Herbert Hoover, Jr., to his bedside at Walter Reed for briefings on the Middle East situation.⁵⁹

Tuesday, November 6.--The President conferred with Herbert Hoover, Jr., and Allen W. Dulles during the morning and then journeyed to his home at Gettysburg to vote. He returned to Washington for more talks in the afternoon and conferred with Secretary Dulles by telephone.⁶⁰

During the afternoon the British and French announced the acceptance of the United Nations cease-fire proposal and Egypt withdrew her appeal for "volunteers."⁶¹

Wednesday, November 7.--During the morning President Eisenhower conferred with Herbert Hoover, Jr., and with Secretary Dulles at Walter Reed Hospital. In the afternoon a conference was held with Admiral Radford and Secretary of Defense Wilson. The President sent a personal message to

⁵⁸Ibid.

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰New York Times, November 7, 1956, p. 8.

⁶¹Ibid.

Premier Ben Gurion of Israel appealing to him to withdraw Israeli forces from Egypt.⁶²

By November 7 the decisional period was over in so far as this study is concerned. The British and French acceptance of the cease-fire proposal and the Soviet victory in Hungary represented the turning points in the decisional period and the end of the crises.

⁶²New York Times, November 8, 1956, p. 1.

CHAPTER V
THE BASIC DETERMINANTS OF DECISION MAKING:
EISENHOWER AND DULLES

In order to analyze the decisions made by Eisenhower and his advisers relative to the Hungarian and Suez crises an attempt will be made here to categorize the basic determinants of competence, motivation, and information-communications and relate these to the top-level decision-makers.

Since it is evident from the data available on the period in question that Eisenhower and Dulles were the key decision-makers in the Hungarian and Suez decisional unit, they will be represented as the key "actors" in the situation.

First the general pattern of competence, motivation and information - communications of Eisenhower and Dulles will be established. Then an analysis of the decisions themselves will be made by adapting the factual propositions on the behaviors and activities of the two men as implied in the variables.

Sphere of Competence: Eisenhower

The sphere of competence or organizational role of President Eisenhower was based in large part on his experiences as an Army officer. He came to the White House with a military man's view of organization

and administration. As a result of his many years in the armed forces he quite naturally embraced the concept of a staff organization which resembled the type of system with which he had worked for so long.¹ One of the President's first steps after taking office was to create the position of Staff Secretary. This job he gave to the late General Carroll. He then appointed Sherman Adams to the post of Special Assistant to the President and thereafter frequently referred to him as "my chief of staff."² Eisenhower's staff system, in which were spelled out all the functions and responsibilities of each individual, provided for a fixed order and sequence of procedures from the President down. Within the staff itself there was more formality, both in working procedures and personal contacts than had been true in the Truman Administration where no set pattern had been established.³

The departmentalization and specialization of roles which Eisenhower created in his staff organization provided for routine assignment of functions and decisions. With the type of organization which evolved Eisenhower was left free to concentrate his energy where he believed it was most needed--with the important issues that required Presidential decisions. The President did not look upon this as an abdication of his authority but rather as a sharing of this authority with the men around him. This approach reflected the President's basic attitude towards government. He believed that the democratic process provided for a diffusion of power and, because of this

¹Merriman Smith, Meet Mister Eisenhower (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1955), p. 124.

²Ibid.

³New York Times, March 16, 1963, p. 6.

conception, he did not want to be the final arbiter of policy. While he did not want major decisions to be taken out of his hands entirely, he did refuse to use his power arbitrarily. Merlo Pusey, President Eisenhower's biographer, commenting on this aspect of the President's character noted that,

. . . while the President loves system, he is not a one-man show by either nature or by training; rather, he operated as a sort of supercaptain of many interlocking teams. Instead of brilliant improvisation, he believes in good organization, through staff work and an orderly play of many minds upon every important issue before it is resolved.⁵

President Eisenhower's personal conception of his job gives a hint as to his sphere of competence. The President regarded his job as consisting of four distinct parts: 1) Chief of state; 2) Head of government; 3) Ceremonial chief of state; and 4) Head of political party. The role which is most important in this study, that of Chief of State, President Eisenhower defined as, "largely concerned with foreign affairs policy, which the President determines and turns over to the Secretary of State for execution."⁶ These concepts of his role were embodied in his "staff" and "team" concept of organization and displayed by his close adherence to the spirit and the letter of the Constitution.

Eisenhower, unlike some Presidents who have bypassed their Cabinets, relied heavily on his to assume full responsibility for the offices they held.⁷ From the beginning of his Administration Eisenhower regarded the Cabinet and the National Security Council as bodies for candid discussion and debate.⁸ His unprecedented Cabinet meeting at the Commodore Hotel in

⁵Ibid., p. 87.

⁶Smith, op. cit., p. 298.

⁷John M. Brown, Through These Men (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956), p. 98.

⁸Robert J. Donovan, Eisenhower: The Inside Story (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956), p. 98.

New York City, on January 12, 1953, before his inauguration, was a preview of the reliance he was to place on his Cabinet. At this meeting the President-elect read a draft of his inaugural speech to his newly appointed Cabinet in order that they might criticize and, if necessary, make needed changes to it.⁹

Eisenhower's relations with Congress followed the traditionalist's conception of the separation of powers. He brought with him to the Presidency a genuine respect for Congress and its Constitutional role.¹⁰ In addition, Eisenhower undoubtedly had a bipartisan point of view regarding politics which may have been engendered in part by the aura of charisma with which, some say, the public had endowed him in the 1952 elections.¹¹ He wanted very much to carry this bipartisanship over into his relations with Congress - a desire which was largely fulfilled in the field of foreign affairs during his first four years. His campaign speech in Convention Hall, Philadelphia on November 1, 1956, reflected President Eisenhower's image of himself as being "above" politics when he said,

. . . now though I am a party member, before all else I am your President - responsible not to Republicans or to Democrats, but to all Americans. And I believe it is fitting - in this, my final address of this political campaign - to speak to you in this role and this spirit. I speak to you of the faith and convictions that have guided me - and this Administration - in these past four years. . . .¹²

⁹Ibid., p. 2.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 83.

¹¹James C. Davies, "Charisma in the 1952 Campaign," The American Political Science Review, XLVIII (December, 1954), 1083.

¹²"Address in Convention Hall, Philadelphia, Pa., November 1, 1956, by President Eisenhower," Public Papers of the Presidents, 1956, op. cit., p. 1066.

Motivation: Eisenhower

A study of the motivational factors and their relevance to the decisions made by President Eisenhower leads the researcher immediately and irrevocably to the paramount motive of the President – that of bringing peace to the world. Pusey aptly described this trait when he wrote:

It may be truly said of Eisenhower that he is a man of peace by instinct, training, conviction, and experience. He refuses to regard any people as an enemy. He looks upon war as the greatest catastrophe, other than the loss of freedom, that can befall any country. Consequently, he refuses to use war as an instrument of policy, except as a last resort to save our way of life from threatened destruction.¹³

President Eisenhower's actions as well as his public statements from his inauguration up to the time of the Hungarian and Suez crises reflected the genuine and sincere interest in peace of the military man who has seen the horrors of war. His conclusion of the Armistice in Korea, his Atoms-for-Peace program, his support of the Geneva conferences and of disarmament, as well as his Open-Skies plan for effective control of disarmament, and his actions regarding Quemoy and Matsu all bespoke his deep conviction that peace could be brought to the world.¹⁴ A study of the President's public statements leads one to the same conclusion regarding his desire for peace.

In his Inaugural Address delivered in Washington, on January 20, 1953, the President said:

In pleading our just cause before the bar of history and in pressing our labor for world peace, we shall be guided by certain fixed principles.

. . . Honoring the identity and the special heritage of

¹³Pusey, op. cit., p. 86.

¹⁴Oliver Benson, "The Foreign Policy of the Eisenhower Administration," in The McNeese Review, VII (Spring, 1955), 19.

each nation in the world, we shall never use our strength to try to impress upon another people our own cherished political and economic institutions.

. . . Appreciating that economic need, military security, and political wisdom combine to suggest regional groupings of free peoples, we hope, within the framework of the United Nations, to help strengthen such special bonds the world over. The nature of these ties must vary with the different problems of different areas.

. . . Abhorring war as a chosen way to balk the purposes of those who threaten us, we hold it to be the first task of statesmanship to develop the strength that will deter the forces of aggression and promote the conditions for peace. For, as it must be the supreme purpose of all free men, so it must be the dedication of their leaders, to save humanity from preying upon itself.

. . . Respecting the United Nations as the living sign of all people's hope for peace, we shall strive to make it not merely an eloquent symbol but an effective force. And in our quest for an honorable peace, we shall neither compromise, nor tire, nor ever cease. . . .¹⁵

In an address before the General Assembly of the United Nations in December, 1953, President Eisenhower voiced his convictions regarding the peaceful settlement of differences between nations when he said:

Never before in history has so much hope for so many people been gathered together in a single organization. Your deliberations and decisions during these somber years have already realized part of those hopes.

But the great tests and the great accomplishments still lie ahead. And in the confident expectation of those accomplishments, I would use the office which for the time being, I hold, to assure you that the Government of the United States will remain steadfast in its support of this body. This we shall do in the conviction that you will provide a great share of the wisdom, the courage, and the faith which can bring to this world lasting peace for all nations, and happiness and well being for all men.

. . . my country's purpose is to help us move out of the dark chamber of horrors into the light, to find a way by which

¹⁵Dwight D. Eisenhower, "Inaugural Address, January 20, 1953," Peace With Justice (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), p. 30.

the minds of men, the hopes of men, the souls of men everywhere can move forward toward peace and happiness and well being.¹⁶

Throughout the statements made by President Eisenhower we find this sincere desire for peace with justice. He was convinced that the only hope for a complete and lasting peace was based on justice through the instrument of the United Nations organization. His basic policy rejected the use of force to bring about peace and therefore he advocated that the settlement of controversies between nations be accomplished through the United Nations. President Eisenhower believed that, "the United States was strong because its government was founded on a deeply-felt religious faith."¹⁷ He repeatedly expressed the belief that the foundation of a durable peace had to be strong moral values based on resolute faith.

In an address to the American Jewish Tercentenary in 1954 the President reiterated these convictions:

The pursuit of peace is at once our religious obligation and our national policy. Peace in freedom where all men dwell in security is the ideal toward which our foreign policy is directed.

Our nation, because of its productivity and power, both existing and potential, holds a prime responsibility for maintaining peace.

The following avenues must be trod as we make our way toward our peaceful goal.

First, we must tirelessly seek, through the United Nations and through every other avenue open to us, every means to establish the conditions for an honorable peace.

Second, we must promote the unity and collective strength of other free peoples.

Third, we must maintain enough military strength to deter aggression and so promote peace.

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 54-59.

¹⁷Smith, op. cit., p. 220.

Let us then, each of us, resolve anew that we shall strive for peace with all our hearts and minds. From country seat to the conference table among nations; let us talk for peace from the classroom to the Congressional hall.¹⁸

Peace was the theme again at an address at the Annual Luncheon of the Associated Press in New York on April 25, 1955, when the President said:

Two great American objectives are mountain peaks that tower above the foothills of lesser goals. One is global peace based on justice, mutual respect and co-operative partnership among nations. The other is an expanding economy whose benefits, widely shared among all our citizens, will make us even better able to co-operate with other friendly nations in their economic advancement and our common prosperity.

The principle objective of our foreign policy, therefore, as we search for peace, is the construction of the strongest possible coalition among free nations. The coalition must possess spiritual, intellectual, and material strength.¹⁹

President Eisenhower's reliance on the United Nations as the instrument through which world peace could be achieved was reaffirmed in an address at the Tenth Anniversary Meeting of that organization in San Francisco on June 20, 1955:

I am privileged to bring you a special message from the Congress of the United States. Last week the Congress unanimously adopted a resolution requesting me to express to all of you here, on behalf of the people of the United States, our deep desire for peace and our hope that all nations will join with us in a renewed effort for peace.

. . . It seems fitting that I, today, speak principally in terms of my country's unswerving loyalty to the United Nations and of the reasons for our tireless support of it.

So, with the birthday congratulations I bring, I reaffirm to you the support of the Government of the United States in the purposes and aims of the United Nations, and in the hopes that inspired its founders.

¹⁸Peace With Justice, op. cit., pp. 80-90.

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 102-103.

I can solemnly pledge to you here, and to all the men and women of the world who may hear or read my words, that those who represent the United States, will strive to be thus loyal, thus dedicated. For us of the United States, there is no alternative, because our devotion to the United Nations Charter is the outgrowth of a faith deeply rooted in our cultural, political, and spiritual traditions.

We shall work with all others - especially through this great organization, the United Nations, so that peaceful and reasonable negotiations may replace the clash of the battlefield. In this way we can in time make unnecessary the vast armaments that, even when maintained only for security, still terrify the world with their devastating potential and tax unbearably the creative energies of men.²⁰

Again, at the Geneva Conference in July, 1955, the President reaffirmed his hopes for peace saying:

We cannot expect here, in the few hours of a few days, to solve all the problems of the world that need to be solved. Nevertheless, we can, perhaps, create a new spirit that will make possible future solutions of problems which are within our responsibilities. And equally important we can try to take here and now at Geneva the first steps on a new road to a just and durable peace.

. . . there is the problem of respecting the right of people to choose the form of government under which they will live; and of restoring sovereign rights and self-government to those who have been deprived of them. The American people feel strongly that certain peoples of Eastern Europe, many with a long and proud record of national existence, have not yet been given the benefit of this pledge of our United Nations wartime decoration, reinforced by other wartime agreements.²¹

Peace with justice and a rejection of the use of force was a part of President Eisenhower's State of the Union Message in January, 1956, when he said:

Our world policy and our actions are dedicated to the achievement of peace with justice for all nations.

²⁰Department of State Bulletin, XXXIII (July 4, 1955), 3-6.

²¹"Statement at the Geneva Big-Four Conference, July 18, 1955," Eisenhower, Peace With Justice, op. cit., pp. 123-124.

The sum of our international effort should be this: the waging of peace, with as much resourcefulness, with as great a sense of dedication and urgency, as we have ever mustered in defense of our country in time of war. In this effort our weapon is not force. . . .²²

His speech opening the 1956 Presidential campaign for re-election, delivered over radio and television, on September 19, 1956 was also on the subject of peace:

. . . I want to talk of one word -- and of many things. The word is Peace, and the many things are its many and momentous meanings.

. . . we face, in these days another grave crisis concerning the Suez Canal. We have spoken with care and restraint. We cannot yet know whether the issue can be settled with justice and fairness to all. But we can know that the world will know that America has spared no effort to save peace.²³

In his speech of November 1, 1956, Eisenhower, referring to the Suez invasion and the Hungarian uprising, said:

I, as your President, am proud--and I trust you are proud--that the United States declared itself against the use of force in, not one, but both cases.

And now, a few words about the principles that we have followed in making particular decisions.

First, we cannot and will not condone armed aggression--no matter who the attacker, and no matter who the victim.

We cannot--in the world, any more than in our own nation--subscribe to one law for the weak, another law for the strong; one law for those opposing us, another for those allied with us.

There can be only one law or there will be no peace. . . .²⁴

While it is fairly simple to establish Eisenhower's motivation in regard to peace, justice and the United Nations, it is very difficult to define his attitude regarding the election in progress at the time

²²State of the Union Message Delivered to the Congress of the United States, January 5, 1956," Public Papers of the Presidents, 1956, op. cit., pp. 4-9.

²³Opening Speech of the 1956 Presidential Campaign, September 19, 1956," Public Papers of the Presidents, 1956, op. cit., pp. 779-784.

²⁴Address by President Eisenhower in Convention Hall, Philadelphia, November 1, 1956," Public Papers of the Presidents, 1956, op. cit., p. 1071.

of the Hungarian and Suez crises. On the one hand, it would seem logical to assume that election-year exigencies and public opinion might have had a bearing upon his decision. This contention is based on the assumption that so long as the possibility of re-election exists, it is doubtful that a politician will commit what amounts to political suicide by ignoring the domestic political "facts of life."²⁵ On the other hand, however, it is also logical to assume, in light of Eisenhower's public utterances placing himself "above" politics, that he acted in accord with his own basic convictions and that any influence the election may have had was secondary.

Therefore, it appears that arguments can be posed for both propositions; 1) that Eisenhower exploited an international crisis to strengthen his domestic political position, and 2) he conducted his foreign policy in spite of the Presidential campaign.

It is of course impossible, lacking a definitive statement from Eisenhower himself, to determine which hypothesis is the correct one. Needless to say, such uncertainty in the case of motivation is one of the major deficiencies inherent in studies such as the present one. The most the researcher can do is to make a thorough empirical study and then make a value judgment based on his findings. With this qualification then, it must be concluded that politics was not part of Eisenhower's motivation

²⁵The political "facts of life" in this case had to do with the Republican Party and their efforts to run Eisenhower and Nixon on a platform of "Peace and Prosperity" to demonstrate to the American people that the United States was a better place in which to live after four years of Republican leadership. Consequently, the Republicans were more than eager to settle the Suez dispute and not become embroiled in the Hungarian situation since such an international state of affairs would have upset the American voters and would have served to denigrate the Republican's peace and prosperity program.

and if the Presidential election campaign and public opinion affected Eisenhower's decision, the effect was to invigorate the pursuit of a policy which would have evolved even in the absence of a political domestic campaign.

It is possible from the study up to this point to state several general characteristics of Eisenhower which are relevant to an analysis of his foreign policy decisions; first, he rejected force as an instrument of foreign policy; second, he placed a great deal of reliance upon the United Nations as the means for obtaining peace; third, he denounced aggression; fourth, he considered himself "above" politics; and fifth, he placed the objectives of peace and justice above all else, save freedom.

Information-Communications: Eisenhower

In the field of information-communications several observations concerning President Eisenhower's methods of keeping informed on foreign affairs are relevant to this study.

President Eisenhower relied heavily on his staff to bring his attention to important matters.²⁶ Soon after taking office the President created the position of Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs and this assistant became the President's chief liaison with the National Security Council. Rather than sit in on daily National Security Council meetings the President relied on daily briefings on the Council's activities from his staff man.²⁷ These briefings, along with a daily roundup of significant world developments which came to him from

²⁶Smith, op. cit., p. 126.

²⁷Donovan, op. cit., p. 69.

the Central Intelligence Agency, and a digest of news dispatches, columns and editorial opinion prepared by the government information services, constituted the major sources of foreign affairs information for the President.²⁸ President Eisenhower preferred to have his reports reduced to single page memoranda which he could deal with quickly. Usually he had his advisors report in person in order that he could acquire additional information if necessary. To save time the President often consulted with Congressmen, Cabinet members and his advisers by telephone.²⁹ It is also relevant to note that Eisenhower was a rather haphazard reader of the daily newspapers and liked his staff to point out important articles that he should read.³⁰

Eisenhower relied on the "hard" intelligence data furnished by the traditional sources of the Executive department: the Central Intelligence Agency, the intelligence organizations of the State Department - which included embassies - the Department of Defense, the Atomic Energy Commission, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.³¹

In general it seems that Eisenhower's creation of a staff organization resulted in a communication-information pattern usually associated with the military services, i.e., one where the commander-in-chief relies almost entirely on his subordinates to provide him with information through a complicated "chain of command." The situation which evolved as a result

²⁸Smith, op. cit., p. 127.

²⁹Pusey, op. cit., p. 86.

³⁰Smith, op. cit., p. 126.

³¹H. F. Haviland, The Formulation and Administration of United States Foreign Policy (Washington: The Brookings Institution, 1960), p. 92.

of this pattern of information-communication became significant at the time of the Hungarian and Suez crises and will be dealt with in more detail later.

Sphere of Competence: Dulles

Turning now to an examination of the organizational role of Secretary of State John Foster Dulles a quotation from J. R. Beal's biography of Mr. Dulles seems appropriate:

John Foster Dulles took office with a mind sharply focused and a record of having been thinking, writing, and speaking continuously, consistently and imaginatively about the problems faced by the United States in international relations since 1907 when, as a Princeton junior, 19 years old, he accompanied his grandfather to a world peace conference at the Hague.³²

Perhaps as a result of his many years of experience in foreign affairs or because of President Eisenhower's attempt to delegate to his subordinates a large measure of authority, Secretary Dulles considered himself a one-man Department of State. He tended to rely more on his own judgment than on the advice of his staff³³ and divorced himself from the day-by-day operations of policy formation and execution. Hans Morgenthau has noted that Dulles "shut himself off from the regular channels of departmental information and advice [but] kept a monopoly on major policy decisions and took an unprecedentedly large part in certain phases of their execution. . . ."³⁴

³²Beal, op. cit., p. 16.

³³C. L. Sulzberger, What's Wrong With United States Foreign Policy, (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1959), p. 46.

³⁴Hans J. Morgenthau, "What the President and Mr. Dulles Don't Know," New Republic, CXXXV (December 17, 1956), 16.

Joseph Harsch, writing of Dulles' abhorrence of the bureaucratic State Department structure, notes that shortly before taking office as Secretary of State, Dulles expressed a wish that he might have an 'ivory tower' office off in some obscure corner of the White House where he could just "think about foreign policy, and not have any formal connection with the vast, complex, heirarchical structure of the Department of State."³⁵

Actually, Dulles wanted the job of executive director of the National Security Council rather than that of Secretary of State because he reasoned that he could devote his time to foreign policy instead of administration. However, when it was pointed out to him that he had no assurance of being able to influence policy effectively without risking major conflict with whomever was named Secretary of State, together with the fact that the prestige of the Secretary of State's post would make the world listen when he spoke, he decided to take the job.³⁶

Secretary Dulles' conception of a one-man Department of State was reflected in his personal diplomacy policy. He was considered the most traveled Secretary of State as a result of his attempts to carry out the foreign policy of the United States on a personal contact basis.³⁷ It was often said that Dulles "carried the foreign policies of the United States around in his coat pocket,"³⁸ and as a result, the secondary officials in the Department of State tended to become merely executors of his

³⁵Joseph C. Harsch, "John Foster Dulles," Harper's, CCXIII (September, 1956), 29.

³⁶Beal, op. cit., p. 136.

³⁷Henry M. Wriston, "The Secretary of State Abroad," Foreign Affairs, XXXIV (July, 1956), 531.

³⁸Harsch, op. cit., p. 29.

policy. With this diminution of authority the rank of ambassador became one of decreasing importance.

Dulles, who had been a lawyer for many years, came to the State Department with the lawyer's eye and the lawyer's tools for the formation and manipulation of foreign policy.³⁹ The technique of making a case for a client was carried over into his conduct of American diplomacy. As each situation arose it was treated as a case and dealt with as a legal case would be. The lawyer's particular opposition to long-range planning was an integral part of this case method because once a particular case had been dealt with it was considered over. Treating such situations as cases precluded the necessity of looking into their antecedents or planning for future contingencies once the case was finished.⁴⁰

This examination of Dulles' sphere of competence, though brief, will be particularly relevant later in this study when an analysis of the Hungarian and Suez decisions is made.

Motivation: Dulles

The prime motive underlying Secretary Dulles' actions as President Eisenhower's chief Cabinet member was, it seems, a firm conviction that peace could be brought to the world if the United States identified itself, by moral persuasion, with the universal longing for peace. Secretary Dulles evidently had a genuine conviction that the Soviet menace was the greatest peril that the United States faced in its quest for this peace.⁴¹

³⁹ibid., p. 28.

⁴⁰Morgenthau, op. cit., p. 17.

⁴¹John W. Spanier, American Foreign Policy Since World War II, (New York: F. A. Praeger, 1960), p. 100.

Dulles once said, "I want to make my life count for something in the world for Peace,"⁴² and one of his basic beliefs seemed to have been that the door should always be left open for peaceful change. For it was only through such peaceful change that the legitimate aspirations for freedom and self-government could be realized throughout the world. While it may be true that Dulles' methods for achieving this peace which he desired may at times have seemed paradoxical, viz. his policy of "brinkmanship," he was convinced that the only way to achieve lasting peace was by "drawing a line so clearly that the enemy would be left in no doubt as to what would happen if he crossed it."⁴³ He believed that by going to the "brink of war the United States would be able to deter aggression."⁴⁴

Dulles renounced the use of force to achieve peace unless such force were needed to prevent aggression. This idea was a thread with which many of his public statements were tailored:

A first phase of our quest for peace must be to restore our moral influence . . . the United States must make it clear, clear beyond a doubt, that it has no thought of using economic or military might to impose on others its particular way of life.⁴⁵

And again:

I believe that the United States should adopt every honorable course to avoid engagement in war. Indeed, I have devoted my whole life to the pursuit of a just and durable peace. I believe however, that there are basic moral values and vital interests, for which we stand, and that the surest way to avoid war is to let it be known in advance that we are prepared to defend these principles, if need be by life itself.

This policy of seeking to prevent war by preventing miscalculation of a potential aggressor is not a personal policy . . .

⁴²Deane and David Heller, John Foster Dulles: Soldier for Peace, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1960), p. 32.

⁴³Spanier, op. cit., p. 104.

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Heller, op. cit., p. 120.

it is a national policy.

My views with respect to peace have been made known on many, many occasions. . . .⁴⁶

Dulles reiterated these convictions in an article he wrote for Foreign Affairs in April, 1954.

The heart of the problem [of peace] is how to deter attack. This, we believe requires that a potential aggressor be left in no doubt that he would be certain to suffer damage outweighing any possible gains from aggression.

Our national purpose is not merely to survive in a world fraught with appalling danger. We want to end this era of danger. We shall not achieve that result merely by developing a vast military establishment. That serves merely to defend us and to deter attack. . . .

The way to end the peril peacefully is to demonstrate that freedom produces not merely guns, but the spiritual, intellectual and material richness that all men want.⁴⁷

Like President Eisenhower, Secretary Dulles rejected force as an instrument to achieve peace and relied more on the United Nations and law to settle controversies. Speaking from the White House over radio and television regarding the Suez controversy he said:

. . . it is inadmissible that a waterway internationalized by treaty, which is required for the livelihood of a score or more of nations, should be exploited by one country for purely selfish purposes.

To permit this to go unchallenged would be to encourage a breakdown of the international fabric upon which the security and the well being of all peoples depend.

Now there were some people who counseled immediate forcible action by the governments which felt themselves most directly affected. This, however, would have been contrary to the principles of the United Nations Charter and would undoubtedly have led to widespread violence endangering the peace of the world.

I believe . . . that most people pay decent respect for the opinions of mankind when they are soberly, carefully, and deliberately formulated. And because I believe that, I am confident that out of this conference there will come a judgment

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 321.

⁴⁷John Foster Dulles, "Policy for Security and Peace," Foreign Affairs, XXXII (April, 1954), 357.

of such moral force that we can be confident that the Suez Canal will go on, as it has for the last one hundred years, for the years in the future to serve in peace the interests of mankind.⁴⁸

In his speech to the United Nations General Assembly at the time of the British-French invasion of Suez Secretary Dulles again expressed his faith in peaceful processes and denounced the use of force:

I doubt that any delegate ever spoke from this forum with as heavy a heart as I have brought here tonight. We speak of a matter of vital importance, where the United States finds itself unable to agree with three nations with whom it has ties, deep friendship, admiration, and respect, and two of whom constitute our oldest, most trusted and reliable allies.

The fact that we differ with such friends has led us to reconsider and re-evaluate our position with the utmost care, and that has been done at the highest levels of our Government. Even after the evaluation we find ourselves still in disagreement. . . .

We are not blind, Mr. President to the fact that what has happened in the last two or three days comes out of a murky background. But we have come to the conclusion that these provocations, serious as they are, cannot justify the resort to armed force which has occurred within the last two or three days and which is still going on tonight. . . .

. . . Mr. President and fellow delegates, there seemed to be peaceful processes that were at work and which, as I say, had not yet, it seemed to us at least, run their course. And while, Mr. President, I would be the last to say that there never can be circumstances where resort to force may not be employed - and certainly there can be resort to force for defensive purposes under Article 51 - it seems to us that, under the circumstances which I described, the resort to force, the violent armed attack by three of our members upon a fourth, cannot be treated as other than a grave error, inconsistent with the principles and purposes of the Charter and one which if persisted in would gravely undermine our Charter and undermine this organization.⁴⁹

Perhaps the best summation of Secretary Dulles' motives come from

⁴⁸"Radio-Television Address by John Foster Dulles from Washington, D. C., August 3, 1956," Department of State Bulletin, XXXV (August 13, 1956), 260-261.

⁴⁹"Speech to the United Nations General Assembly by John Foster Dulles, November 1, 1956," Department of State Bulletin, XXXV (November 12, 1956), 751-755.

his biographer J. R. Beal who wrote, "John Foster Dulles was a peacemaker at heart and he sought actively to apply the virtue and the might of the giant world power in a quest for durable peace."⁵⁰

Information - Communications: Dulles

The information-communications structure which evolved in the State Department during Secretary of State Dulles' tenure of office reflected his personal approach to foreign affairs.⁵¹

His repeated absences from his post for travel abroad had an adverse effect upon the communication-information pattern in that it led to a "diffusion of powers"⁵² within the State Department and, as a result, communications upward largely broke down. The fact that Secretary Dulles evidently believed that he had little need of expert advice led him to be cut off from such advice by his staff.⁵³ A good example of this was his reduction of the functions of the Policy Planning Staff, which was supposed to plan for future contingencies. This staff--set up by Dean Acheson during the Truman Administration--fell into disuse and did not even have a position paper drafted for the likely event that Egypt might seize control of the Suez Canal.⁵⁴

An important need regarding intelligence--that of servicing the

⁵⁰Beal, op. cit., p. 322.

⁵¹Benson, op. cit., p. 17.

⁵²Wriston, op. cit., p. 531.

⁵³William H. Hale, "The Lonliest Man in Washington," Reporter XV (October 18, 1956), 11-16.

⁵⁴Sulzberger, op. cit., p. 46.

decision-makers with comprehensive and sustained long-range analyses of future contingencies--was not fulfilled as a result of Dulles' apparent disdain for advice. The deterioration of this essential link in the foreign policy process became quite evident at the time of the Hungarian and Suez crises.⁵⁵ President Eisenhower learned during those twin crises that the machinery for long-range United States policy planning lacked depth in the planning staff. Secretary Dulles' hospitalization at the height of the Suez crisis dramatically pointed up the fact that the State Department was a one-man agency. Dulles' downgrading of the role of his ambassadors by his personal diplomacy also caused this critical link in the foreign policy chain to break down. His ambassadors--who should have been his eyes, ears, and voice in foreign countries, and the primary source of information and intelligence--were so stripped of prestige that they delivered haphazard and fragmentary reports from their posts.⁵⁶

Another consequence of Dulles' absences was the transformation of the top echelons of his Department into a collective leadership with the resultant haphazard administration. His attempts at bipartisanship, as evidenced by his appointment of members of the Democratic Party to posts in the State Department had a divisive effect upon the State Department staff. Those members of the Department who were Democrats naturally did not see eye-to-eye with the Republicans and the radical differences resulted in a "hodgepodge of different policies and debilitated the whole formation."⁵⁷

While the pattern of necessary communications and information in

⁵⁵Haviland, op. cit., p. 97.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 110.

⁵⁷Morgenthau, op. cit., p. 17.

the State Department did not break down completely during Secretary Dulles' tenure, the fact that the United States was caught almost completely by surprise by both the Hungarian uprising and the invasion of Suez certainly is indicative that all was not as it should have been.

CHAPTER VI

THE ANALYSIS OF THE HUNGARIAN - SUEZ DECISIONS

The first step in analyzing the decisions that were made in regard to Hungary and Suez will be to state several general empirical characteristics of the decisions and to suggest possible alternative courses of action.

Characteristics of the Hungary and Suez Decisions

1. These decisions were what can be termed "crisis" decisions in that the eventual outcome could have been World War III.

2. The decisional period was of relatively short duration. While, in the case of Hungary, several days elapsed after the initial uprising before it became apparent what course of action the United States would take, the initial statements of President Eisenhower indicated that the United Nations would be utilized.¹ In the case of the Suez invasion the decision as to what action the United States would take was made almost immediately after the British and French invasion.

3. The decision relative to the Hungarian uprising had a certain amount of influence on the Suez decision in that Eisenhower had already condemned the Soviets for their military intervention in Hungary and he

¹See Chapter IV, above.

felt that, morally, he could not do anything but denounce the British and French actions as well.

5. The decisions in both cases were unprogramed. From the data studied it is evident that no firm course of action had been formulated before the necessity for the decisions was thrust upon the decision-makers.

Alternative Responses

While it has not been possible to obtain information relating to the alternative courses of action which the decision-makers might have perceived and considered, a set of alternative solutions is hypothesized here to show how they might have been ruled out by the determinants of decision-making under study. What probably happened in the decisional process was that a single course of action evolved from the definition of the situation and then this response was subjected to a critical scrutiny in the context of values and outcomes rather than in comparison with other alternatives.²

There were at least five courses of action or alternative decisions which were available to the decision-makers in both situations:

- In Hungary; a) The situation could have been disregarded entirely.
- b) Indirect military intervention in the form of "volunteers" and supplies.
- c) Direct military intervention to aid the insurgents.

²Snyder suggests this as being the case in the Korea decision and it would seem applicable here also. See Snyder, op. cit., p. 247.

- d) A referral of the situation to the United Nations.
- e) An offer to the Soviets to pull United States forces out of Western Europe in return for a Soviet withdrawal from East Europe.

In Egypt;

- a) The situation could have been disregarded.
- b) Indirect military action in the form of "volunteers."
- c) Direct military intervention on the side of Egypt.
- d) Support of the British and French.
- e) A referral of the situation to the United Nations.

It is evident that some of the alternative courses of action which have been suggested can be dispensed with out-of-hand as being incompatible with United States' interests in respect to the world situation at the time. However, some of the alternatives which on the surface appear entirely unrealistic, may have had some merit. For example, Richard Lowenthal writing in the New Republic³ contended that the offer to match Soviet withdrawal from Eastern Europe by American withdrawal from Western Europe would have given encouragement to the freedom movements in the Soviet satellites, added to the calculations of the Soviets, and could have been the one consideration which might have induced them to capitulate. Such contentions are of course academic questions at this time but they do fit into this scheme inasmuch as they make it possible to indicate how such courses of action were ruled out by the sum of the motives+perception+information, and therefore point to the logical decision when given

³Richard Lowenthal, "Hungary - Were We Helpless?" The New Republic, CXXXV (November 26, 1956), 10-15.

these variables.

Major Characteristics: Eisenhower

The next step in analyzing the decisions that were made will be the listing of the major characteristics of President Eisenhower and Secretary Dulles which are relevant to the decisions under study. These characteristics are inferred from the data already set forth under the heading of "determinants of decision-making." It is contended that the sum of these variables resulted in the decisions that were made. Therefore, certain hypotheses will be drawn from each characteristic to be applied to the explanation of the decisions.

Characteristic 1. He placed a great deal of reliance on his Cabinet--especially his Secretary of State.

Specific hypothesis. The reliance the President placed on his Cabinet and Secretary of State led to Secretary Dulles' tendency to formulate foreign policy on his own rather than to merely execute the foreign policies which the President formulated.

Characteristic 2. He was a traditionalist President and endeavored to adhere to the Constitutional powers of the Presidency.

Specific hypothesis. The traditionalist concepts of the Presidency held by President Eisenhower precluded his overstepping his Constitutional powers.

Characteristic 3. He thought of himself as being non-partisan and above politics.

Specific hypothesis. Eisenhower's conception of himself as a non-partisan politician seems to rule out the influences of the election on the decisions taken.

Characteristic 4. He had a genuine desire for peace.

Specific hypothesis. His desire for peace ruled out courses of action that could not be readily identified as peaceful.

Characteristic 5. He believed that the only hope for a lasting peace was a peace with justice.

Specific hypothesis. Eisenhower's conviction that lasting peace could only be obtained through justice led to a narrow outlook regarding the world political situation.

Characteristic 6. He believed that the best way for peace with justice was through the United Nations.

Specific hypothesis. The President's reliance on the United Nations to settle controversies prevented any decision on the Hungarian and Suez crises which did not include the United Nations.

Characteristic 7. He rejected the use of force as an instrument of foreign policy.

Specific hypothesis. His rejection of force resulted in a priori submission of the Hungarian and Suez controversies to the United Nations.

Characteristic 8. He had a deep religious conviction and felt the Government of the United States was founded on strong moral values and based on resolute faith.

Specific hypothesis. His religious convictions and strong moral values supported his desire to achieve peace in the world without resort to force.

Characteristic 9. He denounced aggression by any country.

Specific hypothesis. His indiscriminate denunciation of aggression caused him to take a one-sided view of foreign policy which in turn prevented him from choosing a course of action in the Suez controversy which might

have been more beneficial for the United States.

Characteristic 10: He relied on his staff almost exclusively to furnish him with information.

Specific hypothesis. His reliance on his staff to furnish him with information resulted in his being supplied with information that they thought was important and thus placed too much emphasis on his staff's interpretation of relevancy.

Major Characteristics: Dulles

Characteristic 1. He, like President Eisenhower, was sincerely desirous of achieving peace in the world.

Specific Hypothesis. Dulles' desire for peace limited the courses of action which could be followed in the Hungarian and Suez decisions.

Characteristic 2. His legal training was carried over into his handling of foreign affairs.

Specific Hypothesis. His legal training led him to utilize the case method in handling foreign affairs. As each case arose it was treated as a case would be and disposed of as such. This approach did not always embrace courses of action which would best serve the interests of the United States.

Characteristic 3. He indiscriminately denounced aggression.

Specific hypothesis. His indiscriminate denunciation of aggression did not allow for the support of allies who were cast in the role of aggressor.

Characteristic 4. He considered force as a weapon to be used only from the standpoint of its potentiality and rejected the use of direct force.

Specific hypothesis. His rejection of force left the United Nations as the most logical instrument to settle controversies.

Characteristic 5. He held a conception of himself as a one-man Department of State.

Specific hypothesis. His one-man Department of State concept resulted in a diffusion of powers in the department and a subsequent breakdown in the foreign policy planning structure.

Characteristic 6. He was reluctant to take the advice of his subordinates.

Specific hypothesis. His failure to take the advice of his subordinates resulted in his being out of touch with certain aspects of foreign affairs and also led his staff to be rather haphazard in their collection and dissemination of information.

Characteristic 7. His conception of the Secretary of States' job did not include an administrative function.

Specific hypothesis. His disdain of administrative tasks further atomized the communication-information structure within the State Department.

Characteristic 8. He placed a great deal of reliance on personal diplomacy.

Specific hypothesis. His personal diplomacy policy and its failure in the case of the Suez controversy, from the time of Nasser's nationalization of the Canal until the invasion, resulted in the decision by the British and French leaders to take action without consulting the United States.

The Decision-Maker's Perception of the Situation

Before proceeding to a general examination of the decisions made relative to Hungary and Suez it is necessary to state, on the basis of the data studied, the perceptions and definitions of the situations which the decision-makers held. This is essential because these factors naturally exerted a strong motivational influence on the final decisions made.

The decision-makers perceived of the Hungarian uprising as being the result of a general feeling of dissatisfaction among the Soviet satellite nations. They evidently thought of it as the beginning of a breakdown of Soviet influence among these nations which would gain momentum and become widespread without the need for direct military assistance from the United States. Rather than use military force the decision-makers defined the situation as one which could be helped by bringing world opinion to bear on the Soviets through the United Nations. It is evident that the decision-makers also perceived of the situation as one which could lead to World War III if overt military support were given the insurgents. The decision-makers also must have felt that the uncommitted nations of the world and the other satellite nations were looking to the United States, as the champion of freedom, to take some kind of action on the Hungarian question. In addition, it is evident that the decision-makers felt a certain sense of responsibility for the revolution because of the broadcasts of the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe which may have encouraged the revolt.⁴ With the alternatives of not taking any action at all ruled

⁴See Beal, op. cit., p. 314, where he describes the investigations of the Voice of America broadcasts by the State Department, after the Hungarian revolt began, to see if the United States was guilty of inciting the violence in Hungary.

out by these considerations and the alternatives of direct or indirect military intervention made impossible by the concept of the rejection of force and the motives for peace it became logical for the decision-makers to perceive of the situation as one which it would be natural to submit to the United Nations.

When the Suez invasion took place Eisenhower had already denounced Soviet intervention in Hungary and with the uncommitted nations of the world looking on he could not then reverse himself and condone such actions by Britain and France. Eisenhower perceived of the situation and defined it as one where the United States could not remain silent or support its allies without risking world condemnation. At first the decision-makers looked at the situation as one which had to be settled in accord with the Tripartite Declaration of 1950. Then, as their definition of the situation changed, this value was downgraded and pushed into the background. Again, as in the Hungarian decisions, the perception and definition of the situation by the decision-makers, combined with the other variables mentioned in this study, pointed to the United Nations as the logical course of action.

Summation

It is evident from the study thus far that the decision to take the Hungarian and Suez situations to the United Nations for settlement was the only possible course of action President Eisenhower and Secretary Dulles could have taken within the framework of their competence, their motivation, and their information-communications structure. While it may seem anticlimactic in a sense to recount these factors again in detail,

several points still remain to be clarified and summarized.

One of these points has to do with the question of who actually made the decisions. Part of the problem in such a determination stems from the type of relationship which existed between Eisenhower and Dulles. The unique affiliation between the two men makes it exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, to determine which one actually made the decisions relative to Hungary and Suez. The root of the problem concerns Eisenhower's almost complete reliance on Dulles in foreign affairs matters and his broad delegation of authority to Dulles in making foreign policy decisions.

An effort was made to resolve this problem by asking several persons involved in the Hungarian and Suez decisions who they thought actually made the decisions. The question was not answered, however, and consequently a determination must be made on the basis of supposition.

Lacking any definitive statement from those involved in the decisions then, it would seem logical to assume that Eisenhower probably actually "approved" the decisions in question but that he was influenced to an incalculable degree by his Secretary of State. Since the basic motives of the two men seem to have been almost identical and since Dulles clearly had the opportunity to influence Eisenhower, possibly the best answer to the question would be that it was a joint decision; a decision which represented a coalition of the motives and competences of the two men.

Proceeding with the summation then, it can be said that the desire for peace with justice which was manifest throughout the public lives of both President Eisenhower and Secretary Dulles certainly ruled out the alternatives in the Hungarian and Suez situations which would not bring peace to the world. The rejection of force as an instrument of foreign

policy adds further weight to this premise and lends credence to the assertion that direct military intervention did not constitute an acceptable alternative.

The indiscriminate denunciation of aggression embodied in the President's and the Secretary's concepts of their competence precluded anything but a condemnation of the Soviet actions in Hungary. Then, because justice was also a value held, as well as the fact that Britain and France were considered aggressors, those two countries were also condemned. Dulles' legal concepts regarding the handling of foreign policy came into play here also. Britain and France were evidently condemned not on the basis of a reasoned calculation of what was best for the United States but rather because this was a case and a case had to be treated as an entity in itself. No considerations were relevant which did not enter into the immediate settling of the case. Long-range planning as to what would be best for the United States once the issue was settled as well as a consideration of the antecedents of the situation were not relevant in the lawyer's settlement of the case. The lawyer's peculiar opposition to long-range planning was thus brought into the field of foreign affairs. The method employed by Dulles seems to have been to settle the case at hand and then treat each new situation separately as it arose. Such a concept would, when combined with the motives for peace through justice and the denunciation of aggression, rule out the other alternatives.

The lack of information at the outset of each crisis created a "vacuum" in so far as proper planning was concerned and this, coupled with the need for immediate decisions, further impeded the selection of other

alternatives and necessitated action based on prior, learned responses rather than on prepared policy. The lack of information, as the data indicates, was due to a number of factors brought about by the President's staff system and Secretary Dulles' concept of personal diplomacy. Dulles' handling of the Suez dispute prior to the invasion led to a loss of faith by the British and French leaders in his ability to handle the situation. This further resulted in their determination to settle the controversy in the manner they thought best and without advising the United States of their actions. The breakdown in the information-communication structure of the State Department as a result of Dulles' reluctance to accept his staff's advice contributed to the lack of information in both situations and consequently narrowed the choice of alternatives available to the decision-makers. The lack of information and proper planning in the Suez situation was well illustrated by the extremely critical statements made by Eisenhower and Dulles when the British and French invaded Suez. These were then followed by a more moderate position after a few days had elapsed. The first reactions were what could be termed learned responses based solely on established motives and values. Then, when the opportunity for discussion and sober reappraisal was presented and the best interests of the United States could be considered vis à vis our allies, a more moderate stand was taken.

The many public statements of both Eisenhower and Dulles regarding their faith in, and dependence upon, the United Nations as the primary instrument for settling international controversies made it almost a foregone conclusion that, if the sum of the variables ruled out other alternatives, the twin crises would be referred to the United Nations for settlement.

The President continually reiterated that the United States was dependent on the United Nations and he gave the appearance of believing that the strong moral values and resolute faith on which the United States was founded could best be furthered through the United Nations.

Within the context of this analytical scheme then, the decisions that were made relative to the Hungarian and Suez situations were consistent with the empirical determinants of decision-making as embodied in this study. The decisions were made because the decision-makers were authorized, motivated, and prepared to act when presented with the decisional situation. The decisions which were made reflected the spheres of competence, the motives, and the information-communication structure of the decision-makers. The staff system of the President, the personal diplomacy policies of Secretary Dulles, the motives for peace with justice, the denunciation of aggression, the rejection of the use of force, the legal concepts of Dulles, faith in the United Nations, the lack of information, and the way in which the situations were perceived and defined by the decision-makers, all represented a summation of variables which led directly to the most logical decision in both crises - the settlement of the controversies through the United Nations Organization.

CHAPTER VII

CUBA: THE PREDICISIONAL EVENTS

Introduction

The present chapter deals with what can be termed the "pre-decisional events."¹ In general, the presentation here attempts to accomplish two purposes. First, it furnishes the reader with a brief historical sketch of events in Cuba from the time of Castro's takeover to the time of the actual Cuban crisis of 1962. Second, the overview allows both the researcher and the reader to gain an insight into the environment in which the decision-makers acted prior to the time when the actual decision had to be made relative to the Soviet missile buildup. Hopefully, such an insight will enable the researcher to characterize the decision-makers' perception of the situation at the time of the crisis in order to more adequately analyze the decision itself.

The basic hypothesis here then is that a knowledge of the environment and the problems faced by the decision-makers, as actors in the situation, prior to the time when an actual decision had to be made, is necessary for a clearer perception and explanation of the decision itself.

Castro's Rise to Power

Fidel Castro's rise to power in Cuba can be traced back to the

first expedition he led against the Fulgencio Batista government at Santiago de Cuba on July 26, 1953. This first effort of Castro to overthrow the Batista regime was unsuccessful, however, and Castro was captured and imprisoned. Upon his release in 1955 he immediately left Cuba and traveled to Mexico where he began raising a force in preparation for another offensive.

In December, 1956 Castro led about eighty men in a landing in Cuba's Oriente Province. Castro's force was met by a much larger number of Batista troops and a fierce battle ensued. Castro, with only twelve survivors of his eighty-man contingent remaining, escaped into the Sierra Maestra mountains. Once there he set up a headquarters and subsequently was successful in recruiting a revolutionary army.¹ With sympathetic support from the United States he waged a two-year-long campaign against the Batista government which culminated in the overthrow of the Batista regime on January 1, 1959.²

While Castro was probably not a communist at this time, the overthrow of the Batista regime opened the way for the Communist Party of Cuba to assert itself.

Within a few hours after the fall of the Batista Government the Communists, who had been somewhat suppressed by Batista, seized control of the Batista party headquarters in Havana and hung out their own party signs. Union headquarters were also taken over by the Communists who

¹Nicolas Rivero, Castro's Cuba: An American Dilemma (New York: Van Rees Press, 1962), p. 36.

²R. Hart Phillips, Cuba: Island of Paradox (New York: McDowell, Obolensky, Inc., 1959), p. 408.

declared themselves in control of all unions in Cuba. The Communist newspaper Hoy began publication on January 7, 1959 for the first time in six years and many Communists who had been forced to leave Cuba began returning.³

Castro and the Soviet Bloc

The United States recognized the Castro Government on January 7, 1959 with an expression of confidence that the new government would honor its international obligations.

During the first months of the new revolutionary government Castro did not appear to be hostile to the United States. On the contrary, he outwardly courted the United States in an obvious effort to elicit aid and assistance with which to further his many schemes for improving the economy of Cuba.

Castro's flirtation with United States friendship did not survive for many months, however, and during the summer of 1959 he began a campaign of confiscation of United States owned property. Despite such provocations the United States endeavored to work for a continuation of friendly relations between the two countries. On September 10, Assistant Secretary of State Roy Rubottom informed Castro that the United States was still favorably disposed toward the Cuban Government despite the hostile actions taken by that government during the previous nine months.

Further provocations followed this proferment of United States

³New York Times, January 8, 1959, p. 16.

⁴Department of State Bulletin, XLI, (October 26, 1959), 597.

friendship. On October 26, the Cuban Government passed a law imposing confiscatory taxes on the United States' owned Nicaro nickel facility and Castro, in announcing the new law, openly denounced the United States before a rally of 300,000 persons.

On October 27, Philip Bonsal, the United States Ambassador to Cuba, informed the Cuban Government that the "United States awaits a resolution by the Cuban Government of the issues involved . . . and an observance of international law. . . ."5

Sources inside Cuba--close to Castro--said at this time that his campaign of anti-Americanism was being carried on by orders from the Soviet Union. Castro's role, as far as the Kremlin was concerned, was evidently to provoke the United States into taking overt action against the Cuban Government which would provide the Soviets with propaganda to be used against the United States. The Soviets were evidently still troubled by the adverse propaganda they had received as a result of their suppression of the Hungarian revolt in 1956 and, no doubt, would have liked to see the United States cast in the role of an aggressor too.

By the end of 1959, the Eisenhower Administration was sharply divided over the question of what action the United States should take with regard to Cuba. Vice-President Richard M. Nixon submitted a proposal at that time which suggested that the United States help Castro's opponents to overthrow him. Others in the Administration, however, including President Eisenhower, opposed Nixon's proposal.⁶

⁵Department of State Bulletin, XLI, (November 16, 1959), 715-718.

⁶Charles L. Markmann and Mark Sherwin, John F. Kennedy: A Sense of Purpose (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1961), p. 165.

Castro at this time began replacing some of his leaders with Communists. This was done unobtrusively, however, and he endeavored to keep his personal involvement with communism from the Cuban people. While Castro himself denied being a Communist, various steps were taken early in 1960 which brought Cuba and the Soviet Union closer together.⁷

Soviet First Deputy Premier Anastas I. Mikoyan arrived in Cuba early in February, 1960 and a few days later it was announced that Cuba and the Soviet Union had signed a trade agreement. Under the terms of the pact the Soviet Union agreed to buy one million tons of Cuban sugar in each of the next five years and Cuba received a \$100 million credit for the purchase of equipment from the Soviet Union.⁸

In the ensuing months Castro signed trade pacts and entered into diplomatic relations with other Communist bloc countries. On February 20, Castro signed a trade and payments agreement with East Germany. Cuba established diplomatic relations with Czechoslovakia on May 16; and with Poland on June 15. On July 23, Cuba and Communist China signed a five-year trade and payments agreement which provided for the Chinese purchase of 500,000 tons of Cuban sugar in each of the next five years. In September, Hungary signed a trade agreement with Cuba, and North Korea established diplomatic relations with the Castro Government during the same month. Bulgaria and Romania followed suit in October and by the end of 1960 Castro was either trading with,

⁷Phillips, op. cit., p. 417.

⁸New York Times, February 15, 1960, p. 1.

or carrying on diplomatic relations with, virtually the entire Sino-Soviet bloc of nations.⁹

By June, 1960, within Cuba itself, the Communist takeover was definitely established and clearly evident.¹⁰ By this time the Communist Popular Socialist Party was faithfully following the Castro line and it was evident that Castro looked to the Soviet Union for political guidance and support. Soviet methods were employed to insure suppression of all opposition, political prisoners crowded the jails, and secret police carried out a careful surveillance of the populace. The Castro Government had, by this time, assumed control of the press and radio and television and had declared it a crime to make unfavorable comments about either the Communists or the government.¹¹

The Soviet involvement in Cuba was further clarified on July 9

⁹New York Times, February 21 - December 31, 1960.

¹⁰While official United States declarations at this time were still relatively bland in denunciation of Castro, various periodicals in the United States carried articles which reflected a keen perception of the threat the Castro-Soviet alliance presented to the Western Hemisphere. An article entitled, "Communist Takeover," in the June 20, 1960 issue of U. S. News and World Report, outlined the various moves the Soviets could be expected to take in Latin America. The prognostications are especially interesting in light of subsequent events. The moves which the article predicted the Soviets would take were: 1) Promote the Communist takeover of the powerful Oil Workers Union in Venezuela; 2) Back the forces in Panama demanding the takeover of the Panama Canal; 3) Provide armed backing for forces of revolt in Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic and Guatemala; 4) Agitate for the removal of the United States Naval Base at Guantanamo; 5) Utilize Cuba as a Soviet submarine and missile base; and 6) Use the Cuban embassies in Latin America as centers of Communist activity.

¹¹New York Times, June 30, 1960, p. 11.

when Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev stated: "Speaking figuratively, in case of necessity, Soviet artillerymen can support the Cuban people with rocket fire. . . ." Khrushchev followed this statement with one a few days later in which he pledged to help Castro oust the United States from the Guantanamo Naval Station.¹²

Khrushchev's declaration of support for the Castro regime at that time was in response to the Central Intelligence Agency's training of rebel forces for action in Cuba. The CIA had, for several months, been preparing rebel forces in various Central American countries. Soviet Intelligence undoubtedly discovered these preparations and transmitted the information to Castro, who, on September 26, took the floor of the United Nations General Assembly to deliver a four-and-one-half hour speech accusing the United States of planning aggression against Cuba.¹³

Relations between the United States and Cuba grew steadily worse during the fall of 1960. Castro continued seizing United States owned property in Cuba and Soviet-bloc arms and ammunition continued to flow into Cuba. On December 19, Cuba and the Soviet Union issued a joint communique whereby Cuba openly aligned itself with the domestic and foreign policies of the Soviet Union and indicated its solidarity with the Sino-Soviet bloc.¹⁴

Castro took the final step in his anti-United States crusade on January 2, 1961. On that date the Cuban Government announced that it was limiting the personnel of the United States Embassy and Consulate

¹²New York Times, July 13, 1960, p. 14.

¹³Department of State Bulletin, XLIII (October 17, 1960), 621.

¹⁴New York Times, December 20, 1960, p. 1.

in Havana to eleven persons and forty-eight hours was granted for the departure of all except those eleven persons.

President Eisenhower replied to the Cuban ultimatum on January 3, when he said:

This unusual action on the part of the Castro Government can have no other purpose than to render impossible the conduct of normal diplomatic relations with that Government. Accordingly I have instructed the Secretary of State to deliver a note to the Charge d' Affairs ad interim of Cuba in Washington which refers to the demand of his Government and states that the Government of the United States is hereby formally terminating diplomatic and consular relations with the Government of Cuba.¹⁵

The United States, in severing diplomatic relations with Cuba, turned the handling of its affairs over to the Swiss Embassy. It was stressed at this time, however, that the termination of United States diplomatic relations with Cuba had no effect on the status of the Naval Station at Guantanamo and that the treaty rights under which the base was maintained could not be abrogated without the consent of the United States.¹⁶

During the early months of 1961, delegations of Cuban administrative people that had been sent to Russia for training began returning and Castro undertook a reorganization program aimed at revamping the Cuban government to make it more closely resemble the Soviet model. A new Ministry of Industry was created and avowed Communist Ernesto Guevara was put at its head. Guevara was given widespread power over mines, petroleum, manufacturing, and sugar mills and had the authority

¹⁵Department of State Bulletin, XLIV (January 23, 1961), 103.

¹⁶Rivero, op. cit., pp. 98-99.

to modify all state industries. Castro borrowed the idea of economic plans from the Soviets and called for a four-year plan to begin in 1962. The main objective of this plan was to be the industrialization of Cuba which would end its dependence on sugar as a major industry.

After President Kennedy's inauguration in January, 1961, Castro, despite his growing friendship with the Soviet bloc, made some tentative gestures to determine Kennedy's willingness to resume normal relations with Cuba. Kennedy replied through the State Department indicating that, while the United States endorsed the professed aims of Castro's revolution, it was more concerned by the fact that the revolution had obviously been captured by anti-democratic forces; consequently, Kennedy said that only the full restoration and guarantee of freedom for the Cuban people could establish the necessary climate for the resumption of normal relations.¹⁷

At the end of March, Congress extended for 15 months the embargo on Cuban sugar. Castro retaliated a few days later by ordering a gunboat to intercept and detain a Western Union cable-repair ship which was sailing in international waters. The captain of the Western Union vessel radiod to the Guantanamo Naval Station and a United States destroyer and several aircraft were dispatched to the scene. No action was taken other than surveillance, however, and after a few hours the ship was released.

Coincident with this latest Castro provocation, the United States Government published a State Department White Paper entitled Cuba¹⁸ which outlined the history of Cuban-American relations since Castro's

¹⁷Markmann and Sherwin, op. cit., p. 167.

¹⁸Cuba, State Department White Paper, Publication 7171, (Wash.: Office of Public Services, April 3, 1961).

revolution. The pamphlet was both an indictment of the Castro regime and a call to action for the other nations of the Western Hemisphere to join together in opposition to the Soviet threat to the hemisphere.

The State Department paper expressed the opinion that the situation in Cuba presented the Western Hemisphere and the Inter-American system with a grave and urgent challenge. The paper emphasized, however, that the challenge did not arise from the fact that the Castro government established itself by revolution but rather from the fact that the leadership of the revolution betrayed their own movement - delivering it into the hands of "alien powers."¹⁹

The State Department document described Castro's revolution thusly:

What began as a movement to enlarge Cuban democracy and freedom has been perverted, in short, into a mechanism for the destruction of free institutions in Cuba, for the seizure by international communism of a base and bridgehead in the Americas, and for the disruption of the inter-American system.

It is the considered judgment of the Government of the United States of America that the Castro regime in Cuba offers a clear and present danger to the authentic and autonomous revolution of the Americas--to the whole hope of spreading political liberty, economic development, and social progress through all the republics of the hemisphere.²⁰

The tone of the paper was clearly critical of the Cuban leadership and its courting of the Soviets, but explicit in absolving the Cuban people themselves from the responsibility for such involvement; or for overthrowing the Batista regime in the first place;²¹

¹⁹Ibid., p. 2.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹The publication of this document, coming as it did just two weeks before the United States-sponsored Bay of Pigs invasion, could very well have been an effort to justify that invasion as well as an attempt to gather the necessary support of the Cuban people for an overthrow of the Castro regime as a concomitant of the invasion. The fact that the paper presented an indictment of the Castro regime, while carefully justifying the principle of revolution as a device to overthrow a tyrannical regime, certainly lends credence to such an assumption.

The character of the Batista regime in Cuba made a violent popular reaction almost inevitable. The rapacity of the leadership, the corruption of the government, the brutality of the police, the regime's indifference to the needs of the people for education, medical care, housing, for social justice and economic opportunity -- all these, in Cuba as elsewhere, constituted an open invitation to revolution.

.....

. . . so far as the expressed political aims of the revolution were concerned, the record of the Castro regime has been a record of steady and consistent betrayal of Dr. Castro's prerevolutionary promises; and the result has been to corrupt the social achievements and make them the means, not of liberation, but of bondage.

The history of the Castro Revolution has been the history of the calculated destruction of the free-spirited Rebel Army and its suppression as the main military instrumentality of the regime by the new state militia. It has been the history of the calculated destruction of the 26th of July Movement and its supersession as the main political instrument of the regime by the Communist Party.

.....

The Cuba of Castro, in short, offers the Western Hemisphere a new experience -- the experience of a modern totalitarian state. . . . The Castro regime is far more drastic and comprehensive in its control than even the most ruthless of the oldtime military dictatorships which have too long disfigured the hemisphere.²²

An awareness of the Soviet military buildup in Cuba was reflected in the State Department's thorough discussion of the magnitude of the arms shipments to Cuba. The paper noted that 30,000 tons of arms with an estimated value of \$50 million had poured into Cuba from Soviet bloc nations since the middle of 1960. Referring to a military parade held in Havana on January 2, the pamphlet observed that various kinds of Soviet tanks, assault guns and field guns had been in evidence and that it was apparent that the Cuban armed forces had been equipped and were dependent upon the Soviet bloc for the maintenance of their armed power. Besides

²²Cuba, State Department White Paper, op. cit., pp. 2-17.

the equipment itself the State Department noted that Soviet and Czech military advisors and technicians had accompanied the flow of arms. The consequences of this arms buildup were summarized in the paper with the comment that Cuba had, at that time, except for the United States, the largest ground forces in the hemisphere. It was further noted that these forces were at least ten times as large as the military forces maintained by the Batista regime. The size of the Cuban armed forces was estimated at between 250,000 and 400,000 men.²³

The State Department's indictment of the Castro regime concluded with a review of Castro's activities in support of armed invasions of Panama, Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic and Haiti. The failure of Castro's ventures, the pamphlet noted, resulted in the adoption of more indirect methods as a means to provide revolutionary situations in other Latin American republics, "through the indoctrination of selected individuals from other countries, through assistance to revolutionary exiles, through incitement to mass agitation, and through political and propagandized operations of Cuban embassies."²⁴

Nine days after release of the State Department's Cuba pamphlet President Kennedy, on April 12, not only repeated his pledge not to send American troops into Cuba but added that he was opposed also to the mounting of an offensive against Cuba by Cuban exiles in the United States. Conspicuous by its absence from Kennedy's statement, however, was any declaration that the United States would cease supplying aid and military

²³Ibid., pp. 21-23.

²⁴Ibid., p. 26.

training to Cuban refugee groups outside the United States.²⁵

On April 15 a number of Cuban airfields were bombed and Cuba protested the same day in the United Nations charging that the pilots of the hostile aircraft were "mercenaries" of the United States. United States Ambassador to the United Nations Adlai Stevenson categorically denied the Cuban charges and other Administration officials refused to disclose whether they had any advance knowledge of the bombing raids.²⁶

On April 17 the abortive "Bay of Pigs" invasion of Cuba began with United States assistance and support.²⁷ The invasion was a complete failure and some 1,113 Cuban rebels were captured by Castro's forces shortly after the landing.

On April 18 Cuban Foreign Minister Raul Roa charged in the United Nations that Cuba was being invaded by mercenaries who had been trained by the Central Intelligence Agency.²⁸ On the same day the Soviet Union released the text of a message to President Kennedy which accused the United States of backing the bombing of Cuban towns and of landing revolutionaries under the protection of United States aircraft and ships. The Soviet position vis á vis Cuba was made clear in the letter from Soviet Premier Khrushchev when he said:

We will extend to the Cuban people and its government all the necessary aid for the repulse of the armed attack against Cuba. We are sincerely interested in the relaxation of international tension, but if others go in for its aggravation, then we will answer them in full measure. . . .

²⁵Department of State Bulletin, XLIV (May 8, 1961), 661.

²⁶Markmann and Sherwin, op. cit., p. 172.

²⁷Support and assistance which, it must be added, lacked the United States air cover necessary for a successful invasion.

²⁸Department of State Bulletin, XLIV (May 8, 1961), 668.

I hope the United States Government will take into consideration these reasons dictated only by concern that steps should not be permitted which might lead the world to a catastrophe of war.²⁹

President Kennedy replied to Khrushchev's allegations in a letter dated April 18. Kennedy said:

Mr. Chairman: You are under a serious misapprehension in regard to events in Cuba. For months there has been evident and growing resistance to the Castro dictatorship.

There are unmistakable signs that Cubans find intolerable the denial of democratic liberties and the subversion of the 26th of July Movement by an alien-dominated regime. It cannot be surprising that, as resistance within Cuba grows, refugees have been using whatever means are available to return and support their countrymen in the continuing struggle for freedom.

I have previously stated and I repeat now, that the United States intends no military intervention in Cuba. In the event of any military intervention by outside force we will immediately honor our obligations under the inter-American system to protect this hemisphere against external aggression.³⁰

The Cuban and Soviet charges of United States complicity in the Bay of Pigs invasion were answered in the United Nations by Adlai Stevenson. In his statement Stevenson reviewed the threat presented by Castro to the Western Hemisphere, saying:

Three years ago American citizens looked with sympathy on the cause espoused by Castro and offered hospitality to his followers in their battle against the tyranny of Batista. We cannot expect Americans today to look with less sympathy on those Cubans who, out of love for their country and for liberty, now struggle against the tyranny of Castro.

I do not see that it is the obligation of the United States to protect Dr. Castro from the consequences of his treason to the promises of the Cuban revolution, to the hopes of the Cuban people, and the democratic aspirations of the Western Hemisphere.

.....

I repeat again . . . No invasion has taken place from Florida or any other part of the United States, and we are opposed to the use of our territory for landing a military attack against any foreign country.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 662.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 661.

The whole world knows and no one denies that, since Dr. Castro betrayed his revolution, there has been a rising tide of discontent and resistance both inside and outside Cuba; sabotage, violence and guerrilla fighting within Cuba have been daily news for months. But it is not true . . . that this has been caused by aircraft proceeding from United States territory and piloted by Americans. . . .³¹

While the full details of the invasion are still not available at this time, it is certainly evident that the United States was, in fact, involved and that as a result of the failure of the invasion the United States and the Kennedy Administration suffered a loss of prestige through its direct and indirect complicity. Valuable lessons were no doubt learned, however, lessons as to the need for decisiveness and for firm and resolute action. These were to serve the Administration well when the time for decision in Cuba arose again.

Stepped-Up Communist Infiltration During 1961

After the Bay of Pigs invasion in April, Communist infiltration of Latin America was stepped up as Soviet and Red Chinese propaganda publications and broadcasts were increased. The Soviets promoted an ever-increasing amount of trade with the Latin American nations in an effort to gain a foothold there. Bolivia, for example, was offered \$150 million in aid by the Soviets to help develop its oil and tin resources while, at the same time, a barter deal was proposed with Uruguay, Argentina, and Chile.³²

Late in 1961, as the pattern of Soviet infiltration of Cuba became more apparent and the threat it presented to the rest of Latin America

³¹Ibid., p. 673-676.

³²Current History, XL (April, 1961), 221.

was realized, the Organization of American States called a conference for the purpose of establishing their position on Castro.

The conference was convened at Punta Del Este, Uruguay, on January 22, 1962. At the conference the OAS declared unanimously that "the Castro-Communist offensive in this hemisphere [was] a clear and present danger to the unity and freedom of the American Republics."³³ The OAS further resolved that the Castro Government was incompatible with "the principles and objectives of the inter-American system and therefore should be excluded from participation in the inter-American system."³⁴

The foreign ministers at the conference also established special machinery within the OAS to block Communist subversive activities before they reached the level of insurrection or guerrilla war.

Within the Kennedy Administration the growing threat presented by the Soviets in Cuba was the subject of a Department of State publication released on January 3, 1962. The document, entitled The Castro Regime in Cuba,³⁵ contained information on the extensive ties of the Cuban Government with the Sino-Soviet bloc and the threat posed by the Castro regime to the independent governments of the Western Hemisphere. It noted that from the time the Castro regime came to power it had deliberately tried to undermine the established governments of Latin America in order to destroy the inter-American system. In the process, the Castro regime had, the statement said, "associated itself with the Sino-Soviet bloc in an active partnership and adopted totalitarian policies

³³Department of State Bulletin, XLVI (February 19, 1962), 267.

³⁴ibid. It should be noted, however, that the resolution did not pass unanimously. It was affirmed by a 2/3 majority vote.

³⁵Department of State Bulletin, XLVI (January 22, 1962), 129-130.

and techniques to cement dictatorial control over the Cuban people."

The State Department publication further charged that the Castro regime had established such extensive and intimate political, military, economic, and cultural ties with the Soviet Union, Communist China and the countries associated with them as to render Cuba an "appendage of the Communist system." In conclusion the State Department said that Cuba:

As a bridgehead of Sino-Soviet imperialism within the inner defenses of the Western Hemisphere . . . represents a serious threat to the individual and collective security of the American republics and by extension to the security of nations anywhere in the world opposing the spread of imperialism.³⁶

In February, President Kennedy announced an embargo upon trade between the United States and Cuba. He stated in his proclamation that the embargo was being imposed in accordance with the decisions of the recent meeting of foreign ministers of the inter-American system at Punta del Este, Uruguay. On humanitarian grounds, exports of certain foodstuffs, medicines, and medical supplies were exempted from the embargo. The President pointed out that the reason for the embargo was to deprive Cuba of the dollar exchange it had been deriving from the sales of its products in the United States. It was hoped that the loss of this income would reduce the capacity of the Castro regime to engage in acts of aggression, subversion and other activities which endangered the security of the United States.³⁷

The growing awareness within the United States of the Soviet threat in Cuba was further displayed in a State Department summary of Sino-Soviet military aid to Cuba issued on March 27. The State Department

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Department of State Bulletin, XLVI (February 19, 1962), 284.

press release surveyed the preliminary attempts of the Cuban government to obtain Soviet bloc arms in 1959 and noted that no firm military aid pacts were concluded until the summer of 1960. The release stated that the military aid pacts were an outgrowth of First Deputy Chairman of the USSR, Anastas I. Mikoyan's visit to Cuba in February, 1960, and that from that time on "a massive bloc trade and aid program . . . gained momentum throughout 1960 as US-Cuban relations deteriorated."³⁸ Commenting on the period from 1960 to early 1962 the State Department release noted that:

For about a year and one-half the Sino-Soviet bloc has supplied Cuba with large-scale military assistance. Bloc military deliveries--primarily from the USSR and Czechoslovakia--have included a wide assortment of land armaments ranging from small arms through heavy tanks. Bloc aircraft supplied to Cuba include MIG jet fighters, helicopters, transports and trainers. Extensive military training has been provided both in the bloc and in Cuba. Communist military aid has turned the Cuban military establishment into one of the most formidable in Latin America, and it has introduced a military capability hitherto not present in any of the Latin American countries in the Caribbean area. However, there is no evidence that the Soviet Union has supplied Cuba with missiles or that missile bases are under construction in Cuba.

.....
From the autumn of 1960 until the late summer of 1961, bloc arms deliveries were made regularly to Cuban ports.

.....
The capabilities of the Cuban ground forces have increased steadily since the introduction of bloc equipment and training in the autumn of 1960.

The groundforces are estimated to number 300,000. All units are equipped with bloc small arms and many have heavier equipment.³⁹

That the Administration was keeping a close surveillance of Soviet bloc shipments to Cuba was reflected in the itemization made by the State

³⁸Department of State Bulletin, XLVI (April 16, 1962), 644-645.

³⁹Ibid.

Department of arms and military equipment which the Department said included: 50-75 MIG jet fighters, 150-250 medium and heavy guns, 50-100 assault guns, 500-1000 pieces of field artillery, 500-1000 anti-aircraft artillery weapons, 5,000 mortars, 200,000 small arms and a number of patrol vessels and motor torpedo boats.⁴⁰

Increasing Soviet Aid To Cuba

During the summer of 1962 Soviet shipments to Cuba increased dramatically. Early in 1962, at about the time that the Punta Del Este Conference was concluding its work, the Soviets evidently decided to move into Cuba on a large scale. After the large shipments of arms in 1960, Russian aid to Cuba had become sporadic; probably due to the fact that the Soviets were not certain that Castro was permanent as a leader. In the spring of 1962, however, Cuba was upgraded to full-fledged membership in the Communist camp and late in July, the Soviets resumed heavy shipments of military equipment to that country.

By September it was estimated that \$175 million worth of arms had been shipped to Cuba — a total of 400,000 tons. The arms consisted of everything from jet aircraft, destroyers and torpedo boats to electronics equipment, missiles and tanks. Along with the military equipment came Soviet technicians to operate the missiles and radar equipment. These Soviet military advisors were different in several respects from those that had arrived in Cuba during 1960. Whereas the first Soviet technicians were sent as individuals to give lectures and night courses in factories and clubs, those that arrived during the summer of 1962 came as complete,

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 645.

self-contained units and were quartered in separate camps where they had no contact with Cuban forces. Reports from Cuba at the time indicated that these Soviet technicians were keeping control of missile and radar installations and that such sites were "off limits" to Cubans.⁴¹

Controversy Within the United States Over Cuba⁴²

Obviously, the buildup of Soviet forces and weapons in Cuba did not go unnoticed in the United States. Many influential persons within the government voiced their concern over the Soviet's actions there. Chief among these persons was Senator Kenneth B. Keating of New York who played a major role in alerting the Administration to the menace presented by the Soviets.

On August 31, Keating made the first of ten Senate speeches on the subject of Cuba. Keating said in his first speech that he was "reliably informed"⁴³ that between August 4 and August 15 over ten Soviet vessels had unloaded uniformed Soviet troops in Cuba. Keating reported on movements of Soviet convoys and on evidence that missile base construction was underway in Cuba. He urged that the matter be placed before the Organization of American States for settlement and pleaded with

⁴¹Leo Savage, "Castro's Foreign Legion," The Reporter, XXXVII (September 27, 1962), 34-91.

⁴²See David L. Larson, The Cuban Crisis 1962: Selected Documents and Chronology (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1963), for an excellent coverage of this period.

⁴³It is interesting to note here that the author, during the preparation of this paper, contacted Senator Keating and asked him if he would care to divulge the sources of his information at the time of the Cuban affair. Keating cordially acknowledged the request but replied: "Unfortunately, I do not believe it would be right for me to say any more now than I have in the past--namely, that my sources were in the government, although not at the highest level. The careers of certain employees would be jeopardized [sic] even now if the full story were revealed and for that reason I am not prepared to provide any names or other specifics."

the Administration to take "vigorous and concerted action to meet this threat . . . to the security of the United States."⁴⁴

President Kennedy confirmed the existence of Soviet military men, material, and anti-aircraft missiles and sites in Cuba on September 4. Kennedy's statement, however, denied that there was any evidence either of an organized combat force in Cuba from any Soviet bloc country or of any military bases provided to Russia. He also denied that there was any evidence which indicated that offensive ground-to-ground missiles were in Cuba or that there was any other "significant offensive capability either in Cuban hands or under Soviet direction and guidance." Kennedy reaffirmed the United States position on Cuba which held that the Castro regime would not be allowed to export its aggressive purposes by force or the threat of force.⁴⁵

While the Kennedy Administration seemed at this time -- at least as far as outward appearances were concerned -- to be unaware of the growing Soviet threat in Cuba, indications are that the Administration was not as uninformed as many Republican opponents seemed to think. U-2 flights, which had been going on at the rate of two per month, were doubled in early September and a close surveillance of shipping lanes was inaugurated.⁴⁶

During September and early October agitation for action to meet the threat in Cuba was intensified by the Republican leaders in Congress.

On September 7, Senator Everett M. Dirksen and Representative

⁴⁴U.S., Congressional Record, 87th Cong., 2d Sess., 1962, CVII, 18359.

⁴⁵Department of State Bulletin, XLVII (September 24, 1962), 450.

⁴⁶New York Times, November 3, 1962, p. 1.

Charles A. Halleck, the Republican minority leaders of Congress, issued separate statements urging a stronger United States policy toward Cuba. Both Congressional leaders proposed a joint resolution giving the President the authority to use troops, if necessary, to defeat Communism in Cuba.⁴⁷

The same day that Dirksen and Halleck introduced their resolutions, Kennedy requested authorization from Congress to enable him to call up 150,000 reserves for a limited period. However, the President maintained that this call for reservists was dictated more by the Berlin situation than by the Cuban problem.⁴⁸

The Soviet Union entered the controversy on September 11, when that Government issued a statement warning that any attack by the United States on Cuba or upon Soviet ships bound for Cuba would mean war; and the implication was that such war would be nuclear war.⁴⁹

President Kennedy answered the Soviet declaration on September 13, with a strongly worded statement reaffirming his earlier assertions that the United States would move quickly against Cuba if necessary to defend the security of the United States. However, he added that military action at that time seemed neither necessary nor justified.⁵⁰

While the Soviet Government accepted, with reservations, President Kennedy's declaration that United States military intervention in Cuba was not required or justifiable at that time, the statement did not meet with such sympathetic acceptance among Republican foes of the Administration.

⁴⁷New York Times, September 8, 1962, p. 6.

⁴⁸Ibid.

⁴⁹New York Times, September 12, 1962, p. 1.

⁵⁰Department of State Bulletin, XLVII (October 1, 1962), 481-482. (Read by the President at his press conference on September 13).

Senator Barry Goldwater of Arizona charged on September 16, that the Kennedy Administration had a "do nothing policy" in regard to Cuba and maintained that Kennedy virtually promised the Communists a free hand there. Goldwater, along with Senators Strom Thurmond of South Carolina -- although a Democrat, still a Kennedy Administration opponent -- and John Tower of Texas, suggested that a blockade be initiated against Cuba to stop all shipping to that country.⁵¹

Goldwater was joined the next day by other Republicans urging some form of economic and military blockade to screen out the military build-up in Cuba. Senator Jacob Javits also urged Kennedy to demand that the Soviet Union stop extending military assistance to Cuba and if the Soviet Union refused, to take whatever action was necessary.⁵²

Former Vice President Richard M. Nixon added his protest to that of his fellow Republicans on September 18 when he called for a "quarantine" of Cuba to halt the flow of Soviet arms. Nixon urged Kennedy to take stronger action and pledged his support to the Administration if such a course were undertaken. Nixon suggested that such a program could involve a naval blockade of the island and a commitment from the United States allies that their ships would not be used by the Soviet Union for shipments to Cuba.⁵³

The Kennedy Administration at this time still held publicly to the view that the Soviet arms deliveries to Cuba were essentially defensive in character and that stronger action was therefore not justified.

⁵¹New York Times, September 17, 1962, p. 1.

⁵²Ibid., September 18, 1962, p. 16.

⁵³New York Times, September 19, 1962, p. 1.

On September 19 the Senate Foreign Relations and Armed Services Committees approved the text of a joint resolution on Cuba sanctioning the use of force, if necessary, to defend the Western Hemisphere against Cuban aggression or subversion. The Senate passed the resolution the next day with only one dissenting vote -- that from Senator Winston L. Prouty of Vermont who did not feel that the resolution had gone far enough.⁵⁴ The House of Representatives passed the resolution by an overwhelming vote a few days later and, here again, the only objection of those who dissented was that the resolution was not strong enough.⁵⁵

The Soviet reply to the Senate resolution came on September 21, when Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei A. Gromyko issued an official statement for his government which contained a warning that any attack on Cuba by the United States would mean war between the Soviet Union and the United States.⁵⁶ The United States answer to the Soviet threat was issued in the United Nations by Ambassador Stevenson who charged that "the threat to the peace in Cuba comes not from the United States, but from the Soviet Union."⁵⁷

The multilateral exchange of threats, counter-threats, criticism and position-pronouncements between the Kennedy Administration, the Soviet Union, Cuba, and Congressional opponents of the Administration was discussed by Secretary of State Dean Rusk in an interview with ABC News correspondent John Scali on September 29. Rusk, in answer to a question put to him by Scali regarding the Cuban situation and United

⁵⁴U.S., Congressional Record, 87th Congress, 2nd Sess., CVIII, 1962, 18892-18951.

⁵⁵Ibid., 19702-19753.

⁵⁶New York Times, September 22, 1962, p. 6.

⁵⁷Ibid.

States reluctance to use force to resolve the issue, replied:

Well, I think . . . it is clear that the power of the United States is such that you could put armed forces ashore in Cuba, but that means a lot of casualties and it means a lot of Cuban casualties; it means bloodshed. And if we could find an answer without that, we should try to do so.⁵⁸

The position of the Kennedy Administration with regard to the "offensive" versus "defensive" weapons controversy was summed up by Rusk in this same interview when he said:

Now I don't think we ought to play with words on this question of defensive and offensive weapons. Any weapon is offensive if you are on the wrong end of it. But the configuration of the military forces in Cuba is a configuration of defensive capability. What we are concerned with is the development of any significant offensive capability against Cuba's neighbors in the Caribbean, or against this country, and we are keeping a very close watch indeed on just that point.⁵⁹

During the first days of October, the Kennedy Administration, subjected to persistent attacks by its foes in the United States, decided to take action to prevent the use of American, allied, and neutral shipping for the delivery of weapons to Cuba. In line with this decision, President Kennedy issued an order on October 4, excluding any ships engaged in this trade from using ports in the United States and penalizing all shipowners who transported Soviet bloc supplies to Cuba. The plan included closure of United States ports, restrictions on the use of United States ports to countries that traded with Cuba, and prohibition of United States flag ships or United States-owned ships from trading with Cuba.⁶⁰

On October 8, President Osvaldo Dorticos Torrado of Cuba, in an

⁵⁸Department of State Bulletin, XLVII (October 22, 1962), 595-98 (Department of State press release 590, dated September 29, 1962).

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰New York Times, October 5, 1962, p. 1.

address before the United Nations General Assembly, condemned what he called the United States "naval blockade" of Cuba.⁶¹ United States Ambassador Adlai Stevenson immediately replied to the Cuban charge contending that they were "neither original nor true." Stevenson justified the sanctions placed on shipping to Cuba on the ground that the Castro government had been penetrated by an "alien" government whose arms offered a threat to the security of the Western Hemisphere.⁶²

Congress, on the same day that Dorticos was attacking the United States in the United Nations, announced that it was withholding, under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, military assistance from any country which sold goods to Cuba or permitted its ships to carry Soviet bloc goods to that country.⁶³

During the first weeks of October, United States aerial surveillance of Cuba and of ships bound for Cuba, continued but was restricted somewhat by adverse weather.⁶⁴ Pictures taken by these reconnaissance aircraft revealed that Soviet Ilyushin 28 jet bombers had been shipped to Cuba early in October. However, there was still no evidence that any ground-to-ground missiles had been introduced.

While the high-altitude photographs did not show any missiles in Cuba, Senator Keating, on October 10, said on the Senate floor that he had confirmed reports of intermediate-range missile sites under

⁶¹New York Times, October 9, 1962, p. 3.

⁶²Department of State Bulletin, XLVII (November 5, 1962), 706-08. (Read to press correspondents outside UN General Assembly hall.)

⁶³New York Times, October 9, 1962, p. 7.

⁶⁴Between October 3 and October 14, a hurricane in the Caribbean area and a dense cloud cover obscured high-altitude photographs. It was evidently during this period that work on the missile launch sites was increased.

construction there.⁶⁵ Keating's information was subsequently confirmed by U-2 photos taken on October 14 which showed that missile launching pads were indeed under construction in the San Cristobal area of Cuba.⁶⁶

The photographs taken on October 14 offered the first concrete intelligence data showing Soviet ground-to-ground missiles in Cuba and set in motion a chain of events which was to bring the world to the brink of war.

Summation

For the purposes of this study the pre-decisional period ended on October 14 when proof of the missile base construction was finally obtained by the Kennedy Administration.

The general pattern followed thus far of describing the crisis events separately from the account of what the decision-makers did during the crisis will be modified somewhat at this point. Instead of describing the events in the crisis and accounting for the decision-maker's activities in separate chapters, as was done in the Hungarian and Suez studies, a description of both will be included in the same chapter in the case of Cuba. This is being done in order to prevent duplication. The fact that the Hungarian and Suez crises were situations in which the United States was not a direct participant, that is, not one of the protagonists, made the separation of the historical accounts of the crises from the description of the United States' decision-maker's activities, both necessary and practical. However, in the case of the Cuban blockade, the United States

⁶⁵U.S., Congressional Record, 87th Cong., 2nd Sess., CVIII, 22957.

⁶⁶New York Times, November 3, 1962, p. 1.

was, of course, a direct participant, a protagonist. Thus, the description of the crisis events in conjunction with the account of the decision-maker's actions seems to be a more logical and practical method of organization for increasing clarity and understanding. At the very least it will dispense with the duplication which was necessary in the previous studies.

CHAPTER VIII

CUBAN CRISIS: THE DECISIONAL EVENTS

Introduction

This portion of the study deals with the decisional period and with the decision-makers themselves. As in the case of the Hungarian and Suez studies, it has been separated from the actual analysis of the decision in order to facilitate reconstruction. No attempt will be made here to account for events not in the decisional period--this will be left for the analysis of the decision. For the purposes of this study the decisional period will be from October 14 to October 28, 1962 inclusive.

The description of events in the decisional period will be confined, for the most part, to things said and done by those connected with the Cuban decision. However, as was noted earlier, a general description of the crisis events will be included.

Day by Day in the Crisis

The decisional period for what has become known as the Cuban missile crisis can accurately be said to have begun on October 14, 1962, for it was on that day that a U-2 reconnaissance plane gathered the first concrete intelligence data showing medium range ballistic missiles in Cuba. The photographs taken by the U-2 in its high-altitude flight

over Cuba marked the beginning of a crisis period which the late President John F. Kennedy said might very well herald "an important turning point in the history of East and West."¹

Monday, October 15.—While the first really fruitful photo mission was flown on Sunday, October 14, it was not until Monday evening that the preliminary analysis of the films was completed.

The photos, when processed, revealed that the San Cristobal area of Cuba had been transformed into a Soviet medium range ballistic missile site complete with launch pads, service roads, a motor pool, troop tents, and missile-ready buildings. The piece de resistance of this sequence of photographs was a picture of an intermediate range ballistic missile lying out in the open near a launch pad.²

The photo-intelligence findings were first communicated to General Marshall S. Carter, Central Intelligence Agency Director John McCone's deputy, who was filling in for McCone during the latter's absence from Washington. General Carter immediately called the United States Intelligence Board, composed of all federal intelligence agencies, into emergency session. Defense Secretary Robert McNamara was informed next and an informal meeting was called at the home of Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Maxwell Taylor. Presidential Special Assistant McGeorge Bundy was called at about 8:30 P.M. and advised of the intelligence findings. Secretary of State Dean Rusk was informed of the missile build-up at

¹Stewart Alsop and Charles Bartlett, "In Time of Crisis," Saturday Evening Post, December 18, 1962, p. 16.

²"Cuba, the Missile Crisis," NBC White Paper, Broadcast over NBC Television, February 9, 1964. A copy of the script was furnished the author by NBC.

9 P.M. while attending a black-tie dinner in the State Department dining room.³ Later, top Department of State officials held a midnight meeting in Under Secretary of State George W. Ball's conference room.⁴

President Kennedy was not told of the intelligence report that night. McGeorge Bundy said later that he did not advise the President immediately for three reasons; first, he wanted to be absolutely positive of the information before he alerted the President, second, all the people who the President would have had to call in for advice were at dinners all over Washington and if the President had called these people away from such gatherings, the secrecy of the matter would have been compromised, and third, since the President was tired from campaigning and could not do anything about the situation that night anyway, Bundy thought it would be better for the President to get his rest.⁵ Thus, Kennedy was not told of the missiles until the next day.

Tuesday, October 16.--President Kennedy was informed of the Soviet missiles in Cuba at about 8:30 A.M. McGeorge Bundy took the intelligence report and photographs to the President's bedroom where the Chief Executive was eating breakfast. According to Bundy, the President's first reaction to the news was one of skepticism. Kennedy indicated that the information would have to be confirmed, then, if it were true, action

³Department of State Bulletin, XLVII (December 17, 1962), 908-11.

⁴Fletcher Knebel, "Washington in Crisis: 154 Hours on the Brink of War," Look, December 19, 1962, p. 49.

⁵NBC White Paper, op. cit., The third reason for not advising the President seems to have been the most compelling. Theodore Sorensen in Decision-Making in the White House (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), p. 31, comments on this aspect, noting that "untroubled Presidential sleep is an all too rare and therefore a carefully guarded commodity."

would have to be taken.⁶

After Bundy's briefing with the President, events began to move swiftly. The President's special counsel, Theodore Sorensen, was called in and advised of the intelligence report. He was told by the President to "think about it" and to check all the previous statements Kennedy had made as to how the United States would respond to such a threat.⁷

President Kennedy, after talking to Sorensen, summoned his appointments secretary, P. Kenneth O'Donnell, informed him of the news, and asked him to call an urgent meeting of his key counselors for 11:45 that morning. The President's advisers began arriving at the White House at 11:30 A.M. and included: Attorney General Robert Kennedy, Treasury Secretary Douglas Dillon, State Department Soviet Expert Llewelyn Thompson, Secretary of State Dean Rusk, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Maxwell Taylor, and Vice-President Lyndon Johnson. Defense Secretary Robert McNamara was delayed and arrived late. Theodore Sorensen was among those present and later described the conference:

Those present constituted the group which was later called the Executive Committee of the National Security Council. There was no such formal designation at that time. It was simply those people in the government whose judgment the President wanted and who had some jurisdiction over the matter. We met that morning with the President. We discussed first of all the range of alternatives beginning with doing nothing at all and going all the way up to all out war.⁸

It appears that there were at least six major courses of action

⁶NBC White Paper, op. cit.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid.

discussed at the conference.⁹

First, the alternative of doing nothing at all was considered. This course of action -- or inaction -- was ruled out as being contrary to the pledges the United States had made to the free world. It was argued that such an action would destroy the credibility of our pledges in the eyes of the world and allow the Soviet Union to make an immense political gain in Latin America.

The second alternative actually included two sub-alternatives; a diplomatic track of protest and complaint in the United Nations or a public diplomatic process with the Soviet Union directly. This course was rejected as too weak and ineffective a response to the immense threat the missiles in Cuba presented.

The third alternative considered was an all-out invasion of Cuba. This response was not too popular among most of the President's advisors, due to the belief that it would injure the moral position of the United States in the world and also because it might give the Soviets an excuse for counter-action in Berlin or in some other trouble spot in the world. Llewelyn Thompson, the State Department's Soviet expert, was one of those not in favor of the invasion alternative and warned that Khrushchev, if suddenly faced with precipitate action on the part of the United States, might respond on impulse.

⁹The alternatives which the President and his advisers considered were gathered from a variety of sources. Those that seem to have been the most authentic were: NBC White Paper, op. cit.; Knebel, op. cit.; Alsop and Bartlett, op. cit.; and E. W. Kenworthy, Anthony Lewis and Max Frenkel, "Cuban Crisis: A Step by Step Review," The New York Times, November 3, 1962. Knebel, Alsop and Frenkel were all contacted by the author and each of these gentlemen indicated that they interviewed the members of President Kennedy's advisory group at the time of the Cuban crisis and based their articles on the first-hand information they obtained from those persons.

The fourth alternative was actually an attenuated version of the invasion proposal since, instead of invasion, it called for "selective" air strikes on the missile installations. This response seems to have been the one which was most favored by that group of advisors who believed that some sort of positive military action should be taken. The air strike alternative was not dismissed as a possible option during this first meeting and was, in fact, given serious consideration for the next several days.

The fifth alternative, a blockade of maritime traffic entering Cuban waters, was thought by some at the meeting to be too weak a response to the immense threat presented by the missiles in Cuba. It was also argued that a blockade would seriously irritate the members of NATO who were maritime powers. In addition, the critics of this course of action contended that such a response would not insure the removal of missiles which were already in Cuba.

The sixth alternative discussed was a limited blockade in the form of a "quarantine" which would stop only those Soviet ships delivering missiles. This response was thought by many to be even less desirable than a full-scale blockade.

While this first meeting of President Kennedy and his National Security Council Executive Committee did not yield a firm consensus as to the best course of action to deal with the Cuban situation, it was productive in that it had the effect of defining the alternatives and focusing attention on the possible consequences of each response. In addition, the meeting did produce several immediate decisions. It was agreed that air surveillance of Cuba should be intensified and that

action should await further intelligence findings but should not be delayed longer than absolutely necessary. Along with this decision to delay action for the time being, it was decided that when disclosure of the missile build-up was made public the President would also announce his contemplated action to meet the threat. In keeping with this latter objective, President Kennedy ordered absolute secrecy until plans were formulated and, as part of this strategy, normal routines were ordered continued.¹⁰

The meeting produced one additional decision. The President ordered that the armed forces be put on alert and that Operation X, the contingency plan for the invasion of Cuba be activated.¹¹ The Executive Committee of the National Security Council met at 10 A.M. at the State Department. The President was absent from this and subsequent meetings during the day. He had, in keeping with his order to carry on normal routines, left for Connecticut during the morning to campaign for Democratic candidates in the forth-coming elections.¹²

¹⁰New York Times, November 3, 1962, p. 6.

¹¹Operation X had been drawn up by Presidential order in October, 1961. The plan specified exact times for attack waves to hit Cuba: At zero hour in early morning fighters from Florida would strafe missile sites and airfields with rockets and machine guns — but no atomic weapons. They would be given 15 minutes to knock out the missiles so that Castro could not touch off a nuclear war. Navy warships and Air Force attack bombers would level coastal defenses along the invasion beaches and then, after this first strike, three divisions of troops would hit the island. Chief of Naval Operations Admiral George Anderson was designated Operation Commander and ordered to update the plan.

¹²New York Times, November 3, 1962, p. 6.

The meeting of the top-level planning group was an informal one which lasted most of the day and night. The various alternative courses of action to meet the missile threat were again discussed and, by the end of the day, it was apparent that the two most favored responses were a selective air strike or a blockade. All-out invasion was ruled out as being too dangerous from an escalation standpoint as well as from a world opinion point of view. It was argued by those opposing such a course of action that a surprise invasion would cost America dearly in friends and allies both in Latin America and Europe. In addition, such an assault would kill Russians without warning and might impel the impulsive Khrushchev to start a nuclear war. Robert Kennedy was most influential in opposing such action and said at one point; "My brother will never be a party to a Pearl Harbor."¹³

An added sense of urgency was injected into the deliberations when new photographs were developed which revealed that the Soviets had at least forty medium range missiles in Cuba. The photos also showed additional intermediate range sites under construction in the Guanajay area between San Cristobal and Havana.¹⁴

The President returned to Washington about midnight and was briefed on the day's events by his brother Robert and Ted Sorensen.¹⁵

Thursday, October 18 -- President Kennedy met during the day with Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko. Gromyko told the President that he had been instructed to make it clear once again that Soviet assistance

¹³Knebel, op. cit., p. 50.

¹⁴New York Times, November 3, 1962, p. 6.

¹⁵Knebel, op. cit., p. 50.

to Cuba was "pursued solely for the purpose of contributing to the defense capabilities of Cuba," and that "training by Soviet specialists of Cuban nations in handling defensive armaments was by no means offensive."¹⁶

The President listened patiently to Gromyko's statement but did not, at this meeting, refute Gromyko's claim by confronting the Soviet diplomat with the United States intelligence findings. While the President has been criticized in some quarters for not doing so, he said later that he did not advise Gromyko for several reasons. First, he did not consider his information complete at that time. Second, he had not yet decided what action to take. Finally, Kennedy said he feared that, in the face of a warning, the Russians would not really back off, but would take some evasive action to blunt the effect of the eventual decision. In light of these circumstances, the President said he "considered it unwise to inform Gromyko in detail of what he knew."¹⁷

During the evening, Secretary Rusk played host to Gromyko at a State Department dinner. In the same building, at approximately the same time, the Executive Committee was meeting to discuss the still secret crisis. Alternative courses of action were still being considered at this time and the President's key advisors began to focus on a naval blockade as the most favored response. An air strike had been practically ruled out as a possible move because it was felt that it had the same drawbacks as an invasion. Robert Kennedy, while opposed to invasion, nevertheless,

¹⁶"Address by President Kennedy, October 22, 1962," Department of State Publication 7449, Inter-American Series 80 (Washington: Office of Media Services, October, 1962).

¹⁷NBC White Paper, op. cit.

outlined the disadvantages of a blockade: It would not get rid of the missiles or halt the construction of sites; it would offend maritime countries; it might kill Russians if Soviet ships had to be halted by gunfire; it could provoke a counter-blockade of Berlin; and it prolonged the agony of the whole crisis. Even with such disadvantages, however, the President's brother swung his support behind a blockade.¹⁸

While no definite decisions were reached regarding action which should be taken it was agreed that there was a need for a solid legal basis for any moves which might be taken. Deputy Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach, a former international law professor, was given the task of building a good legal case for the United States response.¹⁹

The President seemed to favor a blockage, or as he called it, a "quarantine," but he did not attempt to influence his advisers. In fact, President Kennedy purposely absented himself from a number of meetings in order to give his advisers an opportunity to more freely voice their opinions. Ted Sorensen, interviewed on NBC television after the crisis, offered an insight into the President's thinking at this time when he said:

The air strike or an invasion automatically meant a military attack upon a Communist power and required, almost certainly, either a military response from the Soviet Union or an even more humiliating surrender, which would have cost them heavily in their prestige all over the world, particularly in the other underdeveloped countries they were trying to build their relations with. The blockade, on the other hand, had the advantage of giving Mr. Khrushchev a choice, an option so to speak. He did not have to have his ships approach the blockade and be stopped and searched. He could turn them around. So that was the first obvious

¹⁸Knebel, op. cit., p. 50.

¹⁹New York Times, November 3, 1962, p. 7.

advantage it had. It left a way open to Mr. Khrushchev. In this age of nuclear weapons that is very important.²⁰

While deliberations were taking place during the day, other, more deliberate, steps were taken to cope with the crisis. A considerable military deployment was set in motion. The Defense Department announced that additional aircraft had been sent to the southeastern United States. The New York Times reported that a long scheduled Navy-Marine amphibious exercise, which involved 5,000 marines and forty ships and was called Philbriglex-62, was taking place in the Caribbean area. The purpose of the exercise was to liberate the mythical "Republic of Vicques" from the rule of a tyrant named Ortsac--Castro spelled backwards.²¹

Friday, October 19.--President Kennedy flew West During the morning to keep a scheduled campaign commitment. While the President seemed reluctant to leave, the feeling was that if this long-planned trip were called off, the Soviets would have a clear warning that a move was underway. Before departing, Kennedy indicated to his advisers that he tentatively approved of the blockade idea.²²

At 10 A.M. the Executive Committee met at the State Department. Deputy Attorney General Katzenbach, not a regular member of Ex Comm, was present

²⁰NBC White Paper, op. cit.

²¹New York Times, November 3, 1962, p. 6. While the exercise was eventually cancelled and the ships used for blockade duty, the operation at the time was evidently interpreted by the Soviet Union as a show of force and certainly must have served to alert them to the fact that a decision relative to Cuba was in progress. In any event, the Soviets did use the operation for propaganda purposes in their radio broadcasts to Latin America and Europe. See Edward D. Wilson, The Cuban Crisis: An Analysis of Political Communications of the Soviet Union, unpublished Master of Arts thesis, the University of Oklahoma, 1963, for a penetrating analysis of Soviet propaganda broadcasts at the time of the crisis.

²²New York Times, November 3, 1962, p. 7.

at the meeting and gave a brief statement of his legal views regarding a blockade. Katzenbach and the rest of the group agreed that a resolution by the Organization of American States would provide strong legal support for such an action. However, Katzenbach thought that even if such a resolution were not forthcoming, a unilateral order for a blockade could be justified on legal grounds.²³

The Executive Committee still was not in complete agreement at this time as to what action should be taken. There was some talk of an air strike instead of a blockade, or an air strike combined with a blockade.

About 7 P.M. more photographs were shown to the President's advisers which showed work on the missile installations proceeding rapidly. The Executive Committee decided that the situation was growing critical and that action would have to be taken no later than the following Monday. Robert Kennedy called the President in Chicago that evening and advised him of the latest developments. The President then instructed Ted Sorensen to begin work on the first draft of a Presidential address to the nation which he tentatively scheduled for the following Monday.²⁴

Attempts at secrecy were still being undertaken as late as Friday evening when, at 8:30 P.M., the Pentagon issued a statement denying that any alert of United States armed forces had been ordered or that any emergency military measures had been set in motion. The statement further noted that the Pentagon had no information indicating the presence of offensive weapons in Cuba.²⁵

²³Knebel, op. cit., p. 52.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Ibid.

Saturday, October 20.--At 9:35 A.M., the President's Press Secretary, Pierre Salinger, announced in Chicago that Kennedy was returning to Washington because of a one-degree fever and an upper respiratory infection.²⁶

The President flew from Chicago to Andrews Air Force Base where he transferred to a helicopter for the short trip to the White House. Meanwhile, Vice-President Johnson, who was in Hawaii, cut short his stay and flew back to Washington. The deepening crisis also caused Secretary Rusk to cancel several speeches in Virginia in order that he might be available.²⁷

President Kennedy met with his advisers most of the afternoon in the Oval Room of the White House. The President listened to the consensus of his advisers and at 4:30 P.M. he gave his tentative approval to a blockade. Kennedy told his advisers to go ahead with blockade preparations subject only to a final word from him the next day.²⁸ Kennedy and his advisers agreed that the announcement of the blockade would be combined with an appeal to the United Nations Security Council demanding that the Soviets get out of Cuba. Due to this consideration, as well as to the fact that the President wanted our allies informed of the impending blockade, it was decided that it could not be put into effect until at least October 22.²⁹

²⁶The New York Times, November 3, 1962, p. 6., notes that the story of the President's cold was false and that it was used merely as a cover story to enable him to return to Washington without alerting the Soviets that a major decision was imminent.

²⁷New York Times, October 21, 1962, p. 1.

²⁸NBC White Paper, op. cit.

²⁹ibid.

Later in the day, McGeorge Bundy worked with Rusk on a new draft of the speech the President planned to make to the nation informing the American people and the world of the crisis in Cuba. Messages were drafted for all United States Embassies and letters to the heads of other governments were prepared advising them of the President's decision. An approach to the OAS was also drawn up, as well as a letter to Khrushchev which would accompany a copy of the blockade speech.³⁰

Sunday, October 21.--After attending Mass at St. Stephen's Catholic Church in Washington during the morning, the President met at the White House with key officials. Secretary McNamara showed the group the latest intelligence photographs of Cuba which indicated that the Soviet missiles would be operational in a matter of days. The information contained in the latest intelligence report evidently confirmed the President's belief that action had to be taken immediately. The President made his decision final; a blockade, to be called a "quarantine," would be the United States response to the Soviet missile buildup. The hour of the President's Monday evening speech was dubbed "P-hour," and all plans were aimed at that moment.³¹

At 2:30 P.M. the statutory National Security Council, with the Office of Emergency Planning represented for the first time, met at the White House to coordinate the operation.³²

³⁰New York Times, November 3, 1962.

³¹New York Times, November 3, 1962, p. 6.

³²Ibid.

General Maxwell Taylor held four meetings of the Joint Chiefs of Staff during the day and Sunday night Pentagon officials began to sleep in their offices.³³

President Kennedy was in constant conference during the day with the Executive Committee and later in the afternoon the White House announced that it was preparing an executive order to "hamper" Soviet shipping to Cuba.³⁴ No announcement was made, however, of the President's planned speech.

Monday, October 22.--At noon Press Secretary Salinger announced that the President would make a speech of "the greatest urgency by radio and television at 7 P.M."³⁵

All during the day Congressional leaders from both parties arrived in Washington after having been called back from campaign trips by the President. Late in the afternoon Kennedy met with these leaders and told them of his decision. At least two Senators, J. W. Fullbright of Arkansas and Richard Russell of Georgia, felt that the contemplated action was not strong enough. House Minority Leader Charles Halleck, however, commented that he was "standing by the President."³⁶

Later in the afternoon ambassadors representing our allies, our adversaries, and the neutrals were informed of the President's decision. The general reaction among these men seems to have been one of displeasure at not having been told sooner. At 6:45 P.M. Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin arrived at the State Department and was told of the blockade decision

³³Knebel, op. cit., p. 52.

³⁴New York Times, October 22, 1962, p. 1.

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶NBC White Paper, op. cit.

by Secretary Rusk.³⁷

At 7:00 P.M., in a speech of extraordinary gravity, President Kennedy told the American people and the world that the Soviet Union, contrary to promises, was building offensive missile and bomber bases in Cuba. The President told of his plans to impose a strict naval and air quarantine on Cuba and made it clear that the United States would not stop short of military action to end what he called a "clandestine, reckless and provocative threat to world peace."³⁸ The President said that he was directing that "the following initial steps be taken immediately:"

First: To halt this offensive build-up, a strict quarantine on all offensive military equipment under shipment to Cuba is being initiated. All ships of any kind bound for Cuba from whatever nation or port will, if found to contain cargoes of offensive weapons, be turned back. This quarantine will be extended, if needed, to other types of cargo and carriers. We are not at this time, however, denying the necessities of life as the Soviets attempted to do in their Berlin blockade of 1958.

Second: I have directed the continued and increased close surveillance of Cuba and its military build-up. The Foreign Ministers of the Organization of American States in their communique of October 3 rejected secrecy on such matters in the Hemisphere. Should these offensive military preparations continue, thus increasing the threat to the Hemisphere, further action will be justified. I have directed the Armed Forces to prepare for any eventualities; and I trust that in the interests of both the Cuban people and the Soviet technicians at the sites, the hazards to all concerned of continuing this threat will be recognized.

Third: It shall be the policy of this nation to regard any nuclear missile launched from Cuba against any nation in the Western Hemisphere as an attack by the Soviet Union on the United States, requiring a full retaliatory response upon the Soviet Union.

Fourth: As a necessary military precaution I have reinforced our base at Guantanamo, evacuated today the dependents of our personnel there, and ordered additional military units to be on a standby alert basis.

Fifth: We are calling tonight for an immediate meeting of

³⁷Department of State Bulletin, XLVII, (November 17, 1962), 909-11.

³⁸Department of State Bulletin, XLVII, (November 12, 1962), 715-20.

the Organ of Consultation, under the Organization of American States, to consider this threat to hemispheric security and to invoke articles six and eight of the Rio Treaty in support of all necessary action. The United Nations Charter allows for regional security arrangements — and the nations of this hemisphere decided long ago against the military presence of outside powers. Our other allies around the world have also been alerted.

Sixth: Under the Charter of the United Nations, we are asking tonight that an emergency meeting of the Security Council be convoked without delay to take action against this latest Soviet threat to world peace. Our resolution will call for prompt dismantling and withdrawal of all offensive weapons in Cuba, under the supervision of United Nations observers, before the quarantine can be lifted.

Seventh and finally: I call upon Chairman Khrushchev to halt and eliminate this clandestine, reckless, and provocative threat to world peace and to stable relations between our two nations. I call upon him further to abandon this course of world domination and to join in an historic effort to end the perilous arms race and transform the history of man. He had an opportunity now to move the world back from the abyss of destruction — by returning to his Government's own words that it had no need to station missiles outside its own territory, and withdrawing these weapons from Cuba — by refraining from any action which will widen or deepen the present crisis — and then by participating in a search for peaceful and permanent solutions.³⁹

After the President delivered his speech, Ambassador Stevenson delivered a letter to Valerian A. Zorin, head of the Soviet delegation to the United Nations, who was the October President of the Security Council, calling on him to summon an urgent meeting of the Council.⁴⁰

In addition to the letter a draft resolution was submitted calling on the Soviet Union to dismantle and withdraw the missiles under UN verification. The resolution stated that after the missiles were withdrawn under supervision the United States would end the quarantine.⁴¹

³⁹"Address by President Kennedy over radio and television, October 22, 1962," Department of State Bulletin, XLVII (November 12, 1962), 715-20.

⁴⁰U.S. Request for Convening U.N. Security Council, " Department of State Bulletin, XLVII (November 12, 1962), 724.

⁴¹U.S. Draft Resolution Presented to the U.N. Security Council October 22, 1962, " Department of State Bulletin, XLVII (November 12, 1962, p. 1.

Thus it was on this, the ninth day of the missile crisis, that the world was informed of the United States' awareness of the Soviet build-up and of the decision to take action to insure that the missiles and bombers were removed.

Tuesday, October 23.--Moscow's first reaction to President Kennedy's speech came at 8:00 A.M. Eastern Daylight time. The statement issued by the Soviet Government was accompanied by a letter from Premier Khrushchev in which the United States was accused of — among other things — "violating international law," committing "piracy," and "taking provocative acts which might lead to thermonuclear war."⁴² USSR Deputy Representative to the United Nations P. Morozov presented the Soviet Government statement in the United Nations and called for a Security Council meeting to examine the question of "the violation of the Charter of the United Nations and the threat to peace on the part of the United States. . . ."⁴³

Moscow's reply to the blockade proclamation was interpreted by the President and his advisors as an indication that the Kremlin had been caught off guard. The Soviet statement was assumed to be a delaying tactic designed to give Khrushchev an opportunity to formulate a more definite response.

At 9:00 A.M. the Council of the Organization of American States met in Washington to consider the Cuban question.

⁴²U.N., Security Council Document S/5186, October 23, 1962, p. 1.

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴New York Times, November 3, 1962, p. 6.

Secretary Rusk represented the United States and offered a resolution to authorize the use of force, individually or collectively, to enforce the blockade. Rusk cited the Rio Pact of 1947 as justification.⁴⁵

The meeting of the Council lasted most of the day and just before 5 P.M., the resolution submitted by the United States was approved by a vote of 19-0.⁴⁶

Meetings between the President and his key advisers continued throughout the day and tension rose as intelligence reports came in noting that at least twenty-five Soviet ships had been sighted moving toward Cuba.⁴⁷

At the United Nations, Soviet Ambassador Zorin presented a resolution calling on the United States to withdraw the blockade and to stop interfering in Cuba's domestic affairs.⁴⁸ Stevenson had presented the United States resolution earlier which charged the Soviets with actions

⁴⁵Department of State Bulletin, XLVII (November 12, 1962), 720-22.

⁴⁶It should be noted here that the OAS decision was important for a number of reasons. First, the unanimity of the Council in opposing the Soviet Union's move undoubtedly surprised the Russians and accounted for much of their diplomatic confusion during the week. Second, it was the first time that the American States had authorized the use of armed force under the Treaty of Rio de Janeiro. Finally, the decision was important, as far as the United States was concerned, since it put the blockade action on a much firmer legal footing. That the President considered the OAS resolution important, is attested to by the fact that he waited until after the Council made a decision before he signed the official blockade proclamation. Whether or not Kennedy would have done differently in the absence of an OAS endorsement is, of course, problematical.

⁴⁷New York Times, October 24, 1962, p. 1.

⁴⁸U.N., Security Council Document S/pv .1022, October 23, 1962.

which threatened the peace of the world and called upon them to remove the offensive missiles from Cuba.⁴⁹

At 7:06 P.M. President Kennedy signed the official proclamation ordering the blockade. The "quarantine", as it was called, was scheduled to begin at 10:00 A.M. the following day.⁵⁰

Wednesday, October 24.--The blockade of Cuba went into effect at 10:00 A.M.

Coincident with the commencement of the blockade, Secretary of Defense McNamara issued a press release describing the action the United States intended to take regarding the stopping of ships bound for Cuba. He stated that all available means would be used to stop vessels for search and inspection. Force, however, was to be used only as a last resort, McNamara said, and then only in such an amount as to achieve a minimum of damage.⁵¹

In an atmosphere of tense anticipation the Executive Committee met at 10:00 A.M. at the White House. CIA Chief John McCone started the meeting with an intelligence briefing on the latest developments. The planners were told that the Soviet ship nearest Cuba should make contact with the blockade by about 7:30 P.M. that evening.⁵² McCone advised the group that low-level reconnaissance flights over Cuba were needed to accurately assess the extent to which work on the missile sites was proceeding. The President immediately ordered such flights and they were flown later

⁴⁹Department of State Bulletin, XLVII (November 12, 1962), 723-34.

⁵⁰Department of State Bulletin, XLVII (November 12, 1962), 717.

⁵¹NBC White Paper, op. cit.

⁵²This ship evidently altered course or slowed down, however, since no contact was reported by the blockading vessels on October 24.

in the day by Navy P-8U's.⁵³

At the United Nations during the day, Secretary General U Thant made a statement, on behalf of forty member nations, urging President Kennedy and Premier Khrushchev to suspend for two or three weeks both the blockade and the arms shipments while negotiations were held.⁵⁴

Thursday, October 25.--The Defense Department announced the first interception of a Soviet ship bound for Cuba. According to the Department of Defense statement, the encounter took place at about 8 A.M. but the ship, the oil tanker Bucharest, was allowed to continue without being boarded after it was ascertained that it had only petroleum aboard. The Defense Department also disclosed that twelve other Soviet ships bound for Cuba had altered course.⁵⁵

The Soviet decision to alter the course of the vessels headed towards Cuba was interpreted in Washington as being a cautious move on the part of the Soviets which was taken to give them time for serious consideration of the United States challenge. Such actions fitted in well with President Kennedy's obvious desire to avoid a direct confrontation while at the same time showing the Soviets that the United States was determined to take whatever action might be necessary. It is clear that President Kennedy wanted to give the Soviets an opportunity to back down and consequently he did not want to put them into a position from which they could not honorably or peaceably extricate themselves.

Later in the day Premier Khrushchev agreed to Secretary Thant's

⁵³New York Times, November 3, 1962, p. 6.

⁵⁴United Nations Press Release SG/1353, October 24, 1962, pp. 1-3.

⁵⁵New York Times, October 26, 1962, p. 1.

proposal made the day before which called for a suspension of the blockade in return for a promise by the Soviets to stop shipping missiles to Cuba.⁵⁶

President Kennedy in his reply noted, however, that while he appreciated the spirit which prompted U Thant's message, he could only agree to discuss the matter, not suspend the blockade.⁵⁷

While the President's letter did not specifically outline his objections to U Thant's proposal, officials in Washington made it clear to the press that U Thant's offer, as it stood, was unacceptable, even temporarily. The ultimate objective was the removal of the missiles and nothing else would suffice. Neither would unverified removal of the missiles be acceptable.⁵⁸ The feeling among Kennedy and his advisors was that the proposal, if accepted, would only serve to thwart the positive action already undertaken by the United States in instituting the blockade. If, as was expected, negotiations failed, it would then be difficult, if not impossible, to set in motion another blockade which would have such widespread support from United States allies. In short, Kennedy felt that the United States had gained an immense psychological and military advantage on the Soviet Union with the blockade and he did not want to chance losing this upper-hand until substantive action had been taken to remove the missiles.

During the early evening hours Ambassador Stevenson confronted the Soviets at the United Nations with the evidence the United States had showing Soviet missiles in Cuba. Stevenson's indictment was specific and

⁵⁶New York Times, October 26, 1962, p. 16.

⁵⁷Department of State Bulletin, XLVII (November 12, 1962), 740.

⁵⁸New York Times, November 3, 1962, p. 16.

backed up by overwhelming substantiation of the missile build-up. However, the Soviet representative would not admit that there had been such an introduction of "offensive" missiles even when asked quite forthrightly by Stevenson, who said:

All right sir, let me ask you one simple question: Do you Ambassador Zorin deny that the U.S.S.R. had placed and is placing medium and intermediate-range missiles and sites in Cuba? Yes or no -- don't wait for the translation -- Yes or no.⁵⁹

When Zorin refused to answer, Stevenson made a statement that was classic, saying, "I am prepared to wait for my answer 'till hell freezes over if that's your decision."⁶⁰

Friday, October 26.--At 7 A.M. President Kennedy was informed that the Navy was tracking a Soviet ship bound for Cuba. The President gave the order to board and search. At 7:50 A.M. the United States destroyer Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. ordered the Soviet cargo ship Marucla to heave to. The Soviet vessel complied and was boarded and searched. No prohibited material was found, however, and the ship was allowed to proceed on course to Havana.⁶¹

The President's Executive Committee met during the morning to discuss the latest developments in the crisis. At this meeting Ambassador Stevenson was instructed to make it "unmistakably clear to Mr. Thant that the United States was immovable in its determination to get the missiles

⁵⁹Department of State Bulletin, XLVII (November 12, 1962), 737-40.

⁶⁰Ibid., NBC White Paper, op. cit., states that Stevenson said this in the United Nations on Tuesday, October 23. This is not the case, however, Stevenson did address the United Nations Security Council on October 23, but did not make the "hell freezes over" statement until October 25.

⁶¹New York Times, October 27, 1962, p. 6.

out of Cuba."⁶²

Later in the afternoon, amid reports in the nation's press that the United States was contemplating more direct action to meet the crisis in Cuba, the White House released a statement on the situation. The press release stated that the development of missiles sites in Cuba was continuing at a rapid pace in an obvious effort to achieve a "full operational capability as soon as possible." The White House statement concluded that there was no evident intention on the part of the Soviets to dismantle or discontinue work on the sites.⁶³

At the United Nations, during the early evening, U. Thant made public the replies of President Kennedy and Premier Khrushchev to his latest appeal for a settlement of the crisis. Again, while both heads of state accepted the proposal in essence, neither would agree to the terms which called for cessation of the blockade and removal of the missiles.⁶⁴

At about 9 P.M. an important turning point in the crisis began to develop. It was at that hour that the first part of a four-part letter from Premier Khrushchev to President Kennedy began arriving at the State Department via teletype from the Moscow Embassy.⁶⁵

The first and third sections of the letter arrived first and were read to the Executive Committee by Secretary Rusk. President Kennedy was then given the news and, after reading parts one and three, he remarked

⁶²New York Times, November 3, 1962, p. 7.

⁶³Department of State Bulletin, XLVII, (November 12, 1962), 740-41.

⁶⁴Department of State Bulletin, XLVII (November 12, 1962), 740.

⁶⁵NBC White Paper, op. cit.

that he saw nothing new in them and went to bed, leaving instructions not to be awakened unless there was something really new in the other parts.⁶⁶

The President's advisers studied the remainder of the letter as it was transmitted to them later in the night. By early morning the letter was complete and it was agreed by those who were analyzing Khrushchev's message that he had changed his position. While the letter still has not been made public by the State Department, various officials subsequently commented on parts of the message making possible a reasonably complete reconstruction of its main points. The letter, it was said, was "long, rambling, emotional and contradictory."⁶⁷ But for the first time Khrushchev acknowledged the presence of Soviet missiles in Cuba. He argued that they were defensive in nature, but conceded that he understood the President's feelings about them, since a missile was like a pistol and could be used for defense or offense depending upon the intentions of the user. Khrushchev compared Kennedy and himself to two men pulling on a rope with a knot in the middle; if both men went on tugging, Khrushchev said, the knot could only be cut with a sword.⁶⁸ Therefore, Khrushchev proposed that if Kennedy would stop pulling on his end, he, Khrushchev, would also stop the tug of war. In effect, Khrushchev was backing down and seemed to be implying that he would remove the missiles from Cuba under United Nations supervision if the United States would pledge not to invade

⁶⁶Alsop, op. cit., p. 16.

⁶⁷Ibid.

⁶⁸Ibid.

Cuba.⁶⁹

Saturday, October 27.--As the Executive Committee convened at 10:00 A.M. to consider a reply to Khrushchev's letter of the night before, a new letter from the Soviet Premier began to come into the State Department. In this message Khrushchev proposed that the Soviet Government would remove their missiles from Cuba if the United States would take its missiles out of Turkey and Greece.⁷⁰ This was unwelcome news to the President and his advisers since they had interpreted Khrushchev's earlier letter as being a proposal for a favorable solution to the crisis. Now, with Khrushchev's latest proposal, they were presented with a dilemma. It could be construed as an effort on Khrushchev's part to play for time while the missile installations were completed. Or it could be taken as an indication that Khrushchev had been overruled by some in the Kremlin who were opposed to negotiation. Bundy later said that, while the proposal to trade bases with the Soviets was a possible solution to the crisis, it was "the gravest kind of political danger for us because if we had done that . . . the Atlantic Alliance might well have come unstuck."⁷¹

⁶⁹NBC White Paper, op. cit. After the Khrushchev letter was finally complete there is some disagreement over whether the President was informed of its contents that night. The NBC White Paper states that he was informed and that he agreed that the letter seemed to indicate unconditional acceptance of the United States' terms by the Russians. The Alsop-Bartlett article on the other hand, states that after reading the first and third parts, the President said he "saw nothing new in them," went to bed and was not awakened that night. The New York Times, November 3, 1962, article, however, noted that the President was given the entire letter at 11:00 P.M. and read it "with relief." Whether or not the entire letter was given to the President on Friday is of course, not too important. The noteworthy fact is that the letter itself represented a turning point in the crisis and indicated a willingness of Khrushchev's part to resolve the crisis.

⁷⁰Department of State Bulletin, XLVII (November 12, 1962), 741-743.

⁷¹NBC White Paper, op. cit.

It was agreed that Khrushchev's latest proposal was unacceptable and a terse White House statement was drafted by the Executive Committee and released to the press. While the statement did not formally reject the Turkey-Cuba proposal, it did make it clear that the first requirement for any negotiation over Cuba was an agreement by the Soviet Union to halt work on the Cuban missile bases. After the missile installation work was halted the White House statement noted that efforts for a "sensible negotiation" could proceed.⁷²

When the Executive Committee reconvened after lunch they were confronted with still more bad news. During the morning a U-2 had been shot down by Soviet anti-aircraft missiles while on a reconnaissance flight over Cuba. This was the first time one of the Soviet missiles had been fired at a United States aircraft over Cuba and the President and his advisers agreed that definitive action had to be taken immediately.

Various answers to Khrushchev's two letters were considered by the President and ExComm. According to one report, it was the President's brother, Robert, who suggested the reply which was subsequently adopted. It is said that Robert Kennedy proposed that the President simply interpret the Friday night letter as a proposal for an acceptable deal, ignoring all other implications.⁷³ The President agreed with his brother's proposal and drafted a letter to Khrushchev which said in part:

⁷²Department of State Bulletin, XLVII (November 12, 1962), 741.

⁷³Also, op. cit., p. 18, writes that Robert Kennedy suggested what has since been dubbed the "Trollope ploy." The name comes from the Victorian novelist, Anthony Trollope who had a standard scene; a young man with no marital intentions makes some imprudent gesture toward a marriage-hungry maiden -- he squeezes her hand, even kisses her. The lady instantly seizes the opportunity by shyly accepting what she chooses to interpret as a proposal for marriage.

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As I read your letter, [of October 26] the key elements of your proposal--which are generally acceptable as I understand them--are as follows:

1) You would agree to remove these weapons systems from Cuba under appropriate United Nations observation and supervision; and undertake, with suitable safeguards, to halt the further introduction of such weapons systems into Cuba.

2) We, on our part, would agree--upon the establishment of adequate arrangements through the United Nations--to ensure the carrying out and continuation of these commitments; (a) to remove promptly the quarantine measures now in effect and, (b) to give assurances against an invasion of Cuba. I am confident that other nations of the Western Hemisphere would be prepared to do likewise.⁷⁴

The letter was published and delivered to the Russians at about the same time, 7:00 P.M.⁷⁵

The Executive Committee continued their meeting until late Saturday night discussing what actions should be taken should Khrushchev reject Kennedy's proposal to end the crisis. It was agreed that, in light of the continued work on the missile installations, as well as the fact that reconnaissance planes were now being shot at, it might be necessary to carry out selective air strikes on the missile sites after all. All agreed that such strikes would have to take place before the following Tuesday, when it was estimated the missile sites would be

⁷⁴Department of State Bulletin, XLVII (November 12, 1962), 743.

⁷⁵In the light of subsequent criticism of the Kennedy Administration by Presidential candidate Barry Goldwater during the 1964 campaign, several points about Kennedy's letter to Khrushchev should be noted. Kennedy was criticized for giving a "no invasion pledge" to Khrushchev and therefore tying the hands of the United States as far as action against Castro is concerned. Such is not the case, however, as it is clearly evident that in this letter Kennedy made such a pledge conditionally. That is, he pledged not to invade Cuba if the missiles were removed under United Nations observation and supervision. The Soviets subsequently did remove the missiles, of course, but Castro would not agree to allow observation teams from the United Nations to make on the spot inspections in Cuba. Therefore, since the sine qua non of the agreement was not specifically fulfilled, it is evident that the United States is not bound by the agreement not to invade Cuba.

completed. It was equally apparent to all present that air strikes against Cuba would be the next rung on the ladder to nuclear war.⁷⁶

Sunday, October 28.--The Soviet's answer to President Kennedy's message of the previous day was broadcast by Moscow radio at 9:00 A.M. Eastern Standard time. The statement was in the form of a letter from Premier Khrushchev to President Kennedy. In his message Khrushchev said that he had ordered work on the bases stopped and for the missiles to be crated and returned to the Soviet Union. Khrushchev promised that representatives of the United Nations would "verify the dismantling." Khrushchev further noted that he accepted the statement made by Kennedy in the October 27 message that there would be "no attack, no invasion of Cuba, and not only on the part of the United States, but also on the part of other nations in the Western Hemisphere."⁷⁷

President Kennedy, in conference with his advisers, immediately set about drafting a reply to Khrushchev's letter. About noon Kennedy's statement was broadcast over the Voice of America facilities while a formal reply was sent through diplomatic channels to the Soviet Premier.⁷⁸

President Kennedy in his response to Khrushchev noted that he welcomed the "statesmanlike decisions to dismantle the bases in Cuba and return the offensive weapons to the Soviet Union under verification." Kennedy said, this was a "welcome and constructive contribution to peace." The President also noted that he considered his letter of Saturday and

⁷⁶Alsop, op. cit., p. 18.

⁷⁷Department of State Bulletin, XLVII (November 12, 1962), 743-45.

⁷⁸Department of State Bulletin, XLVII (November 12, 1962), 745.

Premier Khrushchev's reply as "firm undertakings" which should be "promptly" carried out. The President expressed hope that the necessary measures for United Nations inspection would be taken "at once" so that the United States could lift the quarantine.⁷⁹

With Khrushchev's acceptance of the United States' terms and Kennedy's reply to the Soviet Premier the immediate crisis ended -- all that was left to be accomplished was the actual removal of the missiles.

The Crisis Cools

For the purposes of this study, as far as the decisional events are concerned, the Cuban crisis ended on October 28 when Khrushchev formally announced that he would remove the missiles. While it is true that the world was confronted with a few anxious hours in the weeks that followed the crisis, as negotiations for the removal of the missiles went forward, no problems of comparable magnitude faced the decision-makers of the United States during this time.

During the weeks after the crisis period the Soviet Union did, in fact, remove the missiles and aircraft from Cuba and, while no on site inspection plan was agreed upon,⁸⁰ the United States was evidently satisfied that aerial surveillance of the missiles leaving Cuba sufficiently

⁷⁹Department of State Bulletin, XLVII (November 12, 1962), 745-46.

⁸⁰Castro proved to be the stumbling block as far as inspection was concerned. In a letter to Secretary General U Thant on November 15, 1962, Castro made his position clear, saying: "We have given you--and we have also given it publicly and repeatedly--our refusal to allow unilateral inspection by any body, national or international, on Cuban territory." Castro remained adamant in his refusal and no on-site inspection was ever carried out. See United Nations Press Release SG/1378, November 16, 1962, pp. 1-4, for the text of Castro's letter.

verified their exit.⁸¹

President Kennedy lifted the quarantine officially on November 21, 1962.⁸² The day before he had made a statement to the press in which he outlined the post-crisis developments. The President said in part:

I have today been informed by Chairman Khrushchev that all of the IL-28 bombers now in Cuba will be withdrawn in thirty days. He also agrees that these planes can be observed and counted as they leave. Inasmuch as this goes a long way toward reducing the danger which faced this Hemisphere four weeks ago, I have this afternoon instructed the Secretary of Defense to lift our naval quarantine.

In view of this action I want to take this opportunity to bring the American people up to date on the Cuban crisis and review the progress made thus far in fulfilling the understandings between Soviet Chairman Khrushchev and myself as set forth in our letters of October 27 and 28. Chairman Khrushchev, it will be recalled, agreed to remove all weapons systems from Cuba which were capable of offensive use, to halt the further introduction of such weapons into Cuba, and to permit appropriate United Nations observation supervision to insure the carrying out and continuation of these commitments. We on our part agreed that, once these adequate arrangements for verification had been established, we would remove our quarantine and give assurances against invasion of Cuba.

The evidence to date indicates that all known offensive missile sites in Cuba have been dismantled. The missiles and their associated equipment have been loaded on Soviet ships. And our inspection at sea of these departing ships has confirmed that the number of missiles reported by the Soviet Union as having been brought into Cuba which closely corresponded to our own information, has now been removed. In addition the Soviet Government has stated that all nuclear weapons have been withdrawn from Cuba and no offensive weapons will be reintroduced.

Nevertheless, important parts of the understanding of

⁸¹November 8, 1962, the Defense Department released a statement which noted that, as a result of aerial surveillance, the United States had photographs which indicated that all known MRBM and IRBM missile bases in Cuba had been dismantled. See the New York Times, November 9, 1962, p. 3, for the text of the statement issued by Assistant Secretary of Defense Arthur Sylvester.

⁸²Department of State Bulletin, XLVII (December 17, 1962), 918.

October 27 and 28 remain to be carried out. The Cuban Government has not yet permitted the United Nations to verify whether all offensive weapons have been removed, and no lasting safeguards have yet been established against the future introduction of offensive weapons back into Cuba.

Consequently . . . this Government has no choice but to pursue its own means of checking on military activities in Cuba.

.....

In short, the record of recent weeks shows real progress. . . . The completion of the commitment on both sides and achievement of a peaceful solution to the Cuban crisis might well open the door to the solution of other outstanding problems.⁸³

In the months following the dramatic missile confrontation between the Soviet Union and the United States, the crisis atmosphere gradually subsided until, finally, the issue, overshadowed by other more immediate problems, was all but forgotten by a world which had, for 14 long days in October, 1962, stood on the brink of nuclear war and stared into the frightening abyss.

⁸³Department of State Bulletin, XLVII (December 10, 1962), 874-75.

CHAPTER IX

THE BASIC DETERMINANTS OF DECISION-MAKING:

JOHN F. KENNEDY

Introduction

The objective of the present chapter is the same as that of Chapter V which dealt with the determinants of decision-making in the Eisenhower Administration. As in that chapter, it is an attempt to categorize the basic determinants of decision making by focusing on spheres of competence, motivation and information-communications, as these factors relate to the top-level decision-maker.

One deviation from the previous study should be noted here, however. While in the case of the Hungarian-Suez decisions it was evident that Eisenhower and Dulles shared a certain amount of the power to decide, it is equally apparent that no such sharing of authority existed in the Kennedy Administration when the Cuban decision was made. The Secretary of State, in this case Dean Rusk, did not have the influence and delegated authority regarding foreign policy decision-making that Secretary Dulles had. This is evident, in fact, from the study of the very determinants which we are here attempting to categorize and will be shown in the course of the present analysis. Therefore, after analyzing the data available, the author has excluded a study of the Secretary of

State as far as the basic determinants of decision making and the relation of these factors to his position in the decision-making structure are concerned. This exclusion of the Secretary of State from the present analysis should not be taken to mean that the writer thinks Rusk was not influential in the decision-making unit. On the contrary, Rusk was quite influential, however, the contention is that Rusk's ideas and wishes regarding decisions did not influence President Kennedy to the degree that Secretary Dulles' did President Eisenhower. This will be shown quite clearly as the study proceeds.

Sphere of Competence: John F. Kennedy

Ideally, of course, the most precise way in which to characterize a President and how he views his powers, his "role" and his responsibilities, would be to look at the public statements of that President and observe what he has said regarding his competence. Fortunately, such statements by Kennedy are rather numerous and, as a result, a reasonably exact picture can be reconstructed.

President Kennedy, soon after he took office, characterized the role of the Presidency as being "a strong and active one." Kennedy felt that the President should be kept intimately informed of what was happening in all fields of government to enable him to be prepared for action at all times. In his forward to Theodore Sorensen's book Decision-Making in the White House, Kennedy summed up what he believed was the central focus of the Presidency when he said: "The heart of the Presidency . . . is informed, prudent, and resolute choice -- and the secret of presidential enterprise is to be found in an examination of the way presidential

choices are made."¹

President Kennedy left no doubt as to who would make the decisions in his Administration. He firmly believed that the President, while he could derive advice and counsel from his subordinates in the decisional process, in the end, stood alone. "There stands the decision -- and there stands the President," Kennedy once wrote.² Indeed, there is an overwhelming preponderance of evidence which shows that the President meant exactly what he said.

As noted, President Kennedy intended to be a strong, active, and independent President and after taking office he moved swiftly to set up a Presidential staff system which would allow him to exercise his office in terms of these conceptions. As Richard Neustadt suggests, Kennedy was like Franklin D. Roosevelt in this respect and shared Roosevelt's concern for the distinction between "personal" and "institutionalized" staff.³

Kennedy chose White House staff members -- his "informal" staff -- not according to political, geographical or other patterns, but rather for their ability to serve his needs and to talk his language. Flexibility was consciously built into his staffing system by not prescribing precise "roles" for his advisors. They were to work with Cabinet officials and departmental personnel to spot, refine, and define issues for the President. They were not, however, to replace the role of any Cabinet official nor

¹Sorensen, op. cit., p. xii.

²Ibid.

³Richard E. Neustadt, "Approaches to Staffing the Presidency: Notes on F.D.R. and J.F.K.," American Political Science Review, LVII, (December, 1963), 855-64.

block access to the President -- as was true in other administrations. Kennedy was explicit in this regard and wanted his advisers to increase unity rather than "splinter responsibility."⁴ The President continually took pains to build up morale and increase the prestige of his Cabinet officers by stressing the fact that his Cabinet members were his principal advisers in their fields of competence. For example, he was careful to note on several occasions that Secretary Rusk was his chief adviser on foreign affairs, thereby backing up the Secretary's own authority and image.⁵

In order to carry out his ideas regarding White House organization Kennedy's senior White House staff advisers, Special Counsel Theodore C. Sorensen,⁶ and Special Assistant McGeorge Bundy were assigned broad roles which Neustadt has characterized as "action-sphere" assignments.⁷

Such action assignments -- as compared with "program area" assignments -- allowed Kennedy's White House advisers to range far and wide in their search for information which he needed. There was a deliberate attempt to build overlapping areas of responsibility into the White House staff system and all had direct access to the President. According to Neustadt, Kennedy's deliberate attempt to structure his staff relationships in this manner reflected the President's taste for "competition and alternative sources" of information.⁸

⁴Sorensen, op. cit., p. 71.

⁵Ibid., p. 80.

⁶Neustadt, op. cit., p. 856, notes that the title, Special Counsel, was created by F.D.R. for his adviser Samuel Rosenman.

⁷Ibid., p. 861.

⁸Ibid.

The White House staff members were given responsibility in various spheres of activity. McGeorge Bundy, for example, had the responsibility of maintaining channels of information from the State and Defense Departments and other security agencies. In addition, Bundy monitored all decisions to see that they were fulfilled.⁹ Kennedy was determined however, not to be told what decisions he would make. If advice was offered and he believed it to be misplaced he would veto the advice whether it came from his brother, Attorney General Robert Kennedy, or anyone else. On the other hand, after he had given an adviser a job, if that counselor suggested a course of action Kennedy thought had merit he would endorse it. Kennedy, for example, gave Bundy the responsibility of streamlining the staff organization of the National Security Council and when Bundy found that the Operations Coordinating Board, an arm of the Council, was not performing a useful function, Kennedy abolished the Board.¹⁰

In the end, the job of his advisers as visualized by Kennedy was to keep him posted, to provide him with choices, so to speak, to allow him to grasp the "big picture" of the problems which were brought to him.¹¹ President Kennedy was acutely aware of the Chief Executive's major problem, seclusion from information, and he was determined that his liaison men, his advisors, would provide him with this vital ingredient of effective Presidential decision-making.¹²

⁹Lester Tanzer, The Kennedy Circle (Washington: Luce, 1961), p. 38.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹William R. Manchester, Portrait of a President (Boston: Little, Brown, 1962), p. 43.

¹²Ibid., p. 42.

In creating his Cabinet and in maintaining relations with them President Kennedy was determined to break with the traditions of his predecessor, Eisenhower. In a discussion with John Fischer, Editor in Chief of Harper's Magazine, Kennedy, before he had been nominated to the Presidency, outlined his ideas on this subject saying:

I believe every head of a department is overburdened. My judgment would be that they delegate and rely on subordinates, so that instead of really getting the best minds of the country to study a problem without prior commitment to an agency, you're really getting a staff operation, which gives the President precompromised final solutions without revealing to him the alternatives that might have been open. That appears to be the way President Eisenhower prefers to work. I'm hopeful it isn't the way a future President will work because I am convinced that discussion and differences and new points of view should be brought to bear on the President.¹³

According to the President's old government teacher, emeritus Professor Arthur N. Holcombe of Harvard, "the President did not want a Cabinet of the traditional kind. What he wanted was energetic and efficient department management."¹⁴

Kennedy's conception of what the Cabinet should be was reflected in his choice of Secretary of State. He chose a man whose ideas and concepts regarding the role of the President were identical with his own. Dean Rusk, Kennedy's choice for Secretary of State, more than a year before his appointment, set down in clear detail his perception of the Presidential role when he wrote:

In a unique sense the President is the custodian of the national interest. Elected by a national constituency, he speaks to Congress and to the people of the needs of the nation as a whole.

.....

¹³John F. Kennedy, Strategy For Peace (New York: Harper Brothers, 1960), pp. 353-69.

¹⁴Manchester, op. cit., p. 47.

The crucial, indispensable contribution which the President can make to the conduct of our foreign affairs is to enter fully into his office, to use its powers and accept its responsibilities, to lead a people who are capable of responding to the obligations of citizenship. He holds a unique office in a unique constitutional system, which offers him vast powers in exchange for leadership -- powers which are as large as the situation requires. A Presidential system can not easily adjust to an interregnum; a nation moving with such great mass and velocity needs the engineer at the throttle.¹⁵

Certainly these words of Dean Rusk were in accord with Kennedy's conception of his Presidential role -- a role which quite naturally involved choosing those persons as Cabinet members who believed as he did and who would be inclined to strengthen and re-inforce his position.

With regard to the Cabinet, Sidney Hyman suggests that Kennedy was a "strict constructionist" in that the President believed that the Constitution did not create a "committee Presidency, but a one man President in whom power and responsibility achieve their supreme unity."¹⁶ In line with this theory Kennedy felt that, if this constitutional power of the President were divided by delegating too much of his responsibility to Cabinet members, the President's own power and initiative would be lost. Kennedy meant to be the secretary in charge of all the secretaries when essential matters were involved and he hand-picked his Cabinet members with this thought in mind. There is no doubt that he valued their advice and delegated a great deal of responsibility to his Cabinet members but there is equally little doubt that, unlike some Presidents, he reserved the responsibility for making the organic decisions to himself. Kennedy's

¹⁵Dean Rusk, "The President," Foreign Affairs, XXXVIII (April, 1960), 353-69.

¹⁶Sidney Hyman, "Inside the Kitchen Cabinet," New York Times Magazine, (March 5, 1961), p. 27.

emphasis on reserving the crucial decisions to himself and keeping his hand in as many other decisions as possible should not be interpreted as an implication that he withheld responsibility from his cabinet members. On the contrary, it was a conscious policy of Kennedy's to make the agencies and departments of government more effective by giving them a great deal of responsibility, but this delegation was not to be carte blanche. Kennedy insisted upon being kept informed and would not, for example, allow his Secretary of State to formulate and execute important foreign policy moves without consulting with him. In short, what the President wanted was balance and he meant to achieve this rather paradoxical state of affairs by establishing a system where there would be a steady flow of information, alternatives, and proposals between the Cabinet members and the Executive.

Channels of communication were always kept open between the President and his top-level advisers. He asked Cabinet members to call him at any time they felt it was necessary and, if they were in doubt as to the necessity of such a call, to call him anyway. It was apparent that Kennedy wanted to be the ultimate decision-maker on important matters and at the same time he wanted the advice of his Cabinet on such matters. However, this advice was not solicited through the traditional medium of formal Cabinet meetings.¹⁷ As a matter of fact, Kennedy held relatively few formal Cabinet meetings during his term of office. Instead he preferred informal, ad hoc, gatherings composed of those individuals in the Cabinet

¹⁷Indeed, after over a year in office, Kennedy had held only 15 formal Cabinet meetings as compared with about 45 during Eisenhower's first year.

and elsewhere whom he trusted and whose advice he valued. A primary consideration as far as who was invited to participate in such meetings was the field of competence of the individual and the relevance of this expertise to the problem at hand.

Kennedy, while still a Senator, commented on the apparent paradox involved in the idea of depending more on Cabinet members while having fewer Cabinet meetings and, in so doing, he offered an insight into his own ideas regarding Cabinet meetings. He said, "I think in the future that we will find the Cabinet perhaps more important than it has ever been, but Cabinet meetings not as important."¹⁸

Under Kennedy, the Cabinet did indeed become more important, but not as a formal institutionalized organization. Rather, the men in the Cabinet became important in their roles as intimate advisers to the President. Kennedy dealt with each Cabinet officer as an individual rather than with the group as a whole. As a result the Cabinet became important as individuals not as a formal body. Kennedy did, in fact delegate copious responsibility to his Cabinet members in running their own departments, but at the same time he kept his hand on the pulse of government by requiring bi-weekly reports from each of his Cabinet members.

This was the Kennedy way and it seemed to reflect an understanding of the prime danger inherent in improper staff organization; that is, that if staffs are structured in such a way that alternatives are defined by them it will mean, in the end, that the staff is dictating executive decisions.¹⁹

¹⁸Richard F. Fenno, Jr., "The Cabinet: Index to the Kennedy Way," New York Times Magazine, (April 22, 1962), p. 13.

¹⁹Frederick W. Collins, "The Mind of John F. Kennedy," The New Republic, CXLIV, (May 8, 1961), 15.

Kennedy's determination to surround himself with those who could give him the kind of assistance he needed to carry out his duties as he perceived them, gradually led to the development of a small "inner cabinet" and, in the process, some of the more formal arrangements fell into relative disuse.

The National Security Council, for example, declined in importance. Kennedy, before his election to the Presidency, indicated his misgivings regarding the Council when he said:

Every President operates differently. What the Security Council, of course, is attempting to do is to take these extremely complicated and far-reaching matters and present them to the President in a way that will enable him to make some reasonable judgment on them. So quite obviously the Council is needed. The questions basically are whether the staff at the lower levels really develop the position papers which bring unanimity at the Council, and whether, for example, the Secretary of the Treasury has too dominant a voice, and whether a new President might insist on other groups participating which do not have the departmental background, perhaps setting up almost a small inner cabinet with a special responsibility to the Security Council.²⁰

This inner cabinet which Kennedy mentioned did, in fact, develop. It was composed of those he trusted most and those whose opinion he valued; Attorney General Robert Kennedy, Special Council Theodore Sorensen, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, Secretary of State Dean Rusk, Secretary of the Treasury Douglas Dillon, Special Assistant McGeorge Bundy, Presidential Military Adviser Maxwell Taylor and Central Intelligence Agency Director John McCone were some of the members of this inner circle of advisers. While this small advisory group did not replace the formal Cabinet as such it did meet much more frequently than the Cabinet to discuss problems with the President. It was, however, not given a name or formalized

²⁰Kennedy, Strategy For Peace, op. cit., p. 205.

as a group until the time of the 1962 Cuban crisis when it became the Executive Committee of the National Security Council.

Hyman described the "kitchen cabinet" of Kennedy's in this way:

It consists of general practitioners of government drawn from the members of the White House staff plus selected allies drawn from the rank of 'Kennedy men' placed at strategic levels of power elsewhere in the Government. In its motions it is loose-jointed, enjoys a free interplay with an accessible President, subdivides into general areas of responsibilities which require distinctive kinds of energy, but has no formal chain of command.

Thus far it has not made of itself an 'institutionalized' rival or critic of the regular Cabinet. Nor does it act as a policeman, forcing warring agencies into a show of unanimity on a debated subject before it reaches the President's desk. It is, however, deeply involved at every stage in the making of decisions.²¹

Kennedy's formation of this special group of advisors, while at the same time consciously keeping the more formal Cabinet and National Security Council functioning, reflected his basic conviction that a President must reach out and bring as much information and advice, from as many sources as possible, to himself in order that he can more effectively make decisions. Kennedy did not want decisions made before all alternatives were discussed nor did he want the alternatives diluted before they reached him. Commenting on President Eisenhower's staff system Kennedy once said:

I think President Eisenhower felt he could use his time most effectively by having the staff co-ordinate things at the secondary level and then for him to work through the chairman of the staff. I try to keep in contact with all these men individually because I think it enables me to keep in much greater intimacy with the various responsibilities we have.²²

²¹Hyman, op. cit., p. 27.

²²Tanzer, op. cit., p. xvii.

Kennedy once remarked that he liked to think of the Cabinet members and White House officials in terms of a wheel and spokes instead of in traditional organizational chart terms. He was the hub of the wheel and his advisers, the spokes, came directly to him without first picking their way through a maze of boxes and lines.²³ Kennedy, in effect, cast aside the Eisenhower method of having information and advice filtered by staff members before reaching him. Kennedy's perception of the role of the President and how it should be exercised evidently instinctively showed him that the only way to preserve his power to make choices was to keep numerous channels open to himself while maintaining a fluid structure around him.²⁴ Commenting on the role of the National Security Council, Kennedy stated these beliefs when he said:

I think the Security Council and those who constitute its membership would, of course, continue to function under any President. But I would hope that there might be other groups, less committed to represent a particular department, less engaged in the great tasks that press on a Secretary -- that they also could bring to bear some views, some independent judgments, on the President, so that constant realistic alternatives, fully developed alternatives, on which he could make a final judgment, could be presented to him rather than merely a consensus rising from the secondary staff level. Under the latter system the President gives an endorsement rather than a judgment.

.....

. . . the President, constitutionally and practically, is the man who must make these judgments [with regard to foreign policy].²⁵

The Kennedy system provided for diversity and flexibility in other ways as well. For example, in order to create a forum where his foreign

²³ Ibid., p. xix.

²⁴ Fenno, op. cit., p. 13.

²⁵ Kennedy, Strategy For Peace, op. cit., p. 205.

policy ideas could be debated freely and without the inhibition inherent in a formal meeting with him present, the President encouraged his advisers to meet separately in informal groups to discuss the proposals which he gave them.

One of these groups became known as the "Tuesday Group" whose informal chairman was Walt W. Rostow of the State Department. The assemblage also included McGeorge Bundy, George C. McGhee, Under Secretary for Political Affairs and Paul N. Nitze, Assistant Secretary of Defense. Depending on the issue under discussion, other key officials would also be asked to join the group from time to time. The Tuesday Group and others like it, in addition to exchanging their views regarding the President's proposals, many times originated policy of their own which would be passed on to the President and then, if he approved, it would go down the line to the various departments concerned.

In terms of his sphere of competence President Kennedy left no doubt as to his conception of his role as President. He meant to make the important decisions and his advisory bodies were structured with this objective in mind. His virtual abolition of the Cabinet as a formal joint council, his abandonment of the formalism of the National Security Council meetings and procedures, his dismantling of the Operations Coordinating Board, and his promotion of informal advisory groups all were reflections of his desire to make the process of decision-making more effective -- and to keep the control of decisions, and thereby the control of government, in his hands. It was clear that Kennedy wanted to be a President who was in direct control of government, with no assistant President and no board of directors to interfere with his actions.²⁶

²⁶Collins, op. cit., p. 16.

His preference for small advisory group meetings, formed ad hoc, to get at the facts of a major problem, to isolate the issues, to examine possible solutions and consequences, and to make recommendations, mirrored his belief that decisions could best be made after a frank, open and informed discussion of the alternatives. This desire to bring the best minds together for the discussion of policy problems is evidently one reason that Kennedy did not use formal Cabinet meetings except for coordination and for "esprit de corps" purposes. He seemed to realize instinctively, as did Franklin Roosevelt, that Cabinet meetings which provide the kind of clash of policy alternatives among informed individuals which would educate the President, are a rarity. Kennedy had much the same attitude regarding formal meetings of the National Security Council. Under Kennedy, the NSC became a place not for generating big papers or broad objectives, but rather a place where policy was exposed to final discussion, where the President confronted a problem and then, finally, made a decision.²⁷

President Kennedy succinctly summed up his entire organizational structure when he noted that he was a President "who had no advisers." This was the cumulative effect of Kennedy's entire staff system. This paradox of a President surrounded by advisers who said that he had no advisers. The meaning is evident, however, and in the end, no paradox existed, for what President Kennedy meant was that the highest functions of his councillors was to tell him what questions he needed to have the answer to before making a decision. They were to give him their judgments, conclusions, opinions, and analyses but the decisions were to come from the President himself. This was the Kennedy approach and it was this conception of his

²⁷Ibid.

competence which determined the organizational roles and relationships of his subordinates, as well as the division of work and the structure of authority in his administration. In short, this was the Kennedy sphere of competence.

Motivation

Motives, as Snyder suggests, refer to "why" questions -- why does the decision-maker, the "actor," act as he does? Or to put it another way, why does a decision take a particular form in a particular situation?²⁸ These are the questions to be answered by motivational analysis. In accomplishing this task it must be remembered that motives are not behaviors, they are inferences drawn from behavior. The task of one who undertakes motivational analysis then, involves finding what within the individual, rather than without, incites him to action and leads him to make a particular response to certain stimuli.

Such an undertaking is, admittedly, not simple. Obviously there are inherent deficiencies. However, it is contended that an attempt at motivational analysis is vital to the explanation of a decision.

An analysis of President Kennedy's motivation discloses a number of prime motives which seem to have characterized his behavior. First, and probably most important from a behavior standpoint, Kennedy desired to be a strong President; a President who could preserve the power and prestige of the Presidential office. Second, he wanted to be an informed, prudent, and resolute Chief Executive. Third, he wanted to be an independent President, one whose power would not be diluted by the delegation of too much authority. Fourth, he perceived that there was a place in the scheme

²⁸Snyder, op. cit., p. 140.

of international relations for negotiation and conciliation. Fifth, he was motivated by a desire to place the United States in a position of strength from which negotiation would be both possible and profitable. Sixth, he desired to carry out what he believed to be the national purpose and to identify himself with the American people to carry out this purpose. Finally, Kennedy was motivated by an inherent "intent of action" which drew together and brought to fruition these other inner needs and desires.

These motives of President Kennedy were, obviously, interrelated and interdependent. Naturally they cannot be treated in isolation. One motive cannot be divorced from another motive. For example, Kennedy's desire to be a firm and prudent Chief Executive cannot be separated from his obvious wish to preserve the power and prestige of that office. Neither can the fact that he wanted to be an independent President be detached from his desire that the power of the President would not be diffused. These motives then are, in effect, multiple motives; a configuration of motives, so to speak, which compose a system in the sense that they are related to one another and expressed in related programs of action. Thus, they must be characterized with that thought in mind.

There can be no doubt that Kennedy desired to be a strong President, a President who would return to that office the power and prestige which he believed had been lost. He voiced this conviction, even before his nomination, while addressing the National Press Club in January, 1960, saying:

The central issue [of the coming campaign] . . . is not the farm problem or defense or India. It is the Presidency itself.

.....

The history of this Nation -- its brightest and its bleakest pages -- has been written largely in terms of the different views our Presidents have had of the Presidency itself. This

history ought to tell us that the American people in 1960 have an imperative right to know what any man bidding for the Presidency thinks about the place he is bidding for, whether he is aware of and willing to use the powerful resources of that office; whether his model will be Taft or Roosevelt, Wilson or Harding.

.....

Whatever the political affiliation of our next President, whatever his views may be on all the issues and problems that rush in upon us, he must above all be the Chief Executive in every sense of the word. He must be prepared to exercise the fullest powers of his Office -- all that are specified and some that are not. He must master complex problems as well as receive one-page memorandums. He must originate action as well as study groups. He must reopen the channel of communication between the world of thought and the seat of power.

Ulyses Grant considered the President a 'purely administrative officer.' If he administered the Government departments efficiently, delegated his functions smoothly, and performed his ceremonies of state with decorum and grace, no more was to be expected of him. But that is not the place the Presidency was meant to have in American life.

If there is destructive dissension among the services, he alone can step in and straighten it out -- instead of waiting for unanimity. If administrative agencies are not carrying out their mandate -- if a brushfire threatens some part of the globe -- he alone can act, without waiting for Congress.

'The President is at liberty, both in law and conscience, to be as big a man as he can.' So wrote Professor Woodrow Wilson. But Woodrow Wilson discovered that to be a big man in the White House inevitably brings cries of 'dictatorship.'

So did Lincoln and Jackson and the two Roosevelts. And so may the next occupant of that office, if he is the man the times demand. But how much better it would be, in the turbulent sixties, to have a Roosevelt or a Wilson than to have another James Buchanan, cringing in the White House, afraid to move.

Nor can we afford a Chief Executive who is praised primarily for what he did not do; the disasters he prevented, the bills he vetoed -- a President wishing his subordinates would produce more missiles or build more schools. We will need instead what the Constitution envisioned: a Chief Executive who is the vital center of action in our whole scheme of government.²⁹

The above statements by John F. Kennedy, then a United States Senator, reflected his conviction that Presidential power was a commodity

²⁹"Address by John F. Kennedy before the National Press Club, January 18, 1960," in John F. Kennedy: A Compendium of Speeches, Statements and Remarks (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1964), pp. 1107-1108. [*Italics mine*].

which had to be actively pursued and once gained, preserved and enhanced through forthright action on the part of the man holding that office.

Determination coupled with a firm resolve to take prudent action to meet any threat to the democratic system was the theme of Kennedy's address before the American Society of Newspaper Editors on April 20, 1961. Speaking on the subject of Cuba, the President said:

Any unilateral American intervention, in the absence of an external attack upon ourselves or an ally, would have been contrary to our traditions and to our international obligations. But let the record show that our restraint is not inexhaustible. Should it ever appear that the inter-American doctrine of noninterference merely conceals or excuses a policy of nonaction--if the nations of this hemisphere should fail to meet their commitments against outside Communist penetration -- then I want it clearly understood that this government will not hesitate in meeting its primary obligations, which are to the security of our nation.

Should that time ever come, we do not intend to be lectured on 'intervention' by those whose character was stamped for all time on the bloody streets of Budapest.

No greater task faces this Nation of this Administration. No other challenge is more deserved of our every effort and energy. Too long we have fixed our eyes on traditional military needs, on armies prepared to cross borders or missiles poised for flight. Now it should be clear that this is no longer enough -- that our security may be lost piece by piece, country by country, without firing a single missile or the crossing of a single border.

Let me then make clear as President of the United States that I am determined upon our system's survival and success, regardless of the cost and regardless of the peril.³⁰

Perhaps the best summation of President Kennedy's determination to lead the nation resolutely was made by him in his Inaugural Address on January 20, 1961 when he said:

Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe, in order to assure the survival and the success of liberty. This much we pledge and more.³¹

³⁰Department of State Bulletin, XLIV (May 8, 1961), 659-60.
[Italics mine.]

³¹New York Times, January 21, 1961, p. 1.

Kennedy's commitment to the principle of negotiations as a way to ease the tensions of the nuclear age was enuciated in a speech at the University of Rochester in October, 1959. In this address Kennedy outlined the areas where he believed agreement was possible, saying:

First, both the United States and the USSR would like to be free of the crushing burdens of the arms race.

Secondly, neither the United States nor the USSR wants a nuclear war. Neither wants to set the fire that may extinguish civilization as we know it. . . .

Third, neither the United States nor the USSR wants nuclear weapons -- and the power to initiate nuclear war -- to pass into the hands of too many other nations. . . .

Fourth, neither Americans nor Russians want to breathe radioactive air. . . .

These are the real areas of potential agreement with the Russians -- because these are the real interests we could share in common. If we could succeed in reaching practical, enforceable agreements in these areas, there would still be fierce competition. But it would be competition in trade and aid, in production and propoganda, in seeking friends and building fences. Our security would be at stake in this competition -- let us never forget that. We could still not relax our effort. Mr. Khrushchev would still be out to 'bury' us. But the world's very survival would be less endangered -- the Cold War would be less likely to become hot -- and the competition would be one that we should accept with pleasure.³²

A few months after his Rochester speech, Kennedy, speaking in Washington, D.C., reflected the concern of the prudent man for the effects of nuclear war and reiterated his conviction that negotiation could offer a solution. He said:

Some say that there is little point in negotiating with the Russians in these terms because they have never abided by any agreement and never will. But this is another way of saying that war is the unavoidable fate of mankind. Lenin used to say this, in the days before war meant the annihilation of whole peoples. Stalin blindly said it, even after the atomic bomb had been dropped on Japan. No American should say it. We who believe in human reason and the possibility of peaceful change should never lose hope that even a

³²Kennedy, Strategy for Peace, op. cit., p. 12.

tough-minded Kremlin politician will see the light -- or enough of the light to know that war, in the age of the hydrogen bomb, is no longer a rational alternative.³³

A genuine faith that problems could be worked out through peaceful negotiations while still standing firm to the basic commitments of American democracy was the subject of a speech Kennedy made in Tulsa, Oklahoma in September 1959. In criticizing the Eisenhower Administration's policy regarding Formosa, Kennedy indicated his desire for a firm policy, saying in part:

. . . let us remember in the future that foreign policy is neither successfully made nor successfully carried out by mere pronouncements--and that the use of such terms as appeasement, Far Eastern Munich, and national unity does not in itself constitute a policy.

The American people, in my opinion, do not want either appeasement or war, if either can be avoided through peaceful negotiations.

.....

The demands of national unity and national security call upon each of us to stand firm in a moment of crisis.³⁴

At his inauguration President Kennedy combined the themes of negotiation, national strength, and nuclear dangers when he said:

Finally, to those nations who would make themselves our adversary, we offer not a pledge but a request: that both sides begin anew the quest for peace, before the dark powers of destruction unleashed by science engulf all humanity in planned or accidental self-destruction.

We dare not tempt them with weakness, for only when our arms are sufficient beyond doubt can we be certain beyond doubt that they will never be employed.

But neither can two great and powerful groups of nations take comfort from our present course -- both sides overburdened by the cost of modern weapons, both rightly alarmed by the steady spread of the deadly atom, yet both racing to alter that uncertain balance to terror that stays the hand of mankind's final war.

³³Ibid., p. 26.

³⁴Ibid., p. 104.

So let us begin anew--remembering on both sides that civility is not a sign of weakness, and sincerity is always subject to proof. Let us never negotiate out of fear. But let us never fear to negotiate.³⁵

Motivation, as noted earlier, is inferred from behavior and President Kennedy's actions during his term of office reflected his basic determination to utilize the power and prestige of the Presidency to solve the problems which confront the United States and the world.

After the failure of the Bay of Pigs invasion in early 1961 -- marking the low point in the Kennedy determination and decisiveness -- President Kennedy moved rapidly to formulate policy and meet crises as they arose. He took a firm stand on Berlin in 1961 calling up the reserves and warning of possible war when United States access rights to that city were threatened by Soviet intransigence. To meet the growing threat of Communist takeover in Viet Nam he initiated a counter-guerrilla offensive there and expanded the conventional warfare capabilities of United States forces. In the Congo he steadfastly backed the efforts of the United Nations Secretary General Hammarskjold, and of his successor U Thant, to maintain a united Congo through the use of United Nations troops there. He was instrumental in bringing about a Geneva Conference for settlement of the Laos problem through neutralization. He showed the seriousness of the United States purpose regarding disarmament by creating the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. The 1964 Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, passed after his death, was a Kennedy-sponsored proposal to do away with testing in the atmosphere. His efforts on behalf of the Alliance for Progress reflected his concern for the under-developed countries of the Western Hemisphere.

³⁵New York Times, January 21, 1961, p. 1. [*Italics mine*].

On the domestic scene his efforts in the area of civil rights -- first in sending troops to Mississippi to insure the registration of Negro college student James Meridith and then in sponsoring the 1964 Civil Rights Act -- and his handling of the steel companies in their efforts to raise prices displayed to the nation his resolution to utilize the powers of the Presidency to settle domestic crises.

In all these instances Kennedy behaved in a manner calculated to utilize and enhance the power which he believed was inherent in the Presidential office.

Another facet of Kennedy's inner drive was a sincere desire to achieve what he perceived to be the "national purpose." He identified this purpose as being:

. . . what it has been since the nation's founding: to demonstrate that the organization of men and societies on the basis of human freedom is not an absurdity, but an enriching ennobling, practical achievement. Our purpose is to demonstrate at home that this great continental democracy can solve its problems by the method of consent -- by a system of freedom under law. With respect to the world outside, our purpose is not only to defend the integrity of this democratic society but also to help advance the cause of human freedom and world law -- the universal cause of a just and lasting peace.³⁶

Kennedy meant to achieve this national intent by developing a new "strategy for peace" that would be relevant to the nuclear age. The chief ingredients in this strategy were not money and military preparedness but social inventiveness, moral stamina, and physical courage, which Kennedy said had not been developed sufficiently. He believed that it was up to the President as leader of the nation to help the citizens of the United States develop this sense of purpose and thereby bring about such a successful

³⁶Kennedy, Strategy for Peace, op. cit., p. 3.

strategy. According to Kennedy, the Eisenhower Administration had not helped to achieve the national purpose because "attitudes, platitudes, and beatitudes" had taken the place of a "critical and vigilant intelligence marching in advance of events. . . ."³⁷ Kennedy perceived that he had what amounted to a mandate from the people to carry out this responsibility. Indeed, in speaking of the President's role, he once remarked, "my desires are those of most of the American people."³⁸ The vigor with which he carried out the affairs of state certainly lends credence to the contention that Kennedy was a President who was motivated by a firm conviction that the Presidential office was an office which could be utilized to achieve the national purpose.

President Kennedy's personality³⁹ can be characterized as one which included a compulsive instinct for inquiry -- he wanted to know everything there was to know about affairs which concerned the Presidency. His concern for the relevant reached deep down into the recesses of government and his interests ranged much farther than the traditional boundaries of the Presidency. Kennedy's personality and perception of his role made him insist on making decisions by himself after hearing what his advisers had to say. Combined with this ability Kennedy had what could be called an ease for decision which included choosing what needed to be decided and when. He had a talent for suspended judgment,

³⁷Ibid., p. 7.

³⁸Manchester, op. cit., p. 206.

³⁹As was noted earlier, motivation includes personality and although this determinant is not easily categorized, it is both relevant and useful to at least attempt to do so.

which Frederick Collins has called "an ability to live with chaos,"⁴⁰ and he tempered this good judgment with a rigorous sense of personal responsibility.

All of the personality traits of President Kennedy, - his sense of personal responsibility, his ease of decision, his curiosity, his ability to identify himself with the aspirations of the American people, his political sensitivity, his independence, and his instinct for the relevant, were synthesized and set in motion by what was perhaps his most outstanding trait, an unremitting intent of action. This sense of movement, this inner restlessness, inherent in the Kennedy disposition, added a new dimension to the Presidency and gave the American people a new sense of purpose.

President Kennedy, in a speech he was never able to deliver, appropriately summed up both his motivation, and the sense of purpose which his personality had given to the citizens he served. He was to have said:

.....
America today is stronger than ever before. Our adversaries have not abandoned their ambitions--our dangers have not diminished--our vigilance cannot be relaxed. But now we have the military, the scientific and the economic strength to do whatever must be done for the preservation and promotion of freedom.

That strength will never be used in pursuit of aggressive ambitions--it will always be used in pursuit of peace. It will never be used to promote provocations--it will always be used to promote the peaceful settlement of disputes.

We in this country, in this generation, are--by destiny rather than choice--the watchmen on the walls of world freedom. We ask, therefore, that we may be worthy of our power and responsibility--that we may exercise our strength with wisdom and restraint--and that we may achieve in our time and for all time the ancient vision of peace on earth, good will toward

⁴⁰Collins, op. cit., p. 15.

men. That must always be our goal--and the righteousness of our cause must always underlie our strength. For as was written long ago: 'Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.'⁴¹

Information-Communications

It should be noted at this point that any attempt to separate organizational roles and relationships from information-communication can not be entirely successful. Just as much which comes under the heading of competence includes motivation, so too does a great deal of that which we call roles and relationships come within the area of information and communications. The relative brevity of the following description of Kennedy's information-communication network is accounted for by this fact, i.e., that it was impossible to characterize his competence - his roles and relationships-- without including a certain amount of data which could just as properly be classified as communications data. With this qualification in mind then we will proceed with a characterization of the information-communication structure of President Kennedy.

The most striking aspect of the information-communication structure in the Kennedy Administration was its diversity. Information flowed to the President from a multitude of sources and, what was equally important, it flowed directly to him without being filtered through an elaborate staff structure and without being digested beforehand by staff members.

The information-communication network which Kennedy established

⁴¹Speech to have been delivered by John F. Kennedy in Dallas, Texas, November 22, 1963, in Four Days: The Historical Record of the Death of President Kennedy, compiled by United Press International and American Heritage Magazine, (New York: American Heritage Publishing Company, 1964), p. 129.

reflected his basic conviction regarding the Presidential "need-to-know." Kennedy, perhaps more than any other President before him, realized the necessity of having a constant and varied flow of information reach him. He summed up this need himself when he said:

One of the problems of any President is that his sources of information are limited. I sit in the White House and I read in the papers and magazines and memoranda, and things that I see, that is the sum total of what I hear and learn. So the more people I can see, the wider I can be exposed to different ideas, the more effective I can be as President. So, therefore, it is a mistake to have just one person working on one subject because then you don't get any clash of ideas and therefore have no opportunity for choice.⁴²

Ideally, of course, the President of the United States is in a position to know everything, since he has at his command the sources of information and the ability to communicate with those who collect the facts. However, while the President is in a unique position regarding information, he does not always get it unless he actively pursues it. A President can so structure his information-communication relationships that he ends up being exposed to only that information which his staff decide he should know.

President Kennedy had by nature a compulsive desire to be informed at all times on all matters and this characteristic led him to create a system whereby his needs could be fulfilled. Kennedy used official and unofficial channels to gather the information he considered vital to the Presidential office. His personal aides on the White House staff were primarily concerned with keeping him informed as to public opinion, the state of political affairs, policies in progress, and personnel problems. His Council of Economic Advisers, the National Security Council, individual

⁴²Tanzer, op. cit., p. xvii.

Cabinet members, the Central Intelligence Agency, and his Scientific Adviser, kept him advised on the world of power and diplomacy.⁴³

The President received, on Friday of every week, from every department represented in the Cabinet and from independent agencies, a report of activities of the preceding six days. His military aide reported to him each morning and gave him the intelligence reports that had come in during the preceding night. In addition, Kennedy was kept apprised of the latest developments constantly by aides McGeorge Bundy, Theodore Sorensen and Kenneth O'Donnel.⁴⁴

Kennedy did not rely merely on the official channels of communication, however. He had many auxillary lines of communication within the government which furnished him with different views on the same subject and he allowed persons who ordinarily did not have direct access to the White House to bypass the usual channels. In addition, the President sought information from independent sources outside the government such as, personal friends, elder statesmen, and journalists. Neither did Kennedy rely solely on what was personally communicated to him by others. He was a rapid and inveterate reader and each morning scanned the pages of the New York Times, the Washington Post and the Wall Street Journal. Indeed, James Reston of the New York Times, commenting on Kennedy's penchant for newspaper reading, once noted that the President "took printer's ink for breakfast."⁴⁵ Walter Heller, Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers who once gave the President a twelve-page memorandum on a complex economic problem and found at a Cabinet meeting an hour later that Kennedy

⁴³Hyman, op. cit., p. 17.

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Manchester, op. cit., p. 38.

was quoting from it, remarked joyfully that "the President read everything."⁴⁶

Sorensen, in Decision-Making in the White House, notes that Kennedy was like Franklin Roosevelt in that, while he was careful to rely primarily on responsible officers when an important decision was involved, he continually sought independent information from a variety of sources as well.⁴⁷

Kennedy obviously wanted all the facts and all the viewpoints and he was not content to have only filtered and strained information. He wanted to be able to anticipate problems and evidently felt that keeping informed was the prerequisite for such appraisals. Naturally Kennedy did not pay attention to all the information he received, nor did he remember it all, but what he actually considered and retained was the key to what he decided. Sorensen writes that the information which Kennedy did retain and consider,

. . . depended on his confidence in the source and on the manner in which the facts were presented. He was certain to regard some officials and periodicals with more respect than others. He was certain to find himself able to communicate more easily with some staff members than with others. He was certain to find that some reports or briefing books have a higher reliability than others, that some can be skimmed and some even skipped.⁴⁸

Kennedy preferred to have his information communicated to him directly by the individuals concerned and he endeavored to keep the channels to his desk open at all times. If Cabinet officers, aides, Congressmen, or

⁴⁶Tanzer, op. cit., p. xiii.

⁴⁷Sorensen, op. cit., p. 37.

⁴⁸ibid., p. 39.

others he desired information from did not call him, he called them.

Kennedy placed a great deal of reliance upon information which came to him as a result of meetings with his advisers. As noted earlier, he did not hold formal Cabinet meetings often, but he did meet frequently with his inner circle of advisers who composed his "kitchen cabinet." He utilized this smaller cabinet as a device to bring diverse points of view to bear on problems, to hear alternatives, to expose errors and to challenge assumptions. He believed, as Sorensen has pointed out, that the interaction of many minds is usually more illuminating than the intuition of one.⁴⁹

The kitchen cabinet formed a vital part of Kennedy's information-communications structure and he used it assiduously. Sidney Hyman points out that this inner cabinet was linked in six ways to Kennedy's channels of communication:

It has tried to make certain, (1) that the departments understand the implications of their own proposed policies; (2) that the departmental proposals--along with the dissents from them--reach the President in a coherent form; (3) that adequate means are at hand to back up the final Presidential decision; (4) that the final decision is gripped by the gears of the bureaucracy and faithfully executed; (5) that the Congress and the people are brought into the process as each case warrants; (6) that the final decision is kept under review to see whether it actually attains the end for which it was framed.⁵⁰

Kennedy's active pursuit of information from many diverse sources, coupled with his emphasis on keeping the channels of communication open to him, permeated the Executive Branch during his administration and resulted in a general strengthening of the entire communications-information

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 59.

⁵⁰Hyman, op. cit., p. 17.

structure of that branch. His compulsive desire to know all that he could about affairs which concerned the President and to find these facts out first hand, if possible, certainly leads one to conclude that when a decision was made by him it was a decision which was made with the benefit of every possible bit of information and with a consideration of every opinion on the subject. Indeed, with the information-communications network which evolved under Kennedy's leadership it is difficult to imagine that decisions, with the possible exception of the Bay of Pigs invasion decision, were ever made without adequate prior knowledge and debate. The Cuban missile crisis decision is an excellent example and, as will be shown later, the Kennedy method regarding intelligence gathering was vitally relevant to the successful consumation of that decision.

CHAPTER X

THE ANALYSIS OF THE CUBAN BLOCKADE DECISION

An analysis of the Cuban decision will be undertaken here in order to determine how the major variables -- the determinants of decision-making described earlier -- influenced the decision which was finally made.

First, a number of general empirical characteristics of the decision itself will be listed. While Snyder suggests that it may be possible to formulate hypotheses from such characteristics which would have general applicability and which could be tested in other cases,¹ they are listed here largely for purposes of illustration to show the types of data which can be derived from a study of this kind. Since the scope of the present study is limited and does not encompass a thorough comparison of the decisions themselves, no attempt will be made to apply these findings to the cases under study.²

Characteristic 1. The Cuba blockade decision was a crisis decision. The fact that it was a decision which had to be made in a relatively short

¹Richard C. Snyder and Glenn D. Paige, "The United States Decision to Resist Aggression in Korea," in Administrative Science Quarterly, III, (December, 1958), 361.

²Snyder and Paige, Ibid., list many of the same characteristics in their Korean study. Such characteristics seem to be common to decisions of the nature under study.

time, combined with the cruciality of its nature, warrants its being categorized as such.

Characteristic 2. The decision was made in relative secrecy.

In fact, the very reason for the decision itself was kept secret until the decision was announced.

Characteristic 3. The occasion for the decision was one of surprise.

Although events leading up to the actual placement of Soviet missiles in Cuba could possibly have forewarned the decision-makers, it is not known at this time whether such was the case -- the inference is that they were not forewarned.

Characteristic 4. The necessity for the decision was created by a change in the environment and not spontaneously induced from within the total foreign policy-making organization.

Characteristic 5. The decision was a positive action decision rather than a policy decision which would have merely established rules for future contingencies. The action contemplated was real and was immediately executed.

Characteristic 6. All indications are that the decision was unprogrammed. It appears that there was no plan -- other than an invasion plan -- for dealing with the exigency which arose.

Characteristic 7. The decision-making unit was small. Only a relatively small number of clearly identifiable decision-makers were involved. It appears that President Kennedy, the Executive Committee of the National Security Council and the President's immediate advisers -- between 12 and 15 persons -- made up the core group which was influential in the final decision.

Characteristic 8. The decision was not an irrevocable one. It could have been modified or revoked at any time even after the order was given to institute the blockade.

Characteristic 9. The decisional period was short. The fact that the missile site construction was proceeding at a rapid rate while the decision was under consideration injected a sense of urgency into the deliberations and necessitated a rapid response.

Characteristic 10. The decision was a high level one in that all of the effective decision-makers were members of the President's immediate staff or held the rank of assistant secretary or higher.

Major Characteristics of President Kennedy

Following the general pattern established in the preceding analysis of the Hungarian-Suez decisions, the next step in the analysis of the Cuban decision will be a listing of the major characteristics of President Kennedy. These are inferred from the data set forth under the headings of sphere of competence, motivation, and information-communications. The basic assumption here is that certain hypotheses may be drawn from these variables which can be applied to the decision and thus explain that decision.

Characteristic 1. He desired to be a strong President.

Specific hypothesis. His desire to be a strong President ruled out alternatives which did not include a positive response to the threat posed by the introduction of missiles in Cuba.

Characteristic 2. He was an active President, possessing a basic motivation which can be characterized as an "intent to action."

Specific hypothesis. His basic "intent to action" excluded any possibility that the Soviet maneuver in Cuba would be ignored.

Characteristic 3. He was an independent President.

Specific hypothesis. His independence precluded anyone but him making the final decision relative to Cuba.

Characteristic 4. He was anxious to enhance the power and prestige of the Presidential office.

Specific hypothesis. His determination to enhance the power and prestige of the Presidential office increased his desire to make a positive action decision relative to Cuba in order to make amends for the failure of the Bay of Pigs invasion.

Characteristic 5. He desired to fulfill what he believed to be the national purpose.

Characteristic 6. His belief that the United States and the Soviet Union could find common ground on which to negotiate.

Specific hypothesis. His belief that the United States and the Soviet Union could find common ground on which to negotiate convinced him that a measured response to the Soviet play -- allowing room for both sides to maneuver -- was the correct decision.

Characteristic 7. While he had a firm conviction that negotiation was a solution to many problems, he did not rule out the use of force if it was necessitated by the nature of the problem.

Specific hypothesis. His conviction that negotiation could be a solution to many problems, coupled with his resolve to use force if necessary, led to his selection of a response which combined both force and room for negotiation.

Characteristic 8. He did not rely solely on his staff for information.

Specific hypothesis. The fact that he did not rely entirely on his staff for information lessened the chance that his perception of the situation would be variegated by his advisers telling him only that which they thought relevant.

Characteristic 9. He structured his relations with his Cabinet and his other advisers in such a way as to stimulate debate and independent inquiry.

Specific hypothesis. His structuring of his Cabinet and staff in such a way as to stimulate debate and independent inquiry generated an atmosphere conducive to the clash of many ideas from which he, as the ultimate decision-maker, could extract those he thought most appropriate.

Characteristic 10. He maintained a fluid and flexible staffing system.

Specific hypothesis. His maintenance of a fluid and flexible staffing system in which fixed routines and assignments were lacking stimulated the "productive tension" which he believed resulted in a more independent perspective on the part of his advisers. The overlapping of assignments and roles inherent in his system also served to broaden the range of alternatives which could be used in problem-solving and kept uniformity of advice to a minimum.

Characteristic 11. He endeavored to keep all channels of information open to him.

Specific hypothesis. His insistence that as many channels of information as possible be kept open to him resulted in his being well informed and enabled him to make a decision in the Cuban crisis which took into consideration all the intelligence data available.

Characteristic 12. He had a great respect for the United Nations but was well aware of its limitations.

Specific hypothesis. His respect for the United Nations, combined with his awareness of its limitations, led him to use the processes of that organization to display to the world the Soviet actions in Cuba while at the same time taking active steps outside the UN to insure removal of the missiles.

Characteristic 13. He interpreted the role and the powers of the Presidency "loosely."

Specific hypothesis. His loose interpretation of the powers of the President insured that the decision he made would bring into play all the powers of the Presidency, whether explicitly delegated or not, to meet the Soviet threat.

Characteristic 14. He delegated authority regarding important decisions sparingly.

Specific hypothesis. His parsimonious delegation of authority to his subordinates in the making of important decisions insured that a decision as critical as the one relative to Cuba would not be made by anyone except himself.

Characteristic 15. He was acutely aware of history and of prior commitments.

Specific hypothesis. His acute sense of history and of prior commitments demanded that he weigh carefully all relevant factors—including what he had previously said he would do—before making a decision. In the case of Cuba this consideration involved his prior experience relative to the Bay of Pigs invasion. An action which he later admitted was ill-advised.

Characteristic 16. His personality make-up included an innate ability to get along with the other world leaders.

Specific hypothesis. His personality make up, including as it did an innate ability to get along with other world leaders, allowed him to deal with Khrushchev as a peer and to place faith in his opponent's propensity for moderation.

Characteristic 17. He had a keen faculty for perceiving that which was relevant.

Specific hypothesis. His faculty for perceiving that which was relevant included a perception of those things which he and Khrushchev had in common. This intuitive sense led him to choose a measured response in the Cuban crisis which would keep the options open and allow Khrushchev to back down with equanimity.

Perception of the Situation

As Snyder suggests,³ an important element in decision-making is the way in which the decision-maker perceives of the situation requiring action. Perception seems to be the key first step in the sequential flow of action which leads to a decision. The decision-maker, before he can act, must be stimulated to act. To be stimulated to act he must perceive of the situation as one requiring action on his part. The decision-maker's definition of the situation is built around both the projected action and the reasons for the action. The basic assumption is that a decision results from the interrelating of values and situation with attitudes, perception, and information; all of which can be called "value relevancy." The establishment

³Ibid., p. 370.

of value relevancy is brought about by the decision-maker's perception of the situation together with the calculation of the consequences of particular values vis a' vis a certain state of affairs. The key questions thus become: how did the decision-maker define the situation and how did he determine the necessity and urgency for direct and positive action?

In order to understand how President Kennedy and his advisers perceived of the Soviet actions in Cuba it is necessary to recall briefly the Bay of Pigs decision and note the effect it had upon United States foreign policy.

President Kennedy had, in April, 1961, given the order to go ahead with the invasion of Cuba by CIA trained Cuban exiles. The invasion had been planned during the Eisenhower Administration, however, and Kennedy seemed to have been suspicious of it from the start. He was new to the Presidency and anxious to make his first important decisions at the margin, leaving room for escape. As a result he modified Eisenhower's invasion plan considerably but did not dispose of it entirely. All indications are that he would have liked to have discarded the plan but that he let it go through only because his advisers assured him that if it failed it would be written off as a minor incident. When it was finally carried out, United States air cover for the invading force was withheld on Kennedy's orders and the invasion failed.

Kennedy took full responsibility for the failure of the invasion and, as a result, suffered a serious loss of prestige both in the United States and abroad. Not only did Kennedy lose personal prestige, the seriousness of the United States purpose became suspect and the credibility of the American deterrent was jeopardized.⁴

⁴Patcher, op. cit., p. 83.

The Soviets evidently decided to exploit what they interpreted as a failure of leadership in the West. Khrushchev stepped-up his pressure in Berlin and began a military build-up in Cuba. Kennedy responded to the Berlin threat, standing firm on United States commitments there, by calling up the reserves in the fall of 1961, and by warning the American people that war might come if the Berlin question were not resolved.

As noted previously, the Soviet build-up in Cuba brought Kennedy under increasing pressure from the opponents of his Administration in the United States. All during the summer and early fall of 1962 he was urged to take action to rid Cuba of Soviet forces and denounced when he would not. Sorensen notes that the President wanted to do something but was determined not to allow another Bay of Pigs to turn into a fiasco.⁵ Each rumor to the effect that there were Soviet missiles in Cuba was checked out by the Kennedy Administration. Specialists on Soviet affairs assured the President that they believed that Khrushchev would never allow long range missiles to be stationed on the uncertain island of Cuba. Kennedy, in a press conference on October 1, 1962, indicated that he would take action if given the opportunity. He said:

. . . unilateral military intervention on the part of the United States cannot currently be either required or justified, and it is regretable that loose talk about such action in the country might serve to give a thin color of legitimacy to the Communist pretense that such a threat exists. But let me make this clear once again: If at any time the Communist build-up were to endanger or interfere with our security in any way, including our base at Guantanamo, our passage to the Panama Canal, our missile and space activities . . . or the lives of American citizens in this country, or if Cuba should ever attempt to export its aggressive purposes

⁵Sorensen, op. cit., p. 85.

by force or the threat of force against any nation of this hemisphere, or become an offensive military base of significant capacity for the Soviet Union, then this country will do whatever must be done to protect its own security and that of its allies.⁶

Clearly, Kennedy was both ready and anxious to act; all he needed was sufficient reason to act. As of October 1, 1962, he still did not have this provocation and, as Sorensen points out, "no President--whatever others were saying--could stake the dignity of his office and the security of the nation on unfounded rumors and exaggeration."⁷

During the summer of 1962 Khrushchev evidently chose to interpret Kennedy's inaction as an indication of indecision or weakness--or both--and the Soviet Premier decided to test Kennedy's determination and resolve.

It should be noted here that, while Khrushchev's reasons for introducing missiles into Cuba may have been primarily political, there were military considerations as well. Khrushchev's Cuban adventure was important militarily because if his ploy had been successful our missile warning system would have been bypassed, our deterrence capability would have been dangerously weakened, and the entire strategic balance of power would have been upset.

In any event, when the missile base construction was finally discovered, Kennedy interpreted Khrushchev's objectives as both political and military. He perceived of the situation as one which was a test of United States determination as well as a test of United States military power. The reason for action which he had been waiting for to exhibit his strength and

⁶Department of State Bulletin, XLVII (October 1, 1962), 481-82.
[Italics mine.]

⁷Sorensen, op. cit., p. 85.

resolution was given to Kennedy in October, 1962 and he was determined to take advantage of it.

This definition of the situation on the part of President Kennedy was reflected in his October 22, 1962 speech in which he emphasized that the secret swift build-up of Soviet missiles in Cuba was a deliberately provocative change in the status quo which the United States could not accept. Kennedy further noted that the United States could not let this threat go unchallenged if our courage and commitments were ever again to be trusted. Kennedy further stated that the action on the part of the Soviet Union represented a major effort to change the strategic balance of power and he cautioned that unless the challenge were met, the United States would invite the Soviets to make similar moves elsewhere and demand concessions in other parts of the world.⁸ Leaving no doubt in anyone's mind that he meant to meet the challenge with determination and firm action Kennedy said:

The 1930's taught us a clear lesson: Aggressive conduct, if allowed to go unchecked and unchallenged, ultimately leads to war. This nation is opposed to war. We are also true to our word. Our unswerving objective, therefore, must be to prevent the use of these missiles against this or any other country and to secure their withdrawal or elimination from the Western Hemisphere.⁹

The opportunity that Kennedy had been waiting for was given him by Khrushchev. This was the situation having all the necessary ingredients--dangerous provocation, sufficient information, and the means to respond--which Kennedy had been waiting for to prove his resolve and re-establish his leadership of the West. He now had both the will to act and the reason to

⁸"Address by President Kennedy, October 22, 1962," State Department Publication 7449, op. cit., p. 2.

⁹Ibid.

act—all that remained was a choice of means and their implementation.

Perception was important too in the selection of the means which Kennedy chose to respond to the Soviet threat. He realized that Khrushchev's action struck at the very foundation of his foreign policy. Kennedy knew that if he were humiliated a second time in Cuba all hope for world peace would have been gone and he would have been exposed to the world as a weak, indcisive leader. In addition, United States hegemony of the Western bloc would have been undermined and the way would have been opened for Soviet dominance. Kennedy's perception included these values and he decided to respond only after careful, thoughtful deliberation which would allow the best possible chance for success. Kennedy, the United States, and the free world could not afford another failure in Cuba.

The Alternatives Considered

In considering the activities of the decisional unit — in this case the group which was later called the Executive Committee of the National Security Council — it should be kept in mind that although we have been discussing the Cuban crisis largely in terms of Kennedy's motivation, sphere of competence, and information-communications structure, such variables necessarily included his advisory group. Thus, in analyzing the various alternative courses of action within the context of the decisional unit, it is implied that this decisional unit was a direct reflection of the determinants of decision-making as they applied to Kennedy. The assumption is that the decision-maker's competence includes his advisers, i.e., they become a part of his competence. Consequently, in discussing what Kennedy's advisers thought, we are, in a sense, speaking of these determinants. In other words President Kennedy, as the ultimate decision-maker

influenced his advisers through his leadership. His leadership, embodying his entire competence, thus was relevant in determining the thinking of his advisers.

This is not to suggest that Kennedy's advisers had a common bias in matters of foreign policy--obviously they did not. It is, however, contended that they had a common bias with respect to Kennedy's competence. Indeed, the very fact that they were his advisers supports this thesis. Certainly they did not always say things or present their opinions in accord with what they thought the President wanted to hear but, more importantly, when consensus was reached this consensus was in line with the values held by President Kennedy.

As noted earlier, the decision-makers considered at least six major courses of action to meet the Soviet threat in Cuba. Each of these options was considered in turn and each was either rejected out of hand or held open as a possible response. All but one, a quarantine of shipping to Cuba, were eventually ruled out as being incompatible with United States' interests.

However, to say that the option that was finally decided upon was selected because it was in accord with the national interest does not sufficiently explain its selection. To be more precise it should be noted that the response selected was chosen because it was more compatible than any of the others with the sum of the variables of attitude+perception+values+motives+information, as these applied to the final decision-maker, President Kennedy. These are the determinants of decision-making under study here and it is contended that it was these variables which, ultimately, led to the selection of a course of action. It is within this context that

the various alternatives will be studied.

Proceeding with the analysis then, it can be said that the decisional unit reflected several of the above mentioned variables grouped under the heading of "competence." The ideas of President Kennedy regarding organization and staffing led him to form a special advisory body to study the Cuban crisis. Kennedy reached outside the formal structure of the Cabinet and of the National Security Council to select a group of men he knew and trusted. The group became known as the Executive Committee of the National Security Council and was composed of eight regular members: Robert Kennedy,¹⁰ Theodore Sorensen, John McCone, Maxwell Taylor, Dean Rusk, Robert McNamara, McGeorge Bundy, and Douglas Dillon. In addition, Kennedy, in accord with his desire to get diverse points of view on important matters, at various times during the Cuban deliberation invited others he trusted to sit in on Ex Comm meetings. Dean Acheson who had served as Secretary of State under Truman was asked to join the group several times, as were Robert Lovett, Secretary of Defense under Truman, John McCloy former United States High Commissioner for Germany, and Adlai Stevenson, United States Ambassador to the United Nations.

Kennedy gave to Ex Comm the task of considering all the alternative responses that the United States could take in relation to the Soviet missile build-up in Cuba. In this sense, Ex Comm held the nation's safety in its hands. In another sense, and more importantly, they did not, because ultimately, the President himself had to decide. Kennedy was well aware of this fact, and at one time during the crisis remarked that, "No matter

¹⁰Some analysts contend, Stewart Alsop for one, "Cuban Crisis," *op. cit.*, p. 17, that one of Kennedy's chief motives in forming EX Comm was to bring his brother Robert into the center of the policy making structure.

how many advisers you have, the President must finally choose. . . ."¹¹

Ex Comm and its method of operation further reflected the President's ideas regarding diverse opinions and the free discussion of ideas. Sorensen, in Decision Making In the White House, offers an insight into this facet of Ex Comm:

Everyone in that group [Ex Comm] altered his views as the give and take talk continued. Every solution or combination of solutions was coldly examined, and its disadvantages weighed. The fact that we started out with a sharp divergence of views, the President has said, was 'very valuable' in hammering out policy.

In such meetings, a President must carefully weigh his own words. Should he hint too early in the proceedings at the direction of his own thought, the weight of his authority, the loyalty of his advisers and their desire to be on the winning side may shut off productive debate. Indeed, his very presence may inhibit candid discussion. President Truman, I am told, absented himself for this reason from some of the NSC discussions on the Berlin blockade; and President Kennedy, learning of his return from a mid-week trip in October, 1962, that the deliberations of the NSC executive committee over Cuba had been more spirited and frank in his absence, asked the committee to hold other preliminary sessions without him.¹²

The first, and possibly the most obvious, response to the Soviet missile build up which Ex Comm discussed was the option of doing nothing at all. Since the information regarding the missile base construction still had not been made public when deliberations got under way, the decision-makers could have decided to ignore it entirely. With the November off-year elections less than a month away, a no-action option should have held a certain amount of appeal.¹³ Election-year exigencies, however, did

¹²ibid., p. 60.

¹³In fact, it is the opposite charge that has been leveled against Kennedy. Many opponents have said that he precipitated the crisis in the first place in order to reap electoral gains in the forthcoming election. This charge, however, seems to have been totally without substance. Indeed, the timing of the crisis could not have been more unfortunate for Kennedy who had been saying for months that no threat existed in Cuba. To be confronted just before the election with proof that such a threat did exist and to be compelled to admit that he was wrong certainly was not conducive to political gain. Actually it was surprising that the voters did not think that Kennedy had made a complete fool of himself and thus vote for the Republican candidates in the election.

not seem to be a factor in the discussions. The weight of all the other, more relevant considerations, far overshadowed political gain as far as Congressional seats were concerned.

All indications are that the no-action alternative was never seriously considered by Ex Comm. It was in no way compatible with either the President's motives, his competence or his information. As already pointed out, Kennedy's perception of the situation indicated that action had to be taken -- inaction clearly was no substitute. His prior statements as to what he would do if the Soviet build-up in Cuba was found to be "offensive," and his acute awareness of prior commitments left no room for an alternative which did not include some action to meet the threat. His desire to make amends for the Bay of Pigs failure, combined with his basic motive to be a strong, active and decisive leader, further ruled out inaction. His sense of responsibility for what he felt was the loss of prestige of the United States led him to reject any alternative which would further endanger the United States position of leadership in the West. It was clear to President Kennedy that any decision which involved inaction would be a military and political gain for the Soviet Union and would destroy the credibility of United States commitments in the world and allow the Soviet Union to assume the position of leadership held by the United States.

In terms of the basic determinants of decision-making then, there can be no doubt but that the sum of the variables under study here categorically ruled out the no-decision option.

The second alternative considered, a diplomatic track of protest in the United Nations, was considered almost as inappropriate a response as

the no-action option. Many of the same reasons that compelled the decision-makers to reject the latter alternative were inherent in their opposition to the United Nations response. It was evident to Ex Comm that a mere complaint in the United Nations would be too weak and ineffective a response to the immense threat the missile build up constituted. Such a course of action would be entirely incompatible with Kennedy's perception of the situation as well as with his overall objectives and desires. Kennedy's faith in the United Nations, as already noted, was tempered with an awareness of that organization's limitations. It was quite evident that the small and new nations -- all concerned with their own sovereignty -- would not vote for any action against a small nation which would endanger their own concept of sovereignty. Since these nations obviously considered it right and proper for a nation, especially a small nation, to arm itself against so-called "imperialist" powers, they certainly would not condone any action which would deny this right to Cuba. However, while Kennedy could not depend entirely on the United Nations, he did not entirely ignore it. His basic commitment to negotiation and to the concept of world organization motivated him to utilize the United Nations to bolster the position of the United States juridically and politically. The strategy which was finally decided upon included a diplomatic track of protest in the United Nations in conjunction with a blockade. In effect, the United Nations protest was an attempt to act in accord with the principles of legality while at the same time taking more direct action to insure that the missile build up would not continue.

The third alternative that was discussed by Kennedy and his advisers, all-out invasion, seems to have been one of the least attractive of all the

possible responses. As has been noted earlier, there was already a contingency plan for the invasion of Cuba in readiness at the time the crisis developed. However, while Kennedy did order that the invasion plan be updated and kept in readiness, all indications are that he never considered it a satisfactory response. Invasion was probably less in accord with Kennedy's values and attitudes than was any other response save no action at all. While he was motivated to take strong and resolute action to meet the Soviet threat, he was also anxious to avoid action which might precipitate a nuclear war. Clearly some alternatives would be more dangerous than others. Kennedy and most of his advisers felt that if Cuba were invaded it would give the Soviets an excuse for counter-action in other parts of the world. Such a course of action was dangerous not only because it would give the Soviets an excuse, it was doubly hazardous in that it might lead the unpredictable Khrushchev to act on impulse and precipitate a nuclear holocaust.

Additional considerations were relevant too. Kennedy, while he ardently desired to regain for the United States the stature and prestige he felt was lost as a result of the Bay of Pigs invasion, believed that an all-out invasion of Cuba would not accomplish that objective because it would only serve to further tarnish the moral position of the United States in the eyes of the Latin American and neutral nations of the world. His sense of history was an important consideration in this respect too, for he was aware that the United States, in 1956, had chastized Great Britain and France for their invasion of Suez; and that Eisenhower had in that year, left the allies of the United States isolated in order to make the point that no responsible nation should take the law into its own hands. It was

evidently clear to Kennedy that an invasion of Cuba, under the circumstances, would be an abandonment of the United States' policy of adhering to international law and the United Nations Charter.

Kennedy's faith in negotiation further ruled out a response which would have given Khrushchev no opportunity to back down gracefully. Kennedy correctly perceived that a precipitate invasion of Cuba would have left little or no room for negotiation.

The fourth possible course of action which the United States could have taken involved selective air strikes designed to destroy the missile launch sites in Cuba. This alternative, although it was almost as fraught with danger as all-out invasion, seems to have received serious attention from Kennedy and his advisers. In fact, all indications are that Kennedy's advisers were divided on whether an air strike or a blockade would be the best solution. Those advisers who favored an air strike, called "hawks" by one of their group,¹⁴ included McCone, Dillon, Acheson, Taylor and McGeorge Bundy. Those opposing the air strike, termed the "doves," included McNamara, Robert Kennedy, Robert Lovett, Llewellyn Thompson and Stevenson. Robert Kennedy and Stevenson seem to have been the leading "doves." Indeed, the President's brother is reported to have said at one point in the deliberations that an air strike on Cuba would "be a Pearl Harbor in reverse."¹⁵ Stevenson strongly opposed an air strike and suggested instead that a negotiated settlement -- involving the trading of bases -- might be worked

¹⁴Alsop, op. cit., p. 16.

¹⁵Sorensen, op. cit., p. 35.

out with the Soviets.¹⁶

Kennedy, in accordance with his desire to hear all sides to the question encouraged his advisers to discuss the air-strike alternative candidly. In the end, however, despite the fact that a number of his counsellors still clung to the air-strike alternative, Kennedy decided that the nation's basic commitment to tradition and principle would not allow an air strike on Cuban military installations without some type of advance warning. And, as Sorensen suggests,¹⁷ no advance warning could be devised which would not leave the United States vulnerable to endless discussion and debate, while allowing the missile site construction to proceed. Kennedy's desire to keep the options open and maintain a high degree of flexibility led him to place the air strike proposal in reserve, to be used should a less hazardous response prove ineffective.

¹⁶Stevenson was later criticized by some members of Kennedy's group for his proposal. Alsop, op. cit., p. 16, for example, reports that one official said, "Adlai wanted a Munich, he wanted to trade the Turkish, Italian and British missile bases for the Cuban bases." However, others who supported Stevenson's position have said that he merely suggested that Kennedy might offer to withdraw the U. S. base from Guantanamo if Khrushchev removed the missiles from Cuba. This latter version of Stevenson's proposal may well have been the correct one. Fletcher Knebel, Look magazine's Washington correspondent, who questioned several members of Ex Comm at the time of the Cuban crisis, believes that this was the case and that the proposal was actually accepted by Kennedy, then later rejected. Knebel offered this opinion in a letter to this writer saying: "A close friend of mine swears that he saw Ted Sorensen's original Kennedy speech draft [to the Nation, October 22, 1962] which circulated for opinion at the Pentagon. This draft, he says, included a sentence about both Russia and the U. S. removing all armed forces from Cuba. He says this definitely meant that we'd evacuate Guantanamo. Of course, the Pentagon screamed and, he says, the sentence was dropped." [*Italics mine.*]

¹⁷Sorensen, op. cit., p. 35.

The same dangers which mitigated against invasion were inherent in the air strike response and it seems that these, the danger of precipitate Soviet action should Russians in Cuba be killed and the expected unfavorable reaction of the neutrals and the Latin American nations, ruled out any chance of Kennedy's acceptance of such a proposal.

The response finally chosen by Kennedy and his advisers as the most appropriate way in which to force the removal of the Soviet missiles from Cuba was, of course, a blockade, to be called a "quarantine." By the time that Kennedy made the final decision to blockade Cuba there was still a difference of opinion among his advisers as to the advisability of such a response. However, Kennedy, leaving no doubt as to who the ultimate decision-maker was, chose the blockade option.

In making his decision Kennedy was acting in accord with the determinants of decision-making under study here. The blockade offered the advantages of strong and positive action while at the same time leaving room for negotiation and compromise. In addition, while it was a resolute action, it had less chance of precipitating nuclear war than did any of the others. Still it left the options open; the missiles could be destroyed by an air-strike or an invasion should the blockade fail. Kennedy's desire to preserve the moral commitments of the United States was reflected in the decision as well. His attempts to characterize the action as a legal one points up this fact. Also, Kennedy's belief that the United States had a national purpose to fulfill led him to emphasize the Monroe Doctrine as a basis for the blockade action.

Kennedy, interviewed after the crisis, was questioned regarding the blockade and its implications as far as international law, the Monroe

Doctrine, and the Organization of American States, were concerned.

His answers offer an insight into his motivation and perception of the situation and deserve mention here. When asked about the legality of the United States' action, Kennedy replied:

The quarantine was imposed pursuant to a recommendatory resolution adopted by the governing Council of the OAS in accordance with the terms of the Rio Treaty of 1947. Cuba was a party to this treaty and is a member of the OAS. Regional organizations and their recommendations of the use of such measures are entirely consistent with the United Nations Charter.¹⁸

With regard to the Monroe Doctrine, Kennedy said:

The original purpose of the Monroe Doctrine which was to prevent any extension to the Americas of a despotic political system contrary to the independent status of the countries of this hemisphere, has been adopted and supported by the OAS as a multilateral safeguard for the American Republics. In this spirit, the OAS Charter and the Rio Treaty -- the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance -- provide the means for common action, if necessary, to protect the hemisphere against intervention or aggression.¹⁹

Asked what the legal difference between a quarantine and a blockade was, Kennedy replied:

A quarantine is a selective effort designed to deal with a specific threat to peace. It must be differentiated from a blockade which is part of the conduct of war, designed to force an enemy to comply with the will of the blockading country. In the immediate situation, the United States quarantine was aimed solely at preventing the introduction of offensive weapons into Cuba, in order to protect ourselves and this hemisphere.²⁰

Finally, when asked whether the action could be considered aggression, Kennedy indicated his feelings regarding the legality of the quarantine saying:

¹⁸Department of State Publication 7454, op. cit., p. 7.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 6.

²⁰Ibid., p. 7.

Not in any sense of the word. The quarantine is designed to deal with a threat to the peace by a foreign power on Cuban soil. This determination was made by the US for its own security, but it did not act alone. Rather, the international organization having jurisdiction in the area, the Organization of American States, recommended action under the Rio Treaty of 1947, which contains provisions and procedures for collective defense in the Western Hemisphere. . . . Only then did the United States issue the proclamation of quarantine.²¹

It is manifestly apparent from these statements by President Kennedy that he desired to act in accord with the moral principles he thought inherent in the United States' national purpose. It is equally apparent that the response he chose to make to the Soviets was a limited one which would avoid a direct confrontation and which would give Khrushchev an opportunity to back down without losing a great deal of prestige. The choice enabled Kennedy to gain time in which to seek a political solution to the problem and was in line with his faith in the processes of negotiation. In the end, of course, this faith was justified and the decision which he made was eminently successful.

Summary

The basic questions postulated at the beginning of this study-- why a decision at all and why this particular decision--can now be answered in terms of the determinants identified and analyzed throughout the Cuban study.

1. The decision was made because a decision-maker authorized to act, motivated to act, and prepared to act was present.

2. This decision, rather than another, was made because: a) A blockade--a positive action decision--having the specific objective of

²¹ Ibid., p. 3.

removing the missiles as well as preventing the introduction of more missiles, was commensurate with the basic values threatened; b) The blockade could reasonably be expected to achieve the objective without leading to all-out war; c) the blockade was thought to be the best possible response combining strength with the opportunity for negotiation; d) The risks and costs of the course of action were acceptable in terms of the values at stake; and e) The means for carrying out the blockade were immediately available to implement the course of action decided upon.

The answers to these questions suggest that Kennedy and his advisers, in arriving at the decision to blockade Cuba, acted within the context of two kinds of decision-making processes: organizational and intellectual.²² The organizational process determined whose calculations and discussions would be authoritative and provided the necessary intellectual process. In turn, the intellectual process resulted in the definition of the situation and the selection of alternatives.

As implied in the preceding analysis, the organizational process in this case was relatively uncomplicated. However, several features deserve mention because of their influence on the organizational process. First, the decisional unit, the Executive Committee of the National Security Council, was formed by President Kennedy himself. It was an ad hoc unit which by-passed both the formal Cabinet arrangement and the National Security Council. Second, relationships among the members of the decisional unit were, for the most part, informal and communication was largely oral and face-to-face. This suggests that a crisis decision which requires top-level authority necessitates the formation of a key group which can escape

²²Snyder, op. cit., p. 242.

organizational formality and normal procedures.²³

The conclusion which can be reached here is that President Kennedy's leadership determined both the membership in the decisional unit and the distribution of power and responsibility within the group. It follows from this that his leadership was a relevant factor in the organizational process.

Within the context of the intellectual process, President Kennedy's perception of the situation, his desire to take firm and resolute action, his determination to leave room for negotiation, and his awareness of the consequences of precipitate action, were all relevant to the decision made. The decision, in short, was the result of an interrelating of values and situation with attitudes and perception; Kennedy was in a position to make the decision, he had the organizational system within which to act, and he had a communicative network to carry out his decision. In terms of the determinants of decision-making under study then, it can be concluded that the making of the decision consisted of an inter-relating of values+attitudes+information+perception+situation, all leading to the final course of action which Kennedy took.

²³Ibid., Snyder noted these same characteristics in his analysis of Truman's decisional unit at the time of the Korean decision.

CHAPTER XI

CONCLUSIONS

It was noted at the outset of this study that an effort would be made to draw valid general conclusions from a comparison of the decision-making activities of Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy. Such conclusions, it was stated, would be drawn from the study in order to form the basis for generalization regarding foreign policy decision-making.

The primary objective of this final chapter then, is a summarization of such general conclusions. In addition, several other purposes will be fulfilled; first, a typology of each President will be suggested, second, a recapitulation of the general characteristics of the two Presidents will be set forth by way of summary, and third, methodological conclusions, as to the usefulness of the scheme tested throughout this study, will be drawn. It should be mentioned, however, that no effort will be made here either to summarize the analyses of the decisions in question or to synthesize the empirical characteristics of those decisions. This has already been done in the appropriate sections of the study and there is no need to duplicate those conclusions here.

Typologies

Snyder suggests that the orderly analysis of foreign policy

decision-making requires carefully constructed typologies of the decision-makers themselves and the way in which they handle foreign policy. He has noted six of these decision making types: the communicator, the innovator, the traditionalist, the literalist, the power seeker, and the career servant.¹ They are noted here merely for illustrative purposes.

In attempting to cast Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy into one of these types, it was discovered that they are a bit too restrictive to properly typify either of these Presidents adequately. Therefore, a combination typology is suggested for each President.

Eisenhower could be classified as the "traditionalist--career servant" type. He was a traditionalist in that precedent and long standing habits of procedure and thought governed his decision-making actions. In addition, his actions contributed to a slowing up of organizational change and to rigidities of approach to problems. The career-servant typology is applicable in that he was the type of decision-maker who maintained a carefully correct attitude with respect to role limitations.

Kennedy, on the other hand, can be classified as the "innovator--power seeker--communicator" type since he was a risk taker--in a sense a rebel against the normative order--and an original thinker who was a catalyst as far as the intellectual processes of decision-making are concerned. He pressed towards the outer limits of the negotiable area of his sphere of competence and his position clearly dominated his behavior.

¹See Snyder, op. cit., pp. 169-170, for a full description of each typology.

Kennedy was a leader who had definite skill in translating specialists to each other and in providing bases on which the different perspectives of decision-making could be integrated. He further personified this typology by the fact that he was a leader who took a broad view of his sphere of competence and tended to personalize his relationships, even when it meant departing from normal channels of communication.

General Characteristics of the Eisenhower and Kennedy Approaches

Possibly the most striking aspect of the Eisenhower approach to foreign policy matters was his delegation of authority to his Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles. There is very little doubt that this delegation was virtually complete and that policy formulated by Dulles was rarely, if ever, reversed by Eisenhower. Indeed, Sherman Adams has written that such delegation, "included the responsibility of developing the specific policy . . . , the decision where the administration would stand, and what course of action would be followed in each international crisis."² This aspect of Eisenhower's competence was manifestly evident in the Hungarian and Suez decisions where careful analysis failed to resolve the question of who actually made the decisions -- Eisenhower or his Secretary of State.

All this was in sharp contrast to the Kennedy approach which placed the Secretary of State in a subordinate position to the President in foreign policy matters. Where Eisenhower had looked to Dulles for foreign policy and left its formulation and execution in the Secretary's

²Sherman Adams, Firsthand Report (New York: Popular Library, 1962), p. 92.

hands, Kennedy did not consider foreign policy to be policy unless and until it had gone through his hands and had his personal approval. In fact, under Kennedy, many top policies originated in the White House and then moved through the policy-making machinery of the State Department for appraisal and comment. It is true that Kennedy did endeavor to enhance the prestige of the State Department and the Secretary of State, however, he did not do this by abdicating his responsibility or authority in foreign policy matters.

Besides the differences in relation to their Secretaries of State, Eisenhower and Kennedy had divergent views regarding the staffing of the Executive Office itself. Eisenhower, relying on his long years of Army experience, set up a rigid staff system in the White House which was highly reminiscent of the armed forces system. Eisenhower's staff system provided for fixed lines of authority and explicit functions for each member of the staff. Everyone fitted into an orderly and carefully prescribed organizational system headed by Eisenhower's chief of staff, Sherman Adams. Only Adams reported directly to the President; everyone else had to report to the Chief Executive through the chain of command--much like the procedure in the armed forces. Adams, during most of the Eisenhower Administration, kept a rigid grip on White House affairs as assistant to the President--some have called him the assistant President--and ruled with a firm hand, shielding the President from all but the most urgent problems. Adams himself has commented on one aspect of this role, saying:

Because Eisenhower disliked talking business on the phone, Persons and I and a few other staff members would

speaking for him on the telephone on many matters that required his personal attention.³

Kennedy, on the other hand, created a staffing system which was much less rigid than was Eisenhower's. Kennedy's personal tastes regarding the Presidential office made it practically a foregone conclusion that no chief of staff would channel information to him or, what is more important, speak for him. Kennedy meant to be his own chief of staff and endeavored to work directly with the individuals involved in an issue; not through a staff of subordinates. Kennedy intended to keep his hands directly on the controls of government and a chain of command system clearly was incompatible with such an approach. While Kennedy did have trusted assistants, they did not perform the function that Eisenhower's assistants did in shielding him from matters they did not consider important. Kennedy's assistants acted more in the role of intermediaries or liaison men who could keep him informed of happenings and carry out Presidential directives. Whereas the channels of communication to Eisenhower were zealously guarded by his assistants, no such powers were given to Kennedy's staff men. Lines of communication were always open to Kennedy and no staff filtered information or advice before it reached him.

Kennedy's attitude towards regular Cabinet meetings to decide foreign policy matters was another facet of his competence which was quite different from Eisenhower's. While Eisenhower relied a great deal on full, formal Cabinet meetings to discuss important decisions, Kennedy considered Cabinet meetings a waste of time and energy and preferred to

³Ibid., p. 82.

confer only with those directly involved in a problem. He placed more reliance on ad hoc groups formed to consider specific problems and appointed men to these committees whom he felt could give him the most valuable advice and counsel. With Kennedy, the nature of the problem determined the group with which he would work. Full Cabinet meetings were called usually only for the consideration of government-wide problems having to do with domestic affairs. When it came to foreign affairs, Kennedy preferred to confine Cabinet activity to briefings by Secretary of State Rusk and other trusted advisers and experts from his White House staff, the Defense Department, and the State Department.

The approach to foreign policy matters by Kennedy and Eisenhower can be best characterized by examining their individual participation in decision-making activities. The way in which each President conceived of his role and the degree to which he desired to participate in decision-making predetermined the staffing of the White House, the choice of advisers, the use of the Cabinet, the reliance each placed on information, and the channeling of information to the White House. All of these factors, as well as a multitude of other variables affecting decision-making, either resulted from, or were caused by, the degree to which each President conceived of his role and participated in the decision-making process. To put it rather bluntly, participation reflected a passive versus an active approach to the Presidency. Eisenhower's was a passive approach, Kennedy's an active one.

John Emmet Hughes offers an insight in this respect which is quite relevant in assessing such passivity and activity at the beginning of the Kennedy and Eisenhower Administrations. Writing about the interval between

the time of the election of a new administration and its transition to office, Hughes has said:

This awkward interval between regimes, never easy and usually untidy, always reveals something of each new regime's particular spirit and method of work. Thus in 1960, the incoming Kennedy administration, in such key areas as the Departments of State, Defense, and Treasury, would go through elaborate and detailed self-education for the turnover of Executive power--with days of conferences, and weeks of contact, between incumbents and appointees on up to the Secretarial level. The approach was markedly different eight years earlier. In all the sphere of foreign affairs and defense policy, the sum of such educating contacts was two--one chilly twenty-minute exchange at the White House between Truman and Eisenhower, and one fifty-minute visit by Henry Cabot Lodge.⁴

This statement by Hughes serves to support the contention here that Eisenhower started out with a passive approach to the Presidency while Kennedy began with an active one. Such an outlook at the beginning presaged or predetermined the manner in which foreign policy, as well as other matters, would be handled later.

Eisenhower waited in the White House for situations to develop. His staff shielded him as long as possible, then presented facts in outline. Decisions were often deferred until they became necessary. Kennedy, by contrast, reached out and gathered information, stimulated situations requiring action, and then acted with determination. Whereas Eisenhower preferred to have as many decisions as possible made at the staff level, Kennedy wanted to make all important decisions and at least know about the less important ones. Eisenhower, never a voracious reader, liked to have his staff condense information into one page memoranda and brief him on developments. Kennedy, on the other hand, liked to read

⁴Hughes, op. cit., p. 61.

everything and interpret for himself that which was relevant. Eisenhower preferred to be presented with decisions already worked-out so that he could say "yes" or "no" to the finished product. Kennedy wanted to be presented with many alternatives in rough form then choose what he felt was the correct one after he had looked at all possibilities. In effect, Eisenhower had one method of reaching decisions; by initialing decisions his staff presented him with. Kennedy, however, had at least four approaches: 1) He might make a decision based upon the recommendation of a Cabinet officer without consultation with any members of his White House staff; 2) He might ask members of his staff to make recommendations after they had dug through the various departments of Government for the needed information -- then these recommendations would be discussed with the Cabinet officer concerned and out of the debate would come a decision; 3) He might use the National Security Council or the Cabinet to discuss a problem and elicit the views upon which decisions were based; or 4) He might simply delineate a policy within the framework of which Cabinet officers and other top officials could make their own decisions. Kennedy, used, at various times, and depending upon the gravity of the decision, any or a combination of these methods.

Conclusions Applicable to Foreign Policy Decision-Making

Before listing the major empirical conclusions drawn from a comparison of the decision-making techniques of Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy several qualifications should be noted.

Naturally, since generalization rests on comparison, it is best to draw general conclusions from as many cases as possible. To do so with

only a limited number of cases is, to say the least, hazardous. It is conceded that the cases studied here fall into the "limited" category, however, the author believes that the cases analyzed do offer a sufficient number of comparable properties on which to base tentative conclusions which may be valuable. It must be emphasized then, that the conclusions which follow are of this provisional type and no attempt will be made to specify the conditions under which these generalizations will hold true in every case. They are stated here merely to illustrate the type of information which may be derived by utilizing the decision-making approach as a frame of reference for the study of foreign policy-making.

With these qualifications in mind then, the conclusions are set forth below:

Conclusion 1: Sweeping delegation of authority by a President to his Secretary of State, as in the case of Eisenhower and Dulles, leads to the concentration of foreign policy decision-making in the hands of the Secretary of State; thereby debilitating Presidential initiative in the formulation and execution of foreign policy.

Conclusion 2: A "traditionalist" President, i.e., a President such as Eisenhower, who views his powers and prerogatives "narrowly," tends to define course of action open to him in the same restrictive terms. Such an attitude on the part of a President necessarily limits the range of alternatives available to him in the solving of crisis situations.

Conclusion 3: A President who considers himself as being non-partisan and "above" politics, as Eisenhower often described himself, may endeavor to reach solutions to foreign policy problems which are so non-controversial as to be virtually ineffective.

Conclusion 4: Narrow gauge foreign policy objectives, such as Eisenhower's "peace with justice" concept, tend to limit the possible responses to crisis situations. In Eisenhower's case such limitations meant that foreign policy problems had to be solved through means which he identified as peaceful.

Conclusion 5: The rejection of the use of force as a foreign policy instrument further restricts the possible responses to situations requiring action. Eisenhower's handling of the Hungarian and Suez disputes, predicated as it was on such a rejection of force, points up this contention.

Conclusion 6: Too great a reliance on staff and their determination as to the relevance of information, as in the Eisenhower Administration, leads to a President being cut off from important information; thus limiting that President's perception of situations requiring action. Such limitations on perception in turn leads to solutions to problems which are not always in the national interest. Eisenhower's decisions in regard to Hungary and Suez can be placed in this category in that there seems to be little doubt that information about the impending crises was lacking; as well as some question as to the expediency of the alternative chosen.

Conclusion 7: A staff system like Eisenhower's which is set up in a chain of command manner, coupled with a good deal of authority delegated by the President to members of the organizational system, may lead to decisions being made at the staff level. Sherman Adams' comments, noted earlier, tend to bear out this contention as far as the Eisenhower Administration is concerned.

Conclusion 8: A staff system with rigidly specific roles and explicit duties which allow for no cross-currents of opinion, as was true

in Eisenhower's organizational structure, leads to a diminution of alternatives for the solution of problems.

Conclusion 9: An accessible President, i.e., one who keeps all channels of information and communication open to himself, as was Kennedy's practice, is in a much better position to make decisions based on relevant information than one who does not. Kennedy's knowledgeable decision with regard to the Cuban crisis is a case in point.

Conclusion 10: A President who requires his subordinates to submit important decisions to him before they are finalized and before they are executed, as Kennedy did, can keep a tighter grip on foreign policy matters than a President with Eisenhower's approach who might allow staff members to make decisions on their own authority.

Conclusion 11: Positive response decisions are more apt to be made by an "independent" President, viz. Kennedy, who takes a broad view of his powers. Such an interpretation of powers increases the range of alternatives, thus enhancing positivism.

Conclusion 12: Passive response decisions are more likely to result when the President who makes them, viz. Eisenhower, takes a limited view of his powers. Such self-imposed limitations on the President and his capacity to respond limits the range of alternatives, weakens resolve, and intensifies passivity.

Conclusion 13: Decisions which are based on limited or incomplete information are more likely to be decisions which include a passive response to crisis situations. This is true because a decision-maker, when confronted with inadequate information, tends to choose alternative courses of action which leave the most margin for error and which offer the least danger.

Eisenhower's decisions relative to Hungary and Suez seem to bear out this contention.

Conclusion 14: Positive response decisions are more likely to result when complete information is available to the decision-maker. Kennedy's decision with regard to the Soviet missiles in Cuba was obviously a case where extremely adequate intelligence was available to the President. As a result he responded positively after having considered all possible consequences in the light of such information.

Conclusion 15: Formal Cabinet meetings to discuss foreign policy matters are more likely to be used by a President who is traditionalist-minded. Thus, Eisenhower relied a great deal on such meetings while Kennedy did not.

Conclusion 16: The use of ad hoc, informal groups to arrive at important decisions, as was Kennedy's practice, is characteristic of a Presidential staffing system which is flexible as to organization and roles.

Conclusion 17: The flow of information to a President is inhibited by a rigid chain of command staff system. This was a characteristic of the Eisenhower organizational system and, at least in the case of the Hungarian and Suez disputes, seems to have been one of the chief reasons why information as to the impending crises did not reach the top decision-makers until after the crises erupted.

Conclusion 18: A fluid and flexible staffing system, like Kennedy's in which fixed routines and assignments are lacking, stimulates the type of "productive tension" which results in carefully worked-out decisions. Such a staffing system, due to the overlapping of roles and assignments which is a part of it, broadens the range of alternatives used in problem

solving and keeps uniformity of advice to a minimum.

Conclusion 19: The parsimonious delegation of authority to subordinates in the making of important foreign policy decisions helps to insure that such decisions will be made at the Presidential level rather than at the staff level. Such an approach, which was utilized by Kennedy, necessarily concentrates foreign policy making in the hands of the President --where it should be--and serves to strengthen and enhance Presidential prestige and power.

Conclusion 20: A President who includes prior experience and long range objectives in his perception of situations requiring action tends to make important foreign policy decisions which are more than temporary solutions. Kennedy's settlement of the Cuban crisis was a good example of such an approach.

Methodological Conclusions

At this point in the study it should be quite evident that the decision-making approach utilized here is not the ultimate panacea which will solve all the problems besetting those who attempt to explain and predict state action. Certainly the approach has its limitations and its deficiencies; no claim has been made as to its perfectness. However, any faults which the approach may possess are more than compensated for by its virtues. Chief among the qualities which make the scheme a useful investigatory technique is its value as an ordering device or frame of reference.

The framework offered as a part of the decision-making approach is important for two reasons: First, because it specifies the relevant factors which need to be investigated, it more or less insures that pertinent components which may have contributed to the decision under analysis will

not be overlooked or disregarded by the analyst. The systematic classification technique embodied in the frame of reference provides for the categorization of all the variables which may have had a bearing on the decision and thus provides the analyst with a conceptual framework within which he may study each of these variables individually; thereby constructing an empirical explanation for the decision made. Secondly, because the frame of reference sets the limits and establishes the boundaries of investigation, it provides for parsimony in the collection of data. By limiting the researcher only to these variables which are most likely to have a direct bearing on the subject under analysis, the scheme minimizes unnecessary research and insures that irrelevant material will not be included in the analysis. Needless to say, both of the above mentioned advantages are extremely useful to the researcher who is frequently exposed to such a formidable array of information that he has difficulty choosing that which is relevant.

In conclusion then, it can be said that the decision-making approach which has been applied throughout this study is a highly useful device which provides a much needed frame of reference for relating the many aspects of state action. The scheme, presenting as it does a common frame of reference which specifies what data ought to be collected and how these data can most fruitfully be ordered, does away with the random nature of the search for important variables and greatly facilitates research and analysis. In short, the decision-making approach introduces a measure of order in a field which is badly in need of such direction and in this respect it constitutes a major contribution to the study of international relations.

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