WHO ADVISES? POWER, POLITICS & PERSUASION IN FOREIGN POLICY DECISION-MAKING

DISSERTATION

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By

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ABSTRACT

In a complex foreign policy system, involving myriad bureaucracies, advisors, and political entrepreneurs, who advises? What advice is heeded, and which advisor is followed? While most scholars tacitly acknowledge the importance of advisors in international relations, few attempt to answer the question of how advisors impact the decision making process, and the limits to successful advising. Importantly, the question of ‘who advises?’ is often crucial in explaining war and peace, since advisors often impact leader opinions and dictate the course of foreign policy.

My dissertation blends insights from psychology and foreign policy to create a comprehensive framework describing foreign policy advising. In my framework, advisors compete against each other in a ‘marketplace of ideas.’ Successful advisors are those who draw from four bases of power (access, expertise, experience, and rhetoric) to posit salient appeals. However, these appeals are constrained by leader dispositions (such as militant assertiveness and political knowledge) and the strategic situation (the foreign policy problem a decision maker faces). I construct a set of hypotheses that combines bases of power, leader predispositions, strategic situation, and advisory technique to predict when advisors matter.

I use experiments and comparative case studies to empirically explore these hypotheses. Experiments engage the psychological dimension of advising by exploring the impact of advice across personality types. Insights from the experiment are combined with the theoretical model, and applied to four cases of Presidential decision-making: the
capture of the *USS Pueblo*, the capture of the *USS Mayaguez*, the decision to send troops to Lebanon, and the decision to not send troops to Rwanda. I trace the decision-making process using primary and secondary sources, and discover the influence wielded by Presidential advisors. Results suggest important paradoxes; for example, Presidents often ignore the advice of their expert military advisors.

My dissertation is the first systematic study of advisory influence in Presidential decision-making, drawing from numerous fields of inquiry to construct a novel framework to examine foreign policy. Initial findings suggest new, counterintuitive hypotheses for future study.
Dedicated to
Biddy & Peanut
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Studying political science was an accident for me. As a wide-eyed undergraduate at the University of Kansas, I studied physics and astronomy; the study of politics was a hobby of mine, an amusement. If a roommate had not convinced me to take a comparative politics course to fulfill a GEC requirement (though the probable reason was to meet female undergraduates – a rare commodity in the science curriculum), I would not have discovered the intellectual pursuit of politics. What a long, strange trip it has been.

Like many others, this dissertation was not a lonely enterprise, but a product of generous help and advice. Without the introduction to the discipline I received at Kansas, the initial enthusiasm would have been subsumed by secondary pursuits. Scholars – such as Paul D’Anieri, Ryan Beasley, Juliet Kaarbo, and Leonardo Villalon – piqued my interest, providing background and encouragement. At Ohio State, a number of graduate student colleagues provided thoughts, comments, suggestions, and often a partner at the bar. I thank Ray Block, Eileen Braman, Paul Fritz, Natalie Kistner, Greg Miller, and Kevin Sweeney for their insight, wit, and fellowship.

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Cubs. I knew from that moment Ohio State was the place for me. Don has been a
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Without his patience and understanding, this project would not be in its finished form
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Finally, I want to thank my family for their support and encouragement. A
running joke in the Strathman family is to call me ‘Doctor.’ Of course, the unstated
subtext of the ribbing focused on the mismatch between the status of the title, and the
unfinished nature of the dissertation. The joke is (finally) on them.
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Chapter 1

Who Advises? Dynamics of the Inner Circle

1.1 Introduction

In a complex foreign policy system, involving myriad bureaucracies, experts, officials, and political entrepreneurs, who advises? What advice is heeded, and which advisor is followed? And most importantly, how do advisors get their viewpoint included in the decision making process?

While the question seems simple or unimportant, history proves otherwise. From Richelieu to Rasputin, advisors used their positions of influence to gain their own vision of ‘greatness,’ whether it was a strong French presence on the continent or a more powerful tsarist state. Even Shakespeare includes the classic picture of the self-interested advisor in the form of Iago. As the drama unfolds, Iago gains power and influence by providing advice, manipulating and coaxing the major characters to their tragic ends. Throughout, Othello is immune to the hidden power grab of his most trusted advisor, calling Iago a person "of exceeding honesty, [who] knows all qualities, with

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learned spirit of human dealings." As Shakespeare realized, powerful advisors affect
history simply by gaining and keeping their leaders’ ears. Or as another scholar
characterizes, “The person who whispers in the ear of the King is more important than the
King.”

Yet history also demonstrates limits to advisory influence. Advisors are not given
a blank check, manipulating a docile and naïve leader simply due to their prowess. There
are limits, and foreign policy emerges from presidential dispositions and beliefs, as well
as advisory input. For example, Robert McNamara was soundly disappointed in his own
failure to convince Lyndon Johnson to pull out of Vietnam. In hindsight, Secretary
McNamara felt responsibility for not convincing the President to pull back from the
brink. The characters of leaders provide a limit to advisory influence.

Though history and literature accord advisors wide influence in politics, few
political scientists focus their attention on the exact mechanisms of this influence. By
virtue of their position and necessity, advisors hold sway -- as one Clinton advisor
describes it, advisors are like birds perched on their leader’s shoulders, whispering into
their leader’s ear. This dissertation mends this gap by analyzing the bases, tools, and
conditions underlying advisory influence. Specifically, I answer three broad categories
of questions: how do advisors matter, to what extent do they matter, and what limits face
advisors in their quest to capture the leader’s ear. Existing works fail to provide a

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2 Act III, Scene III, Line 257.

3 University of Chicago philosophy Professor Robert Pipping, quoted in David J. Rothkopf, Running the
World: The Inside Story of the National Security Council and the Architects of American Power (New
York: PublicAffairs, 2005).

complete answer to advisor influence by neglecting an understanding of how power is wielded and used in the advisory process. Generally, past scholarship on the role of advisors on the foreign policy process concentrates on structural links between individuals within a proscribed foreign policy hierarchy. But advisors do have power in the process; by concentrating on the roles advisors play, I provide a new perspective on the internal politics and processes of foreign policy making.

Yet having power does not guarantee influence in decisions. Sometimes even the most powerful advisors fail to get their policy preference included in the decision. To connect ‘advisory power’ to political behavior, I explore seven strategies used by advisors to gain their preferred ends through the application of advice. Uncertainty (a characteristic of most foreign policy decisions) creates a window of opportunity for politically minded advisors to persuade leaders into following their advice. Foreign policy decisions resemble a ‘marketplace of ideas’ with advisors competing against each other to be heard. By drawing from their own talents and power, advisors structure the form and content of their arguments to win the policy debate.

In developing an empirical base for understanding the impact of presidential advisors, this dissertation focuses on a number of additional questions – especially questions denoting ‘scope conditions.’ The following chapters address a number of these questions: what factors delimit advisor impact? To what extent can advisors change the minds of leaders? Does the content of a decision determine what advice is heeded? What about available information – does more or less information dictate the advice followed? And finally, do advisors strategically use information?

1.2 The Advisory System

As practitioners and scholars suggest, selecting foreign policy is not a simple knee-jerk reaction to intentions or capabilities. “Foreign and security policy” writes Margaret Thatcher, “concerns much more than the two opposing poles of war and peace. It concerns the whole range of risks and opportunities which the far-sighted statesman must appreciate and evaluate in the conduct of his craft.”6 Decisions are rarely obvious or straightforward, and even the most objective sources of information are biased. Political pressures and cognitive demands complicate the situation, tempting decision makers to delay their choice until forced to make a decision by external circumstances. As Halperin argues, "Because many issues come at him at once and from many different directions with many different pressures involved . . . behavior is characterized, perhaps to a surprising extent, by . . . uncommitted thinking. He will often respond at any one time to whichever pressures are momentarily strongest."7 Leaders engage a ‘hedging strategy’ – creating ‘half decisions’ to put off the inevitable until forced to do otherwise.

Information overload makes decision making even more onerous. For every decision, briefings and memos bombard leaders as they attempt to adjudicate complex political tradeoffs. Dean Acheson (Truman’s Secretary of State and unofficial advisor to the Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon administrations) uses the metaphor of president as head gardener: “If he tries to do it all himself – to be his own secretary of state . . . he will soon become too exhausted and immersed in manure and weed-killer to direct anything

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6 Margaret Thatcher, Statecraft (New York: Harper-Collins Publisher, 2002).

wisely.”\textsuperscript{8} This cacophony is mitigated through an institutional filter instituted by leaders. No leader is an island unto themselves, and without information channels, the complexity of the process quickly becomes unmanageable.

Leaders turn to advisors for professional commentary and interpersonal support to cope with the twin problems of uncertainty and complexity. But advisors are more than just providers. For example, Goldhamer remarks counselors act “as a friend, educator, conscience, eyes and ears, executor, and advisor.”\textsuperscript{9} Or as another author suggests, advisors fill four roles: cognitive, emotional support, understanding and ‘decisional’ support, and political legitimacy.\textsuperscript{10} Advisors become central cogs in the decision making process, providing expertise, friendship, and political cover.

In general, past scholarship ignored these differentiated roles, concentrating instead on how presidents managed the complicated foreign policy hierarchy. Scholars studying these procedural or institutional characteristics of the policy making apparatus favored a ‘demand’ argument; namely, they examined how leaders search out and use advice. As one scholar characterizes it, the focus is on how advice is “tailored to the needs of the person seeking it and to the relationship between this person and those who provide the advice.”\textsuperscript{11} Presidents create a hierarchy that filters information and limits input. The structure of the advisory system and its match (or mismatch) with leader


psychology determine the impact of advisors and quality of the foreign policy. Advisors are treated as decision shortcuts, providing direction to a leader constrained by time and social pressure.

Perhaps most emblematic of this approach is Alexander George’s seminal work on presidential decision making. Briefly, George examines the interaction of different presidential management styles and the organization of a president’s foreign policy making system, describing in detail the pitfalls and benefits of collegial, competitive, and formalistic approaches to presidential management. George acknowledges the impact of three different advisory roles – the ‘devil’s advocate,’ ‘formal options,’ and ‘multiple advocacy’ – to widen the presidential scope of inquiry and side-step procedural biases. Later scholars added to the initial work by focusing on myriad psychological variables.

While this scholarship contributed to the study of foreign policy in many ways, it lacks an understanding of advisors as independent political agents -- an understanding central to classics of political theory. For example, Machiavelli’s seminal work presents a decidedly different picture of advisors as self-interested politicians. Competition within the inner circle drives egotistical power grabs, since ‘princes’ “in order to get the best out


13 George, Presidential Decisionmaking in Foreign Policy (1980).

14 See Thomas Preston, The President and His Inner Circle (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001) and Kowert, Groupthink or Deadlock (2002) for a discussion of these works.
of his adviser, should consider his adviser’s interests, heaping honors on him, enriching him, placing him in his debt, ensuring he receives public recognition, so that he sees that he cannot do better without him, that he has so many honors he desires no more, so much wealth he desires not more, so much status he fears the consequences of political upheaval."15 Although Machiavelli realized the necessary role played by advisors in a complex and uncertain environment, a hierarchy among advisors creates an incentive for political maneuvering and parochial interest; inner circle politicking is an arena where “ambition glistens like a dagger in the moonlight.”16

More importantly, advisors gain power and fame through successes. While princes guarantee loyalty and ensured competition by heaping accolades upon their closest advisors, it has the negative consequence of creating a perverse incentive – the possibility for advisors to gain influence outside of their official roles. Even in democratic systems, with proscribed checks on individual power grab, advisors eclipse leaders. As Neustadt argues “Any aide who demonstrates to others that he has the President’s consistent confidence and a consistent part in presidential business will acquire so much business on his own account that he becomes in some sense independent of his chief. Nothing in the Constitution keeps a well-placed aide from converting status into power of his own, usable in some degree even against the President.”17 Leaders face a dilemma when using advisors since self-interest may prevail over leader needs or even national goals.


The reality of political decision making exacerbates these dynamics. Ambiguity, uncertainty, and the lack of information create different prescriptions for action among experts. As Larson contends, “Uncertainty means that reasonable people may differ. When the president’s advisors offer conflicting diagnoses of the interests at stake and recommendations for action, the president . . . may then have to use his own judgment in deciding whose advice to accept.”18 And in the end, only the president or decision maker is responsible for the policy outcome. Walt Rostow describes the role in this way:

“It’s not generally realized that the president steps off into the dark with almost every decision. Therefore, the mobilization of this information – because the gap may be between what he ought to know and what he knows – is very moving, and it’s the biggest job faced by the national security advisor. And it underlines the difference between responsibility, which goes with the decision making, black as the future may look, and advice. Advice is cheap.”19

Although advisors act as a neutral information source (providing viewpoints and critiques to aid the decision making process), they are swayed by personal and political pressures. Because experts legitimately disagree on prescriptions, information becomes a political tool for advisors intent on ‘winning’ the decision. As a result, foreign policy decisions begin to look like games between advisors, rather than a careful and reasoned decision approach.

Recent scholarship suggests this politicized characterization of advice is a more accurate representation of intrigue in the inner circle. As these authors show, political entrepreneurs manipulate the goals, dynamics, and structures of the foreign policy apparatus to ‘win’ a policy decision.20 Following the path of power theorists, these

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works agree “interest groups, elites, even political systems are all to some extent pliable” in the hands of a master political craftsman.\textsuperscript{21} Information and advice become a means to an end, as advisors play to the desires and wishes of leaders. Again, Machiavelli noticed the negative implications of this process, pleading the “good Prince” to avoid sycophants and idiots in their supplications, concluding that “good advice, no matter who it comes from, really comes from the ruler’s own good judgment, and that the ruler’s good judgment never comes from good advice.”\textsuperscript{22} Practitioners see the same effect at work in the White House – as Alexander Haig commented “Sycophants are knee-deep around the White House.”\textsuperscript{23} Wise rulers are advised to learn “how to use advisers and not be used by them.”\textsuperscript{24}

\subsection*{1.3 The political advisor}

I have argued past works on presidential decision-making fail to account for the political nature of advisors, and thus do not accurately describe advisors as agents who overcome institutional constraints to affect policy; the ‘political question’ has been relatively ignored. In this section, I focus on a ‘supply’ argument. If advisors are


\textsuperscript{22} Machiavelli, \textit{The Prince} (1995), 73.


accurately described as independent political agents, we need to know how \textit{advisors} use advice. What factors or qualities of advisors or advice enable advisors to ‘capture the leader’s ear’? And further, what strategies further this goal?

If foreign policy accurately resembles a game between advisors straining to win the policy decision, then persuasion becomes a central issue. As a first cut, I define persuasion as the attempt to restructure the political game to one’s advantage.\footnote{Theoretically, manipulation is distinct from persuasion. Briefly, manipulation is an influence attempt \textit{before} a decision is made. Persuasion, in contrast, is an influence attempt \textit{after} a decision is made. While I can appreciate the semantic difference between the two, this dissertation examines both manipulation and persuasion attempts as related to advisory politicking.} According to Wrong, successful persuasion varies with ‘power’ (loosely defined): individuals use bases of power to overcome structural constraints and capture the leader’s attention.\footnote{Dennis Wrong, \textit{Power: Its Forms, Bases and Uses} (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2002).} Conventionally, commentators cast these power plays in a malevolent light. But as Wrong notes, persuasion hastens ‘good’ ends by decreasing ambiguity through the provision of information. The position of advisors (i.e. personal access to leaders) grants an opportunity to use the power to persuade and frame core issues toward one’s own agenda by strategically using information.\footnote{Maoz, “Framing the National Interest” (1990).}

Traditionally, scholars studying the strategic use of information explored mass dynamics. After World War II, American social scientists focused on links between mass belief and state influence to understand the processes of authoritarianism,\footnote{Theodor W. Adorno, \textit{The Authoritarian Personality} (New York: Harper, 1950).} obedience to authority,\footnote{Stanley Milgram, \textit{Obedience to Authority: An Experimental View} (New York: Harper & Row, 1974).} and mass propaganda.\footnote{Other scholars continued the line of scholarship by...}

While this line of scholarship furthers the study of mass persuasion, it provides little direction for a study of elite group politicking. A richer contribution comes from William Riker and the concept of heresthetics, defined as the art of gaining allies and forcing enemies by “structuring the world so you can win.”\footnote{William H. Riker, \textit{The Art of Political Manipulation} (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), preface.} Heresthetic is more than rhetoric;\footnote{This distinction is fuzzy in Riker’s work. Generally speaking, the difference is found in technique: rhetoric is a persuasive appeal, while heresthetic forces an opponent’s hand through structural or institutional change. This conception seems limited. As I argue, rhetoric \textit{does} structure and re-structure the world by changing the cognitive representation of the political reality.} entrepreneurs win “because they have set up the situation in such a way that other people will want to join them — or will feel forced by circumstances to join them — even without any persuasion at all.”\footnote{Riker, \textit{The Art of Political Manipulation} (1986), preface.} For example, Riker’s analysis surrounding the
creation of the Electoral College shows the role of policy entrepreneurs invoking heresthetical devices to restructure convention debate to get their way.\textsuperscript{36} Nagel’s study of the New Zealand liberal leader Richard Seldon applies heresthetics to the creation and maintenance of a popular majority.\textsuperscript{37} Politicians structure the political game to their favor through agenda control, strategic voting, and manipulating dimensions of the decision. Importantly, these lessons apply well to the internal politicking of foreign policy decision making.

Riker’s initial work can be expanded in several directions when applied to political advising. First, heresthetics could include new dimensions of persuasion. Initially, Riker’s work concentrated on how agents structure the political game to bring about their wanted end. By using a rational choice perspective, Riker discovered a rationale behind this political jousting, and suggested ways for agents to move decision foci within certain institutional settings. However, advisors have little control over the structure of the foreign policy system. Foreign policy structures are constructed according to leader psychology or dispositions. Though advisors can manipulate certain factors, leaders select who they want to hear from and when.

A more fruitful avenue of influence is found in psychological studies of persuasion. A major topic of social psychology concentrates on how attitudes and public opinion are changed through elite appeals. Experts serve as opinion cues to less informed masses; the provision of knowledge often persuades the mass citizenry to change their


The interpersonal relationship between advisor and leader creates an opportunity to apply this psychological dimension to advisory politics. Even in international relations, an understanding of how advice resonates matters, especially since “power over opinion is . . . not less essential for political purposes than military and economic power . . . The art of persuasion has always been a necessary part of the equipment of a political leader.”

Persuasion is more than restructuring preferences through changing institutional rules; it also includes restructuring preferences by changing the cognitive representation of the debate.

A final issue raised by Riker’s formulation concerns the issue of limits, and the constraints on persuasive appeals. Riker’s initial work presents cases crossing a range of political situations and historical moments. But advising is a very specific arena for heresthetics: participants are carefully selected, roles develop over time, and the person being persuaded is the most powerful (i.e. the leader). In this very specific political realm, manipulation is limited and political opportunities are not constant. As Lukes pens, agents operate in a “set of (expanding and contracting) abilities, faced with (expanding and contracting) opportunities . . . social life can only be understood as a dialectic of power and structure, a web of possibilities for agents, whose nature is both active and structured, to make choices and pursue strategies within given limits, which in consequence expand and contract over time.”

Changing political dynamics, combined with the availability of information and advice, constrains the ability of political agents to persuade leaders.

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1.4 Plan of the Dissertation

The question of ‘who advises?’ could be answered in several ways. A ‘leader-centric’ answer would theorize advisors matter only when leaders are open to their advice. In this view, leader dispositions drive the search for advice. Presidents favoring military responses to international politics naturally prefer ‘hawkish’ advisors. President Eisenhower, for example, was famous for using uncharacteristic rage to force his advisors to conform to his view of the world, leading one author to compare President Eisenhower to a conductor, orchestrating “his advisers and the leaders around him into a chorus supporting his views.”40 Since presidents create their own advising structures, these preferences become institutional constraints, vested in the foreign policy hierarchy. Presidents create direct links between themselves and their most trusted advisors, suggesting the answer to the question of advisors is found in the political beliefs and history of leaders.

Another valid answer arises from the nature of the political decision. Policy problems favor different areas of expertise. Military problems favor military solutions; as a result, presidents turn to their military experts for guidance and direction whenever a military solution is warranted. From this lens, complexity and uncertainty surrounding foreign policy favors the use of those most qualified. This window of opportunity allows advisors face time and access, as leaders learn about the policy decision. Advisors are successful simply by being recognized as an expert. To explain successful advising requires only an understanding of the strategic problem facing a leader.

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But both explanations seem to neglect important qualities of the decision making arena. First, the reality of most political decisions is far too complex for such simple explanations. There is disagreement and internal politicking for even straightforward or simple foreign policy decisions. At its core, elite decision making is a political process involving leaders, advisors, and numerous policy alternatives.41

More importantly, leaders face cognitive and temporal limits to the information they gather, and these limits create uncertainty – leaders face large information costs and never overcome a lack of decision resources.42 By relegating information demands to subordinates or sub-leaders, leaders cope with the uncertainty caused by lack of information, and seemingly decrease information costs. But advisors bring bias into the process. Personal preferences and rhetorical flourish skew the presentation of opinion, creating a new type of information cost to the process; namely, inaccuracy. Leaders face a difficult balance: relying on advisors to gather all necessary information may decrease information costs, but only at the price of accuracy.

These characteristics suggest a dialectical process, where advisors present opinions about the available options and decision makers amend their preferences according to these opinions. Differing points of view clash as advisors compete with each other to gain the president’s trust. In decision-making terms, the advising process impacts the editing of options; a process denoting option description rather than option selection. Decision-making is not only the careful weighting of different policies and

41 For advisors to matter, there must be more than one source of information, and there must be a choice. If advisors agree on a policy choice, or leaders have already made the decision, political advising no longer matters.

their associated utilities but also the process of minimizing doubt (i.e., making choice a non-choice). Advisors that best minimize this doubt through resonant arguments change the direction of foreign policy, and win the decision.

This dissertation argues that advisory influence is best described as a contingent process of persuasion. The nature of the process grants advisors a lever of influence since leaders need coping mechanisms to process incoming information. Successful advising in this complicated realm stems from minimizing doubt and uncertainty. But there are limits in the process. Specifically, leader dispositions set constraints on the content of advisory arguments. Policy preferences and past history hasten and delimit the impact of an appeal. The goal for the successful advisor is to use their bases of power to construct arguments that bypass these constraints, thereby making their advice salient and included in the final policy decision.

In the chapters that follow, I build and expand from this initial description to construct a complete model of advisory dynamics. The second chapter elucidates (in three sections) different literatures speaking to the questions of the dissertation, beginning with an in-depth examination of the politics of advising. Briefly, I review arguments from past studies of presidential decision making, discovering a common thread. Specifically, a decision making hierarchy not only dictates the course of advice (how it flows from advisor to leader), but also determines who leaders favor. Past work shows three variables (bureaucratic structure, presidential personality, and past experience) dictate the course of a foreign policy decision and the opportunities for advising.
But this institutional argument needs to be amended to include advisors as political agents or policy entrepreneurs attempting to change the mind of the leader. The second section of the chapter borrows from political theorists to argue against the institutional argument, and to describe tools available to advisors. I present a different view of the foreign policy process as an inherently political one, where advisors are treated as self-interested players who shape foreign policy by influencing leaders. Advisors use their bases of power to craft appeals and influence presidential decisions. Although structure does dictate broad patterns of political influence, it does not determine the outcome of a foreign policy process. The third section concentrates on this process of persuasion. I examine past works (e.g., bureaucratic politicking, problem representation, decision making under uncertainty) to create a taxonomy of advisor arguments. This extant literature suggests advisors use a number of advisory strategies, while providing hints to the possible limits on their efficacy. By connecting these three sections together – politics, power, and persuasion – I create a number of hypotheses tested in future sections.

The third chapter presents a series of experiments exploring the mechanisms implicit to the model. The experiment is a simulation of a foreign policy crisis, with subjects playing the part of a prime minister. At different points in the experiment, subjects are asked for their policy preferences (which diplomatic and military options they prefer). Advisor arguments are presented between these data points, allowing me to measure the differential impact of arguments; any change in policy preference is connected to differences in advice or appeal. In the broad picture, this chapter gauges the psychological mechanism behind advisor influence.
Although the experiment grants control over internal mechanisms of advising, it contains some inherent biases. For example, no experiment wholly captures the intense political process of give and take that defines the advisory process. Complex interactions between environment, personality, and structure are necessarily left out or rarefied to fit laboratory constraints. And further, certain features of the political reality (e.g., time constraints, advisory structures) impact the efficacy of advisor strategies. To combat these biases, I use in-depth case study work examining the use of advising strategies in presidential decision-making. The fourth chapter describes the first pair of case studies. As I argue in the second chapter, the nature of the foreign policy problem (i.e., time constraints and the stakes involved) becomes a crucial factor. The two cases – both cases of ship seizures – vary according to the chosen policy. In one case (the capture of the USS Mayaguez), President Ford approved a military solution, using troops and suppressive bombing to rescue crewmen. In the other case (the seizure of the USS Pueblo), a diplomatic solution was used instead. By varying cases according to the outcome, I evaluate claims that expertise and advisors are constrained by their area of expertise. Thus, I hypothesize that military solutions are proffered by advisors who have expertise in military tactics, while diplomatic solutions are given by advisors with expertise in diplomacy. Varying cases according to the enacted policy provides enough leverage to evaluate hypotheses concerning the policy area.
Chapter five continues the case study portion of the dissertation by examining non-crisis situations. Again, the logic is the same: by varying the conditions surrounding the decision (i.e., non-crisis) and the outcome, I evaluate the effect of time constraints and areas of expertise on advisory ploys. The two cases I compare are cases of humanitarian intervention: the decision to send troops to Lebanon, and the decision to not send troops to Rwanda (and instead, provide material support for other states involved in the crisis). Importantly, the cases are similar on important dimensions, especially concerning international pressure on the United States to become involved, and a similar domestic situation in the target state. But the outcomes were dramatically different according to the actions and politics of the inner circle.

Finally, the last chapter reiterates the lessons and findings of the empirical chapters, and proffers policy implications and avenues for further research. Simplistic explanations of advising can not capture the intense politics and persuasion attempts of the inner circle. Instead, the contingent model of advising better captures the input, affect, and roles of political advising in foreign policy decisions. I end the chapter with lessons for advisors, and further avenues for research.
Chapter 2
A Theoretical Framework of Advising

2.1 Introduction

Historians and political scientists are similarly puzzled by the sudden change in direction exhibited by Lyndon Johnson after winning the presidential election of 1964. Though President Johnson promised to refrain from exacerbating Cold War tensions, within a three-month period in 1965, Johnson ordered massive troop buildups in Vietnam. A President devoted to major domestic policy programs and the elimination of poverty abruptly changed direction to focus his talents on American involvement in South East Asia.

Conventional explanations behind the escalation decision follow one of two themes. For some scholars, geo-strategic demands and internal domestic politics forced Johnson’s hand. Eisenhower, Kennedy, and eventually Johnson realized Vietnam was a lynchpin to Southeast Asian security against Soviet expansionism; by not checking the falling dominoes, Johnson would lose face domestically and internationally. A second view concentrates on the psychological dispositions of Johnson. For example, Barber argues Johnson (like Wilson and Hoover) failed to ‘see’ data contradicting the wisdom of escalation. As Barber notes “the President appears as a man unable to see what,

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43 Exemplified by his famous “Daisy Girl” campaign advertisement which painted Goldwater as a risky foreign policy adventurist.
eventually, nearly everyone else around him sees: that the line of action simply is not working . . . the costs of persevering in it are far too high."45 This flaw prevented Johnson from stepping back from the edge, precipitating troop deployment.

However, these fatalist explanations leave out the actions of a major group of actors: the advisors surrounding President Johnson, otherwise known as his ‘Tuesday Cabinet.’ The decision to escalate was not a foregone conclusion.46 Johnson questioned the logic of containment and could have followed Kennedy’s lead by pulling out of the theater. Escalation resulted from a combination of Johnson’s inexperience in foreign policy, and dovish advisors unable to provide a sufficient justification for diplomatic solutions. Johnson was not used to the stresses of foreign policy decision-making; intricacies and complexities of military strategy flummoxed the President. “In dealing with foreign policy” writes Kearns, “he was insecure, fearful, his touch unsure. In this unfamiliar world, he could not readily apply the powerful instruments through which he was accustomed to achieve mastery.”47 Inner circle advisors opposed to the escalation could not bring the President back from the edge of war. The lack of influence over President Johnson led to unchecked paranoia and a willingness to use force. As a result,


“in 1965, Johnson was able to take the American people into a war that turned out to be the longest in its history . . . Advisors led to bombs and bombs led to troops and gradually America was at war with North Vietnam.”48

This chapter develops and presents a framework explaining successful and unsuccessful advising. As the escalation example relates, advisors matter even when they fail. The lack of a trusted confidante in the inner circle, combined with the strategic situation and Johnson’s dispositions, led to escalation in 1965. But no theoretical framework exists to explain this failure. To understand advising requires an explanation of what leaders need or require, what advisors provide, and how arguments operate in the marketplace of ideas that is decision making.

Following the trichotomy of Paul Light, I separate the process of advising into three elements.49 First, advisors need an opportunity to persuade or participate in the decision. Qualities of the political environment present windows of opportunity favorable to persuasion. The two factors of the environment I explore (i.e. personal dispositions and nature of the decision) limit the impact of advisor resources, the second element of the advisory framework. Advising requires a stored stockpile of potential political power (such as bureaucratic ties or rhetoric).50 Influence is not guaranteed by the application of power because of constraints in the political environment.

48 Ibid., 280.


However, an advisor with both power and an opportunity to use that power sometimes fails because they squander the moment by employing the wrong advisory technique. This third dimension, a proper strategy of influence, is a crucial link between advisory success and failure during policy decisions. Strategy, like Machiavelli’s virtu, is the successful application of power within a window of opportunity. What separates a successful advisor from a failed advisor is this lynchpin: an intuitive sense of when and how power is brought to bear. Successful strategies draw from the other two factors to influence debate. As one authors described the relationship, “resources shape opportunities; opportunities shape strategies; strategies can conserve resources.”51 The goal of inquiry is to discover when the power base and opportunity interact with strategy to create positive interference and influence decision making.

I begin by exploring these three elements in greater depth. First, I examine works illuminating the constraining impact of presidential dispositions. The match between disposition and foreign policy hierarchy becomes a crucial variable behind the type and amount of influence enjoyed by advisors. The next section explores works on political power. I argue advisory power is attached to several important elements (such as access to the leader and expertise), and that opportunities exist for advisory influence in any foreign policy hierarchy. The third section discusses seven strategies advisors employ to persuade leaders. The final section of this chapter combines these elements into a set of hypotheses. I end the chapter with a discussion of methodology, and the empirical plan I use to probe the validity of these routes of influence.

51 Light, Vice-Presidential Power (1984), 256.
2.2 Politics & structure of the foreign policy hierarchy

Former French President Georges Pompidou once remarked there were three ways for a politician to ruin his career: chasing women, gambling, and trusting experts. He continued, saying “The first . . . was the most pleasant and the second the quickest, but trusting experts was the surest.” Unfortunately for Pompidou, the complexity of decision making requires the use of expert advisors, regardless of potential downfalls. A defined hierarchy is necessary for efficient policy making, and presidents (like most leaders) define and personalize the policy making hierarchy to satisfy their individual demands. But presidents face a steep learning curve. As one scholar argues, “The president is both solution and problem. He is the United States’ only source for central foreign policy leadership. Yet, in practice, presidents often bring idiosyncrasy and discontinuity.” By defining information channels, organizational interests, and experts, presidents mediate instability to construct consistent foreign policy; in time, the “advisory system shapes itself to fit his preferences more than he adjusts his style to fit with it.”

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Work on advisory systems concentrates almost exclusively on this top-down influence of leaders.\textsuperscript{55} These works argue the structure of the foreign policy system dictates the ebb and flow of foreign policy by shaping the input of advisors. Generally, leaders create better decision making processes by reining in the hierarchy and prescribing specific channels of information and participation. For example, Patrick Haney finds that small-groups manage information well during crises (contrary to the expectations of groupthink), but only when decision makers define specific roles for advisors. The lesson from Haney is instructive: “Our focus,” he writes, “must be not only on ‘players,’ but on ‘players in position’ and on how these positions are constructed and managed during crises.”\textsuperscript{56}

Delineating advisory roles within the foreign policy bureaucracy aids successful decision making by prompting responsibility and setting expectations.


Organizational routes of influence are not the only structural factors scholars examine, since leader dispositions also form patterns of influence. For example, Goldhamer argues the type of decision maker (in his framework, either analytic or intuitive) determines when, how, and numbers of advisors used.\textsuperscript{57} Porter suggests personality even influences the type of information favored by leaders (i.e., written reports or oral briefings).\textsuperscript{58} In an historical study of the development of the National Security Agency, Destler presents a similar point. “In large part,” he writes, “Presidents determine the range and quality of advice that they get. They choose their principal officials. They decide day-by-day, personally or through chosen aides, which of these officials will get into the Oval Office, how often, in what contexts. Their styles and preferences also do much to shape the sorts of advice that will reach them.”\textsuperscript{59} Every President has “his peculiarities, preferences, strengths, and weaknesses.”\textsuperscript{60} The outcome of foreign policy is often a result of “not only how these executives as individuals decide but also how they seek advice and how others provide that advice bear upon their decisions.”\textsuperscript{61}

\textsuperscript{57} Goldhamer, \textit{The Advisor} (1978).

\textsuperscript{58} Porter, “Advising the President” (1986).

\textsuperscript{59} Destler, “National Security Advice to US Presidents” (1977), 143.

\textsuperscript{60} Clark Clifford (with Richard Holbrooke), \textit{Counsel to the President: A Memoir} (New York: Random House 1991), 76.

Interactions between these two structural variables (personality and organization) are used by scholars to understand successful and unsuccessful management of foreign policy.\(^{62}\) Alexander George provides the most common conception. Drawing from earlier works on presidential management of the White House, George denotes a number of decision malfunctions arising from structural impediments. As he writes “While structural reorganization can aid in the quest for effective policy, there appears to be no single organizational model by means of which the chief executive and his staff can convert the functional expertise and diverse viewpoints of the many subunits within the executive branch into consistently effective decisions and policies. Impediments to information processing will occur under any of the organizational models that are being considered.”\(^{63}\)

Kowert extended George’s argument by demonstrating the deleterious consequences of a mismatch between personality and structure.\(^{64}\) Group decisions fall into two common traps – groupthink or deadlock – whenever presidential preference and structure conflict. Johnson’s 1965 decision to escalate the Vietnam War serves as a prime example of this mismatch. The President’s ego-defensive needs clashed with his

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\(^{63}\) George, *Presidential Decisionmaking in Foreign Policy* (1980), 121.

open advisory structure (inherited from Kennedy), leading to an outright dismissal of discrepant information and ‘unfaithful’ advisors.65 A past study examining who Johnson talked to reveals a similar pattern of ignoring dissenting information.66

Regardless of possible malfunctions, dispositions and individual preferences guide information requirements. Over time, these preferences become stylized and routinized into structural characteristics that create preferences within the inner circle. For example, Theodore Sorenson recounts the ill will between the Reagan White House and the Department of State during the Iran-Contra Affair. Secretary of State George Schultz was:

“Never informed by the president of key foreign policy decisions, deliberately deceived by what senators termed a White House ‘junta’ utilizing ‘rather shady characters’ to carry out U.S. foreign policy, the secretary testified to ‘a sense of estrangement,’ of not being ‘in good odor’ with the White House staff . . . National Security Adviser John Poindexter had placed the State Department on the list of those ‘who didn’t need to know’ certain overseas actions. His assistant, Oliver North, gave the department the code name ‘Wimp.’ Poindexter’s predecessor Robert McFarlane once said North should be secretary of state. Both McFarlane and Poindexter traveled secretly abroad without informing the department. Still other White House aides vetoed Shultz’s trips and suggested anonymously to the press that he resign.”67

The Secretary of State and other Department bureaucrats had little pull in decisions because Reagan preferred NSC advice. “The State Department’s authority receded, usually because the president – not the national security adviser – so ordained, and usually without much resistance from the department.”68


68 Ibid., 231.
Although scholars using these ‘top-down’ frames added and enhanced the study of foreign policy analysis, explaining foreign policy behavior through a combination of structure and personality seems simplistic. In these accounts, the structure of the foreign policy apparatus (and, by consequence, the personality of the leader) dominates advisory agents and other policy entrepreneurs without questioning the political nature of the psychological mechanism. These approaches unduly limit the impact of advisors on foreign policy behavior, dismissing the political nature of advice and the machinations of advisors.

Yet there is room for political agency in the process. For example, Barrett finds archival evidence that Johnson’s personality did not quell all discussion concerning Vietnam. Johnson did listen to discrepant advice and anguished over the decision to escalate American involvement in Vietnam. As a result, Johnson’s decisions are not explained by the simplistic notion that he rejected discrepant information or even possible sources of discrepant information; rather, Johnson chose escalation from a process that did not fully convince him of the downside to escalation or its political costs. Indeed, this process of persuasion continued throughout the Vietnam period. As an example, after Johnson received a report from a commission led by Clark Clifford concerning responses to Tet, “the remainder of the decision-making process became a struggle among the highest advisors to the President to influence him to adopt their particular alternative, to pursue their particular conception of national objectives for the United States in South

Vietnam.”70 Concentrating solely on structure and presidential preferences misses the important role of advisory agents, and dismisses their impact on the content and outcome of foreign policy decision making.

If we concentrate on advisors as political agents or policy entrepreneurs, then we need to examine how advisors wield their bases of influence, and when they overcome structural impediments. Extant literature reveals three potential windows of opportunity. First, literature suggests some personality types allow greater room for advisory roles.71 Presidents with little experience in foreign policy, or presidents that require more information, rely on the judgments of their advisors. Moreover, psychological literature on persuasion finds certain variables make persuasion more likely.72 For example, Petty and Cacioppo argue “The recipient of the message must have both the motivation and the ability to process the information contained in the communication, and the information


presented must elicit a profile of thoughts (elaborations) that is more favorable than that available prior to message experience.”\textsuperscript{73} The motivation to judge and evaluate incoming information dictates when and how advisors matter.

Another opportunity is found with the content of a decision. Advice, like power, is not fungible, since advisors perform specific functions according to the knowledge and expertise they hold. In his work examining the development of technocrats and experts, Benveniste argues that modernization and enlargement of society necessitated greater reliance on technocrats who mastered certain ‘governmental problems.’\textsuperscript{74} When these problems arise, advisors have opportunities to engage the policy-making process, and use their specific knowledge to persuade leaders. A change in the foreign policy problem changes patterns of advisors and advice.\textsuperscript{75} Importantly, experts serve two purposes: they can legitimate a decision, or they can be used as a scapegoat. As an example, one can examine the arguments provided by the Bush Administration concerning the war in Iraq. Time and again, the Bush inner circle point to the CIA as the source of expert knowledge used to attack Iraq. The president is thus able to deflect criticism by deferring to the source of his advice, and creating a scapegoat out of the intelligence community.

Time constraints and issue importance present further possibility for influence. For example, Irving Janis argues crisis decisions favor advisors. Leaders within crises rarely exhibit vigilant problem-solving processes (i.e., systematically and carefully seeking new information to guide decision-making) because it requires too much time


\textsuperscript{74} Beveniste, \textit{The Politics of Expertise} (1977).

\textsuperscript{75} See Porter, “Advising the President” (1986).
and effort to accomplish.\textsuperscript{76} Decision-makers face a critical tradeoff: the importance of the decision creates the need for greater vigilance and a complete information search, but the shortened time frame reduces the ability to accomplish the task. As a result, leaders turn to emotive, cognitive, and collegial shortcuts to make their decision. Advisors become this connection, serving the demands of the situation, and given a chance to participate in policy making.

In sum, past literature suggests three factors create a need for information and advice within decision-making episodes. Personality, issue area, and time constraints all provide areas of possible advisory influence. Generally speaking, decision makers with a need for expert advice (due to their own personal needs, or the salience of the issue under consideration, or a lack of decision resources) turn to their inner circle for help. With these opportunities, advisors engage their power base to influence decisions.

2.3 Power

Political theorists have long described power as the central currency of politics. As the famous notion of Lasswell relates, political science “is the study of who gets what, when, and how,” and politics is the “study of influence and the influential.”\textsuperscript{77} Conflicts of interest and power resources dictate the ebb and flow of social life. Political behavior emerges from a process dictating “who participates, who gains and loses, and who prevails in decision-making.”\textsuperscript{78} Traditionally, international relations scholars followed these sentiments in their theorizing. Building upon Thucydides’ notion that ‘the strong


do what they will, while the weak suffer what they must,’ practitioners extolled the virtues of power in an anarchic, uncertain, and tragic international environment. To further simplify their models, most treatments of power analysis in international relations aggregated the concept to apply to state actors.

Unfortunately, these forays often confused the concept of power with the concept of influence. As Baldwin recognized, previous scholars integrating power analysis into international relations narrowly concentrated on the bases of power (either military or economic) while ignoring the techniques of power. Analysts confused or conflated influence attempts and influence. Scholars analyzing statecraft were often “complicated and confused by the tendency to treat the capabilities (power resources, power assets, or power bases) of states as if they were property rather than relational concepts.”

Baldwin’s rejoinder is an important critique for scholars applying the concepts of power analysis to intra-state politicking. Undoubtedly, Baldwin is correct: using rough estimates of power to explain political outcomes does not reflect the complexity of political strategy. Power plays and interdependence between political actors complicate theorizing and empirical analysis. But the task is even more daunting for intra-state power analysis. Not only do scholars have to examine the different ‘tools’ of influence in comparison to political ‘ends,’ but scholars must also engage the prior question of who has power and when. Where state-driven theories examine the power of foreign policy, foreign policy analysts must examine the power in or behind foreign policy.

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An analysis of power in this internal environment starts with a brief taxonomy. First, to have influence, an individual must have a power base. A power base is “the value which is the condition for participation in decision making in the given case.”\textsuperscript{80} For example, physical strength over an opponent allows an individual to use brute force to influence another. Or one nation’s resolve may convince another nation to back down in a crisis. Myriad examples and dimensions exist, but the basic point is that to have power, a unit must possess the ability to use power.

But having a power base does not guarantee influence,\textsuperscript{81} since power is constrained by the nature of the system and political problem. Rather, the power analyst must examine three dimensions to determine the amount of power enjoyed by the wielder: weight, domain, and scope.\textsuperscript{82} Weight is defined as the degree of influence; the amount of change afforded by the application of power. Second, scholars can think of domain as the number of individuals affected by an influence attempt; domain is the target of a power play. And finally, Lasswell and Kaplan include directionality by defining scope as the values affected. When put together: “The weight of power is the degree of participation in the making of decisions; its scope consists of the values whose shaping and enjoyment are controlled; the domain of power consists of the persons over whom power is exercised.”\textsuperscript{83} In another way, “one must (explicitly or implicitly) specify


\textsuperscript{81} By influence, I refer to the common definition employed by Baldwin, \textit{Economic Statecraft} (1985).

\textsuperscript{82} See Lasswell and Kaplan, \textit{Power and Society} (1950), 73.

\textsuperscript{83} Ibid., 77.
who is influencing (or has the capacity to influence) whom (domain) with respect to what (scope).”

A clearer picture of a ‘politicized advisor’ emerges when we apply this taxonomy to an advising process. First, the checklist allows us to define advisors as political agents with the ability to change the mind of a leader. Advisors have power to the extent they change or sway political preferences of leaders. Importantly, this perspective assumes that power is relational, referring “to a relationship between two or more people, not to a property of any one of them.” Or, as Dahl notes: "A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do.”

At the most generic level, advisors have influence when they engage their power resources to affect the preferences of a leader. The problem, of course, is that this description is tautological. Power does not exist only when advisors are successful. In another way, the description subsumes the outcome within the process. Further, power is observable only within a protracted process or environment. Again, Lasswell and Kaplan note that analysis “must be contextual, and take account of the power practices actually manifested in the concrete political situation.” Other scholars agree: as one argues “We can only discover these points by an examination of a series of concrete cases where key decisions are made.” Power relations are thus synonymous with behavioral

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85 Ibid., 20.
87 Lasswell and Kaplan, Power and Society (1950), 94.
implications. As Dahl suggests “for the assertion 'C has power over R,' one can substitute the assertion, 'C's behavior causes R's behavior . . . If one can define the causal relation, one can define influence, power, or authority, or vice versa.”

To sidestep empirical and theoretical problems, it is necessary to concentrate on possible bases of influence, rather than policy outcomes. When applied to advising, several questions become important. What resources are at the disposal of a powerful advisor? What are the power bases for advisors? Interestingly, a foundational work on political power touched on the issue of political advisorship. In Lasswell and Kaplan’s typology, advisory influence is classified as the use of ‘enlightenment’ (i.e., knowledge) to impact change. By virtue of exclusive information, advisors affect change by providing information. Influential advisors are characterized as policy entrepreneurs with specific, technocratic expertise – influence achieved via information asymmetries.

However, advisors do not enjoy influence solely due to provision of information; as I relayed in the first chapter, advisors fill a number of emotive and social needs, as well as providing technocratic information. A lone concentration on ‘enlightenment’ obfuscates further possibilities for advisory influence. Advisors enjoy more than one ‘vantage point.’ Clearly, other routes exist for advisory influence.

Scholarship indicates at least four different bases of influence: access, expertise, rhetoric, and experience (or trust). Access is the central independent variable behind advisory influence. Having access (whether it occurs over the phone or by memo or


90 The specific definition provided by Light – vantage points are “anything an adviser can use to persuade the President” (*Vice-Presidential Power* (1984), 7).

face-to-face) is the necessary requirement behind any influence attempt. Without access, viewpoints and advice are lost to the ether of the policy process. Past work exploring patterns of access show a very powerful connection between access and influence. For example, Sigelman and McNeil find a close correlation between patterns of advisory influence and interaction time with President Johnson.\textsuperscript{92} Over time, Johnson’s policy preferences varied with the advisors he met, changing his opinion on policy. As Kissinger relates, the key to influence in the policy establishment comes down to three things: “proximity, proximity, and proximity.”\textsuperscript{93} Simply being near leadership provides opportunities for persuasion.

Moreover, access is often tied to other factors in the political arena. For example, Goldhamer notes four factors (number of advisors available, areas of expertise, rivalry, trust of the leader) sustain access.\textsuperscript{94} Access is both a base of power and a result of power. Indeed, Garrison argues that gaining access (and preventing rival advisors from gaining access) is the key technique behind successful advising.\textsuperscript{95} By limiting who gets to speak with the president, an advisor can craft a message that will not be repudiated by rival viewpoints.\textsuperscript{96}


\textsuperscript{94} Goldhamer, \textit{The Adviser} (1978).

\textsuperscript{95} Garrison, \textit{Games Advisors Play} (1999).

\textsuperscript{96} Work by Joseph Bock takes a different tack. According to Bock, when National Security Advisors become too powerful, other – sometimes lesser – deputies ‘run interference’ and prevent access. Domestic advisors will actually work to erode the power base of powerful advisors with a direct line to the President. For a complete description, see Joseph Bock, \textit{The White House Staff and the National Security Assistant: Friendship and Friction at the Water's Edge}, Contributions in Political Science, No. 170 (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1987).
Expertise is a second base of advisory influence. Consistent with the work of Lasswell and Kaplan, exclusive information creates an avenue of influence.97 Psychological studies provide clearer evidence on the connection, showing both the efficacy of expertness and credibility for successful persuasion.98 However, expertise is limited by perceived bias. As Hovland et al. suggest, “when a person is perceived as having a definite intention to persuade others, the likelihood is increased that he will be perceived as having something to gain and, hence, as less worthy of trust.”99 The greatest limit facing experts is this perception problem, since it is the leader who “determines the standard of relevance. He decides who is consulted and thereby the definition of ‘expertness.’”100 Expertise is powerful, but only if it is unbiased or recognized as such.101

Yet another base is located in rhetorical skill. Classic Greek and Roman thinkers viewed rhetoric (or the art of speaking well) as an essential skill, capable of evoking emotion and changing minds. Rhetoric served aesthetic and practical purposes, and taught to young students as a central route to understanding the world around them. As


one scholar notes, “Rhetoric was no specialist study, confined to the ambitious few . . . it was an established intellectual tradition, which offered practical skills of articulate expression and theoretical insights into the nature of communication.”

While modern day schools lack such a belief, current sophists abound in mainstream media, influencing everyday decisions surrounding toothpaste purchases and which beer to drink.

Rhetoric and persuasion are not confined to commercialism; indeed scholars accord rhetoric a prominent place in politics. Studies on political leadership show the power of rhetoric in the public mind, since a “leader’s dramaturgical jousts with public problems make the world understandable and convey the promise of collective accomplishment to masses who are bewildered, uncertain, and alone.”

Works suggest rhetoric influenced a number of politically salient decisions, from creating public support for American grand strategy, to creating a base of support for social welfare policies, to creating or maintaining charismatic political leadership. Although these works deal with leader-mass polity relations, the dynamics of advice resemble the relationship between leader and advisor. Rhetorical construction of facts into a complete vision of the situation can favor the adoption of some policies over others. A salient example is found in the Cuban Missile Crisis, where military advisors abstained from using the term


‘bombing run,’ instead favoring the cleaner, more humane description of ‘surgical
strike.’\textsuperscript{106} Having the skill to present a favorable picture creates a powerful base of
influence within the policy process.

Finally, advisors draw from shared experiences and friendship to persuade.
Leaders ‘learn’ to follow certain advisors over others due to history. As an example,
Kennedy learned not to follow advice from some of his military advisors (including
George Anderson and Curtis LeMay), saying “The first advice I’m going to give my
successor is to watch the generals and to avoid feeling that just because they were
military men their opinions on military matters were worth a damn.”\textsuperscript{107} The Bay of Pigs
fiasco hardened the President against military options touted by his advisors. Again,
psychological studies concur: perceived experience with a problem creates credibility
and the ability to persuade.\textsuperscript{108} A history of failed persuasion attempts further delimits the
power of an adviser. For example, Tormala and Petty find evidence that persuasion
becomes more difficult after a target believes they successfully resisted the advances of a
‘persuader.’\textsuperscript{109} As the experience of Kennedy (or even Johnson and ‘Tuesday’ lunches)
shows, past experience cuts both ways.

\begin{thebibliography}{10}
\textsuperscript{106} See Graham T. Allison, \textit{Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis} (London: Scott,
Foresman & Co., 1971) for a full discussion of the dynamic.


\textsuperscript{108} Richard E. Petty and John T. Cacioppo, “The Elaboration Likelihood Model of Persuasion,” in
\textit{Advances in Experimental Social Psychology,} Vol. 19. L. Berkowitz, ed., (San Diego, CA: Academic,
1986); Zakary L. Tormala and Richard E. Petty, “Source credibility and attitude certainty: A metacognitive

\textsuperscript{109} Zakary L. Tormala and Richard E. Petty, “What doesn't kill me makes me stronger: The effects of
See also Zakary L. Tormala and Richard E. Petty, “Resistance to persuasion and attitude certainty: The
\end{thebibliography}
Advisors are part of a dynamic system that presents opportunities and roadblocks in an attempt to influence the mind of the leader. The vantage points enjoyed by advisors disappear quickly. The trick for advisors wanting influence is to take advantage of structural opportunities and apply their power resources in appropriate ways to achieve input in the process.

2.4 Persuasion

In previous sections, I characterized advisors as political entrepreneurs with a base of influence, trapped by political institutions and leader preferences. However, there is an alternative view of the advisory process that affords political advisors a greater amount of influence. Scholars employing this alternative view argue foreign policy is best described as an internal battle between advisors eager to capture the attention of the leader through processes of persuasion – a conception popular with presidency scholars.110 For example, Neustadt writes “Power is persuasion and persuasion becomes bargaining. The concept is familiar to everyone who watches foreign policy.”111 Policy decisions result from internal political processes as elite advisors strain to hold the leader’s ear and imagination.

Persuasion is defined as a sub-set of power relations, along with force, manipulation, and authority. Power theorists such as Dennis Wrong define the process of persuasion in this way: “Where A presents arguments, appeals, or exhortations to B, and B, after independently evaluating their content in light of his own values and goals,


accepts A’s communication as the basis of their own behavior, A has successfully
persuaded B.”

Intended influence results from the application of advice or appeal –
the content of the exhortation or argument changes the justification or reason for
behavior.

Psychologists studying persuasion define it differently. A seminal work of
Hovland, Janis and Kelley described persuasion as a communication “stimulating the
individual to think both of his initial opinion and of the new opinion recommended in the
communication.” Successful persuasion entails creating cognition in the minds of the
target; in the language of Petty and Cacioppo, persuasion entails elaboration. “By
elaboration,” write Petty and Cacioppo, “we mean the extent to which a person carefully
thinks about issue-relevant information . . . Issue-relevant elaboration will typically result
in the new arguments, or one’s personal translations of then, being integrated into the
underlying belief structure (schema) for the attitude object.” A persuasion attempt
engages the target to think harder about their currently held beliefs. If successful, this
additional thinking creates change in the attitudes of the target.

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Combining power literature with this psychological view of persuasion, successful advising is defined as a product of applying power (from any of the four power bases) to increase cognition and belief change; persuasion is the successful application of power on a leader’s cognitive functioning. If we take this definition as a starting point, we need to understand what creates elaboration in the mind of decision-makers; or more specifically, what persuasion strategies are available to political advisors intent on manipulating leaders to their preferred ends. A wide range of past scholarship presents seven strategies consistent with this notion of persuasion.

2.4.1 Bureaucratic politics

A belief that bureaucracies shape interests and goals of its members unites much of the literature on bureaucratic politics. The competitive nature of the policy system affects the goals and desires of bureaucratic actors. And while some formulations allow for personal interests to be included, the approach largely assumes organizational interests dominate personal interests of bureaucrats. For example, Ripley finds

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bureaucratic interests even shape the cognitive styles of bureaucrats, impacting the processing and encoding of information.\textsuperscript{118} Bureaucrats internalize broader bureaucratic interests, creating self-fulfilling prophecies and a direction for political action.

As bureaucrats further the interests of their bureaucracy, a ‘horse-trading’ game emerges as individuals bargain with each other to ‘win’ the policy debate. Halperin’s scholarship argues bureaucrats win this game by positing an argument that one’s preferred policy is consistent with the shared image of the decision making group.\textsuperscript{119} The assumption is that leaders make decisions consistent with what they believe their inner circle holds; leaders use the shared image to drive their decisions. Arguments most able to capture the shared image of the group affect policy choice.

However, there are constraints to these appeals. For example, Halperin notes four distinct limits to bureaucrats attempting to capture the shared group conception: organizational information channels (i.e., selective information is collected by each bureaucracy and not shared with other members of the group), long-term bureaucratic interests, deference to expertise, and the content of shared imagery (or the amount of agreement in the initial formulation of the policy problem).\textsuperscript{120} Acknowledging these constraints, bureaucrats present selective information and sidestep these blocks. To be


\textsuperscript{120} Ibid.
successful, advisors must overcome information channels and selective information to craft a message that heightens their credibility or creates a coalition among the inner circle.

For political advisors, two strategies become important. First, inner circle entrepreneurs attempt to capture the shared image of the group by invoking expertise. Essentially, advisors appeal to leaders by claiming exclusive knowledge over the policy decision. For example, Herken’s work on National Science Advisors demonstrates the power NSAs wield when discussing technical aspects of science policy. Science advisors are often the only source of ‘valid’ opinion because science or defense funding is dominated by technocratic language and arguments not understood by leaders (or oftentimes, other bureaucrats). By virtue of their expertise, National Science Advisors win policy debates (such as influencing the development of anti-ABM systems).

A second strategy is to create a coalition among other group members. This strategy is the essential point of Allison’s seminal work: bureaucrats make side-bargains through pulling and hauling to create a motley compromise that is then presented to the leader as the recommendation of the advisory group. Advisors attempt to change the dimensions of the decision by recruiting supporters in the decision making group through bargains. The creation of this group coalition influences the leader into a decision

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122 Coalition building also holds a side-benefit by mitigating blame for bad policies. As one author notes, “Even the most distinguished and forthright advise is usually reluctant to stand alone. If he fears his persistence in a meeting will earn him the disapprobation of his colleagues, a rebuff by the President, or the outrage of Congress, press, or public, he may quickly seek the safety of greater numbers” (Theodore Sorenson, “Presidential Advisers,” in *The Presidential Advisory System*, Thomas E. Cronin and Sanford D. Greenberg, eds. (Washington, DC: Harper & Row Publishers, 1969), 5). Coalitions provide a safety net to advisers pushing for risky policy.
consistent with the shared standing. Importantly, this strategy creates an even greater power base by increasing expertise and prestige. As Sorenson notes, “By reflecting in his advice to the President his agency’s component bureaus, some of which he may not even control, he increases both his prestige within the department and his parochialism without.” Even within a protracted bureaucratic conflict, advisors successfully drawing upon group pressures magnify their power, and exert enough influence to change behavior.

2.4.2 Cognitive Representation Approach

While bureaucratic politics literature provides clues concerning these two strategies, it suffers several flaws. First, the literature is correct in identifying bureaucratic in-fighting (centered around organizational interests) as a crucial aspect of the foreign policy process. But the literature does not do a good job in predicting who will win the infighting, or how the victory is accomplished. Second, bureaucratic politicking seems to favor content of an appeal over the form of the appeal as a crucial variable. Bureaucratic politics is concerned with the content of arguments – if an argument includes enough side payments for the other members of the decision making group, then a coalition will form to support it. Yet, what about the form of an argument? Does the style and rhetoric of a bureaucrat matter as well? In general, bureaucratic politics literature neglects the impact of presentation and how the strategic use of information matters.

123 Juliet Kaarbo extends the argument by demonstrating the powerful impact of coalitional politicking on the selection of foreign policy; see Juliet Kaarbo, “Power Politics in Foreign Policy: The Influence of Bureaucratic Minorities,” European Journal of International Relations 4 (March 1998).

The second broad strand of literature that speaks to advisory influence stresses the presentation and form of information over content. This second approach is most closely related to the problem representation approach.\textsuperscript{125} The approach asserts humans construct mental representations of problems they face. This preliminary mental activity impacts decision making by stressing the efficacy of certain options and dismissing inappropriate ones. Options chosen by foreign policy decision makers “can best be understood by first studying the way in which they represent the problem they see themselves as facing.”\textsuperscript{126} While attempts at understanding this phase of decision making increased in recent years, many researchers would agree with Abelson & Levi that research on the editing phase of decision is a critically under-developed field in psychology. As they write “there is a paucity of research altogether on the problem recognition phase of decision-making, perhaps because it is often taken for granted.”\textsuperscript{127}

The basic assumption is “that decision makers construct an intermediate summary representation of the evidence and that this representation, rather than the original ‘new’ evidence, is the basis of the final decision.”\textsuperscript{128} Decision makers are described as finite computers with limited processing and memory functions, attempting to comprehend a complex situation with ill-defined boundaries; as Voss terms them, ill-structured

\textsuperscript{125} Donald A. Sylvan and James Voss, \textit{Problem Representation in Foreign Policy Decision Making} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).


problems.129 Decision making is not the careful, reasoned weighting of options; rather, decisions emerge from the construction of a preliminary mental model. This prior cognition – which issues and which dimensions should be given attention – dictates the choice of policy.

To create these initial representations, decision makers engage in a cognitive process that connects disparate strands of information into a more complete mental picture of the problem. The representation of a problem entails “problem objects” (nodes taken from memory or incoming data that represent objects) woven together by a mode of problem representation. The “weaving” of individual cognitive elements into an accessible and adequate picture becomes crucial to decision making, dictating the combination of individual cognitive elements into generalized patterns that are then checked for completeness.

Advisors influence leaders by aiding the construction of these mental models. But these persuasion attempts have limits. In particular, literature on problem representation suggests two constraints to advisory appeals. First, the completeness of information impacts the construction of the summary representation. Past work suggests humans are uneasy when information is conflicting, or part of the story is missing. Scholars of both cognitive consistency and schema theory show that humans require a complete and balanced picture of the situation.130 When these are lacking, decision


makers either search out the required information, or fill in the episodic gaps from internal memory. However, too much information can lead to information overload.\textsuperscript{131} With overload, contradictory and numerous data create a need for decision-makers to simplify the situation. Thus, a tradeoff: humans require consistent and complete mental models, but too much incoming information leads to a decrease in cognitive functioning.

Second, humans seek to avoid uncertainty. Indeed, the development of bureaucratic organizations is based upon the preference for ready-made responses to certain stimuli. As Vertzberger explains, “organizations can react quickly to environmental challenges by activating previously learned programs . . . [providing] ready-made responses to internal or external stimuli, so the stimuli can be interpreted with little reflection.”\textsuperscript{132} The lesson for scholars is that humans, as efficient cognitive misers, prefer the certain (or familiar) response to the uncertain. Throughout a decision process, leaders seek to lessen uncertainty by creating a complete picture of the situation in their heads. Advisors that succinctly complete this picture are favored in the final policy decision. Successful advising is a process of minimized uncertainty, and advisors who eliminate decision uncertainty often influence a leader’s cognition.

Three strategies of persuasion allow advisors to impact the construction of the mental model. First, advisors are successful by emphasizing simple, cause and effect relationships, simplifying the complex political reality into a digestible image of the situation. Rhetorically stressing the internal connections between elements simplifies the political decision, and solidifies the mental picture of the leader. Contrarily, advisors


\textsuperscript{132} Ibid., 210-211.
may attempt to aggrandize or embellish the situation. In this case, advisors add information in the form of analogies or metaphors to generate support for their preferred policy by filling in missing information. Analogies and metaphors persuade by reducing uncertainty, re-organizing information and drawing an individual’s attention to similarities they may have previously missed.\textsuperscript{133} By creating stories and linking events through a narrative device, advisers highlight their policy prescriptions. Importantly, these strategies are delimited by the amount of information available to the leader. For example, a ‘simplification strategy’ will decrease uncertainty only if there is a lot of information available. Likewise, ‘embellishment’ decreases uncertainty only in the presence of low information. Thus, available information becomes an important condition underlying advisor impact.

A final strategy is derived from Amos Tversky.\textsuperscript{134} The work uses a set of experiments to show decision-makers feel uneasy when trying to decide between two similar options. Choosing between two different options is much easier (and thus decreases uncertainty) than choosing between two similar options. Similarly,


psychological studies show that adding and subtracting options to a decision impacts uncertainty and the willingness to make a decision. Manipulating the number of options under consideration presents a tool of leverage for the prescient advisor. In the advisory process, advisors may try to eliminate similar options (to their preferred end) and add similar ones to their opponents. Advisors win policy debates by manipulating uncertainty and leader unease associated with the number of policies available.

2.4.3 Bargaining, or strategic signaling

A third area of advisory technique is concerned with signaling and credibility. Leaders are not ignorant of the personal preferences and organizational constraints facing advisors. Rather, leaders recognize advisors often present skewed or selective information supporting their policy preference. To get their policy accepted, advisors have to convince leaders their advice is more relevant and trusted than other arguments.

Work by Randall Calvert suggests that one effective technique is ‘flip-flopping’ (i.e. recommending a policy that seemingly violates or goes against personal preferences).135 Drawing from a formalized model of advisors, Calvert finds leaders are persuaded to follow advice from an advisor if that advice contradicts previously stated positions. Essentially, advisors can ‘shock’ leaders into listening to them by contradicting their own interests or recommendations. Advisors going against their own interests create a credible signal, thereby reducing uncertainty in the minds of decision makers, and making the new policy recommendation salient.

2.4.4 Access

Finally, previous scholarship on the advising process concentrates on manipulating the institutional constraints to your advantage. Specifically, research suggests advice matters less when many voices are heard. A policy decision involving many advisors and bureaucrats will dilute the persuasive impact of any appeal. The cacophony obfuscates a piece of advice, and decreases its chance of changing the decision making process. Successful advising is a function of who does and does not participate in the decision.

Quite simply, advisors have impact by delimiting who gets access. For example, Garrison argues advisors at the top of a foreign policy hierarchy manipulate who is involved in the decision, creating a favorable environment for one’s preferred policy. She writes “Those who are not members of the core advisory group or have no access to the group immediately are cut out of the loop and the influence process. Access and the prevention of access, therefore, are power resources that determine who participates and who influences the course of the advisory process.”

Real world examples abound, but perhaps the best example is found in President Carter’s decision making process behind the Iran Hostage Crisis. Officials consciously scheduled the meeting approving the rescue mission to coincide with Cyrus Vance’s vacation. Because Vance was the most robust countervailing voice, supporters used the opportunity of his absence to exaggerate the level of support for the mission. As a result, Vance’s deputy (Warren Christopher) attended the meeting, and was blindsided by the process. Carter approved the mission, and Vance resigned his position.

2.5 A Framework of Advisory Influence

The previous sections described three variables underlying successful advising: the constraints or structural impediments of the advising system, bases of advisory power, and strategies used by advisors to persuade leaders. In this section, I tie these different factors together to create a framework explaining advisory influence. The goal of this section is to present “the formula of who says what to whom with what effect.”

I argue for a contingent approach to advisors. Simply put, certain bases of power provide advantages and disadvantages to different advisory strategies, while political conditions and leader dispositions set limits to their effectiveness. The influence of an advisor or argument is contingent upon the advisory power, qualities of the political situation or leader psyche, and the strategy. For example, an advisor strong in rhetorical skill may have the ability to persuade a leader of his policies -- but a hawkish leader may ignore the advisor if they posit a dovish recommendation. Regardless of advisory power or persuasion strategy, preference towards the use of force limits the acceptability of advice. Another example: a lifelong bureaucrat from the State Department supporting a strong military response (or flip-flopping) has a greater chance of impacting policy choice, but only if the time horizon is limited, such as in crises, when the salience of the action has greatest impact. While other examples abound, the general lesson is that certain bases of power are more effective within certain political circumstances, and without a base of power, advice is rarely followed.

But what is the match between power, advice, and political structure? What factors magnify the salience of a piece of advice? What hinders the impact of advice? What can weak advisors do when political conditions do not favor them? How can
strong advisors maintain their position as political conditions change? Do advisors use up their ‘store’ of resources during the life of a decision? And what impact does the leader have – are they trapped by the exigencies of situation and advice, or do they have the power to dictate the ebb and flow of advice and hence constrain the machinations of their advisors? Answers to these questions rotate around an understanding of how the different pieces of the advising puzzle interact.

The first section argued previous scholarship on advisors concentrates on cognitive dispositions of leaders and how leaders structure the advisory system. However, personality also figures prominently in the types of advice sought and followed. For example, a ‘hawkish’ leader that views the world through a simple black-and-white lens would prefer advice that espouses the use of the military to achieve moral ends (however that is defined). Meanwhile, a dovish leader with the same view of the world would follow advice that confirms their suspicions. In both situations, military means can be justified, but in different ways. If advice does not take into account leader preferences, then it is less likely to be followed.

Likewise, the content of the decision and the amount of time to make a decision may force a leader’s hand. For instance, leaders listen more closely to who they perceive as experts in particular policy fields. A president will listen to their Secretary of State or National Security advisor for foreign policy, but not for economic policy. The importance of a decision magnifies this effect: the higher the stakes involved, the greater the need for knowledge and thus the greater the impact of specialists. Because of this perception, advisors with specific knowledge enjoy influence in the decision making process.

137 Hovland et al., Communication and Persuasion (1953), 12.
These personality and environmental variables dictate effectiveness of advisory power bases. I argued earlier in this chapter that access is a crucial dimension of power for advisors: gaining and maintaining access with a leader is the most direct and effective way for advice to be followed. Johnson’s proclivity for confirming evidence changed the composition of his Tuesday lunches, where disagreeing advisors were rarely invited back. Likewise, if a leader perceives a decision to be largely diplomatic or technical in nature, then non-diplomats may not be invited to participate. Access, a crucial dimension behind successful advising, is limited by a need for their participation.

The resources of expertise and past experience follow a similar pattern. To effectively use expertise, the content of a decision must allow an advisor to further their advice. But expertise often turns on leader perceptions. In a study of science advisors, Schilling suggests “The contributions that science and technology will bring to international politics will largely turn, not so much on the particular arrangements of scientists in the policy-making process, but on the purposes of statesmen and the theories they have about the political world in which they live.”138 Expertise is tempered by the constraints, demands, and wishes of the leader. Likewise, past experience in a similar situation (or even the past relationship between leader and advisor) matters only if a leader recognizes the need for innate knowledge. Expertise and experience are effective only when both the content of the decision and the wishes of the leader provide an opportunity for advisors to affect the policy process. Without an opportunity and perceived need on the part of the decision maker, experts languish outside of the process.

Finally, an advisor blessed with rhetorical ability can enjoy an advantage when a leader has little foreign policy experience, or when there are time constraints on the decision making. Rhetoric derives its power from the psychological resonance of the argument. For example, an inexperienced leader (one without background in foreign policy) may rely on easily accessible analogies or metaphors because they lack the knowledge to differentiate the current policy decision from past policies. Time constraints present a similar challenge: during crises, leaders do not have the luxury of a complete and full information search, and are apt to rely on the salient argument of the advisor. When the time horizon is lengthened, leaders engage the full benefits of the advisory system, appreciate a fuller information search, and discuss alternative options with contrary advisors. Time and ability delimit effectiveness and salience of a policy argument.

Yet, advisors may fail in their attempts to convince a leader, even when political structure and power favor an advisor. To be effective, advisors must carefully choose the strategy that maximizes their base of power and avoid institutional constraints. Importantly, strategies match with bases of power, and create expectations when each strategy will be most effective. These ideal-typical situations provide a good rule of thumb for the empirical inquiry in the later chapters.

First, access matters when an advisor is granted face-time with the leader. Having a connection and ability to participate in a decision grants a lever of influence—regardless of expertise. For example, a White House photographer interjected at a crucial
moment during the last meeting concerning the *Mayaguez* capture, convincing President Ford to call for a lesser military response. Greater levels of influence scale with face-time.

Second, expertise (as a base of power) is the backbone for two advising strategies: invoking expertise and coalition building. Invoking expertise as an advisory strategy is effective if the leader recognizes the expertise. The area of inquiry, and the policy choice under discussion, must fall under the umbrella of expert knowledge an advisor claims. Without this perception, advisor arguments ring hollow, and advice falls on deaf ears. Further, expertise is most effective when information is either dense or lacking. In terms of leader dispositions, a lack of experience creates an impetus to defer judgment and analysis to the expert. In times of crisis or great uncertainty, invoking expertise is an effective strategy.

The opposite is true for coalition building. To build a base of support within a policy decision, advisors must convince other members the efficacy of a policy option. Oftentimes, this occurs when bureaucratic favors are exchanged. For example, the initial decision to blockade Cuba arose from a ‘triple alliance’ of Robert McNamara, Robert Kennedy, and Ted Sorenson. This alliance, “consisting of the advisers in whom the President has the greatest confidence and with whom he was personally most compatible,” swayed the President to side against missile strikes. Yet, there is one downfall to coalition building: it takes time. Working outside deals, and creating compromise, requires willingness and a conducive environment. Because crises shorten the time horizon for a decision, there is not enough time for horse-trading to occur, and

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advisors will play the role of loyal bureaucrat, rather than advisor. During crises or when time is lacking, advisors lack an opportunity to gather knowledge of their counterparts, and do not easily offer wanted side deals.

Flip-flopping gains resonance from past experience. Advisors, if used in a number of situations, build reputations. When done correctly, advisors draw from past experience to influence the mind of the leader. Salience results from two sources: bureaucratic affiliation, or personal ethos (or in another way, scholarly association). Career bureaucrats often spend years developing a reputation for being a good soldier; indeed, to advance through a bureaucracy, a member must ‘show their stripes’ and toe the bureaucratic line. If they violate this reputation at a crucial time, their recommendation becomes more credible and salient (and thus more powerful). Personal ethos follows a similar pattern: a career official will develop a reputation -- for being a hawk or a dove, studious or shallow, calm or reactive -- throughout their careers. Being identified as a student of a particular world-view creates expectations that, once violated, create salience. As an example, Kennedy lost confidence in his initial policy stance in the Cuban missile crisis (i.e., surgical strikes) because of who supported it, namely, the military chiefs, Rusk, Nitze, McCone, and Acheson.\(^{140}\) Why? The supporters of the strike were not individuals Kennedy viewed as allies. Past experience led the President to distrust the advocates of the surgical strike. But going against one’s reputation carries stiff penalties. An advisor is in their position due to reputation. Violating this reputation creates a new expectation that may limit future involvement. If invoked during a crisis

\(^{140}\) Ibid.
(where dramatic acts are more significant), flip-flopping can be an effective technique. The symbolic act of defying one’s own identity is not muted by the continued arguments of a policy group.

Finally, rhetorical skill is associated with embellishment, simplification, and subtraction. Rhetoric is the act of persuasion through furthering arguments that increase mental cognition. This conception does not stray far from Billig’s idea that psychology is an internal dialogue.141 By positing arguments for or against certain options, advisors manipulate the uncertainty surrounding a decision. Again, time plays a crucial role in the effectiveness of these rhetorical plays: metaphors and other rhetorical feints are less effective when countervailing opinion controverts their lessons. Further, crises do not allow leaders to fully engage all information or discuss the pros and cons of every policy. Leaders rely on heuristics and limited information processing to decide the fate of a policy during crises. Embellishment (using rhetorical flourishes such as analogies and metaphors) fills in the incomplete mental picture in the heads of leaders. Using analogies and metaphors allows a leader to go beyond the information given, and complete their mental model.

Contrarily, too much information can overload leaders. When humans are confronted with too much information, cognitive processing shuts down, and individual unease rises. In cases of long, drawn out policy discussions, arguments that simplify the information, or which subtracts options from the table, become persuasive. By simplifying the political reality, advisors exert influence on the minds of leaders, making their preferred ends more attractive.

This discussion suggests a match between strategy, structure, and political situation combine to explain when advice effectively sways leaders. Certain advisory strategies are associated with different power bases, and effectiveness is limited by the dispositions of the president, the foreign policy question under review, and the amount of time available for the decision. Importantly, the discussion presents hypotheses connecting the different factors to successful advising. Table 2.2 presents the full accounting of the framework. The next section explains the methodology used to explore these hypotheses.

2.6 Methodology

The major aim of this dissertation is to develop a set of maxims describing the impact of advisors in foreign policy decision making, and to use these maxims to shed light on important cases of American foreign policy. To gauge the veracity of the proposed model and the possible explanations behind advisory influence, I use an experiment and case studies. This mixed-method approach combines the benefits of both methods, strengthening internal and external validity.

The key to successful advising is the interaction between different variables. The political context and mental makeup of the leader create important limits to persuasion attempts; advisory influence depends on the interaction of context, argument, and psychology. As literature suggests, the mechanism behind advisory influence is an internal one – the internal dialogue of leaders. While it is possible for scholars to reconstruct objective measures of arguments and policy choice, the internal mechanism of persuasion is difficult to examine.
Of course, one way to cross this gap is through an intensive search of biographies and speeches. Self-reflection on the part of principals involved in a decision, especially an intensive search for the personal evaluation of leaders, could provide a missing link between arguments, advice and the foreign policy outcome. But biographies and self-reflection introduce bias. Hindsight and placement outside of the decision (subconsciously and consciously) tempts participants to change the course of history. A large-n study suffers from a similar flaw. One could create a data set that counts advisors and their posited arguments, and correlate foreign policy outcomes with positions of advisors. Yet, the internal connection between argument and policy – the interaction between psychology, argument, and context – is absent. While it holds an advantage over other methods (i.e., statistical control), it is unable to examine the internal dimension of persuasion.

Experiments, on the other hand, do provide a way to examine the psychological mechanism. The experimental method allows confidence in precision and power by introducing random assignment and controlled treatments. As some scholars note, “experimentation provides a clearer glimpse of cause-and-effect relations, enables complex phenomena to be decomposed” than other social science methods.142 In the next chapter, I use the experimental setting (in the form of a hypothetical foreign policy crisis) to gauge the impact of advisor arguments, and its interaction with psychological dispositions.

But experimental methods hold important pitfalls when generalizing to ‘real-world’ cases. Though precision and power (and consequently, internal validity) are high, the artificial nature of the experimental setting does not easily generalize to political events. For example, an experiment measuring the impact of rhetorical strategies in the lab may over-estimate the power of the stimulus when generalizing to the political arena. However, the goal of the experiment is not to construct a real-life facsimile of advising and politicking. The goal is instead to check the internal logic of the model, and create expectations for the case studies. Persuasion and the connections between dispositions and the acceptance or rejection of advice are best gauged by using a controlled setting. As a result, experimental results will grant the best first guess on this internal mechanism of persuasion.

Suppose we find experimental evidence that supports the connection between the use of expertise, and the changing of a decision maker’s policy preference. We know that, psychologically, there is a disposition to accept a certain argument. But without a connection to how the rhetoric was used in a foreign policy decision, and the circumstances surrounding its use, we can not say the advisor mattered. There could be a spurious correlation (such as an unaccounted political pressure) that drives the policy choice, and not the psychology. To bolster the claims of this research, I employ a structured, focused comparison that utilizes two case study techniques: process-tracing, and congruency.

The case study analysis is driven by the logic of structured, focused comparison. According to George, the method is “focused because it deals selectively with only certain aspects of the historical case . . . and structured because it employs general
questions to guide the data collection and analysis in that historical case.”143 For this dissertation, I examine dynamics and arguments of presidents and their advisors within two theoretically important conditions: the nature of the political problem (i.e., crisis vs. non-crisis) and the nature of the policy choice (humanitarian intervention vs. military strike).

While these two factors set the political stage for advisory dynamics, it only captures an objective, between-case comparison. However, by nature, the process is dynamic, involving interactions between psychology, argument, and information. To capture this source of variation, I need to develop what George calls the functional equivalent of an experimental design: “requiring causal interpretations in single-case analysis to pass a series of hurdles (questions inspired by the logic of controlled experiments) before granting them plausibility.”144 For this dissertation, case studies must satisfy the requirements for congruency and process-tracing.

Congruency, or establishing consistency between beliefs and policy choice, is a within-case validity check. To check consistency, I develop a list of all possible policy options available to decision makers, and compare the connection between independent and dependent variables. If the selected policy choice matches the hypothesized choice, then consistency holds. Importantly, the “plausibility of an explanation is enhanced to the extent that alternative explanations are considered and found to be less consistent


with the data and/or less supportable by available generalizations.”¹⁴⁵ By comparing and contrasting arguments, advisor preferences, and policy choice, I establish face validity for my framework.

But consistency only provides a ‘shallow’ check on truth-claims. To bolster the results of the congruency procedure, I engage in process tracing. In George’s view, “process-tracing seeks to establish the ways in which the actor’s beliefs influenced his receptivity to and assessment of incoming information about the situation, his definition of the situation, his identification and evaluation of options, as well as, finally, his choice of a course of action.”¹⁴⁶ The trick, however, is to couch the explanation in analytical variables or questions. Process-tracing is an appropriate strategy in checking the truth claims of my framework since it involves a description of behavior “not summarized by a single data point, but by a series of points or curves plotted through time. Any explanation of the processes at work in the case thus not only must explain the final outcome, but also must account for this stream of behavior.”¹⁴⁷ Convergence between case studies and experimental results provides the best of both methods.

2.7 Conclusion

The next chapter marks the beginning of the empirical portion of the dissertation. I describe the experiment and systematically examine the factors that dictate efficacy of persuasive arguments. Results from the experimental runs are checked in chapters four and five by case studies: chapter four presents a comparison of two crisis decision

¹⁴⁵ George, “Case Studies and Theory Development” (1979), 59.

¹⁴⁶ George, “Causal Nexus” (1979), 113.

episodes, while chapter five compares two humanitarian interventions. A more complete picture of advisory influence (especially concerning the use of force) emerges from these empirical exercises.

A. Smith, eds. (Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, 1985), 36. Please see the appendix for the list of questions I use to drive case study research.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Base of Power (resources advisors use to create salient advice; e.g. Light 1984)</th>
<th>Strategy (the use of advisory resources; applying the base of power)</th>
<th>Window of Opportunity (the opportunities to apply advice; characteristics of the President or strategic decision that allows (or limits) advisory influence)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Access</strong> (participation in the decision)</td>
<td>Gain face time (e.g. Garrison 1999)</td>
<td>Time constraint? (the amount of time and information surrounding a decision; see Janis 1989)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Experience</strong> (reputation and past history with a decision or President)</td>
<td>Flip-flopping (e.g. Calvert 1985)</td>
<td>Dispositions? (preferences in worldview and knowledge; see Hovland &amp; Janis, 1959)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expertise</strong> (technocratic knowledge; exclusive information relevant to a decision)</td>
<td>Invoking expertise (e.g. Benveniste 1977)</td>
<td>Content of the decision? (the foreign policy problem leaders face; see Porter 1986)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Expertise varies according to the perceptions of leaders. Advisors that verify a leader’s beliefs will be more successful than an expert that contradicts.

Coalition building (e.g. Allison 1971; Halperin 1974) | Successful during non-crises: coalitions take time to construct. As a result, coalitions have the most impact during non-crisis decisions. | Much like access, invoking expertise is contingent upon the problems leaders face. |

Successful during crises:flip-flopping is most salient when decision frame is short, and the salience of the act is not diluted by other arguments.

Not constrained by time

Constrained by knowledge: leaders with experience in foreign policy rely on their own store of knowledge, rather than deferring to advisors.

Gaining face time is contingent upon the problem facing leaders

Successful during crises:

Expertise is most salient when leaders face a lack of time. Rather than engaging a complete information search, leaders turn to their most expert advisors as a shortcut.

Not constrained by dispositions.

Not dependent on the content of a decision.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time constraint?</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dispositions?</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Content of the decision?</strong></td>
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</table>

Table 2.1. Framework and theoretical expectations. The base of power is associated with advisory strategies, which in turn are limited by windows of opportunity.
Table 2.1 Continued.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rhetoric (crafting arguments)</th>
<th>Embellishment (e.g. Neustadt &amp; May 1986; Shimko 1995)</th>
<th>Successful during crises. In crises, leaders lack information; embellishment fills in gaps in knowledge and persuades leaders.</th>
<th>Constrained by knowledge: leaders with knowledge more easily resist rhetorical ploys.</th>
<th>Not dependent on the content of a decision.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Simplification (e.g. Vertzberger 1990)</td>
<td>Successful during non-crises: simplification clarifies information by presenting a simple description. Simplification will be successful when time is not limited.</td>
<td>Constrained by knowledge: leaders with knowledge more easily resist rhetorical ploys.</td>
<td>Not dependent on the content of a decision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Subtraction (e.g. Tversky 1972)</td>
<td>Not constrained by time.</td>
<td>Constrained by knowledge: leaders with knowledge more easily resist rhetorical ploys.</td>
<td>Not dependent on the content of a decision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Policy: Military Option</td>
<td>Policy: Non-military or Diplomatic Option</td>
<td></td>
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<td>--------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</table>
| **Non-crisis**     | 1) building a coalition  
2) simplification  
3) flip-flopping – invoked by advisors representing the “diplomacy” departments (e.g., Sec. of State) | 1) building a coalition  
2) simplification  
3) flip-flopping – invoked by advisors representing the “defense” departments (e.g., Sec. of Defense, NSA) |
| **Crisis**         | 1) expertise – invoked by advisors representing the “defense” departments (e.g., Sec. of Defense, NSA)  
2) embellishment  
3) gain face time  
4) subtraction | 1) expertise – invoked by advisors representing the “diplomacy” departments (e.g. Sec. of State)  
2) embellishment  
3) gain face time  
4) subtraction |

Table 2.2: advisory tactics & expectations for case studies -- nature of the decision X nature of the policy choice.
A. Invoking expertise: this strategy falls from the bureaucratic politics literature (one author states this as THE finding of bureaucratic politics). Essentially, leaders turn to different advisors based on the problem they are facing. Because different advisors have different information particular to the job they serve, they become the de facto information source. For example, in the decision to develop nuclear weapons, the President relied on a committee made up of nuclear scientists. This strategy attempts to capture the impact of expertise on the decision making process. When advisors invoke expertise, they aim to convince the leader of their views due to their proclaimed expertise in the area of investigation. Recognizing this expertise, leaders weight the expert’s preferred options more heavily. When advisors present arguments based on their expertise, the scholarly literature predicts they will be favored in the decision making process.

B. Building a majority group recommendation: again, this strategy is found in the bureaucratic politics literature. Scholars assume advisors have different viewpoints and interests because different bureaucracies have different interests. The goal for the loyal bureaucrat is to get the ‘best deal’ for their bureaucracy. As such, politicking is defined by a process of pulling-and-hauling, as side deals are made to insure benefit. These side deals result in a recommendation posited by a ‘sub-group’ within the decision making group. This strategy cuts to the heart of the bureaucratic politics approach. Bureaucratic ‘pulling and hauling’ and side-payments among bureaucracies (and their ‘chiefs’) translate into coalitions at the group decision making level. A majority opinion should create pressure on leaders to accept the recommendation of the group, and translate this pressure into foreign policy consistent with group opinion.

C. Embellishment and D. Simplification: these two strategies fall from literature on problem representation and explanatory styles. Briefly, the ways in which information is presented impacts the image or representation of the situation in the head of the leader. A mismatch between the image and the information creates uncertainty. But information that expresses the available information in such a way as to complete the mental image lessens this uncertainty, thereby persuading the leader of a policy position. Since decision makers rely on an initial representation of the problem in their heads, the way leaders construct the summary representation creates opportunities for manipulation. At this stage, the format and style of advice allows advisors a chance for changing the mind of the decision maker. More specifically, if the form of the advice decreases uncertainty, advisors can manipulate leaders into decisions in their favor. By expressing available information appropriately, advisors can capture the leader’s ear and have their policy preferences dictate the foreign policy decision.
Table 2.3 Continued.

E. **Subtraction**: work by Tversky in the early seventies argued some decisions are made by comparing and contrasting different qualities or aspects of decision options in an elimination process. Importantly, they find that when comparing options, arguments that differentiate (rather than assimilate) are much more effective. Their reason: humans can alleviate the tension created by uncertainty when they can easily differentiate options from each other. Certainty (in the decision maker’s mind) can be manipulated by adding options to the table, or subtracting (i.e., dismissing) options from discussion. Arguments that add options to the table in the presence of low information should be favored, while subtraction should have greatest impact in conditions of high information.

F. **‘Shock’ or flip-flopping**: essentially, this strategy falls from an important piece written by Randall Calvert (1985). Calvert argues leaders expect bias in the positions proffered by advisors. Decision makers expect posited advice to conform to the preferences of the advisor; information is skewed in favor of an advisor’s position. However, if an advisor reverses field by either offering a position that is contrary to previously stated positions or offering a position that seems to contradict their interests, then a leader will take that position more seriously. In other words, if an advisor flip-flops, the leader assumes there is a good reason behind the flip-flopping, leading to persuasion in favor of the new position.

H. **Gaining access or creating face time**: this strategy turns out to be the default for a majority of work on advising. The reasoning: access and the individuals involved in the decision making group crucially dictate the flow and outcome of the decision. In other words, the variance and power of advising is defined by the ability to determine who will be allowed to participate (Garrison 1999). The assumption: face-time matters more than the content of the arguments. As such, the strategy for successful advising is to get as much face-time as possible, while limiting the access of others.
1. Who are the participants in the decision process?
   -- when were participants involved?
   -- how much time did each participant have with the decision maker?
   -- what was the form of the participation? (e.g., policy papers, face-to-face contact, part of the decision-making group, etc.)

2. What are the policy preferences of each participant?
   -- what are the initial policy preferences, bases of power, and personality predispositions of each participant?

3. What are the prior beliefs and preferences of the decision-maker?
   -- are there any past decisions or personality characteristics that set a precedent limiting the impact of advice?

4. What are the strategies and arguments posited by advisors? (see Table 2 for operationalizations of each strategy)

5. What are the policy preferences at each stage of the process?

6. What is the final policy choice?

7. Is the final policy choice congruent with advisor preferences? Is the decision consistent with the advice and preferences of the ‘winning’ advisor? Is the decision incongruent with other advisor preferences?

Table 2.4: case study questions.
Chapter 3

The Psychology of Persuasion & Limits to Advice

3.1 Introduction

Leader dispositions serve a prominent role explaining variation across advisory systems. For example, reports of President George W. Bush’s management style concentrate on his internal picture of international relations. For the President, politics is driven by faith in action and certainty in deed. Disagreement and debate are subsidiary to the broader goal of maintaining confidence in American actions. As Suskind notes “open dialogue, based on facts, is not seen as something of inherent value. It may, in fact, create doubt . . . It could result in a loss of confidence in the decision-maker and . . . by the decision-maker.”148 Advisors violating this tenet become secondary actors, and lose their seat at the policy table. Presidents initiate changes in the foreign policy hierarchy to best serve their preferences, mediating who gets to say what and when.

In general, previous work on advisors concentrates on the structural characteristics arising from leader preferences. Kennedy’s desire for free-wheeling debate required a correspondingly collegial advisory system; contrarily, Nixon’s desire for secrecy and structure emphasized a formal system centered on one central advisor. But there is a larger role for these dispositions to play in the political story.

Disagreements among top advisors create uncertainty and conflicting prescriptions, even in the strictest foreign policy hierarchy. In this marketplace of ideas, advisors compete against each other, positing differing advice based on their views of the strategic situation. Leader dispositions exert a powerful influence during discussions, dictating limits to the persuasiveness of these appeals. Preferences of style, content, and approach buffer leaders from the rhetorical ploys of the inner circle. Psychological dispositions check the influence of arguments and stimulate a leader’s imagination, hindering and hastening the acceptance of advice.

This chapter examines the impact of dispositions on the acceptance and rejection of advisory appeals, including an initial exploration of the model presented in the previous chapter. The goal is to explain and explore the psychological contribution to advising – which dispositions limit an argument? How easy is it to persuade decision makers to change their minds? What is the impact of rhetoric, style, and source on the acceptance and rejection of a policy recommendation? This chapter gauges the limits to persuasion, and explores the impact of advice and style on the internal dialogue of decision making. This initial exploration provides clues to the operation of advisory strategies in the case study chapters.

I continue in several parts. First, I present a basic description of political advising, placing the impact of dispositions within psychological models of choice. Next, I describe an experiment designed to examine this impact within a foreign policy simulation. Again, the goal of the experiment is to discover general principles concerning the acceptance and rejection of political arguments. The third section comments on experimental results, and the analysis of experimental data. The main
independent variable in the analysis is change – the impact of strategies and dispositions on change in policy preference. A fourth and final section translates these results into lessons carried over into case studies.

3.2 Leader Dispositions & Decision Making

Political decisions have three components: a number of alternatives, their associated outcomes, and values attached to these outcomes.\(^{149}\) Generally, decision-makers examine options by extrapolating cause-and-effect into the future, assign values to these different guesses, and choose the most appropriate policy according to some standard or matrix. Decisions emerge from a two-stage process, where decision makers gather relevant information from memory or experience, and then decide between options by comparing and contrasting costs and benefits. Leaders make a reasoned choice from among the considered alternatives.

However, this optimal model often fails to describe political decision making simply because it assumes the wrong matrix; namely, the assumption decision makers choose options which maximize benefits and minimize costs. While this assumption is a suitable simplification, other axes exist. As an example, Janis and Mann suggest certainty serves as a benchmark.\(^{150}\) Decision makers often use a hedging strategy to buy time, acting only when they achieve a satisfactory level of certainty or forced to act by the situation. Rather than choose options consistent with strict rationality, decision makers err on the side of caution, choosing policy only when they are certain of the


outcome. This deviation is only one of many decision axes following the basic lesson of Simon’s work on rationality. Decision making falls short of the optimal process assumed by strict rational choice models due to the lack of time, motivation, and cognitive ability. Instead, humans “satisfice,” choosing options that meet a sub-optimal level of satisfaction. Humans engage in an information search dictated by quick rules of thumb, and make decisions once this minimal standard is satisfied.\footnote{As Simon writes, this view “postulates that human rationality is very limited, very much bounded by the situation, and by human computational powers . . . It is a theory of how organisms, including man, possessing limited computational abilities, make adaptive choices and sometimes survive in a complex, but mostly empty, world” \textit{(Reason in Human Affairs}, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1982, 34).}

While models of decision making neglect outside political actors (concentrating instead on the internal calculations of decision makers), advisors play a key role in the process. Before a decision is made, leaders construct an initial mental image of the situation from their own knowledge base and incoming data. This embryonic understanding sets bounds on subsequent information searches. Advisors enter the picture in the next stage, refining and supplementing these initial thoughts into a more complete picture of the event. When asked for their view, top aides posit their beliefs concerning each option, while stressing their preferred outcome. Salient appeals capture the imagination of the leader, concretizing the representation in their heads. Leaders amend their preferences according to the salience and impact of the advice. Once a decision maker reaches a satisfactory point, the decision is made; otherwise, decision makers continue to stall until they reach their satisficed goals.\footnote{Of course, reality often sets bounds on the decision making environment, sometimes forcing a decision before a leader is confident in their decision. I return to this implication in the context of crisis decisions later in the dissertation.} Political advising is a process of change and persuasion, as leaders wind their way to a decision.
But what creates change? And how do advisors effectively convince their leaders? Interestingly, Zaller’s work on public opinion provides important clues to this dialectic. For Zaller, attitudes exist only as a balance of negative and positive considerations an individual holds towards an issue. Attitude change is not the replacement of some crystallized memory structure for another, but rather a change in the relative balance of positive and negative considerations. In his words, change “depends on a two-step process involving reception of new ideas and acceptance of some as new considerations, thereby altering the balance of considerations.” Petty and Cacioppo concur with the conception, suggesting persuasion refers to “any change in attitudes that results from exposure to communication.”

These views translate well to an advisory process: leaders begin with an initial and (generally) incomplete description which changes over time with the acceptance and rejection of incoming information. However, constructing favorable or unfavorable judgments on different policy options is more difficult than counting a decision maker’s internal ledger. Rather, one has to contend with the possibility different personality dispositions matter at different stages of a decision. For example, a dichotomous, “black-and-white” understanding of the world could drive the initial picture of the situation. Yet, in later stages, this moral worldview matters less than the cognitive ability to differentiate policy options. A staunchly Catholic politician could create a nuanced justification to support abortion rights by specifying exceptions to the ‘moral rule,’ for example. Psychological dispositions wax and wan in influence; dispositions driving an

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initial, mental picture of the situation differ from the dispositions limiting advisory strategies. This bifurcated model of the psyche suggests scholars need to understand how dispositions impact persuasion on two levels. Leader psychology works in stages, setting the table for possible influence and delimiting the success of persuasion attempts.

Interestingly, previous studies in personality dismiss this dynamism. Many scholars examine their preferred psychological disposition as it relates to markers of behavior or psycho-political development. Freud and Bullitt, for example, tie the political failings of Woodrow Wilson to his relationship with his strict, taciturn father. Later works introduced both new methodological tools and theoretical frameworks to the question of personality. But as one scholar notes, personality studies continue to be bounded by two indelible landmarks: “on one hand the naïve view of political outcomes as merely the projection of leaders’ personalities and on the other the equally simplistic view that individual personalities have no effect.” Scholarships fall into a temporal trap -- psychology is static while political behavior is dynamic.

What explains the variance? What dispositions limit or hasten change in decision episodes? In the next section, I explain possible psychological limits to accepting advice. Consistent with the theoretical foundation presented in the previous chapter, two dispositions impact the ‘persuadibility’ of a piece of advice: the completeness of the mental picture, and general political preferences. Importantly, these factors play a large role in past scholarship devoted to presidential decisions. For example, President Clinton’s lack of foreign policy knowledge allowed his advisors to dominate foreign

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policy decision making. An inability to differentiate and draw from an internal store of knowledge granted his advisors a wide range of influence early in his term. President Reagan presents a different lesson. As many accounts suggest, Ronald Reagan’s preferences for militarism and the use of force dominated the advice he accepted. Proposals that seemed inconsistent with the ability to use force were often ignored. Preferences towards the use of force provided a check on the influence of advice.157

3.2.1 Completeness of the mental image – the constraint of knowledge

The completeness of the mental image provides a first check on advisory appeal. Conventional wisdom suggests advisors have the most impact when information is lacking. Because of the complexity of political decisions, leaders suffer from an information shortfall. Leaders lacking expertise or knowledge to deal with the decision have difficulty creating a complete mental model of the strategic problem. Contrarily, experienced leaders do not fall into this dilemma, since their base of knowledge decreases the need for more information. Leaders with experience and knowledge are better prepared to filter incoming advice; knowledge serves as a buffer against advice and appeals. Greater amounts of knowledge allow an individual to make valid judgments without the need of outside information. The more knowledge and experience an individual holds, the greater their ability to resist arguments.

More importantly, individuals with higher levels of political knowledge provide their own countervailing messages. For example, a TV pundit proclaiming the virtues of force is more likely to persuade a citizen with no knowledge of military force since they

do not have their own base of knowledge to correct any ill-founded claims. Contrarily, an “armchair general,” knowledgeable of both tactics and strategy, is more prepared to disagree with the expert. Knowledge and expertise grant resistance to advice and appeals.

Two scales were used to measure knowledge. The first was a general political knowledge scale. A questionnaire asked a series of nine fill-in-the-blank knowledge questions (such as ‘Which political party is more conservative?’). Correct answers were tallied and summed to create the knowledge variable (Cronbach’s alpha = .7077). However, since this experiment is a foreign policy simulation, it is appropriate to have a more specific measure of foreign policy knowledge. A battery of fill-in-the-blank questions for foreign policy knowledge included a number of foreign policy specific questions (i.e. Who is the Prime Minister of England? Who is the American Secretary of State?). Again, the questions were scored and summed to create the foreign policy knowledge variable (Cronbach’s alpha = .7141).

3.2.2 Content of advice – the constraint of worldview

A second variable explaining the acceptance of advice is found in the difference between an individual’s preferences and the content of the appeal. Decision makers are more likely to agree with arguments that confirm suspicions or conform to their worldview. Advice presenting a prescription consistent with a leader’s policy preferences will have greater weight in a decision. As the example of President Bush suggests, advisors

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157 While other dimensions exist (such as dogmatism or integrative complexity), the twin dispositions of knowledge and worldview are the most prominent variables in work on Presidential advising.

who share his worldview are included in his decision, while dissonant information is ignored. The disjuncture between leader preferences or worldview and the content of advice sets limits on its acceptance.

In its most basic form, these content effects suggest individuals do not seek to change their mind, but rather verify their own beliefs. As studies of belief consistency and schema theory show, humans feel unease when their core beliefs are at odds with the world. Appeals are more likely to change minds when it conforms to the expectations of the receiver; appeals consistent with the content of their mental picture will have the greatest chance of impacting the decision choice. Indeed, this is one of the main variables in Hovland, Janis, and Kelly’s work on persuasion: the content of a message serves a powerful mediating role on the acceptance of a persuasive communication. Including a measure of these worldviews allows me to control for these content effects.

For this study, two dispositions capture this variable by measuring preferences for military and diplomatic policies. The first scale measures militant assertiveness. As some scholars note,¹⁵⁹ stances concerning the use of force are connected to a complicated mélange of factors. Militant assertiveness measures a number of these factors to describe the degree of ‘militarism’ behind an individual’s view of the world. Militant assertiveness is more than acceptance of the use of force; rather, it is more similar to an operational code, describing both an individual’s belief concerning the amount of violence in the world, and the appropriateness of force to deal with this violence. Higher levels of militant assertiveness will be associated with a preference for more extreme military policies. Arguments supporting militaristic policies should resonate with

subjects, leading to positive change on the military scale (and negative or no change on the diplomatic scale). A series of eight questions were tallied and summed (Cronbach’s alpha = .7334).

Internationalism is a second, related scale. Instead of capturing a preference for accommodative or militant responses, internationalism measures support for adventurous foreign policy. “High internationalists” prefer a foreign policy stance that includes a number of different areas and policies, while “low internationalists” or isolationists prefer a more proscribed role for foreign policy. The internationalism scale was made up of four questions (Cronbach’s alpha = .5133).

3.2.3 Advisory strategies

Previous chapters delineated a series of advisory strategies that capture the attention of leaders, and making their position prominent in the decision maker’s mind. These seven strategies draw effectiveness from four different bases of power: access is associated with gaining face time, expertise underlines the politics of invoking expertise and the building of a coalition, experience provides the forcefulness behind flip-flopping, and rhetorical skill dictates the efficacy of embellishment, simplification, and subtraction. The experiment simulates decision making in a foreign policy crisis where strategies serve as manipulations.160

Invoking expertise is used in two manipulations. One manipulation stresses expertise of the fictional minister of defense, and their stated preference for military solutions to the crisis. A second experimental manipulation replaces the minister of

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160 The experiment does not provide information on differences associated with access because of the difficulty associated with manipulating access in an experimental setting. However, the goal of the experiment (understanding psychological factors behind change in policy position) is not compromised. I revisit the question of access in the case studies.
defense with the minister of state, and suggests the importance of diplomatic solutions to the crisis. These appeals capture the essential characteristic behind invoking expertise -- positing an argument that one is especially appropriate for the decision.

Likewise, coalition-building is tested in two manipulations. In one case, two other members of the fictional advisory group (the chief of intelligence and minister of domestic affairs) concur with the position of the defense minister, arguing that a military solution should be attempted. Contrarily, a second manipulation has the two ministers agreeing with the minister of state. In this second condition, the two argue in favor of a diplomatic solution to the crisis. Manipulations mimic the basic point behind coalitional politicking: group consensus makes an argument salient and persuasive.

Two further manipulations engage the impact of flip-flopping. In one condition, the minister of defense urges caution and a diplomatic solution to the fictional boat seizure. In the other condition, the minister of state takes the flip-flopping role, urging the subject to use military means as the appropriate policy choice. For both conditions, we see flip-flopping: advice violates their roles as mouthpieces for their bureaucracies. Arguments and advice gain salience since advisors posit arguments contrary to their expected roles.

Embellishment, simplification, and subtraction drive manipulations in the four remaining conditions. The embellishment manipulation has the defense minister delivering rhetorical flourishes (such as a metaphor) and a more complicated picture of the international environment (specifically, the advice presents a complicated relationship between three hypothetical states involved in the crisis). Simplification takes a different tack, presenting advice (again, from the defense minister) in a terse manner, connecting
cause (i.e., the ‘rival state’ wants to gain status) and effect (i.e., they captured a boat).
The subtraction manipulation presents a different rhetorical technique. In this case, the
goal of subtraction is to limit the number of appropriate responses to the crisis.
Experimentally, this is captured with a statement (furthered by the defense minister) that
posits only one solution to the crisis. Addition (the reverse of the subtraction
manipulation) takes this one step further, arguing in favor of several simultaneous
military solutions (i.e., ‘not just rescue, but also . . .’).

While the above manipulations capture the main characteristics of advisory
strategies, they fail to mimic crisis or non-crisis decision making. As I argued in the
previous chapter, crises impact the operation of advisory strategies: the lack of time and
information represent opportunities to persuade. The constraints of time and information
hold important interactive effects with several advisory strategies.

To capture this dimension, the experiment varies the amount of information and
‘urgency’ within a decision. Consistent with other scholars, I manipulate both
dimensions to capture essential conditions behind crisis decision making.161 The ‘crisis’
condition presents stark information (a basic description of the hypothetical ship seizure)
and reminds subjects their time is being measured and compared with other subjects.162
The ‘non-crisis’ condition includes a richer and longer description of the ship seizure
(i.e., including a description of relative positions of the states, economic strength, past

161 My definition of crisis involving both time constraints and urgency is derived from Janis & Mann,

162 This technique to simulate crises is used by Alex Mintz, Nehemia Geva, Steven B. Redd, and Amy
history), and does not notify subjects that they are being timed. These two factors provide the best approximate treatment for crisis in the context of this experiment.

3.2.4 Control variable: the motivation to process incoming information

While these dimensions serve as dominant variables in my framework, there are control variables that may affect the operation of advice. The work of Petty and Cacioppo, for example, suggest attitude change occurs when arguments engage the cognitive systems of their targets. As Petty and Cacioppo argue “The recipient of the message must have both the motivation and the ability to process the information contained in the communication.”\(^{163}\) Without either motivation or ability, appeals are not likely to engage the amount of thinking necessary to change the held opinion.

Obviously, these dimensions have an impact on an experiment dedicated to an understanding of persuasion. Subjects differ in the motivation to examine the options given to them, or pay attention to the experimental manipulations. Using a control dedicated to the motivation to examine the experimental protocol grants a clearer view of the impact of advice on policy preferences.

Two dispositions (need for evaluation and need for cognition) concentrate on the psychological needs for comparing and contrasting options in a decision making environment.\(^ {164}\) ‘Need for evaluation’ describes a psychological desire to compare and contrast different options, or the desire to examine the differences and similarities within a choice. As one work describes it, the need to evaluate is a variable that measures the

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extent to which people spontaneously evaluate objects as good or bad." In general, individuals scoring high in ‘need to evaluate’ more easily generate attitudinal evaluations, and hold more evaluations. A high need to evaluate would make it easier for advice to persuade, since these evaluations lead to a greater collection of elaborations. Four questions gauged the levels of need for evaluation (Cronbach’s alpha = .5224).

The need for cognition is slightly different since it measures the psychological desire or motivation to think about a choice. When presented with a persuasive communication, subjects differ on their desire to ‘cognate’ or process that communication. As work on ‘Elaboration Likelihood’ suggests, a main variable behind this development of elaborations is need for cognition. As such, subjects with a high need for cognition score will be more likely to be affected by a persuasive communication and amend their preferences. The experimental questionnaire used a series of eight questions to capture need for cognition (Cronbach’s alpha = .7346).

When compared, the need for evaluation captures the likelihood of evaluating different aspects of a policy choice, while the need for cognition describes the likelihood of thinking about incoming information and changing that information in response. Both dimensions have the same hypothesized relationship with change; namely, individuals with high cognitive or evaluative motivations are more likely to think and evaluate an incoming message, thus creating a greater possibility for change.

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166 In the words of Petty and Cacioppo, elaborations are “profiles of thoughts” (*Communication and Persuasion* (1986), 23). Generally speaking, the greater the number of elaborations, the greater the chance they will be integrated into one’s belief structures – aka persuasion.
3.3 Experimental Protocol & Hypotheses

3.3.1 Method

The experiment was a between-subjects, repeated measures experimental design that randomly assigned subjects to one of twenty conditions. A total of 203 subjects participated in exchange for course credit in introductory political science classes. Subjects were representative of the broader student population at Ohio State University.167

3.3.2 Procedures

Subjects arrived at the experimental lab, and were seated at an individual workstation. Following the informed consent procedure, I randomly assigned each participant to one of the conditions, and started a computer program that controlled the presentation of questionnaires and experimental manipulations.168 The experiment asked subjects to play a prime minister in the midst of a hostage crisis.169 The twenty experimental conditions varied along two dimensions: the presence of the crisis manipulation, and advisory strategies.

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167 The gender breakdown: 50.1% of the participants were male, 49.9% female. The average age of the sample was 21.5 (ranging from 18 to 45). A vast majority of subjects were high school graduates of Ohio and roughly 35% were political science majors.

168 Specifically, I used the MediaLab computer program to control and record the experiment.

169 The decision choice was loosely based on the ‘Algonian Simulation,’ a teaching tool developed by Crowe and Noel (1965), though the facts of the simulation have been used in other experimental works. For example, William Boettcher (see “The Prospects for Prospect Theory: An Empirical Evaluation of International Relations Applications of Framing and Loss Aversion,” Political Psychology 25 (June 2004): 331-362) uses facts from the simulation in an experiment devoted to testing limits to prospect theory. For this experiment, I amended both the background story and the scales (both diplomatic and military choice) to better fit theoretical expectations. In general, the decision making task resembles my simplified description of a foreign policy decision by measuring initial preferences, presenting advice, and gauging the final policy choice.
1) Crisis vs. non-crisis

In crisis conditions, subjects were given a very brief, factual account of the history between imaginary states involved in the crisis. The non-crisis condition contained the entire script of the crisis account, and added important background characteristics (such as economic, military, and diplomatic status) of the involved states. To replicate the urgency inherent to crises, subjects were informed they were under a time constraint, and that their time would be measured along with their performance. In all, the crisis condition included one more paragraph than the non-crisis manipulation, as well as the urgency manipulation.170

2) Advisory Strategy

The computer administered a mock transcript from a meeting devoted to the foreign policy crisis. The transcript reported the input and arguments of four advisors (minister of defense, domestic minister, chief of intelligence, and minister of state). Each condition tested only one of the strategies, while all other positions were control statements: brief, non-descript and uninformative positions used as a placeholder. Only one advisor strategy was presented for each condition, allowing the experiment to isolate the effect of an advisory strategy and control for extraneous factors.171

3.3.3 Measurement of the dependent variable

The dependent variable in the experiment was policy choice, measured in two dimensions. Subjects were asked to select appropriate diplomatic and military responses

170 Again, please see the appendix for all experimental materials.

171 Of course, this is very different from a real foreign policy process, where numerous advisors are attempting rival strategies at the same time; messages and strategies mix. While I recognize this experimental limitation, the simplest, most controlled manipulation must occur before mixed strategies are attempted. Future work would examine the impact of mixed signals within a decision.
to resolve the crisis, and assigning a confidence level to their decision. One questionnaire was administered after subjects read initial information, while the other questionnaire was given after subjects read the decision group transcript. Importantly, any change between these points is attributable to the differences in the decision transcripts. The computer administered a final questionnaire designed to measure the psychological variables discussed above (i.e. need for evaluation, need for cognition, political knowledge, foreign policy knowledge, militant assertiveness, and internationalism).

3.3.4 Hypotheses

Barriers to successful advising provide a challenge to advisors intent on changing their leader’s mind. Preferences in knowledge and worldview delimit opportunities for change and persuasion. Consistent with the framework introduced in the previous chapter, a number of hypotheses present possible paths for change in the experiment.

3.3.4.1 Invoking expertise

The framework suggests two sets of expectations for invoking expertise. The first expectation centers on the ‘bound’ nature of expertise; specifically, the framework suggests experts are constrained by their area of knowledge. In this case, there should be differences in how expertise is used by subjects. I expect subjects will be persuaded to change their military choice by the minister of defense (strategy 1). Contrarily, subjects will be persuaded to change their diplomatic choice by arguments presented by the minister of state.

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172 The scale was comprised of 8 different policy choices, ordinally arranged (roughly) in intensity.
H1. Invoking expertise on the part of the minister of defense will cause change in subject preferences for military options.

H2. Invoking expertise on the part of the minister of state will cause change in subject preferences for diplomatic options.

However, it is possible that expertise is constrained by both the preferences of the subject, and the amount of information. Specifically, a subject scoring high on the militant assertiveness scale will be more easily persuaded to change their minds by the minister of defense. Likewise, a subject scoring high on the internationalism scale will be persuaded to change their minds by the minister of state. In essence, there is a content effect at work: subjects are guided by their own internal preferences.

H3. Invoking expertise (minister of defense) and high militant assertiveness interacts to change preferences for military options.

H4. Invoking expertise (minister of state) and high internationalism interacts to change preferences for diplomatic options.

A final set of hypotheses deals with the crisis manipulation. According to the framework, expertise is successful when decision makers lack the time to examine all possible options. Instead, decision makers will rely on the expert in the room to guide their decision. Uncertainty allows ‘experts’ room for influence. Again, we see two hypotheses.

173 This is perhaps the greatest advantage accorded to a repeated measures design. By using individual subjects for both pre- and post-test measures, subjects serve as their own controls and add to the sensitivity of the experimental device.
H5. Invoking expertise (minister of defense) and crisis interact to change preferences for military options.

H6. Invoking expertise (minister of state) and crisis interact to change preferences for diplomatic options.

3.3.4.2 Simplification and embellishment

Simplification and embellishment represent mirrored and opposite predictions. Simplification (the act of positing simple, cause and effect relationships) is a rhetorical technique that is most effective when it eases cognitive overload. As a result, the operation of simplification interacts with the crisis/non-crisis manipulation. Specifically, simplification will be most effective with subjects in the non-crisis manipulation. Embellishment, on the other hand, will be effective in crisis manipulations. Within the constraints of the experiment, the minister of defense presents both strategies. As a result, strategy 3 and strategy 4 should create positive change when interacted with non-crisis and crisis manipulations.

H7. Simplification creates change in policy choice (either diplomatic or military) when subjects are in the non-crisis manipulation.

H8. Embellishment creates change in policy choice (either diplomatic or military) when subjects are in the crisis manipulation.

3.3.4.3 Flip-flopping

Flip-flops gain impact only in the presence of an expected bias; leaders must recognize the previous position of the advisor. The experiment captures this dimension by having both minister of defense and minister of state advocating contrary positions – one strategy presents the minister of defense in support of a diplomatic option, while a
second strategy presents the minister of state supporting a military option. I hypothesize that flip-flopping by the minister of defense is positively correlated with a change in diplomatic option (and negatively correlated with military option), while strategy 6 should be positively correlated with a change in military option (and negative correlation with diplomatic options).

H9. Flip-flopping (by the minister of defense) creates positive change in diplomatic choice.

H10. Flip-flopping (by the minister of state) creates positive change in military choice.

**3.3.4.4 Addition and subtraction**

Addition and subtraction manipulate the presentation of information. In general, past work suggests subtraction creates salience in the minds of decision makers; subtraction over-estimates the differences between options and favors decision. Again, the experiment uses the minister of defense as its mouthpiece, creating two related hypotheses: addition will significantly decrease the chance of persuasion, while subtraction increases the chance of persuasion in both scales.

H11. Addition decreases the possibility for change in both military and diplomatic choice.

H12. Subtraction increases the possibility for change in both military and diplomatic choice.

**3.3.4.5 Consensus building**

The final two hypotheses capture the impact of group consensus on persuasion. Previous scholarship argues consensus is effective only when time constraints are not
present. The reason: it takes time to build a consensus, and crises lack the necessary
time to create a group consensus. Clearly, the experiment does not capture this
dimension well, since subjects are presented with a united front that supports the minister
of defense in one condition (i.e., the chief of intelligence and the minister of domestic
affairs state their support for the minister of defense) or the minister of state in the other.
However, the basic point (and expectation) should remain: group support convinces
subjects to change their minds, regardless of personality dispositions. Again, two
hypotheses emerge: strategy 9 should be positively correlated with change in military
options, while strategy 10 should be positively correlated with change in diplomatic
options.

H13. Consensus (favoring the minister of defense) creates positive change in military
choice.

H14. Consensus (favoring the minister of state) creates positive change in diplomatic
choice.

3.3.4.6 Delimiting impact of dispositions

While the above hypotheses present paths of influence concerning advisory
strategies and their interactions, there is no comment on dispositions. But the framework
introduced in the second chapter suggests significant effects for dispositional variables.
In particular, higher levels of knowledge buffer individuals from persuasion attempts of
advisors. In the experiment, I expect higher levels of knowledge to be correlated with
absence of policy change. Likewise, preferences for military action or diplomacy may
permeate the choice of policies. Dispositions favoring involvement in world affairs or
dispositions towards uses of force or diplomacy, creates favorable or unfavorable
judgments of a piece of advice. In a word, worldviews may have the effect of pushing subjects into higher choices of either scale – above any effect of the advisory strategies. To capture this possibility, I include a set of hypotheses devoted to the impact of these dispositions on the operation of advice.

H15. Knowledge is associated with no change in policy on both scales.

H16. Militant assertiveness is positively related to military policy choice.

H17. Internationalism is positively related to diplomatic policy choice.

3.4 Experimental Results

3.4.1 General results

Basic descriptive analyses show subjects (generally speaking) were persuaded to change their minds after given advisory strategies. The median starting point for the diplomatic choice was a 3, while the median point for the repeated measure was a 5. Military choice did not exhibit a similar amount of change; instead subjects began with a 3 and ended with a 4 on the scale.


3.4.2 Predicting initial choice

The first step in the analysis is to understand the underlying factors leading to initial preferences on both diplomatic and military scales. As the model of advising suggests, leaders create an initial, mental model of the decisions they face. This initial cognition sets limits on the following information search, while anchoring policy preferences in the face of advice.

Table 3.2 reports results from ordered logit models analyzing the selection of the initial policy. Several dispositions are significant and positively correlated with diplomatic choice. For example, foreign policy knowledge, militant assertiveness and need for cognition are correlated with more extreme initial choices. As the coefficients show, each dimension is positively correlated with higher starting values on the diplomatic choice scale. Interestingly, the positive correlation with militant assertiveness seems to go against conventional wisdom, since militant assertiveness captures preferences for military action. Moreover, there is a positive and significant correlation with initial military choice: higher initial values for military choice are correlated with higher initial values for diplomatic choice.

Military choice demonstrates a different pattern. In particular, only one disposition – internationalism – is significantly related to initial military choice. Specifically, high scores on the internationalism scale correlate with less extreme initial military choice. While this is consistent with our understanding of internationalism, it is

interesting that militant assertiveness is not associated with higher starting values on the military choice scale. Again, we see a significant and positive correlation between initial diplomatic choice and initial military choice.

In general, results suggest dispositions (at least foreign policy knowledge, militant assertiveness, internationalism, and need for cognition) play a significant role in selecting the starting point for subjects. When asked for their preferences, subjects used dispositional cues to guide their choices. Next, I examine the factors behind preference change.

3.4.3 Explaining change

The focus of the experiment is on persuasion: what factors, strategies, and dispositions are related to policy change? Specifically, the experiment was designed to gauge the variable impact of strategies and dispositions on individual preference change for military and diplomatic choice. To examine change, I first recoded the dependent variable measures into two dichotomous variables. Next, I used logit analyses with these new variables as the dependent variable, while regressing the series of independent variables (like advisory strategy, psychological disposition, and crisis) on it.

Theory suggests different equations for change in diplomatic and military response. The framework predicts expertise (Defense), simplification, embellishment, flip-flopping (State), addition, subtraction, and consensus (Defense), are related to change.

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176 In the table, these new variables are called ‘poschandr’ and ‘poschanmr’, short for ‘positive change in diplomatic response’ and ‘positive change in military response’ respectively. More specifically, if a subject experienced a positive change (i.e. movement toward a more militaristic or diplomatic option in the second questionnaire) from initial to final policy choice, they were coded as a 1 (if not, they were coded as a 0).

177 I do not examine the factors behind negative change simply because it was a rare event: 16 cases (or ~8%) experienced a negative change on the diplomatic scale, while 21 cases (or ~10%) experienced a negative change on the military scale. While the question of what causes negative change is an interesting one, a lack of cases precludes exploring the phenomena quantitatively.
in military response. For change on the diplomatic scale, expertise (Minister of State), flip-flopping (Minister of Defense), and consensus (State) were substituted for their corollaries. Table 3.3 presents the analysis for diplomatic and military responses.

Change in diplomatic choice demonstrates significant correlations between several variables. Initial diplomatic choice plays a dampening role on change, as evidenced by the significant and negative correlation. Interestingly, the negative and significant relationship between change and need for cognition is not expected. Generally, past works show need for cognition makes persuasion easier when subjects are presented with a strong argument.

Two advisory strategies are significant in the model: both simplification and consensus (Minister of State) are positively correlated with change. When administered simplification or consensus strategies, subjects were persuaded to change their minds. While the significant relationship between consensus and diplomatic change was expected (hypothesis 14), the positive relationship with simplification was not. Rhetoric (in the form of simplification) should be significant when interacting with the crisis manipulation. This analysis suggests a different lesson: simplification is effective regardless of the available information.

Change in military choice demonstrates a different set of relationships. Again, we see initial choice significantly dampens persuasion attempts; as the table shows, there is a significant and negative relationship between initial military choice and change. Interestingly, the model also demonstrates a significant and positive relationship with
diplomatic choice. While I have no prior expectation concerning this relationship, it does suggest subjects were driven (at least for military choice) to change their minds based on their preferences for diplomatic choice.

Two advisory strategies are positively correlated with change: embellishment and subtraction. Though the framework predicts subtraction is positively correlated with change (hypothesis 12), embellishment was not expected to hold a significant positive relationship with change. Theoretically, embellishment is successful only in the presence of crisis – the lack of information favors an argument which fills in episodic gaps. This analysis suggests otherwise; embellishment may not require a lack of time or information to be successful. In other words, there is a significant and positive main effect between the embellishment manipulation and change. Finally, the analysis finds a negative relationship between foreign policy knowledge and change: foreign policy knowledge limits persuasion (hypothesis 15). This relationship holds for change in military choice, as evidenced by the coefficient.

The lack of significant relationships involving expertise (Hypothesis 1 and 2), flip-flopping (hypothesis 9 and 10), addition (hypothesis 11), knowledge (hypothesis 15), and internationalism (hypothesis 17) are more troublesome. The lack of significant relationships between these variables and change suggests a misspecification of theory, or an inappropriate experimental simulation. I return to this discussion at the end of the chapter.
3.4.4 Interactions – strategies, crisis, dispositions, and change

Though a majority of hypotheses were examined through the logit analysis in the previous section, several hypotheses have yet to be gauged. Specifically, my theoretical understanding suggests a number of interactions between strategy and crisis, and strategy and disposition. Rather than use a regular logit, however, I employ an ANOVA technique that uses the dichotomous change variables (i.e. ‘poschandr’ and ‘poschanmr’) as dependent variables.

Tables 3.3 and 3.4 analyze the interaction of expertise and worldview. Specifically, the framework hypothesizes invoking expertise is dependent upon subject’s worldview. Hypothesis 3 predicts invoking expertise (minister of defense) interacts with high militant assertiveness to create significant change for military choice, while Hypothesis 4 states invoking expertise (minister of state) interacts with high internationalism to create significant change in the diplomatic scale. As the tables demonstrate, the ANOVA shows no significant differences attributable to the interaction. In effect, results show there is no discernable, significant interactive effect.

Tables 3.6 and 3.7 report interactions between expertise, simplification, embellishment, and crisis for both diplomatic and military choice. In an analysis of change for diplomatic choice, only the interaction of embellishment and crisis is significant. A further analysis comparing the counts in each cell verifies hypothesis 8: 80% of subjects in the crisis condition experienced a change in preferences (with the mean change of 1.9), compared to 50% (with a mean change of .8) in the non-crisis condition. Moreover, cells representing subjects not administered the embellishment condition within crisis (65.5% of subjects experienced a mean change of 1.5) and non-
crisis (57.1% of subjects changed, with a mean of 1.2) distinguish this interaction from the main effect of the crisis manipulation. Combined, the analysis suggests a significant difference attributable to the interaction – a finding consistent with the theoretical formulation.

The ANOVA for military choice shows significant interactions for both simplification and embellishment. However, the results demonstrate a very different change, as 90% of subjects noted a change in policy preference (with a mean change of 2.7) in the non-crisis condition, compared to 50% of subjects changing their minds (with a mean of 2.0) in the crisis condition. The remaining two cells put this interaction in relief, as 66% of subjects changed (with a mean of 1.01) when administered the crisis manipulation only, while 63% of subjects in the non-crisis manipulation were persuaded (with a mean of .92). Embellishment follows a different pattern, as 50% of subjects experienced a change (with a mean average .8) in the non-crisis condition, compared with 90% of subjects going up the scale (with a mean change of 1.9) in the crisis condition. Again, in the crisis manipulation only, 65% of subjects were persuaded (with a change of 1.10) compared with the non-crisis manipulation only (63% of subjects changed with a mean of .93). Both patterns follow hypotheses 7 and 8 in hypothesized ways.

3.5 Chapter Summary

The empirical strategy used in this chapter proceeded in three steps. First, an ordered logit analysis demonstrated significant relationships between dispositions and policy choice for both scales. The analysis then used a logit analysis to unpack the effects of the experimental manipulations and subject dispositions. These analyses suggested advisory strategies presented few consistent effects. The final step used an
ANOVA analysis to gauge the significance of several interactions. This tripartite empirical process highlighted the impact of the main variables in three dimensions.

Although these general results hold important clues to the operation of advice during decisions, they stray from the central questions of the dissertation. In this section, I explicitly answer these questions by referring to the data analysis. I end the chapter with a discussion of important results for the following case studies.

3.5.1 Revisiting hypotheses

In general, experimental results suggest a number of important conclusions regarding the impact of strategies and dispositions on policy choice. Hypotheses 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 relate to the operation of expertise and invoking expertise as an advisory strategy. First, experimental results suggest expertise is not significantly related to change in preferences. Expertise (for both the minister of defense and minister of state) does not create a significant change for either military or diplomatic choice. As table 3.3 relates, expertise did not operate according to hypothetical expectations.

Moreover, hypothesis 3 expects a significant interaction between expertise (minister of defense) and militant assertiveness. Hypothesis 4 expects a different interaction; namely, a significant interaction between expertise (minister of state) and high internationalism. Both interactions failed to achieve significance in the analysis. Again, expertise did not operate according to the framework. The interaction between expertise and crisis suggested expertise interacts with the crisis manipulation. According to the logic of the framework, the lack of information should push subjects into accepting
expert advice. However, this was not the case, as tables 3.6 and 3.7 show the interaction of the two manipulations did not reach significance, allowing me to reject hypotheses 5 and 6.

Hypotheses 7 and 8 suggest the limits to simplification and embellishment. Specifically, the hypotheses expected significant interactions between the advisor strategies and crisis manipulation. Tables 3.6 and 3.7 confirm this logic, as both interactions achieve significant F scores in the ANOVAs. Interestingly, there is a difference in domain. For example, the interaction of embellishment and crisis is significant when explaining diplomatic choice (at the .005 level), but this interaction disappears in military choice. Contrarily, the interaction of simplification and crisis is significant in the model for military choice. While the framework does not hypothesize a difference based on the instrument, it does appear that the decision calculus differed.

The next set of hypotheses (numbers 9 and 10) suggest flip-flopping had very little success in significantly changing subject policy choices. As table 3.3 demonstrates, the presence of either advisory strategy was not correlated with significant change. Again, flip-flopping on the part of the minister of state should persuade subjects to change their policy preferences on the military scale, while flip-flopping on the part of the minister of defense should be positively correlated with change on the diplomatic scale. The lack of significant coefficients suggests these relationships do not hold.

Hypotheses on the operation of addition and subtraction present (numbers 11 and 12) a different result. Addition (hypothesis 11) failed to reach significance in the logit analyses for both military and diplomatic choice. Moreover, addition resulted in a positive coefficient, violating the expectation of the hypothesis. Interestingly, subtraction
does operate according to the framework. As table 3.3 demonstrates, when given the subtraction manipulation, subjects were persuaded to change their minds. In general, the experiment seems to confirm the general logic behind subtraction as a rhetorical strategy.

Hypotheses 13 and 14 stated consensus would significantly impact the decisions for both diplomatic and military choice. As table 3.3 shows, consensus (behind the minister of state) significantly increased the chance of policy change on the diplomatic scale. When administered the consensus manipulation, subjects were convinced to change their preferences. Interestingly, consensus (supporting the minister of defense) failed to significantly change military choice. Data generally suggests the impact of consensus operated in expected ways for diplomatic choice, but failed to exhibit similarly significant results in military choice.

Knowledge and foreign policy knowledge were expected to have significant ‘moderating’ effects on any change. As the analyses show, this hypothesis received mixed support. In general, high political knowledge is not significantly related to change in the logit analyses. Importantly, high foreign policy knowledge operated in the opposite direction, as the coefficients for both diplomatic and military choice were positive. Yet, high foreign policy knowledge did operate according to expectations, preventing change from occurring. Indeed, as the logit analysis for military choice shows, this ‘buffering’ effect was significant and in the appropriate direction.

And finally, the last two hypotheses engaged the impact of militant assertiveness and internationalism on policy choices. Both militant assertiveness and internationalism were insignificant in the model – they neither hindered nor aided persuasion.
3.5.2 *Do advisory strategies create change?*

A glance at the analysis suggests the impact of advisory strategies varied widely. Generally speaking, analysis demonstrates significant change associated with the presence of simplification, embellishment, subtraction, and consensus. More importantly, I also find significant interactions between embellishment, simplification, and the presence of the crisis manipulation. Initial preferences undoubtedly limited the impact of the strategies, as the higher the initial starting point, the less likely a strategy persuaded subjects to amend their preferences. Results do allow me to argue these strategies did create change in subject preferences, even after controlling for the initial choice.

An analysis using CLARIFY puts these variables in context.¹⁷⁸ For diplomatic choice, simplification increased the chance of change by ~25%. Likewise, consensus (favoring the Minister of State) increased the change by ~23%. For military choice, we see significant increases for embellishment (~20%) and subtraction (~20%). As these numbers suggest, the strategies, when controlling for all other variables, were quite effective in persuading subjects to amend their policy preferences.

3.5.3 *What is the impact of personality dispositions?*

Dispositions impact subject responses, but not necessarily in hypothesized ways. Table 3.2 demonstrates that dispositions matter most in setting the initial picture. In particular, we see militant assertiveness and foreign policy knowledge are correlated with higher starting values for diplomatic choice. Contrarily, internationalism is significant and negatively correlated with starting values on the military scale. Taken together,

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personality dispositions exert a large role in creating the initial anchor or starting point before advisory arguments are administered. Moreover, dispositions set limits on the effectiveness of persuasive appeals by impacting the treatment of incoming information. As I discussed above, foreign policy knowledge significantly decreases the chance of persuasion for military choice. Interestingly, this variable was the only dispositional variable reaching significance; all others (except for the controls) were insignificant.

In general, the analysis suggests dispositions operate in a multi-stage process. And more importantly, they are separate and unequal. For example, militant assertiveness and internationalism aid the selection of initial values, but do not operate during the persuasion process – they are not significantly correlated in any of the models. Again, this is consistent with the framework I propose: subjects rely on worldviews or initial preferences when they lack information. However, subjects evaluate incoming information according to certain ‘operating’ or cognitive dispositions. These initial preferences, while setting bounds to final policy choice, do not determine the final policy choice; to explain the final choice requires an understanding of how dispositions differ in both stages of decision making.

3.5.4 Why did few of the expected relationships hold in the experiment?

As the above discussion suggests, few of the experimental hypotheses followed expectations. Indeed, of the large number of hypotheses I proposed at the beginning of the chapter, only a handful of hypotheses reached significance. In general, these ‘failures’ could be due to three main causes: incorrect experimental manipulations, a misspecification of theory, or if we take the results ‘as given,’ it suggests past scholarship was wrong.
In terms of the experimental protocol, it is possible the experiment did not adequately capture important variables. For example, invoking expertise is commonly understood as a very successful advisory technique. However, subjects may not have viewed the source of information as ‘expert.’ Although the experiment included a page outlining the ‘expertness’ of the hypothetical advisors, this manipulation may not have been strong enough to invoke the proper perception. Moreover, the crisis manipulation could suffer from a similar problem: the experimental manipulation did not adequately invoke the laboratory equivalent. Indeed, if we take the self-reported confidence measure as a ‘weak’ indicator of the crisis manipulation, we find no difference between crisis and non-crisis.\textsuperscript{179} It is possible the manipulation did not operate in expected ways.

While the problem could lie with the experiment, an equally valid critique falls squarely on the theoretical framework. Both a misspecified theoretical model and incorrect theory could lead to the lack of significant results. In general, it is possible theoretical expectations in the experiment were incorrect. Though I am confident in the elucidation of the hypotheses, this can be checked by case studies in the following chapters. If case studies converge with the experimental analysis, the critique is lessened.

3.6 Conclusion

The goal of this chapter was to explore and evaluate the impact of different personality dispositions and strategies on policy choice. Decision makers are not at the mercy of advisors; they have significant psychological barriers based on their amount of knowledge and their political preferences. As I hypothesized in the first section of the chapter, successful advising is more than the sum of its parts. There are important

\textsuperscript{179} The final questionnaire in the experiment asked subjects to self-report their confidence in their decision. Theoretically, if the manipulation worked in expected ways, subjects in the crisis condition should have
relationships between personality, advisory strategy, and the amount of information available to decision makers. Experimental results demonstrate several lessons.

First, several advisory strategies work regardless of the personalities of the subjects. Simplification and consensus (supporting the Minister of Defense) significantly increased the chance for diplomatic change regardless of dispositions. On the military choice side, embellishment and subtraction created change across the personality spectrum. For the case studies, these strategies should have an impact on the outcomes of the decisions since they are not tied to the personalities of leaders. This is not to say that there are differing levels of effectiveness within the categories, only that these strategies are generally effective at changing opinion.\(^{180}\)

Second, high foreign policy knowledge serves as a powerful insulator to advisory strategies. For both diplomatic and military choices, and across advisory strategies, foreign policy knowledge decreases (sometimes dramatically) the probability of change. This is in dramatic contrast to the general knowledge scale which is consistently associated with change. This suggests an interesting finding: the more specific, foreign policy knowledge an individual holds, the less chance strategies will change their mind, while greater amounts of political knowledge actually increases chance for change. The greater the expertise in the area of foreign policy, the less likely an individual will be swayed by the activities of their advisors.

reported lower confidences. However, the difference was negligible (>2%).

\(^{180}\) It is possible that the experiment, in general, favors rhetorical strategies simply because it is difficult to create an experimental manipulation that satisfactorily captures dimensions of expertise or other bases of advisory power. While I generally believe the experiment does capture the essential features of an advising situation, case studies will continue to track the validity of the other, albeit ‘psychologically unsuccessful,’ strategies. Case studies serve as yet another control variable for the experimental results – convergence with qualitative results strengthens the internal connections. I return to these points in the conclusion.
Third, the failure of several strategies is glaring. For example, expertise was an insignificant advisory strategy – subjects did not respond in hypothesized ways to the arguments and positions of those most knowledgeable. Advisory strategies attached to expertise did not create significant change in the preferences of subjects. Instead, expertise rang hollow. In some ways, this is consistent with the theoretical framework – expertise is a perception, and the manipulation in the lab may not have been strong enough to create an ‘expert’ perception in the minds of subjects. Tracing the use and impact of expertise in the case studies will clarify experimental results.

In the chapters that follow, I apply the same theoretical framework to two sets of case studies. Convergence between the experiment and cases present an opportunity to check the weaknesses of both methods, while providing a basis for comparing the efficacy of advisory strategies across personality and situation. But if the experiments did capture an important cognitive mechanism, I expect case studies to demonstrate the efficacy of four strategies: simplification, embellishment, subtraction, and consensus. Moreover, presidents with past experience with foreign policy issues will be more apt to evade or ignore these strategies; instead, other bases of influence will matter more.

Finally, if the theoretical chapter is correct, cases should favor certain strategies. Specifically, I expect the crisis cases to turn on the use of rhetoric, and advisors who employ embellishment and subtraction – the lack of decision resources will favor strategies that complete the mental picture. Contrarily, the drawn out decisions concerning humanitarian interventions should instead favor advisors who use simplification and consensus. Simplifying reality or creating a group consensus will be
salient markers for a confused President. If these four strategies play a significant part in the decision processes, then the significant experimental findings will gain external validity.
H1. Invoking expertise on the part of the minister of defense will cause change in policy choice for military options.

H2. Invoking expertise on the part of the minister of state will cause change in policy choice for diplomatic options.

H3. Invoking expertise (minister of defense) and high militant assertiveness interacts to change policy choice for military options.

H4. Invoking expertise (minister of state) and high internationalism interacts to change policy choice for diplomatic options.

H5. Invoking expertise (minister of defense) and crisis interact to change policy choice for military options.

H6. Invoking expertise (minister of state) and crisis interact to change policy choice for diplomatic options.

H7. Simplification creates change in policy choice (either diplomatic or military) when subjects are in the non-crisis manipulation.

H8. Embellishment creates change in policy choice (either diplomatic or military) when subjects are in the crisis manipulation.

H9. Flip-flopping (by the minister of defense) creates positive change in diplomatic choice.

H10. Flip-flopping (by the minister of state) creates positive change in military choice.

H11. Addition decreases the possibility for change in both military and diplomatic choice.

H12. Subtraction increases the possibility for change in both military and diplomatic choice.

H13. Consensus (favoring the minister of defense) creates positive change in military choice.

H14. Consensus (favoring the minister of state) creates positive change in diplomatic choice.

H15. Knowledge is associated with no change in policy on both scales.

H16. Militant assertiveness is positively related to military policy choice.

H17. Internationalism is positively related to diplomatic policy choice.

Table 3.1. Experimental hypotheses.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
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<tr>
<td>Initial Military Choice</td>
<td>.2264847***</td>
<td>- -</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Knowledge</td>
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<td>Mil. Assertiveness</td>
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<td>Need for cognition</td>
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<td>.1918032</td>
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*pr>.1 **pr>.05 ***pr>.005

**DV: 1st Diplomatic Choice**

Number of obs = 201
LR chi2(8) = 38.18
Prob > chi2 = 0.0000
Pseudo R2 = 0.0585

**DV: 1st Military Choice**

Number of obs = 201
LR chi2(8) = 20.16
Prob > chi2 = 0.0097
Pseudo R2 = 0.0267

Table 3.2. Coefficients from ordered logit analysis modeling initial policy choice.
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*pr<.1 **pr<.05 ***pr<.005

**DV: Change in diplomatic choice**

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<th>Prob &gt; chi² = 0.0000</th>
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**DV: Change in military choice**

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<th>Pseudo R² = .2639</th>
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Table 3.3. Logit analysis modeling change.
Table 3.4. ANOVA analysis, Expertise X Militant Assertiveness.

Table 3.5. ANOVA analysis, Expertise X Internationalism.
### Table 3.6. ANOVA analysis, embellishment & simplification X crisis, modeling diplomatic choice.

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</thead>
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<td>Expertise (State)</td>
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<td>Crisis*Simplification</td>
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<td><strong>Crisis*Embellishment</strong></td>
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</table>

* p > .1  ** p > .05  *** p > .005

### Table 3.7. ANOVA analysis, embellishment & simplification X crisis, modeling military choice.

<table>
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<tr>
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</table>

* p > .1  ** p > .05  *** p > .005

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Chapter 4

Case Study: Advisors & Crisis Decision Making – USS Pueblo and USS Mayaguez

4.1 Introduction

Scholars generally agree crises have three defining characteristics: there is a threat to perceived national interests, a possibility for increased violence or the outbreak of hostility, and a perception of a time constraint. Leaders faced with these challenges attempt to balance domestic and international pressures through the use of their most trusted advisors. In the midst of crises, advisors act as coping mechanisms to enlighten policy discussion and provide justification for the decision. Because decision makers lack the time or resources to fully search out policy alternatives, advisors have an easier time in their persuasion attempts -- especially if a leader is new to conflict mediation or unsure of his own foreign policy knowledge. Importantly, this position provides an opportunity for advisors to overcome structural and psychological limits to advising, and take advantage of the lack of information and time.

The framework introduced in the second chapter suggests advisors easing these demands are favored during decision making. Presidents face large information costs in crises, unable to collect all necessary information. Time and knowledge constraints place leaders in a condition of high uncertainty. Advisors who minimize uncertainty concretize the mental model of the decision. In particular, access, rhetoric and expertise should play large roles in dictating the outcome of the decision.

In crisis situations, face time can crucially sway the decision – time constraints heavily favor quick information channels. Likewise, advisors with expert knowledge of the policy decision, and advisors that are known for their rhetorical skill, will have a greater chance of persuading the President. Expert advisors and skilled orators with access to the President will have the greatest chance of impacting the policy decision in their favor.

Following the case-study questions presented in the second chapter, I begin each case by examining participants and their policy preferences in two cases of ship seizures. First, I examine the dispositions and general policy preferences of each president and their main advisors. Next, I trace the arguments and meetings devoted to the crisis decisions. Again, the case study allows me to check the external validity of the theoretical framework by unpacking and examining the correlation between advisory strategies and change in policy preference.

I end the chapter with a commentary on the influence of advisors in crisis decision making. Specifically, I conclude with a discussion of counterfactuals and congruency:
what were the alternative routes of influence? What policies were not discussed? Was the final policy choice congruent with other possible policies? And finally, what impact did advisors have on the final policy choice?

4.2 The Capture of the USS Pueblo

4.2.1 Background

On April 18, 2002, Senator Campbell (of Colorado) introduced resolution 246 to the US Senate. The resolution, in part, demanded the return of an anti-imperial war memorial in Pyongyang: the captured American reconnaissance ship USS Pueblo.182

The resolution read, in part:

“To date, the capture of the USS Pueblo has resulted in no reprisal against the government or people of North Korea and although the USS Pueblo still remains property of the United States Navy, the North Korean Government displays it as a traveling museum . . . This is unacceptable to me and a number of colleagues. At issue here, isn’t the value of the ship. At issue is the honor of America and the record of those who proudly served and were illegal captives by North Korea, a nation which seeks the destruction of America.”183

Thirty-four years have done little to blunt American outrage surrounding the seizure of the Pueblo.

On the afternoon of January 23, 1968, North Korean patrol boats stationed in Wonsan harbor attacked and boarded the USS Pueblo, a signal intelligence ship outfitted and jointly operated by the US Navy and the CIA.184 Although its location has yet to be

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182 As one author describes it: “the DPRK . . . did not change the ship’s role as a propaganda instrument, as approved guests could climb aboard for a tour that included a twenty-minute video shown in the mess hall celebrating the capture and release of the crew” (Mitchell B. Lerner, The Pueblo Incident: A Spy Ship and the Failure of American Foreign Policy (Lawrence, KS: The University Press of Kansas, 2002), 228).


184 There is some disagreement over whether North Korea was alone in its attack. For example, Robert Liston (The Pueblo Surrender: A Covert Action by the National Security Agency (New York: M. Evans & Company, Inc., 1988)) argues Soviet and Chinese warships harassed the North Korean ships responsible for the capture of the Pueblo. The reason: the presence of highly sophisticated signal intelligence equipment on board. Scouring a number of reports, the author suggests the Pueblo was intercepting underwater
definitively determined, most estimates place the ship anywhere from 15 to 18 miles off
the coast of North Korea – well past the territorial claims of the Democratic People’s
Republic of Korea (DPRK). Commander Lloyd Bucher, captain of the ship, initially
thought nothing of the approaching North Korean boats. For days, patrol ships harassed
the Pueblo, and Commander Bucher expected these low-level intrusions. Risk
assessments created prior to the mission echoed his conclusion.\(^{185}\) While the skipper
expected company, intelligence analysts believed there was low chance for armed
conflict. The Navy did not expect the reaction they received.

Officials in Washington first received reports of the seizure at 12:45 a.m. in the
early morning of the 23\(^{rd}\). Special Assistant for National Security Affairs Walt Rostow
was the first administration official notified of the seizure. After verifying some of the
submarine messages bouncing between a nuclear submarine base in Vladivostok and ships in the Pacific.
While the author provides an interesting argument, the lack of hard data to prove his claims makes the
assessment problematic. However, the work does show the amount of uncertainty and lack of information
still plaguing attempts to understand the boat seizure.

\(^{185}\) A number of secondary sources center their analysis on this shaky risk assessment. For example,
Armbrister writes “Pueblo was a doomed ship, her fate sealed in advance, not so much by the North
Koreans as by Americans themselves” (A Matter of Accountability: The True Story of the Pueblo Affair
Lerner, “No American ship had been captured in international waters since 1815, when the British navy
had apprehended the USS President” (The Pueblo Incident (2002), 82). Daniel Gallery argues “A major
fact that accounts for the whole sorry business of the Pueblo is that nobody – but nobody – really believed
it could happen. Piracy of a US Navy ship on the high seas in A.D. 1968 was simply inconceivable” (The
failures of intelligence (concerning DPRK intentions), led CIA analysts to misinterpret previous instances
of North Korean bellicosity. Indeed, planners believed the reconnaissance ships did not need to be armed
or even be required to make high-speed evasive maneuvers. See Lerner, The Pueblo Incident (2002);
Armbrister, A Matter of Accountability (1970); and Richard A. Mobley, Flash Point North Korea: The
Pueblo and EC-121 Crises (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2003).
information reported by the Commander in Chief of the Pacific fleet (CINCPAC),
Rostow called the President at 2:00 a.m.186 Discussion of the appropriate response would
begin in earnest the next day.

4.2.2 Advisors and their preferences

Actions and arguments of four advisors played a critical role during the Pueblo
crisis: Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, Secretary of State Dean Rusk, Special
Assistant for National Security Affairs Walt Rostow (the National Security Advisor for
LBJ), and incoming Secretary of Defense Clark Clifford. A number of secondary actors,
ranging from General Earle Wheeler (the head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff) to Nick
Katzenbach (the Under Secretary of State), also participated in the meetings devoted to
the seizure.

Perhaps no participant had more experience with the decision-making of Lyndon
Johnson than Robert McNamara. One of the initial foreign policy chiefs appointed by
Kennedy in 1961, McNamara was widely (and incorrectly) identified as the chief advisor
and architect of foreign policy. But President Johnson often dominated his Secretary,
pushing him into a subsidiary role, and never fully taking his advice seriously. Tired of
the pressures of the job (including the vitriol of activist student groups), McNamara was
in his last days as the Secretary of Defense, serving his time until Clark Clifford was
officially approved as his successor.

186 There was a disagreement between McNamara and Rostow concerning the involvement of the President.
Reportedly, McNamara wanted to wait until the morning before notifying Johnson while Rostow believed
this deserved higher priority (Russel D. Buhite, Lives At Risk: Hostages & Victims in American Foreign
Policy (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, Inc., 1995)). In the end, the President’s response was
underwhelming: he hung up the phone after telling Rostow to wait until the morning (Mobley, Flash Point
North Korea (2003)).
Dean Rusk was also a ‘Kennedy guy,’ serving throughout the eight years of the Kennedy/Johnson Administrations. Like McNamara, Rusk was a member of the ‘Tuesday Cabinet’ – the regular Vietnam working group, designed to follow and respond to actions in Southeast Asia.\textsuperscript{187} Before serving as Secretary of State, Rusk was a professor of government, and also served in the Truman Administration, where he played a crucial role in decision making during the Korean conflict.\textsuperscript{188} A strident supporter of action in Vietnam, Rusk was a strong advocate of using force to pressure the DPRK into releasing the crew.

Rostow was another member of the ‘Tuesday Cabinet.’ Known for his voracious appetite for knowledge and imposing intellect, Rostow was perhaps the brightest of the Kennedy circle. Unlike McNamara and Rusk, Rostow was a relative newcomer to the foreign policy apparatus, appointed in 1966 to replace McGeorge Bundy. Some scholars note Rostow was chosen to replace Bundy simply because the President needed someone to take the heat for Vietnam, and continue to support Vietnam policy. As one argues “And Rostow did have this undeniable significance: He had the President’s ear, and he spent two years reassuring the President that victory in Vietnam was just around the corner.”\textsuperscript{189} Before being named the Special Assistant for National Security Affairs, Rostow was Bundy’s assistant and headed the State Department policy planning staff, as well as serving a number of subsidiary White House roles (even writing Johnson’s first State of the Union address). In general, Rostow was a well-known anti-Communist fighter, preferring force over diplomacy to deal with foreign policy problems.

\textsuperscript{187} The other members of the Tuesday Cabinet: McGeorge Bundy, George Christian, Richard Helms, Bill Moyers, Walt Rostow, Earle Wheeler, and, after McNamara’s resignation, Clark Clifford.

\textsuperscript{188} His formal position during the Korean conflict was Assistant Secretary for Far East Affairs.
The fourth and final advisor important in the *Pueblo* case was Clark Clifford. Clifford had a long and distinguished career as a lawyer and government servant. But perhaps Clifford’s most important role was ‘presidential confidante.’ Beginning with Truman, Clifford was a clarion voice used for advice and opinion – a role continuing with both President Kennedy and President Johnson. Although Clifford lacked an official role in the cabinets of Truman, Kennedy, and Johnson, he was often used as a high-level advisor. With the resignation of McNamara, Clifford was finally becoming an official member of the foreign policy hierarchy. At the time of the *Pueblo* however, Clifford remained separate from the Defense bureaucracy and did not enjoy the access of the ‘Tuesday Cabinet.’ As we will see, this distance actually served him well during the debate surrounding the crisis.

4.2.3 *President Johnson: preferences and dispositions*

In 1968, at the height of Vietnam, Johnson still remained a foreign policy neophyte. As many biographers note, Johnson always felt uncomfortable as commander in chief, instead favoring the domestic policy battles he enjoyed as a Texas legislator. Though he required the help of his inner circle for foreign policy decisions, he could never fully trust the input of many of his advisors. One of the defining features of Johnson’s psychology was an in-depth paranoia and mistrust of those around him – especially appointees of Kennedy. Because Johnson never had the opportunity to really ‘choose’ his principals, there was a sense that they were ‘Kennedy’s guys.’ This mistrust forced Johnson to rely on his own ‘gut feelings’ even if they contradicted his experts.

Moreover, Johnson’s preference for a free-wheeling, informal advisory system clouded advisory roles. Without a strict hierarchy denoting flows of information and

responsibility, advisors were sometimes left out of important decisions – much to their dismay. Though this held a recipe for disaster, setting the stage for bureaucratic pressures and personality clashes to run unchecked, Johnson achieved control through his own, distinct, interpersonal style. Whenever advisory disagreements threatened group solidarity, President Johnson would take them aside and not so subtly intimate his own wishes. As one observer describes, “An aide, summoned to Johnson’s presence, never knew if he would be lavishly praised or given a merciless, public dressing down.”

Receiving this ‘Johnson Treatment’ was enough to quell the dispute.

The President initially believed force would be necessary to bring the crisis to completion. At the time of the seizure, Johnson was engaging North Vietnam at the diplomatic table to end hostilities in Vietnam; actions of the DPRK represented yet another thorn in his side. Interestingly, the actions of Kim Sung Il occurred in a ‘Vietnamese lull.’ While history shows North Vietnam waiting to attack US forces over the Tet holiday (the Tet Offensive began on the night of January 30th), Johnson believed the seizure of the boat was a political act on the part of Kim Sung Il to take advantage of the momentary quiet. And more importantly, Johnson believed the boat seizure represented a proxy action on the part of the USSR and China to maintain pressure on American positions in Southeast Asia.

This initial take drove Johnson’s cognition throughout the beginning moments of the crisis. Even though a frontal assault or coastal assault on North Korea risked the

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possibility for a wider conflict, Johnson wanted to use force. The President’s ‘gut’ told him the only way to maintain American strength was to strongly respond to the actions of the North Korean dictator. Johnson fully expected the crisis would end only through another use of force in Asia.

4.2.4 The decision-making process

FIRST MEETING (January 23, 1968, 12:58 – 2:30)

The first meeting convened the next day when Johnson met with his military advisors for the regularly scheduled Tuesday lunch. Due to the limited time frame (and despite the efforts of Rostow to gather as much intelligence as possible), very little was discussed. In general, participants (Secretary of Defense McNamara, Secretary of State Rusk, Under Secretary of State Nicholas Katzenbach, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs William P. Bundy, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Earle Wheeler) merely exchanged basic intelligence on the seizure.

Questions and uncertainty plagued the group at this first meeting. First, there was the question of cause: what did the Pueblo do? Initial reports disagreed in their descriptions for both the American ship and the Korean attackers. Inner circle advisors and their deputies did not know the exact location of the ship, or whether it provoked DPRK action. Second, the group could not grasp the motivation for the attack. Why did North Korea take the ship? What was the motivation for risking war with the Americans? Again, estimates ranged widely in these beginning moments. Some believed the Soviet Union was behind the attack, or at the very least complicit; others suggested the attack was tied to an increase in North Vietnamese Army (NVA) activity. Participants were likewise confused as to why the DPRK would take the opportunity to
capture an American ship and take its crew hostage. For months, American boats patrolled the same area, yet did not experience more than shadowing by DPRK patrols. The principals could not fathom why Kim Il Sung would take the risk at that particular time.

Third, the group openly wondered how the American ship was captured. A substantial number of aircraft were stationed in the area, including a contingent of fighters and escort planes assigned to the *USS Enterprise*. Members did not understand why the Commander in Chief of the Pacific Fleet (CINCPAC) did not attempt a rescue effort, or why the crew of the *Pueblo* was not given air support. Early reports suggested the ship followed emergency protocol, yet there was no American response.

Open discussion led to few answers. General Wheeler did have an answer to the third question: aircraft were not put on alert because of the secretive nature of the ship’s mission and the low probability of North Korean hostility. As a result, no aircraft were readily armed for close support. The closest air support (a contingent of F-4 ‘Phantoms’ stationed in Korea) was on nuclear alert, armed with nuclear-tipped ordnance. By the time planes could be rearmed (including the rush shipment of proper racks to support air-to-ship arms), the sun would have set and the *Pueblo* would have been towed to Wonsan. A contingent of North Korean MiGs stationed in Wonsan further complicated any rescue mission. A rescue or support mission would have unduly risked the lives of pilots and the crew of the boat, increased the chance of North Korean casualties, and risked another war without guarantee of success.\(^{192}\)

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\(^{192}\) Mobley, *Flash Point North Korea* (2003), 44-45.
Although information was scarce, President Johnson believed a military response would be necessary to release the American crew. The lack of specific information allowed Johnson’s paranoia to reign unchecked. Indeed, the President expected the ship seizure to be the first domino of the day, leading to an eventual attack on Berlin.\textsuperscript{193} Johnson felt three policy options should be considered immediately: the use of military strikes against the DPRK, collecting a thorough explanation of the events, and capturing a DPRK ship.\textsuperscript{194}

A majority of advisors argued the military response was unnecessary. First, the ship reached Wonsan harbor, making a military attack unwise and costly.\textsuperscript{195} Although there was a suggestion to rescue the crew by using an American destroyer backed by air support, few of the principals supported the policy. Second, uncertainty made Johnson and his advisors uneasy. An inability to fully understand both what the \textit{Pueblo} did, and why the DPRK responded with piracy, left decision makers wary. As one participant remarked, “No one ruled out a military response at that first meeting. But we had one war on our hands already. We had to have more information before we committed ourselves to a course which might start another.”\textsuperscript{196}

\textsuperscript{193} Interestingly, the \textit{Pueblo} was not the only crisis of the day. Secretary Robert McNamara told Clark Clifford that "this is what it is like on a typical day. We had an inadvertent intrusion into Cambodia. We lost a B-52 with four H-bombs aboard. We had an intelligence ship captured by the North Koreans." Clark Clifford joked, "May I leave now?" (\textit{FRUS}, 212). The story is also recounted in Clark Clifford, \textit{Counsel to the President} (1991).

\textsuperscript{194} \textit{FRUS}, 212.


\textsuperscript{196} Quoted in Armbrister, \textit{A Matter of Accountability} (1970), 239.
However, the President did agree to several initial steps. First, Johnson agreed with McNamara that a buildup of force (in preparation for a possible military response) was appropriate. A contingent of aircraft and ordinance would be shifted from bases in Vietnam to Korea. This would be coupled with the arrival of the *USS Kitty Hawk* to the Sea of Japan. The movement represented a significant increase in firepower in the area, and signaled Johnson’s resolve.

Second, Johnson ordered Rusk (and his Deputy Sam Berger) to send entreaties to other states with the hope of creating widespread diplomatic support for the peaceful release of the crew – especially support from the Soviet Union. Johnson ordered Rusk to contact Kosygin immediately, and ask for his assistance in pressuring the DPRK and Kim Sung Il to release the crew. Finally, Johnson sent his top advisors to gain as much information as possible, and create a list of possible diplomatic and military options. To facilitate this final task, Johnson created a working group (involving the senior advisors and their deputies) to deal with incoming intelligence.

SECOND MEETING (January 24, 1968, 10:30-11:45)

The next morning, senior advisors (as part of the *Pueblo* working group) met to exchange information and formulate options for the President. Those present included Rostow, Clifford, Katzenbach, Berger, McNamara, Nitze, Richard Steadman, General Earle Wheeler, and Richard Helms.

Secretary McNamara began the meeting by suggesting the group focus on three broad questions: what were the North Koreans trying to do by capturing the *Pueblo*?, what do we think the Koreans will now do?, and how does the U.S. respond?197 Richard

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197 Interestingly, McNamara raised this issue with the President in a phone conversation before the meeting. The Secretary strongly intimated the President should take a ‘Cuban Missile approach’ to the decision-
Helms provided an answer to the first question. Citing recent intelligence reports, Helms suggested North Korea wanted to hinder US movement in Vietnam and end emigration to South Korea. According to these sources, the goal of the action was to open a new front in Southeast Asia. While McNamara disagreed with the report (arguing the presence of more American troops in Southeast Asia did not benefit the DPRK), most participants connected the action to broader security concerns; specifically, this was a ‘target of opportunity’ to tie the US down. Importantly, most agreed diplomatic pressure alone would not be enough to release the crew – military force would have to be used to back up diplomatic attempts. Assessments from the North Korean desk and common sense suggested Kim Sung Il would use the crew as a bargaining chip or shield against American military actions.

With this picture established, the discussion turned to possible diplomatic and military actions. Walt Rostow suggested four diplomatic options: send Ambassador Goldberg to UN Secretary General U Thant in the hopes of getting his support for a diplomatic solution, bring a resolution condemning the action to the Security Council, have the President send a letter (through Goldberg) to U Thant condemning the action and asking for help, and attempting a second approach through the USSR (the first approach was rebuffed). The military options were presented by Wheeler: send ships

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198 *FRUS*, 217.

199 Ibid., 217.
and material to the area in the expectation of a military strike, or use the naval and army units in the area to strike back (ranging from attacking DPRK merchant vessels, to mining the harbor, to selectively strike across the DMZ).

Although Rostow listed a number of diplomatic options, he preferred military action and a strong American response. Incoming intelligence suggested Russian complicity with the DPRK action. Moreover, laws of the sea suggested a proportional response. The one option satisfying both constraints was a military one: the capture of a Soviet ship trailing the *USS Enterprise*. More importantly, this would send a strong signal to Kim Sung Il. Other members of the group pointed out the obvious flaw in the plan; namely, open hostilities between the superpowers. While Rostow obviously disagreed, members of the group did not feel comfortable presenting military options to the President.

Clark Clifford spoke up in the midst of the debate, and presented the group with an obvious counter-point. Regardless of why the DPRK captured the ship or how much the Soviets knew about the action in advance, “the question was whether the loss of a U.S. ship with its crew was worth a major military confrontation with North Korea.”

Military action could not guarantee success without threatening a wider conflict. Clifford wanted the other members to realize the broader implications of military action, and not follow their compassion for the crew. With this argument, the advisors adjourned to collect updated intelligence and formulate specific policy options in time for the next meeting with the President.

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200 *FRUS*, 217.
THIRD MEETING (January 24, 1968, 1:00 p.m.)

The next meeting (this time including the President) occurred a little more than an hour after the previous ‘advisors only’ meeting. Yet again, the meeting began with confusion. After McNamara provided a short recap of events (including a reiteration the capture was planned in advance and was probably known by the Soviet premier), the President began by asking specific questions concerning the capture (especially the actions of Captain Bucher). Two advisors contradicted each other in their intelligence. Specifically, the times and radio intercepts were different: McNamara and Rostow disagreed on when the North Korean patrol captured the Pueblo. The President reiterated his need to have all of the facts clear. Indeed, during the recounting of the conflicting data, Johnson learned for the first time the captain of the Pueblo had sent an ‘SOS.’ To keep a clear picture of the situation in his head, Johnson reiterated his call for all information including a correct timeline of the capture.

The meeting turned to a discussion of a confession from Captain Bucher released by the DPRK. Bucher’s statement (obviously written by his captors) implicated the CIA and the Johnson Administration for knowingly violating the sovereignty of North Korea. Once again, advisors suggested Soviet influence. For example, Rostow argued, “The confession by the Captain appears to have been written by the Soviets. This is not the language of an American ship captain. The Soviets may have had a hand in drafting it.” McNamara agreed, noting “The impression that the Soviets were informed in advance is supported by their actions in Moscow. When Ambassador Thompson went to the Soviets, he received a Soviet position on this quite promptly. It is unlikely that the

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201 FRUS, 218.
Soviets could have reached [received] the information about the incident, conferred about it, and then taken a position so quickly without advance knowledge that the incident was to take place.”  

Interestingly, the meeting did not examine specific solutions to the crisis. Participants instead argued over possible North Korean motivations and the influence of the Soviet Union in the capture. And while advisors meant to brief the President, they only magnified their own loose hold on the specifics of the situation. An exasperated Johnson ended the meeting with a brief discussion on Vietnam.

FOURTH MEETING (January 24, 1968, 6:00-7:30 p.m.)

The third meeting of the day (involving only the senior advisory staff) centered on options prepared in advance for the meeting. Diplomatically, discussions in the inner circle centered on using the United Nations to approach the DPRK and release the crew. One option centered on using UN Secretary General U Thant to gain international support against the seizure; a second option went a step further by suggesting the use of a Security Council resolution. While members did not believe either option would lead to the release of the crew, both gestures were designed to buy time for force buildup and possible military action. However, some advisors felt reliance on diplomatic options, at this early stage, would limit the use of force in the future. For example, Walt Rostow believed the use of the Security Council would limit military actions the US could use to release the crew. The Cuban Missile Crisis provided a salient lesson for Rostow:

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202 Ibid., 218.

203 A memorandum was prepared outlining a number of possible military responses. Importantly, throughout the meeting, the advisors ‘stuck to’ this script without thinking of possible options not mentioned.
“In the Cuban missile crisis we did not get into the United Nations until we had made our move. There is a danger that if we go into the Security Council, we would find ourselves blocked from taking military action. In the Cuban crisis we faced the danger that the UN would freeze the status quo. The UN resolution might state that actions were to be taken without use of force. This could prevent or hinder our freedom of action. We also have to be careful not to get the South Koreans up in arms by a lack of adequate response.”

While Rostow feared the possible ramifications of a failed debate (a highly likely possibility with the Soviet veto), others believed the UN provided an important space for further actions. As Rusk argued:

“This is somewhat different from the Cuban crisis. Then, the presence of the missiles was not generally known. We were able to announce the presence of the missiles at the time we announced our action. Here, the basic facts are already known concerning the Pueblo affair. We could work out with the UN that we would be bound not to act for only so long. We may even need a Soviet veto.”

In the end, a legal advisor to the group settled the debate. Because the ship was seized illegally, the advisor felt a future reciprocal action would not violate international law even if the Security Council vetoed the resolution.

On the military side, seven options were considered: sending in the reconnaissance ship USS Banner, air and naval buildups in the area, reconnaissance flights, interfering with DPRK shipping, blockades, air strikes, and calling up military reserves. Importantly, the issue returned again to the UN. The principals believed the UN could thwart any attempts at military reprisal. Several advisors argued for calling up reserves, suggesting the action would both send a credible message to the DPRK and put pressure on the UN to get involved in diplomacy. But a broad based call-up held political risks for the president, especially since it carried a possibility for demonstrations.

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204 FRUS, 220.

205 FRUS, 220.

206 Ibid., 220.
At this point, Clark Clifford argued in favor of UN involvement. For Clifford,

“We need a period to quiet down the feelings which have been engendered. Going to the Security Council would be the best avenue to do this. I do not know how strong our case would be. The North Koreans would probably continue to say that we had violated their territorial waters. It is possible that they might build a better case than we could. If we move precipitately with military force, it might turn out that we had a hard case to prove. Submission of our case to the Security Council has the value of doing something, of recognizing that world body, and of permitting the American people to quiet down in the next 4 or 5 days. This is possibly but the first in a series of incidents. This one is not as sharp as I would like to see it. We should get ready for the next one which may be clearer.

I am concerned about using this incident as the basis for major military actions. As in the case of the USS Liberty, this is not a clear case. If we can find a way out with face, we should do so. There will probably be a better case later on.”

Clifford did not feel the US would be justified in a strong military response, even though the public, South Korean President Park, and Congress pushed for it. The UN provided an important opportunity for the United States, and the advisors should not miss this opportunity.

While others generally agreed with Clifford, they did not think the UN would be productive. Both Rostow and McNamara felt military action would have to take place within a proscribed period of time, otherwise a ‘self-defense’ argument would wear thin; the UN would take a long time to come to any satisfactory conclusion and lessen the legitimacy of the casus belli. Although other advisors did not believe force was necessary at the time, it would be necessary soon. McNamara noted “I am reluctant to use military force unless we see what we gain and what we lose. I believe we have a good case. If our people do, too, and we do not react, there could be a serious effect on the Vietnam situation. It is not clear what would come after the UN.”

207 FRUS, 220.

208 Ibid., 220.
Discussion turned to a consideration of other military options. Specifically, the advisory group explored the viability of capturing North Korean ships, flying reconnaissance missions over Wonsan, and sending the Banner (a reconnaissance ship similar to the Pueblo) to the area. As McNamara said, “It is not only the reaction of our people which we must take into account but also that of the Asians. The North Koreans have attempted an assassination, taken our ship, humiliated our captain. The Soviets do have a vessel doing the same sort of thing and we do not do anything about it. We cannot continue too long without acting.” McNamara realized the public would not take non-action lightly – and more importantly, neither would Johnson.

FIFTH MEETING (January 24, 1968, 7:50 – 8:25 p.m.)

A fourth and final meeting of the 24th began in the early evening. This second meeting with the President involved the senior national security advisors (McNamara, Rostow, Clifford, and Rusk), and was intended to brief the President on possible options and scenarios for force. However, the meeting accomplished little.

McNamara first presented the President with five possible diplomatic moves: take the matter to the Security Council, contact the 16 other states involved in Korea to notify them of another crisis, send a telegram to the ROK to get them to agree to UN action, go to Japan to apply economic pressure, and finally send a message to Kosygin that rebutting American approaches would not end the crisis. Second, McNamara suggested the US build up forces in the area, including calling up reservists and sending in the Banner for reconnaissance. The only ‘real’ disagreement and discussion in this

209 FRUS, 220.
final meeting concerned support. Johnson did not believe the *Banner* should be sent unless supported by air cover to guarantee its security. The President agreed to the recommendations, and waited for more intelligence.

SIXTH MEETING (January 25, 1968, 8:30 a.m.)

Rusk, McNamara, Goldberg, and Rostow met with President Johnson in the White House the following morning. The issue returned to the usefulness of the UN. The President, along with Ambassador Goldberg, worried the UN would tie American hands. Any resolution condemning the DPRK would surely be vetoed and exacerbate the inutility of UN involvement. Although going to the UN signaled American intentions to follow international law and eschew military action, it threatened to limit military actions should diplomacy fail.

The second topic turned to the buildup of forces. Johnson felt a large buildup (including the call up of thousands of reservists) would heighten the tension in the area, as well as threaten the USSR and China. Walt Rostow reiterated the justification: an act of piracy on the high seas allows a state to defend itself appropriately. Johnson was unmoved by the argument, and believed a buildup would not be constructive. Citing a memorandum on Communist intentions, Johnson believed threats would not work on the Communist leadership, saying “They always react negatively to a show of force.”210 Yet the President felt a lack of preparation was foolhardy, and did not think he could risk the lack of preparations. Johnson continued, “I do not want to win the argument and lose the sale.”211

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210 In response, Rostow commented that this was not like Berlin or Cuba – Rostow believed a show of force would pressure the USSR into forcing Kim Il Sung’s hand. See *FRUS* 223 for the exchange.

211 Ibid., 223.
The meeting ended with a series of orders from Johnson. For the time being, the US was to call up its reservists, send forces (including the *USS Kitty Hawk* battle group) into the area, and maintain pressure on the USSR to step in and influence DPRK movements. Johnson maintained faith in the use of the Security Council and in the abilities of U Thant to force an agreement; but in case diplomacy failed, Johnson wanted military options available.\(^\text{212}\)

**SEVENTH MEETING (January 25, 1968, 1:26 p.m.)**

Later on the 25th, a lunch meeting involving the Pueblo Working Group (including Rusk, McNamara, Katzenbach, Wheeler, Rostow, Goldberg, Berger, Clifford, and Helms) and the President served as a turning point in the decision making process. Walt Rostow began with his now familiar argument against using the United Nations. For Rostow, the UN did not further the goal of releasing the prisoners, and instead allowed the USSR to reap benefits from stalling.\(^\text{213}\) By positioning himself as a dissenter to the status quo, Rostow hoped to push Johnson into doing something proactive to release the crew. While other members of the group (including McNamara, Rusk, and Goldberg) dismissed Rostow’s questions, the President agreed something had to be done. The question began to revolve around one crucial dimension: what happens when the diplomatic endeavors fail, or when the DPRK moves? What would be the next step?

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\(^{212}\) Reportedly, Johnson remarked “Anytime you have a world crisis we must have our tanks loaded, our caps on and our planes ready. Let’s not be accused of being unprepared” (*FRUS*, 223).

\(^{213}\) Rostow reported that nearly 800 pounds of sensitive equipment and papers were delivered from Pyongyang to Moscow. To not act immediately would only make the seizure more damaging to US communications intelligence.
After eliciting opinions from other members, Johnson turned to Clifford, asking him for his take on the situation. Clifford responded negatively to any military action:

“It has been my experience that when a situation of this type arises the public is first outraged. Later they change their mind. If anything, I have a feeling that we need to proceed with caution. The situation about the ship is rather fuzzy in my mind. I have great concern about us getting out word of mobilization in this country. Suppose tomorrow that the North Koreans announce that they are mobilizing. Then we really build this situation up. Then, what if we do nothing? I am not comfortable with this large military build-up. We may find that the matter will simmer down a lot during the U.N. discussion. I feel I should urge great caution in this matter and that we should proceed accordingly. If it appears we pose a threat to North Korea and do nothing, we are in a very difficult situation.”

The question of troop buildups engaged the President. The incoming Secretary of Defense disagreed with both McNamara and Rusk; troop buildups should not be the primary concern. As a way to clarify the positives of the buildup, Johnson turned to Wheeler. Wheeler argued military force must be used to support the diplomatic effort, arguing that:

“To the larger question, all military schools teach us that military power is in existence to enhance our foreign policy capabilities and to preserve the internal security of the United States. I think that more military moves would support our diplomatic efforts that are our first order of business. But we should be prepared to move on the other front if the need arises. Some would regard this as a provocation, I am sure. I know the Soviets would. I believe that it will prove to friend and enemy alike that there is determination on the part of the United States to do everything it can on both the diplomatic and the military front if necessary. Public sentiment does change, but while we are moving on the diplomatic front we must be prepared to do something else if necessary.”

But, again, the President was not convinced. The uncertainty of the strategic situation, mixed with heightened military action on the part of the DPRK, made him wary. Clark Clifford interjected once again:

“Buzz Wheeler makes a very logical case. But it disturbs me deeply. I think the President must proceed on the basis of probabilities and not possibilities. I think the North Koreans are not able to mount a massive military activity. They are engaged in harassments. We

214 FRUS, 225.

215 FRUS, 225.
should not send fleets of our aircraft to Korea. I think that is wrong. I think this heightens tension and builds it up. If North Korea is planning something important that could then begin the provocation for us moving. I would get the planes and crews ready here at home. But our moral posture will be better if the North Koreans move first. I am deeply sorry about the ship and the 83 men but I do not think it is worth a resumption of the Korean War.”

The meeting ended with no decisions, and was adjourned until later that night. However, the crucial disagreement concerning the use of force between Clifford and Rostow would animate the final discussions.

EIGHTH MEETING (January 25, 1968, 6:30-7:45)

General Wheeler began the meeting by providing the working group with a quick description of five possible military actions (mining Wonsan harbor, mining other harbors, air or naval strikes, interdicting merchant ships, and sending in the Banner). Katzenbach entered the exchange, arguing Johnson should ‘turn the screw’ on North Korea and ramp up military preparation for an attack. Johnson agreed, believing the DPRK action was ‘more than a pinprick,’ signaling greater militarism on the part of Vietnam. McNamara concurred, suggesting the US should not encourage North Vietnamese leaders by showing weakness and reticence to use force. At this point, an earlier disagreement re-emerged, as Clifford provided a dissenting voice against advisors pushing for war. Clifford changed the debate by referring back to the argument posited by Rostow, and re-focusing the decision on the crew:

“I would like to view this matter differently. Let us assume for the moment that our only goal is to get the men and the ship back. What would be the best way to achieve that end? If we get the ship and the men back without taking substantial military action the President will get credit for restraint. We may have gotten a hair pulled from our beard. I would be ready to sacrifice that hair because our options are limited at this time. We

216 Ibid., 225.

217 FRUS, 226.
must be ready for the next try. We have very few alternatives at this point. So, again I ask what are the best ways to get the ship and the men back.”

Clifford’s point resonated with the fatigued President. Johnson agreed the specific goal of releasing the crew over-shadowed broader geo-political signaling. And from this point, Johnson favored options that could successfully rescue the crew over options designed to shore up American weakness in Southeast Asia. Although Johnson did not think the UN would lead to any constructive engagement, he also did not see how mining harbors or moving fighters into the area would solve the dilemma. The rest of the decision would revolve around this new perspective – how can we get the crew back?

Clark Clifford ended the meeting in dramatic fashion by providing his own interpretation of events. Military actions (like mining and piracy) would not safely release the crew. Moreover, a dramatic buildup of planes and equipment (as suggested by Katzenbach and McNamara) would only make the situation worse. Clifford suggested that:

“This was a ‘spy ship’. There is a general feeling in the world that if you catch a spy you do him in. The North Koreans can say that we invaded their waters. We do not have a clear case to support. We must not issue an ultimatum. The odds are they would tell us to go sell our papers. Like blackmail, it is no good if you publicize it. It will become public knowledge we are sending in planes. The North Koreans have indicated something more may be coming. We do want to be prepared and ready for that. I recommend that we approach the Soviets again. I recommend that we go to the United Nations. I suggest that we start a quiet build up. We should send another message to Kosygin. The North Koreans may conclude they have gotten as much out of this incident as they can. Frankly I can stand a minor set back to our position rather than to take action which may lead us into another war. The capture of a spy ship is not worth us going to war.”

From then on, President Johnson would not seriously consider military action. Four days later (on January 29, 1968), the group engaged in a half-hearted, final consideration of

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218 Ibid., 226.
military options. But Johnson did not believe the use of military force could actually release the crew, finally convinced force held little promise. Diplomatic means became the favored policy until it was successful eleven months later.

AFTERMATH

In December 1968, the DPRK released the crew of the *Pueblo* into American custody, ending a nearly yearlong imprisonment. The specifics of the release were as convoluted and misinformed as the initial meetings devoted to the crisis. After returning, the crew became the subject of an intense Congressional hearing. Although hearings uncovered numerous intelligence gaffes, the blunt of the criticism fell upon the crew, especially Lloyd Bucher.

A diplomatic solution arose from two sources. First, a meeting on January 29, 1968, that served as a final consideration of military options. By this time, Johnson did not believe the use of military force could actually release the crew. While the Pueblo Working Group created a list of ten possible military options (the goal of the meeting was to update the President on the status of these options), the President did not find any of

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219 *FRUS*, 226.

220 This is not to say that suggestions stopped. For example, several months later (in May 1968), Walt Rostow pleaded for military action to release the crew. To back up his claims, Rostow provided the President with updated information concerning military action, including an analysis that downplayed the negative consequences. Again, the President, mired in Vietnam policy, domestic unrest, and the upcoming Presidential election, dismissed the argument.

221 American negotiators signed an agreement taking responsibility for the actions of the crew while simultaneously revoking the terms of the agreement. Interestingly, the DPRK discovered the repudiation only hours before the release. North Korean negotiators were furious at the American sleight of hand, threatening to pull out of the agreement. In the end, the threats were merely bluster, and the release was stalled by only thirty minutes.
them satisfactory. The words of Clark Clifford mimicked the thoughts of Johnson: “Any way you look at it this incident is a loser. We cannot come out even. We must cut our losses. I doubt we will ever want to use any one of the ten military alternatives.”

Second, a speech by a high DPRK official to a visiting Romanian contingent sent a signal that a diplomatic solution could be achieved through one-on-one negotiations. Importantly, this signal from the official ended all military preparations and lessened the troop buildup in the area. Why? Because it provided a solution to the crisis while eliminating the uncertainty associated with the use of force. Most importantly, it verified Clifford’s view diplomacy could end the crisis and release the crew without the chance of war or the deaths of the crew. And in the end, the view turned out to be correct.

4.2.5 Analysis: Successful advising

A glance at the pattern of options (see appendix) shows a dramatic change occurring with Clifford’s dramaturgical turn in the eighth meeting. By changing the focus of the discussion (from sending a message to North Korea and the Soviet Union to getting the crew home safely), Clifford was able to win the policy decision. Interestingly, the strategy used by Clifford was a combination of two advisory strategies: subtraction and embellishment. In the eighth meeting, Clifford stressed a change in the direction of the decision. No longer should the committee worry about the long list of military options – the use of force would not achieve the successful release of the crew, while holding a dramatic risk of war. The group needed to concentrate instead on only diplomatic options; a textbook definition of subtraction.

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222 FRUS, 244.
The use of language is also interesting. As the meeting notes suggest, Clifford de-stressed the importance of using force by referring to a metaphor: tweaking the beard. By comparing the capture of the *Pueblo* to a minor (yet painful) experience, Clifford underscored the change in the debate. Indeed, if the capture was nothing more than a tweak of the beard, it made no sense to go ahead with a rescue mission. Johnson was moved by the argument, and no longer entertained thoughts of force. But why did Clifford win? What base of power allowed Clifford to sway Johnson?

First, Johnson felt Clark Clifford was trustworthy and moderate. When McNamara decided to leave his post, Clifford was Johnson’s choice due to his distinguished past as an effective and intelligent policy mind. Clifford held unofficial advisory positions for both Kennedy and Johnson, often serving as a sounding board for a number of previous decisions. Johnson’s high opinion of Clifford’s experience was concretized by the failings of the advisory group to provide more information concerning the seizure. Expertise of the inner circle failed to minimize the intelligence gaps. Uncertainty and the lack of information bothered Johnson. As the only ‘outside’ member, Clifford was not tainted by these failings. The only voice Johnson could trust belonged to Clifford, even though his ‘gut’ was telling him to use a show of force.

Second, Clifford’s rhetorical skill served him well. Johnson hoped to find solace and direction in the meetings with his inner circle; he sought counsel and an appropriate policy to get him out of the mess. Clifford’s years as a trial lawyer and experience with argumentation allowed him to provide a salient argument. As Clifford writes in his biography:

“...A trial lawyer must confront an enormous amount of facts, sift through them, and identify the most salient. Then he must organize them logically and present them articulately and persuasively in order to convince the jury. Such courtroom experience
was priceless to me when I arrived in Washington in 1945. Substitute the President or Cabinet members for the jury; in both bases, the key art to be mastered was the art of persuasion."

In the *Pueblo* decision, Clifford masterfully changed the representation of the debate into a position that favored his preferences for diplomacy. Without this rhetorical skill, it is possible a use of force would have proceeded.

4.2.6 Analysis: Failed Advising

Interestingly, Clifford’s strength provided a salve to the weakness of his fellow advisors. Johnson eschewed the advice of his expert advisors. Throughout the case, Johnson is disappointed by the failings of his war council. Advisors that should have had more information on the seizure failed to clarify the picture in Johnson’s mind. While this lack of information was not due to any inaction on the part of the advisors, Johnson did not trust the information he was given. The theoretical framework suggests experts should have been given an advantage in the decision; instead, uncertainty eroded this base of power, leaving the other members of the inner circle with little possibility for influence.

Of course, other members of the inner circle could have used rhetorical skill to fill in the intelligence gaps. But rhetoric was limited by the lack of a clear analogous policy decision. As several secondary sources mention, the *Pueblo* was the first boat seizure since the early 19th century. Simply put, there were no historical analogies to use. And the analogies that were considered (such as the attacks on the *Liberty* and the *Maddox*), did not fit the facts of the case; Johnson simply ignored them. As the next case shows, the *Pueblo* crisis would serve a very important rhetorical role in the construction of the military option used to rescue the *Mayaguez*.

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223 Clark Clifford, *Counsel to the President* (1991), 35.
4.3 The Capture of the *USS Mayaguez*

4.3.1 Background

At 2:00 in the afternoon of Monday, May 12 (3:00 a.m. Washington time), 1975, armed members of the Khmer Rouge attacked and boarded an unarmed American transport ship (the *U.S.S. Mayaguez*) carrying goods and mail through international waters. Three days later, the United States mounted air and ground assaults on Cambodia, hoping to secure the release of the crew. The cost was high: 41 killed, 50 wounded, 8 (out of 9) helicopters disabled or shot down, and the loss of a Thai air base. By itself, the attack and marine landing on Koh Tang resulted in 15 killed in action, 49 wounded, and three MIA out of 230 marines.\(^{224}\)

At the time, the Ford Administration argued the heavy military response was necessary to release the sailors of the *Mayaguez*. Lamb relates the words of Brent Scowcroft: “The Administration acted to prevent that crew from being interned and their lives jeopardized, as the crew of the USS Pueblo was, and to make clear to the Cambodian Government and to all other governments that the safety of its sailors and the freedom of the seas for its vessels were matters of great concern to the American Government and people.”\(^{225}\) Although the American plan was successful in gaining the release of the prisoners, many argue the decision was a debacle. For example, two months after the incident, a New York Times correspondent described the incident as “a

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battle to prove manhood, worthy of a juvenile street gang . . . The machismo factor is the key to the understanding of the *Mayaguez* incident."\(^{226}\) Others suggested Ford was driven by the need to shore up domestic support.\(^{227}\)

As I show, these factors miss the true politicking behind the decision for a military assault. The decision to use force was not based on machismo or ego-defensive drives. Rather, the decision turned on the arguments between Defense Secretary Schlesinger and Secretary of State Kissinger. Competition and contention between the two cabinet secretaries drove Ford into accepting a justification for military action.

4.3.2 Advisors and their preferences

The *Mayaguez* crisis was an intense battleground, full of bureaucratic clashes and healthy egos. A number of advisors and administration officials were brought in for the discussions, including: Vice-President Nelson Rockefeller, CIA Director William Colby, Deputy Secretary of State Robert Ingersoll, Deputy Secretary of Defense William Clements, Jr., acting Chairman of the JCS General David Jones, Assistant to the President Donald Rumsfeld, Deputy Assistant for National Security Affairs, Liet. Gen. Brent Scowcroft, senior NSC staff officer for East Asia Richard Smyser, and Under Secretary of the State Department Richard Smyser. One dyad dominated the discussion and created a central fault line for the policy disagreements — the relationship between Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger, and NSA and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger.


Kissinger was depressed at the start of the crisis. The fall of Saigon and the failure of Sinai II shuttle diplomacy diminished the Secretary’s spirit.\textsuperscript{228} In his mind, recent events seriously weakened the geopolitical position of the United States, and only a show of force could change the environment. Paradoxically, the capture of the Mayaguez lightened his spirits, and the Secretary viewed the crisis as an opportunity to reassert American intentions; the United States would not shirk from its responsibilities. A failure to respond forcefully and quickly would embolden other actors in the area -- especially North Korea. America would be engaged in world politics, and would confront injustice in South East Asia: “Believing American prestige was approaching a nadir with the fall of Indochina, the last thing Kissinger would have wanted was an emboldened North Korea or another event that would contribute to an image of American impotence.”\textsuperscript{229} From the very beginning, Kissinger wanted to hit Cambodia hard to communicate a message of American resolve.

James Schlesinger viewed the broader implications of the seizure in a similar way. The United States needed to prevent the spread of aggression in the area, reassert its position in the world, and halt the further deterioration of its position by responding to the threat. He publicly stated his position in an interview several months before the seizure: “Other great powers in history have earned the term perfidious because of their desertion of their allies, and I would hate to see the United States earn that particular reputation.”\textsuperscript{230} Yet, he did not believe a heavy military response was necessary — only


\textsuperscript{229} Lamb, \textit{Belief Systems and Decision Making in the Mayaguez Crisis} (1989), 73.

\textsuperscript{230} Quoted in the New York Times, 24 February 1975, 1.
bold action. Further, Schlesinger’s chiefs in the Department of Defense were against a military retaliation. Citing the lack of both men and material (many troops and ships were no longer near the area), the military men in the Pentagon were wary of strong military action.

Consequently, the initial positions of the two were similar: America had been wronged at the hands of an illegitimate aggressor, and President Ford needed to respond appropriately. However, there was disagreement over the extent of the response. On one hand, Kissinger clearly believed a strong military response was necessary to accomplish the release of the *Mayaguez*. On the other, Schlesinger and the Department of Defense did not believe a military response was prudent, especially considering the risk and lack of military power.

4.3.3 President Ford: Preferences and Dispositions

Ford’s presidency was less than a year old at the time of the boat seizure, and Nixon’s ‘ghost’ haunted his every move. Unfortunately (and perhaps unfairly), Ford’s popularity was at a low point. The economy was stumbling, fuel prices were high, and confidence in the military was low, along with domestic support for the Ford’s policies. Recent events dominated his thinking, especially the fall of Saigon (occurring less than a month earlier), and Ford believed the United States needed to act quickly and without hesitation to prevent the spread of Communist aggression as the morally right policy.231 Further, the memory of the *Pueblo* seizure, combined with the international perception of Ford’s weakness in the face of an energized Congress, convinced him that bold action

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was necessary; the President could not afford to wait for bureaucratic channels to work. Nevertheless, Ford was unsure of the proper route to achieve both ends: success and decisiveness.

Initially, Ford took a middle ground between his two principal advisers, not preferring either strong military action or a strong diplomatic response. Two conflicting goals hounded Ford’s choice and complicated the decision task. First, the President wanted to avoid the embarrassment of the *Pueblo* incident by securing the release of the prisoners. Ford did not want to signal American reticence to act in an uncertain world, and not securing the release of the crew would signal weakness. Diplomacy (the route Johnson selected during the *Pueblo* incident) carried the risk of failing to achieve the crew’s release. A strong military response would reawaken war-weariness and the Nixon scandal in the American public. While a military response would send a message that the US would not stray from its grand strategic goals (and have a greater chance of gaining the release of the crew), it contained a risk of domestic reaction, and draw comparisons between the Ford intelligentsia and the Nixon apparatchiks. Over the period of the crisis, the underlying tension between the State Department and Department of Defense would dominate the ebb and flow of advice.

4.3.4 The Decision Making Process

Four NSC meetings represented the policy debate. While major players differed in their initial goals, an informal consensus did exist. The record suggests that “Ford and his close advisors quickly settled on three overlapping objectives: first, to recover the ship and crew; second, to avoid the possibility of hostage negotiations; and third, to

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mount a demonstrative use of U.S. force to bolster America’s international credibility.”

Though there was no formal ranking of objectives, Ford believed some form of military action would be necessary. As he notes in his memoirs “As long as I was President, I decided, the U.S. would not abandon its commitments overseas. We would not permit our setbacks to become a license for others to fish in troubled waters. Rhetoric alone, I knew, would not persuade anyone that America would stand firm. They would have to see proof of our resolve.” Yet, this could have taken a number of forms, from the placement of American ships to an invasion of the mainland (all of which were considered). And further, the form of military involvement could clash with the other goals. As Guilmartin writes, “Their actions suggest . . . that if necessary they were prepared to give priority to the avoidance of hostage negotiations at the expense of the crew’s welfare.”

The dilemma centered on balancing force with result. What would be more important -- a demonstrative use of force or the recovery of the ship and crew? And further, what amount of force could appropriately satisfy the goals? A policy battle quickly emerged between Kissinger and Schlesinger: “The Cambodians had seized a ship and crew, and enough force should be used to recover them. As a corollary to the rule of proportionality, the military [meaning Schlesinger and the Department of Defense] felt that the rescue should be conducted professionally, which meant reducing to a minimum


the chances for blunders and unnecessary losses in men and equipment. Kissinger and Scowcroft were more interested in hitting Cambodia hard enough to get North Korea’s attention.\textsuperscript{236}

FIRST MEETING (Monday, May 12, 12:05 p.m.)

At the beginning of the first meeting, participants agreed action was necessary. The case of the \textit{Pueblo} served as a starting point. In the \textit{Pueblo} case, North Korea held crewmembers hostage for eleven months, releasing them only after the United States issued an apology for violating the territorial boundaries of North Korea. All members of the first meeting commented the crew could not be used as a bargaining chip for Cambodian interests. But Ford recognized the differences: “How it was similar in some respects and different in others . . . It was a benchmark from which they could proceed.”\textsuperscript{237} Action was indeed necessary, but the type of action was open for debate.

The first discussion centered on immediate, military solutions to the crisis. But the military situation was desperate. The numbers, amounts, and types of forces in the area were not appropriate for strong military action. And further, little data and information were available for military planners. The “perception of the Joint Chiefs was that the location and status of the \textit{Mayaguez} were highly uncertain and that the entire crisis was changing rapidly. In addition, many factors complicated the military planning for the Joint Staff: the exact location of the \textit{Mayaguez} was unknown; there were no U.S. ships in the Gulf of Siam; the nearest land-based air forces were in Thailand and

\textsuperscript{236} Lamb, \textit{Belief Systems and Decision Making in the Mayaguez Crisis} (1989), 99.

\textsuperscript{237} Roy Rowan, \textit{The Four Days of Mayaguez} (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. 1975), 68.
diplomatic problems might preclude their use; the closest ground forces were the marines in Okinawa; and the intentions of the adversary force were unknown.” In terms of military material, the United States was unprepared for quick action.

Kissinger, however, was adamant. Banging on the table and stressing the need to shore up U.S. perceptions of resolve and will, Kissinger stressed the need for quick action and the importance of demonstrating U.S. resolve: “Nations around the world would be watching, he claimed, to see if the failures in Cambodia and Vietnam signaled that America had lost its will to aggression . . . The capture of the Mayaguez, he concluded in a somber clarion call, was a chance to show that there was a point beyond which the nation would not be pushed. ‘We must act upon it now, and act firmly’.” Schlesinger objected to any hasty action. The Department of Defense, he argued, could not react in any meaningful way to the Cambodian actions. Without available units, any military actions would hold great risks, and hold the possibility for loss of American life (thereby referencing the Vietnam quagmire). Moreover, they had little idea of how much force was needed. Again, the lack of information – especially concerning numbers, types, and locations of Cambodian forces – tied planners into knots, creating wildly disparate estimates and numerous contingencies. Schlesinger stressed caution and the use of diplomacy in the face of these uncertainties.

Ford proceeded on two fronts. On the diplomatic side, he ordered Kissinger to send an ultimatum to Cambodia (through China) demanding the release of the crew. On the military side, Ford ordered ships (including the U.S.S. Holt) to the area and the aerial

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238 Head et al., Crisis Resolution (1978), 111-112.
239 Isaacson, Kissinger (1992), 649.
reconnaissance of the *Mayaguez*. Ford hoped this strategy would coerce Cambodia into releasing the crew without a military response. A low risk, but high visibility, show of military will could serve as an omen to the captors. While Kissinger wanted to shorten the time frame for a military response, Ford sided with caution, Secretary Schlesinger, and the Joint Chiefs.

SECOND MEETING (Tuesday, May 13, 10:30 a.m.)

The second meeting took place almost 24 hours after the first meeting. One big change occurred over night: movement of the *Mayaguez*. Aerial reconnaissance showed the ship being towed to the Cambodian island of Koh Tang. The *Pueblo* case again received attention. In the previous ship seizure, crew members were brought to the mainland, severely hampering any American rescue attempt.²⁴⁰ To prevent the boat from reaching land, Ford ordered Navy planes to use force and turn back any boats moving toward the island. Further, diplomatic efforts had failed to contact the Cambodian government. Indeed, the diplomatic letter sent through China was returned unopened.

Ford became increasingly agitated with the inconsistent and incorrect intelligence reports of the Defense Department. Ford earlier ordered hourly updates of the *Mayaguez*. However, intelligence missed or misreported the movement of the ship toward the Cambodian mainland. Indeed, Ford found out about the movement a full four hours after it began, shortening his decision time frame, and tossing uncertainty on the sparse

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intelligence was received. These sporadic and inconsistent intelligence reports (especially the conflicting reports of the movement of the ship) raised questions of reliability for the President.241

A big difference in the second meeting was the personal absence of Kissinger, who decided to keep a speaking arrangement in Kansas City. The Secretary did manage to stay in touch with the President by phone as well as receive briefings on developments in Cambodia. Even far away, Kissinger played a crucial role in the second meeting by convincing Ford not to issue an ultimatum or firm deadline through diplomatic channels. Kissinger’s argument: the deadline granted Cambodia a bargaining chip to stall military preparations.242 Although aides wrote a preliminary draft, Ford agreed with Kissinger and refused to issue the ultimatum.

The overarching goal of the second meeting was to suggest solutions to the crisis, setting the stage for the final decision by winnowing down the entire set of possible policies. Eight options remained on the table (listed in no particular order): diplomacy through the PRC and the U.N. to get the crew returned; conduct a military show of force; seize a Cambodian island; authorize a helicopter landing on the Mayaguez; use the U.S.S. Holt for a ship-to-ship boarding; assault Koh Tang with Marines; attack Kompong Som with tactical aircraft; authorize B-52 bombing of Kompong Som.243

241 Head et al., Crisis Resolution (1978).
243 Head et al., Crisis Resolution (1978).
THIRD MEETING (Tuesday, May 13, 10:40 p.m.).

The third meeting took place roughly 12 hours after the second meeting, and 36 hours after the first meeting, and began like the other two: a brief description of the current situation by intelligence analysts, followed by suggestions from advisors. Again, uncertainty dominated the briefing. A fishing boat ignored the warning shots fired by circling Navy planes, eventually reaching a small fishing village. Importantly, the pilot of the plane reported seeing “Caucasians” huddled on the deck. The decision makers confronted the implication of the new intelligence: crew members may have been taken from the ship (anchored off Koh Tang). The situation was becoming critical.

Diplomatically, the President decided to send a letter to Kurt Waldheim, the UN Secretary General, imploring his help in releasing the prisoners. Further, Ford decided to use military assaults. However, the question under debate became “how much force to use, and the precise moment to use it.”

The key debate was again between Kissinger and Schlesinger. Noting the severity of the situation, Kissinger wanted to hit Cambodia hard. Kissinger stressed two things in his oration. First, heavy force was needed to send a message to Cambodia and North Korea. And second, to avoid the Pueblo situation, this force needed to be used as quickly as possible. His message differed from previous arguments by connecting two diverse elements: the failing U.S. position in the geo-strategic game, and the analogy of the Pueblo.

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244 Rowan, *The Four Days of Mayaguez* (1975), 141.
James Schlesinger countered Kissinger’s argument by stressing the need to recover the ship as the ultimate goal, while diminishing the need to send a message to the rest of the world, especially South East Asia. For Schlesinger, the situation was simple: Cambodia captured an American vessel — a proportionate reaction was called for, not an asymmetric one. The President needed to examine responses that would get the crew back. Proportional response needed to be the central concern of any decision.

This debate weighed heavily on the resulting policy. Kissinger, adamant about using a heavy hand, painted a complicated picture for Ford – and something clicked in Ford’s head. Previously ambivalent about the use of heavy force to retrieve the crew, the appeal convinced Ford. Retrospectively, Ford commented: “Subjectively, I was having thoughts like this: if I had done nothing, the consequence would be very, very bad, not only in failing to meet that problem, but the implications on a broader international scale. Something was required. I felt it would be best . . . to take strong, decisive action — as opposed to the incremental use of force — even though the odds might be against us. It was far better than doing nothing.”245 The resulting decision approved two assaults — one on Koh Tang and one to recover the Mayaguez by ship-to-ship assault — supported by bombing from carrier-based strike planes.

FOURTH MEETING (Wednesday, May 14, 3:52 p.m.)

The fourth and last meeting centered on one last debate: the use of B-52s. Again, uncertainty surrounded the decision-making. Participants did not know where the crew was, relying upon best guesses and the reports of “Caucasians.” Further complicating the matters, diplomatic endeavors met with continued failure.

245 Head et al., Crisis Resolution (1978), 117-118.
The final debate centered on Kissinger and Schlesinger. Kissinger argued in favor of B-52 runs over the mainland, stressing the need for punishment. Schlesinger argued the use of B-52s would be overkill, while putting further troops in danger. Ford agreed with Schlesinger, and ordered the previous night’s plans. “I started issuing the orders. Holt was to seize and secure the Mayaguez. Marines were to land on Koh Tang, rescue crew members there and destroy any Cambodian units that got in the way. Coral Sea was to launch four air strikes against military installations near Kompong Som, including an oil depot, railroad marshaling yards and the airfield at Ream.”

AFTERMATH

Although 41 soldiers died saving the lives of 39 Mayaguez crewmembers, Ford listed the crisis as one of his bright moments as President. Indeed, the President fondly remembers receiving the members of the crew at Andrews Air Force Base as one of his proudest moments. Unfortunately, information released after the resolution of the crisis suggests military assaults (especially on the island of Koh Tang) were unnecessary.

First, the Khmer Rouge released the crew before the military assaults. The crew of the USS Holt, responsible for recapturing the ship, met no resistance -- the ship was deserted. Several hours later, the Holt rescued the crew of the Mayaguez from a Thai fishing boat. Khmer Rouge regulars released the crew in the morning after they signed an oath proclaiming their friendship with Cambodia and their good treatment at the hand of their captors. Importantly, the news of their release was not novel to Kissinger. After the

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246 See Ford, *A Time to Heal* (1979), 280. A White House photographer played an important role in the decision. After hearing of the proposals for B-52 bombing runs, he asked: ‘Are you sure the Cambodian government is behind the seizure, or is it just a couple of rogue Khmer Rouge pirates without authorization?’ Shortly thereafter, the bombing runs changed from using B-52s to tactical strike aircraft.

crisis a reporter leaked a story that Kissinger received news of the crew release through diplomatic back-channels. This information concurred with a Khmer Rouge radio broadcast reporting the release of the *Mayaguez*. Yet, Kissinger did not pass on the information, and the military orders continued unabated.\textsuperscript{248}

Congressmen — concerned Ford had not followed the dictates of the War Powers Resolution — ordered the GAO to examine the events surrounding the crisis. The report, published October 1976, criticized both the administration’s handling of the crisis and the executive decision making process. Specifically, the report argued that other alternatives to military force were not used or considered, such as: contacting Cambodia directly, contacting Cambodian representatives in Paris and Moscow, and enlisting the diplomatic assistance of governments other than China. The failure of the administration to examine these other measures resulted in over-kill, especially in the case of the Koh Tang marine assault.\textsuperscript{249}

4.3.5 *Analysis: Successful Advising*

The outcome and process of the *Mayaguez* case confirms the expectations derived from the advisory model introduced in the second chapter. First, lack of information, uncertainty and misinformation plagued the decision makers, from an inability to track the movement of the ship and crew to an incorrect assessment of enemy forces in the area. Indeed, the crucial decision to land on Koh Tang (the sight of the heaviest fighting) was based on information from a Navy recon pilot who reported seeing “Caucasians” on

\textsuperscript{248} Kissinger argued the signal was not ‘strong enough’ to convince him of its veracity (Kissinger, *Years of Renewal* (1999), 565-570).

\textsuperscript{249} Head et al., *Crisis Resolution* (1978).
the deck of a fishing boat moving toward the island.\textsuperscript{250} Kissinger relates the condition:

“At too many steps, starting with the very first NSC meeting, decisions were made on the basis of information that had turned out to be almost totally wrong. The crisis concluded with an inaccurate assessment of the situation on Koh Tang, where we were told some of the crew were being held by only a very few Khmer Rouge guards.”\textsuperscript{251}

More importantly, the model predicts crises favor rhetorical skill, especially embellishment strategies, as an important tool of persuasion. Diplomatic options changed little throughout the life of the crisis. But military options changed dramatically after the third meeting. As shown in the case, Kissinger’s embellishment (invoking \textit{Pueblo}, banging his hand on the table, stressing the need for symbolic action to renew American commitments and a powerful response) in a time of ambiguity (again, the decision making group was unsure of where sailors were, the numbers and armaments of the Khmer Rouge, and even \textit{who} was responsible) convinced Ford a military rescue and response were necessary. This appeal swamped the arguments against the action coming from Schlesinger, the military, and the Department of Defense. In sum, Kissinger’s explanatory style pushed Ford into the policy. In stark contrast, Schlesinger’s ‘simplification’ strategy failed to sway the President. The lack of certainty and the inability of the Secretary to provide a complete picture of the crisis (due to the lack of intelligence), could not moderate the President’s demands.

Importantly, decision makers used the analogy differentially. For example, where most members used the Pueblo to guide thinking, Kissinger invoked the case as a tool to get his point across. As one scholar notes, “when Kissinger’s preference for a forceful

\textsuperscript{250} See Guilmartin, \textit{A Very Short War} (1995).
military response clashed with Schlesinger’s desire for a moderate response, Kissinger referred to the Pueblo, perhaps in part to reinforce his position against Schlesinger. The argument would have been effective because concern with the repetition of the Pueblo had muted JCS objections to the rushed military operations.²⁵² The big decision — balancing the need to rescue the crew with the force necessary to accomplish the task — ended in the Secretary of State’s favor by invoking the analogy in reference to his preferred policy. Rhetorical skill and oratory flourish aided Kissinger’s appeal, even when others invoked the analogy.

Historical accounts of the strained relationship between Kissinger and President Ford present another take on the power of rhetoric. Quite simply, President Ford did not trust the advice of his Secretary of State, relying instead on his ‘Kitchen Cabinet’ for advice. Kissinger’s status often overshadowed the President, eroding public perceptions of his own abilities as President. Indeed, Ford’s ‘Kitchen Cabinet’ secretly leaked information to the press concerning the pratfalls and mistakes of the Secretary of State as a way to even the playing field and reassert Presidential leadership.²⁵³ In their mind, Kissinger was given too much credit and held too much power. To fight the increasing domestic and international stature of Kissinger, these domestic advisors began an intense propaganda campaign to rein in the Secretary of State, even though it was against the wishes of President Ford.²⁵⁴

²⁵¹ Kissinger, *Years of Renewal* (1999), 570.
²⁵³ Ford’s ‘Kitchen Cabinet’ was a collection of seven former Congressmen and former leaders in charge of domestic policy in the White House.
4.3.6 Analysis: Failed Advising

While the case study confirms my predictions, the counterfactuals suggest new lessons. For example, the model predicts that access, especially in the form of face time, should impact the policy choice. But face time does not seem to capture the explanation behind the policy decision. Kissinger, the ‘hawkish’ member of the advisory group, was physically absent for the second meeting, due to an engagement in Kansas City. The model suggests this should have given Schlesinger and his aides a window of opportunity. One explanation for this could be that Kissinger’s views were represented at the meeting by one of his deputies: although Kissinger was not there, his policy position was. Yet, the dramatic impact of the White House photographer suggests that the slightest physical presence can have influence. Further case studies will hopefully clarify the impact of access.

Second, crises favor expert opinion as a gauge to thinking. Policy expertise in a policy area provides a lever of influence for the Presidential advisor. But in this case, expertise did not sway Ford. Schlesinger directly based his arguments concerning the use of military force on his bureaucratic expertise. Time and again, we find Schlesinger arguing against heavy military action by referring to the estimates of the Defense Department and his top generals. Ford did not follow the argument, partly due to Kissinger, but also because the Defense Department was lax in reporting the latest updates on the location of the *Mayaguez*. The failure of Schlesinger and the military to provide updated information eroded their base of power as information provider. Ford

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could not confidently trust the arguments posited by Schlesinger. Importantly, this concurs with earlier works on the impact of military advice on crisis decisions. For example, one of the conclusions of Richard Betts is “military advice is least coherent, consistent, or certain in situations . . . when different estimates of capabilities or assumptions of goals confuse the military or put them at odds with each other.”

Evidence from the *Mayaguez* case follows this pattern.

Finally, as per the predictions of my model, coalition building and flip-flopping did not determine the final policy choice. In this case, little evidence suggests Kissinger and Schlesinger actively sought out support for their policies. And while distinct groups did emerge (for example, Scowcroft supported Kissinger, while Rumsfeld and the Chairman of the JCS concurred with Schlesinger), they did not sway Ford. Further, the case demonstrates a double flip-flop: the Secretary of State pushed for a military action, while the Secretary of Defense wanted a peaceful resolution. Importantly, my model explains the failure. Kissinger’s past experience was not ‘dovish’ by any stretch of the imagination, and it was not unusual to hear military responses from the Secretary. Schlesinger, on the other hand, did not have a deep background in government work at the time of the crisis; rather, he was a relatively new participant in the process. Schlesinger’s lack of support for a ‘hawkish’ response would not hold water, and instead, go against the Pentagon. In the end, flip-flopping had no effect.

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4.4 Conclusions and Lessons on Advising

The seizures of the *Pueblo* and *Mayaguez* provide important clues to the operation of advice and advisors during crises. In both cases, advisors successfully used rhetorical strategies to capture the decision. For the *Pueblo*, Clark Clifford employed two strategies – subtraction and embellishment – to change the nature of the debate, and result in a diplomatic solution. Likewise, Secretary Kissinger embellishment to convince Ford to use force and send a message to global rivals the United States would not back down in the face of aggression in South East Asia. Importantly, these results concur with experimental findings, and the efficacy of embellishment and subtraction.

Moreover, the cases suggest important lessons concerning failed advising. For example, expertise had little impact in both cases. In the *Pueblo* case, bureaucratic leaders with intelligence failed to move the President towards their position; Rostow, McNamara, and even Wheeler continued to stress a large military buildup in the area, and the possible use of force. Contrarily, military experts could not convince Ford to reject the sizable use of force suggested by the Secretary of State. In both cases, lack of information eroded the base of power for these advisors, weakening their arguments.

A second failed attempt concerns James Schlesinger and the use of simplification. As the case demonstrates, Schlesinger stresses proportionality as the standard of judgment; by eschewing the complicated picture presented by Kissinger, the Secretary of Defense hoped to move the President by clarifying the most important goal – the rescue of the crew. Interestingly, the failure of simplification is consistent with the theoretical framework. Simplification gains salience in times of information overload, not when decision resources are limited by time. As a result, although experimental findings
suggest simplification is a powerful tool when structuring or presenting advice, it loses salience without the strategic precondition. In times of crisis, leaders need to lessen uncertainty by filling in information gaps. Simplification does not ease this task.
FIRST MEETING
Diplomatic Response
Contact USSR and DPRK; pressure both to grant release of the crew

Military Response
Force buildup ~ bolster air forces in the area; deploy the USS Kitty Hawk

THIRD MEETING
Diplomatic Response
Continue diplomatic entreaties to USSR and DPRK

Military Response
Continue military buildup in the area

FIFTH MEETING
Diplomatic Response
Use the Security Council and U Thant; contact other states involved in the Korean theater; contact ROK president; ask Japan to apply economic pressures; contact USSR

Military Response
Continue force buildup; call up reserves

SIXTH MEETING
Diplomatic Response
Continue to use Security Council; pressure DPRK through USSR

Military Response
Continue force buildup; pressure DPRK through USSR

EIGHTH MEETING
Diplomatic Response
Use the United Nations; approach DPRK; pressure DPRK through USSR

Military Response
“Quiet” buildup

Table 4.1. Meetings and military/diplomatic policy outcomes – Pueblo decision.
FIRST MEETING
  
  Diplomatic Response
  Send letter of protest to Cambodia (through China)

  Military Response
  Send ships to the region; aerial reconnaissance

SECOND MEETING
  
  Diplomatic Response
  Continue to attempt to make contact (refuses to set deadline)

  Military Response
  Continue aerial reconnaissance; force buildup

THIRD MEETING
  
  Diplomatic Response
  Continue to make contact; appeal to Waldheim

  Military Response
  Ordered ship-to-ship assault, island assault, and bombing of the mainland

FOURTH MEETING
  
  Diplomatic Response
  Continue to make contact

  Military Response
  Scaled back bombing runs to use strike aircraft rather than B-52s

Table 4.2. Meetings and military/diplomatic policy outcomes – Mayaguez decision.
Chapter 5

Case Study: Advisors & Humanitarian Interventions – Lebanon and Rwanda

5.1 Introduction

Containing the spread of ethnic conflict during the 1990s was the greatest challenge facing states in the newly unipolar world. The end of nearly 50 years of stable enmity was replaced by humanitarian atrocities in Eastern Europe, Southeast Asia, and Africa. Statesmen, pushed by conceptions of national security and a domestic populace burgeoned with moral arguments, attempted to navigate the political minefield of domestic and geo-political interests.

The history of American humanitarian interventions did not begin in the 1990s. Indeed, the history of American foreign policy is replete with tension between the logic of state interest, and the logic of humanitarian concern. As just one example, the American decision to invade Cuba in 1898 was due in no small part to moral arguments spread by an imaginative press. Daily stories of Spanish atrocities engaged the imagination of the public. Congressmen and bureaucratic officials (such as Assistant Secretary of the Navy Theodore Roosevelt) used this ‘eagerness’ to push President McKinley into a war he did not want. Arguments, buttressed by moral justifications, overcame the general reticence and ‘splendid isolation’ of American leaders.
This chapter continues research on American humanitarian interventions by exploring the impact of advisors and their arguments on presidential decisions to intervene. While a glance at the expanse of political science literature denotes a number of definitions for humanitarian intervention, for the purposes of this chapter, we can use a definition employed by Martha Finnemore. For Finnemore, a humanitarian intervention is defined as “deploying military force across borders for the purpose of protecting foreign nationals from man-mad violence.” The big difference important to this dissertation: the concept of time. In general, crises are described by their lack of decision resources. Leaders are limited by both the amount of information they can gather, and the amount of time in which they have to make a decision. Humanitarian interventions are not limited by this dynamic. Because interventions do not directly threaten the national interests of an intervening state, there is less impetus or pressure to ‘do something.’

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258 This is perhaps the true paradox of humanitarian interventions. The lack of a discrete decision moment creates an incentive for intervening states to ‘wait it out’ and hope the conflict dies down before using force. Yet, interventions most successfully end bloodshed only when met early in the outbreak of violence. Time matters more for the participants in the conflict than the interveners who could stop the violence.
My framework suggests several strategies should dominate with the absence of 
time pressures. First, the longer time frame allows bureaucratic maneuvers to be more 
successful. As a result, coalition building and the creation of a policy group consensus is 
the most favored advisory technique. Advisors who use their power to create a dominant 
coalition within the room will be able to win the decision. Further drawing upon 
bureaucratic politics, advisors who flip-flop or violate their bureaucratic loyalties will be 
favored. Again, the longer time frame allows advisors to demonstrate both their initial 
beliefs, and their deviation from those initial preferences. The salience of these changes, 
when combined with specific policy preferences, should convince leaders of their advice.

A final strategy favored during interventions is simplification. The complexity of 
intervention decisions and the longer time frame creates uncertainty in the mind of the 
decision maker. Unlike crises, decision makers have more time to gather information or 
listen to their experts. Advisors who simplify the picture into a clear, black and white 
representation will often be favored in the final policy choice.

For both cases, we see these hypotheses playing out. Lebanon was an open-ended 
decision, with few time constraints. Bureaucratic conflict raged between State and 
Defense, as Haig pushed for a use of force while Weinberger objected. Over time, 
‘presence’ emerged as a satisfactory, consensus recommendation from the inner circle. 
Rwanda is an interesting case for a number of different reasons. As many note\textsuperscript{259}, there 
was widespread recognition of the genocide, there was multilateral support (especially 
within the United Nations), and the presence of an intervention force (especially since the 
France attempted several military missions). But policy entrepreneurs in the 
administration successfully silenced contrary opinion in support of a military action;
advisors used their bureaucratic positions to delimit access, and prevent countervailing messages from reaching the President’s ear. The remainder of this chapter traces these decisions in greater depth.

5.2 Lebanon, 1981-1984

5.2.1 Background

President Eisenhower faced a dilemma in July 1958. The rise of Arab nationalism (emerging with the rise of Nasser) and imminent fall of Iraq (occurring on July 14), threatened the previously stable, pro-Western Lebanese government. But officials refrained from pushing a military solution, since any American action would send the wrong signal to Arab nations. Eisenhower wanted to support native government movements against violent insurrections without appearing as an outside colonizer intent on stealing natural resources. Nearly a month before, President Eisenhower wrote a confidential letter to a personal friend outlining his dilemma. According to the President, the internal Lebanese situation:

“resembled a great internal campaign of subversion and deceit, possibly communistic in origin. Unless the United Nations can be effective in the matter, it would appear that almost any course that the United States could pursue would impose a very heavy cost upon us. The two alternatives could become intervention and non-intervention. Intervention has been frequently mentioned in the press. Under certain circumstances to avoid intervention might be fatal. On the other hand, to intervene would increase, in the Arab world, antagonism toward the West and might even bring Nasser closer to his Pan-Arab ambition.”


To combat the fall of the Lebanese domino, the President decided to send a peacekeeping force to intervene in the civil conflict, even though it meant suffering the disapproval and verbal onslaught of the Soviet premier. Regardless of the political cost, Lebanon held a distinct benefit, since it provided Eisenhower the opportunity to back up the Eisenhower Doctrine. After a brief (and successful) deployment, the 5,000 Marines returned to home. Nearly fifteen years later, another Republican president, facing a similar dilemma, sent more Marines to Lebanon.

The story of American action and Lebanon in the 1980’s begins with the 1958 deployment. The Eisenhower decision set a precedent accepting the use of force in the Middle East. Although Marines were able to pacify the civil strife associated with the challenge to the Camille Chamoun administration, ethnic tension between domestic groups did not disappear. In 1975, new pressures pushed Lebanon into another civil war. Maronite leaders, fearful of a politically active Muslim refugee population, made a deal with Syria to protect their base of power. Soon, Syrian troops pushed into Lebanon, and faced off against an agitated refugee population. The ensuing clash pitted “Christian


262 The Eisenhower Doctrine was an extension of the Truman Doctrine to the Middle East. Briefly, Eisenhower stated the US would lend economic and political support to nascent governments of the Middle East, especially those threatened by the spread of Communism.

263 As I will discuss, the Eisenhower deployment was used by many in the Reagan administration to support the use of Marines. It was not unusual for Reagan officials to disregard the facts on the ground (in 1982 - 83) in favor of their own interpretation of the 1958 deployment.

264 In 1948, 130,000 Palestinian refugees fled to Lebanon after Israeli independence. Continued war and increased birthrate pushed the number past the 200,000 mark in the 1970’s.
against Muslim, left against right, Lebanese against Palestinian, Israel against the PLO, and Syria against Lebanon.” Violence among the factions turned the free-wheeling, urban life-style of Lebanon into a nightmare. “Lebanon was Rita Hayworth posing beside the pool of the hotel St. Georges,” writes Sandra Mackey. “Lebanon was Beirut, a chic port of call for Mediterranean cruises. Lebanon was casinos, elegant shops, and French cuisine presided over by the urbane and cosmopolitan Beirutites.” Civil war overturned this idyllic picture.

In 1981, little had changed on the ground. Conflict between Christian and Muslim militias, combined with Syrian troop actions, amplified the possibility for a broader conflict. More importantly, the inability of the weak Lebanese government to enforce domestic law allowed Palestinian guerrillas to start terrorizing Israeli settlements just south of the Lebanese border. These terrorist attacks and artillery bombardment angered many Israeli nationalists. Menachim Begin and his Minister of Defense, Ariel Sharon, sensed a prime opportunity to gain politically. By attacking Lebanon and rooting out the PLO, Israel could satisfy the calls of nationalists, while simultaneously weakening Syrian armed forces. A successful armed incursion into Lebanon promised to contain Syrian ambition, secure a friendly Christian neighbor to the north, and satisfy domestic groups clamoring for justice.267

265 Sandra Mackey, Lebanon: Death of a Nation (New York: Congdon & Weed, Inc., 1989), 158.
266 Ibid., 4.
267 Charles Winslow, Lebanon: War and Politics in a Fragmented Society (New York: Routledge, 1996), 230. Much has been said concerning American complicity surrounding the planning of Operation Peace Galilee. Some scholars (such as Winslow) argue the US was aware of the planning and even encouraged its timing (Soviet actions in Afghanistan effectively limited any Soviet involvement). Reagan, Haig, and Begin all believed the incursion would be relatively cheap, successful, and not draw the attention of Soviet military planners. However, others note the Reagan administration was genuinely surprised by both the speed and amount of territory Israel took on the first day.
However, Israel was unsure of American support for an armed incursion. In October 1981 (at Anwar Sadat’s funeral), Menachim Begin approached Haig with the Israeli plan. These tentative entreaties were met with skepticism from the Secretary of State. Reportedly, Haig told Begin that “If you move, you move alone. Unless there is a major, internationally recognized provocation, the United States will not support such an action.” Yet, Haig stopped short of telling Begin that the US would publicly rebuke Israel if they did go ahead with the attack. Indeed, the underlying logic of the attack appealed to members of the administration preoccupied with geo-strategy. This confusion quickened the pace of Israeli preparation, convincing Begin the US did not overtly disagree with the policy. Even after the hostilities started, Israeli leaders refused to take American threats seriously, dismissing them as mere warnings.

In the case that follows, I trace the actions and preferences of the American decision makers. I should note at the outset that while the case is considered a humanitarian intervention, American involvement centered on maintaining strength in a geo-strategically important area. This motivation forced the Reagan Administration to play both sides of the fence. On one hand, the administration clearly wanted to maintain and strengthen their alliance and support of the Israeli administration. But on the other, the US did not want to be seen as a new imperialist power intent on occupying the oil-

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269 Weinberger remarks that Sharon “sought to obtain from the Reagan Administration a tacit approval of his plans by arguing repeatedly that the prospective destruction of the PLO would amount to a defeat for the Soviet Union and international terrorism. Although I can add nothing to the controversy about whether or not Al Haig gave Sharon a ‘green light’ to invade Lebanon, I do know that Sharon’s line of argument had a certain amount of appeal to Al and to others who tended to view the Palestinian-Israeli problem as a subset of the Cold War” (*Fighting for Peace: Seven Critical Years in the Pentagon* (New York: Warner Books, Inc., 1990)141). Other scholars argue the US – especially Haig – supported the action, telling his
rich gulf region. Over time, these goals clashed, and American power failed to achieve either goal. Indeed, when both sides (Israeli and Syrian) refused to withdraw their troops and retain a presence (after May 1983), local populations turned on the peacekeepers. Marines stationed in the Beirut Airport would become caught in the middle of an all-out war between ethnic rivals, Israeli invaders, and Syrian imperialists.

American decision making can be broken down into two distinct periods. First, I cover the American decision to include troops in the first Multinational Force. Shortly after the American withdrawal, a flare-up in violence (precipitated by the assassination of Bashir Gemayel) threatened the stability of the regime, and promised to expand into a larger conflict between Israel and Syria. In this second period, American decision makers revisited the issue of intervention, re-deploying a Marine Amphibious Unit to the region. Throughout this second period, advisors continued to revisit the issue of withdrawal – especially as the security of Americans and Marines in Beirut deteriorated. I follow these meetings and issues through the end of the American deployment in February 1984.

5.2.2 Advisors and their preferences

The decision to intervene in Lebanon was kept within a small group of advisors. In general, Secretaries of State Alexander Haig and George Shultz, Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger, and NSA William Clark enjoyed substantial access and influence with the President. While other, subsidiary actors (such as Vice-President George Bush,
Middle East envoy Philip C. Habib, and assorted officials and experts in the Defense and State departments) did provide their advice and spin on the situation, the major actors were the four department heads.270

Alexander Haig first gained foreign policy experience by serving on Henry Kissinger’s NSC staff in the Nixon White House, eventually promoted to White House Chief of Staff. Many felt Reagan chose Haig for his extensive experience with both defense (Haig was an Army General who commanded a division in Vietnam) and White House politics. But as several relate, Haig was the second choice. As one author relates, Reagan initially offered the post to Shultz who declined, mistakenly thinking Reagan was offering the Treasury position.271 As another author suggests, “Some asked why Reagan had not chosen someone else. Reagan claimed that Shultz was the best man for the job. But others observed that Reagan’s team seemed to be a carbon copy of Nixon’s and that his policy was not too different from that of Carter. Weinberger, Haig, and Shultz had all been high-ranking Nixon officials.”272 Haig eventually resigned from the administration on June 25th after discussions concerning the second Israeli attack (begins on June 6, 1982).

Reagan’s wish eventually came true when Secretary of State George Shultz replaced Alexander Haig on August 25, 1982. Shultz brought a wealth of cabinet experience with him when he accepted the head post at the State Department, serving as

270 The Reagan administration experienced exceptional turnover in the major foreign policy advisors throughout his presidency. For example, Reagan appointed 6 different National Security Advisors through both terms; three different NSAs from 1981-1983 alone (Richard Allen, William Clark, & Robert McFarlane).


Labor Secretary, Office of Management and Budget Director, and Treasury secretary in the Nixon and Ford cabinets. Yet, many in the Washington establishment considered Shultz a policy neo-phyte with no prior experience in foreign policy, and even less desire to learn.

Secretary of Defense, Caspar Weinberger was similarly derided as a foreign policy novice with very little experience in defense or security issues by the press and Washington establishment. But Weinberger used his past military service to replace the formal training he lacked. This experience was a salient teacher, convincing the Secretary that force should be used only when there was a limit and an exit strategy. As one scholar describes his development, serving in the military “had inculcated in him not only their needs for more and better weapons but also their determination never again to be sucked into an open-ended military action.”273 This stubbornness tied his hands in administration discussions. His reticence in using force made him a caricature, refusing to entertain the possibilities for peace through the application of force. And in the end, “Weinberger’s alliance with the military would drive other members of the Reagan administration to distraction, not only because it interfered with their agenda for redrawing the map of the world but also because it seemed so ungrateful for the Defense Department to be getting so much money and still be so reluctant to flex American muscle.”274


274 Ibid., 96
On a more personal level, Weinberger had a long history serving the President, stretching back to the 1960’s when he was an advisor to the Governor. The Defense secretary had deep respect for the ideals of Reagan, and shared in a majority of his philosophical beliefs. More importantly, Weinberger truly believed in the Reagan Revolution in foreign policy – previous administrations allowed the Soviet Union to gain relatively, and no longer did the US enjoy the dominance it once held. The primary goal for the Defense Department was to regain strength, including the development of new weapons systems that would allow American statesmen a dominant bargaining position during crisis.

Although he supported the development of a strong military and an expanded set of tools for military statecraft, Weinberger felt force should be used under strict rules of engagement. His own time as a soldier and the tumultuous years of Vietnam convinced him that war should be used only when there was strong domestic support and an exit strategy. In his words, “if you had to go to war, you vitally needed enough freedom of maneuver to allow for flanking and behind-the-lines operations . . . it was a terrible mistake for a government to commit soldiers to battle without any intention of supporting them to win, and indeed without any intention to win.”

National Security Advisor William Clark fit a familiar pattern: in general, experts treated Clark like a foreign policy and defense neo-phyte brought in by Reagan for the affiliative benefits. Clark was not going to upstage the President or cause bureaucratic headaches, and instead Clark generally chose to follow the Presidential lead by protecting him against agitators. More importantly, NSA Clark served a powerful ‘gatekeeping’

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position in the Reagan White House. Similar to the hierarchy of the Nixon advisory
structure (with the NSA serving as an information filter or gatekeeper), Clark shaped and
limited the types and tenor of advice reaching Reagan.

5.2.3 *President Reagan: preferences & dispositions*

Reagan’s interest in Lebanon was tied to the geo-strategic chessboard of the
Middle East. Lebanon bordered a Soviet client to the north and east (Syria) and an
American client to the south (Israel). If Lebanon were to fall to the Soviet bloc, there
would no longer be a buffer to the north. Importantly, this was a significant breathing
space. The mountainous terrain of Lebanon made it an ideal location for artillery, while
providing natural cover for encroaching troops. Accordingly, Reagan feared the geo-
strategic consequences of the civil war. Reagan’s main objective: containment achieved
through the application of American force.

However, President Reagan also realized that Israeli actions (including the active
support of an expanding network of settlements), combined with the anti-Americanism
sweeping the region, effectively engaged the hatred of the roughly 600,000 Palestinian
refugees (and nearly 20,000 guerrillas). Reagan understood the unpredictable and
uncertain nature of the encroaching terrorist threat, and knew conventional forces could
do little to stop a concerted effort on the part of Hezbollah and their associated splinter
groups.276 President Reagan appreciated the cost of any American action – the high risk
of an unconventional attack.

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276 Of course, Reagan did little to show good will towards Palestinian groups. For example, early in his
term, Reagan was convinced by advisors the PLO could not be a good faith bargainer in negotiations
simply because it was a front for terrorist activity. As a result, on September 1, 1982, Reagan announced
his support for Israeli settlements in the occupied territories by arguing they were not illegal and in fact
allowed by UN 242. See Agnes G. Korbani, *US Intervention in Lebanon, 1958 and 1982* (New York:
Unfortunately, Reagan was not as clear when speaking with his own advisory staff. While the public had a very clear image of Reagan as a self-assured, confident military commander striving against Communist aggression, advisors rarely knew what Reagan’s preferences actually were. Time and again, Reagan seemed to be inconsistent - one day favoring a strong military response only to flip the next day. This instability probably emerged from Reagan’s own inexperience and lack of foreign policy knowledge. Indeed, Reagan was more figurehead than policy wonk, dictating a preference to use military force, but unable to fully recognize military tactics and the cost/benefit analysis that led his advisors to their dichotomous positions. Importantly, Reagan’s loose hierarchy did not dictate clear routes of influence. Personal preferences and opinions turned into outright hostility among his principals. By not clearly specifying his goals or choosing one side, Reagan limited the impact of his advisory staff.

One author characterizes the situation as follows:

“"It was not unusual for two of the President’s closest advisors to come out of a meeting with completely different impressions of what Reagan had decided. Although he projected the image of a strong leader, Ronald Reagan frequently relied on ambiguity to resolve – or bury – the conflicts within his administration. Never one to master the intricacies of a problem, he was dependent upon his advisers to tell him not only the facts but also what they meant. When his advisers gave him conflicting opinions, when the time came for him to make a complex and truly difficult decision that only the President could make, he frequently failed. The President’s involvement in foreign affairs was episodic, anecdotal, impulsive, and rarely decisive. It was no wonder that the staff of the National Security Council later concluded that the best way to serve Reagan was to do his job for him.""

Psychologically, advisors, confidantes and biographers present a clear and concise picture of Reagan as a skilled rhetorician with a native aptitude for politics. This powerful interpersonal skill made up for his altogether lack of foreign policy knowledge and his general lack of interest in the subject. For Reagan, the world was clear: the US was
locked in a life or death struggle against an encroaching enemy. The Reagan worldview was more than just political rhetoric – Reagan viewed politics in stark, black and white terms with few gray areas. Foreign policy did not involve nuance, and as a result, Reagan expected his advisors to bring him a consensus recommendation which he could approve.278

When choosing advisors, Reagan did not use expertise or experience as his meter. Rather, Reagan chose individuals he could trust to fill the advisory roles. As one scholar describes the Reagan White House, “one’s influence on presidential decisions hinged largely on having a personal relationship with the president . . . [especially] when there was virtually no systematic, presidency sanctioned procedures or mechanisms for national security decision making at senior levels.”279 Weinberger, Shultz, Haig, Clark – all players had a long personal history with the President. As a result, experience was often ignored at the expense of familiarity – advice confirming Reagan’s beliefs usually mattered more, especially at this stage of his presidency.280 Throughout the Lebanon case, this psychological dynamic played a large role.

277 Martin & Walcott, Best Laid Plans (1988), 139.

278 An interview with a member of the State Department planning staff suggests consensus was the expectation and not the exception. Reagan did not want to decide between two or three possible policies; rather, the President preferred to follow the lead of his advisors.


280 Some argue Reagan never learned this lesson, thus setting the stage for the Iran-Contra Affair. Presidential disinterest concerning the ins and outs of foreign policy allowed bureaucratic actors to run roughshod over policies.
5.2.4 The Decision Making Process

THE FIRST DEPLOYMENT: DECISION-MAKING THROUGH AUGUST, 25, 1982

The decision to send troops on August 25, 1982 resulted from Israeli actions in 1981, and civil conflict in Lebanon. But from the beginning, the President faced a difficult tradeoff. President Reagan wanted to maintain strong ties to Israel yet remain an ‘Arab-friendly’ super power. He wanted to strike a blow against the scourge of terrorism, but not appear heavy-handed. The US wanted an independent Lebanon, free from the proxy agents of the Soviet Union (i.e., Syria and the PLO), but they did not want to play the dominant or instigating role in forcing out the outside invaders. American goals remained abstract and conflicted, attempting to walk a fine-line and not lose either Israeli or Arab allies.

Contrarily, the ever-present existential threat from militant neighbors and terrorists concretized the security demands to Israeli leadership. Begin’s government heavily relied on this specter of terrorism, justifying their buildup by pointing to an increase in terrorist attacks and the need to guarantee the security of Israeli citizens against the onslaught. The Israeli goal was liberation and not occupation – a push to liberate the center of international terrorism from within West Beirut. Indeed, Begin viewed the move in a moral light, comparing the plight of the Maronite minority to Jews before the Holocaust. Yet, realpolitik drove planning as well. The multi-ethnic, democratic, and pro-Western orientation of Lebanon convinced Israeli Defense Minister

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281 More importantly, this was connected to an impending Syrian strike – the Israeli leadership viewed this as a pre-emptive war, believing Syria would have the power to attack in 1983 or 1984.

282 As one author writes, Begin “believed that it was Israel’s duty to save the Christians” (Kirsten E. Schulze, Israel’s Covert Diplomacy in Lebanon (New York: St. Martin’s Press, Inc., 1998))
Ariel Sharon that Lebanon could be manipulated into recognizing Israel as a state. By expanding into Lebanon, Israel could strike against Syria, take out the PLO, and put an ally into power.283

Unfortunately for the Begin government, ‘Operation Peace Galilee’ stalled at the cusp of success. Ariel Sharon and Bashir Gemayel believed aerial bombardment, combined with a siege of West Beirut, would be enough to force the Palestinians out of the area.284 However, Palestinian forces were heavily armed, and could inflict heavy casualties on any force attempting urban warfare.285 The alliance between the IDF and the LAF soon soured in the face of this buildup. Bashir and his Christian forces realized any invasion attempt would be futile, costing hundreds of allied casualties (thereby weakening the possible Lebanese security forces after the war) and possibly thousands of civilian lives (thus creating Muslim suspicion and unease towards the Gemayel administration).286 Further, Bashir believed Israel promised to do all of the fighting.287 Mounting civilian casualties (caused by the incessant Israeli bombardment) forced the hand of Western powers.

283 As Kirsten Schulze describes the goals: “eliminate the Palestinian infrastructure in Lebanon, to re-establish Maronite dominance, to make peace with the ‘new’ Lebanon and to settle finally its struggle for regional hegemony with Syria by taking Syria out of the equation” (Israel’s Cover Diplomacy in Lebanon, 1998, 9).

284 Especially Yasser Arafat, whose soaring popularity presented a thorny political problem to both the Lebanese and Israeli governments.

285 The IDF suffered surprisingly heavy casualties during this early military action – one source puts the losses at 170 KIA and another 700 wounded. These numbers would be dwarfed by any incursion into Beirut. A siege seemed appropriate to the Israeli leadership when faced with these casualties.

286 As several histories note, the native Lebanese population were not supportive of Syrian or PLO influence. By aligning themselves with the IDF in an explicit manner (i.e., the combined arms of the two sides), sullied the reputation of Bashir as a sovereign, independent, Lebanese leader. Gemayel’s complicity with IDF actions began to turn native Lebanese support into hatred. See Jonathan C. Randal, Going All the Way: Christian Warlords, Israeli Adventurers, and the War in Lebanon (New York: Viking Press, 1983).
Internal disagreements and debate within the Reagan administration took shape with the re-deployment of the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) on June 6, 1982. The ceasefire delivered by Philip Habib did not stem Israeli fears of a new rash of PLO sponsored terrorist attacks. On the contrary, the Israeli government argued the ceasefire gave enemy forces sufficient respite for a counterattack against IDF units in Lebanon. More importantly, the PLO used the ceasefire to turn worldwide public opinion in their favor by painting a negative picture of the IDF assault.

The Reagan inner circle held conflicting assessments of Israeli action, and disagreed on the proper response to the new cycle of aggression. The Administration discussed two opposing strategies. On one hand, Secretary of State Alexander Haig believed the US should take a ‘soft’ approach to handling the Begin government. Of course, this was consistent with the common approach Haig took with the Israelis, as many within and outside the administration felt his relationship was too pro-Israel for effective diplomacy. The Defense Department and the Pentagon held a conflicting view. Secretary of Defense Weinberger and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) General Vessey did not believe intervention could create peace, and instead favored a public rebuke of the Israeli action. Israeli movements – especially into Beirut – would only enrage the local population. “From my point of view,” writes Weinberger, “it would

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287 As one author argues, the Maronites viewed Israel as a tactical – not strategic – ally and “expected Israel to fight their war – expel the Syrians, to evict the Palestinians, give them the presidency and the power” (Schulze, *Israel’s Covert Diplomacy in Lebanon* (1998), 135).

288 From July 24, 1981 until June 6, 1982 (the time of the Habib ceasefire), terrorists struck Israel 248 times, resulting in 29 deaths and 271 injured in Israel and abroad (Druks, *The Uncertain Alliance* (2001), 189).

289 Many accounts of the Reagan Administration and its actions in the Middle East comment on the pro-Israeli stance of Haig. Amity soon turned into rumor (as I comment on below), feeding international
have committed us far too permanently to a presence (and a responsibility) in the powder keg.”\textsuperscript{290} In essence, the debate turned on who to support, and when – Haig believed full-throated support for Israeli actions would pressure the Palestinian presence in Lebanon into accepting a peace agreement, while Weinberger believed this course would only result in a Lebanese quagmire.

Concerning the ‘Lebanon problem,’ Haig pushed the President to pressure Arafat and other Palestinian leaders into exiting West Beirut before Israel entered the city. According to Haig, peace could be achieved only after the Palestinian incentive for conflict was erased. Other advisors found fault with this line of reasoning. Both the Vice-President and National Security Advisor felt Israel was to blame for the eruption of violence. Peace would hold only when the United States put enough pressure on Israel to end occupation. To guarantee stability in the region, the United States needed to send a message to the other Arab states that they were willing to constrain their ally when needed; to become an honest broker and create a lasting peace absent Marine deployment required a strong public rebuke and silent assertions to neighboring regimes. Haig held strong, arguing this two-pronged approach would only encourage Palestinian authorities to continue their defense and prolong the civil conflict.

Reagan’s decision at this early stage charted a course between the two positions. Reagan did not publicly rebuke Israeli actions, and instead favored private messages and shuttle diplomacy. Yet the timbre of the debate sent a strong signal to Haig he would not have the control of foreign policy he desired. Indeed, against Haig’s wishes,

\textsuperscript{290} Weinberger, \textit{Fighting For Peace} (1990), 147.
administration officials privately pushed Begin’s government into restraining IDF movements, while simultaneously publicly applauding them for taking tough positions against the PLO. This inconsistency convinced the Secretary of State his advice was not going to be followed within the administration. On June 25th, Haig resigned his position. But Reagan’s decision did more than change the makeup of his foreign policy team. Rather, it signaled an appreciation for the use of force for domestic change. The use of Marine deployments turned from a purely symbolic motion to a military move – an acknowledgement the US would force the creation of a democratic, strong, central Lebanese government rather than acting as a regional policeman and quiet ethnic tensions.

The relatively mild American action did not quell the desire for a wider war on the part of Israeli and Lebanese militants. On August 3, the IDF attacked PLO centers in the heart of the city. In response, the US continued secret diplomacy through Philip Habib, trying to convince Israel continued bombing would garner unwanted attention from the Security Council, and threaten a further deterioration of public opinion. Indeed, the UN Security Council initiated debates to impose economic sanctions against Israel. Of course, debate achieved very little, putting the onus on independent states (especially the United States) to settle the conflict.

291 This was not the only foreign policy decision where Haig was rebuked. For example, the contentious debate surrounding the construction of the Urengoi pipeline also contributed to his resignation. But the resignation came at a bad time for the Reagan Administration and its dealings with Israel; as one scholar notes, the date of Haig’s resignation coincided with the heaviest day of the IDF bombardment of Beirut (Druks, Uncertain Alliance (2001)).


293 The US and its allies refused to agree to any levied sanctions, while the Soviet Union continually attempted to place sanctions.
Again, internal divisions with the administration derailed decisive action. Secretary of Defense Weinberger clearly opposed using military force to achieve peace. For the Joint Chiefs of Staff and their Pentagon planners, the insurgency (now fueled by a wave of anti-Americanism) made peacekeeping difficult if not impossible.\textsuperscript{294} Placing several thousand Marines in Beirut would not accomplish peace, and could exacerbate the situation. Stationing troops in the middle of a civil war held too large a risk. Philip Habib agreed – American troops would not be welcomed as liberators or peacemakers but rather as Western imperialists aiding their Israeli allies.

But National Security Advisor (NSA) William Clark and newly-minted Secretary of State Shultz disagreed with the doomsday scenario presented by the military. Clark echoed previous Reagan doctrine by suggesting military force, especially a much stronger force, insured peace would hold long enough to quell violence. Force could achieve political goals – especially the removal of the PLO from West Beirut. Clark painted a simple, cause and effect relationship to the President, connecting the deployment of force and response of the Lebanese guerrilla groups. As one author relates, the argument relayed the sentiment that “If the United States intervened, the PLO guerrilla fighters would withdraw. It was a short-term mission that could be quickly fixed and whose consequences could be easily anticipated.”\textsuperscript{295} Moreover, public opinion or Congressional action did not threaten to erode support for military action. Indeed, Congressional

\textsuperscript{294} The first memo (from June 19, 1982) Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General John Vessey signed in his new position argued it would “be very unwise for the US to find itself in a position where it had to puts its military forces between the Israelis and Arabs” (Quoted in Martin & Walcott, Best Laid Plans (1988), 93).

disapproval was not a concern, even though the decision violated Reagan’s promise
troops would not meet armed resistance.296 Finally, an argument captured the President’s
attention.

Yet, the President did not want to foment derision and backbiting within the
hierarchy. Clark’s argument made sense: a short, quick use of American troops to quiet
the instability in Lebanon solved the problems highlighted by Israeli actions. But this
went against the wishes and advice of his old friend and confidante, Weinberger. The
President required a decision that could satisfy both ends of the spectrum; a policy that
could gain the support (or at least, the tacit acceptance) of both sides in the debate.
Moreover, the President’s disposition favored consensus over division. Again, President
Reagan preferred certainty and solidarity in his inner circle.

The decision to deploy troops was a perfect mix of Defense Department reticence
and Department of State exuberance. Emerging from the Department of State policy
planning staff, ‘presence’ was designed to satisfy both ends of the bureaucratic debate,
creating a consensus within the inner circle. By using Marines sparingly, and limiting
their participation through a series of narrow mission directives, both sides claimed a
victory. Reagan’s decision resembled a rubber stamp, as the cobbled policy satisficed
cross-cutting bureaucratic pressures. ‘Presence’ was not a choice, but rather a consensus:

296 In both Marine interventions, Congressional action was nearly absent. For example, the Lebanon
Emergency Assistance Act (requiring Congressional approval before an expansion of hostilities or
American action) was passed 9 months after Marines were stationed in the Beirut airport. This tacit
approval of Reagan’s actions continued even as the situation on the ground deteriorated. Again, in October
1983, Congress approved an 18-month extension to American participation in the Multinational Force of
peacekeepers. In other words, Congress twice refrained from using their constitutionally granted powers to
end the mission. See David Locke Hall, The Reagan Wars: A Constitutional Perspective on War Powers
On August 25, the 32\textsuperscript{nd} MAU (Marine Amphibious Unit) began their mission as peacekeepers to separate the warring factions, accomplish the withdrawal of the PLO, and restore legitimacy to the Gemayel government. But the uncertainty of the situation, combined with the heat of the conflict, made Pentagon planners and commanders on the scene uneasy. For example, Colonel Mead (commander of the MAU) remembered the mission “focused on utilizing 32\textsuperscript{nd} MAU in the roles of disengagement; disarming; destruction of weapons; and assembling, processing, and transport/escort of the PLO. The obvious concerns of inserting some portion of the 32\textsuperscript{nd} MAU between 30,000 Israelis and 15,000 PLO and Syrian fighters were well recognized.”\textsuperscript{297} On an operational level, rules of engagement required Marines carry unloaded weapons – making them easier targets for sporadic gunfire or ambushes. Moreover, IDF cooperation was difficult. Israel stalled the Palestinian evacuation by blocking the port with gunships and inspecting all out-going freighters for weapons and criminals. The highlight of the mission occurred with the departure of Yasser Arafat: throngs of supporters and bodyguards, accompanied by French soldiers, attempted to push through American lines. Eventually, Arafat left port, and a major goal of ‘presence’ was peacefully settled.

The departure of Arafat signaled a true change in the Lebanese conflict. Getting rid of Arafat and his cadre of terrorists was the explicit goal of Israeli action at the beginning of ‘Operation Peace Galilee’ – Israeli force was not a surprise to anyone, including Arafat. As one scholar relates “Israel telegraphed its invasion of Lebanon the way bad prizefighters telegraph punches. Yasser Arafat was so sure the invasion was coming that for months in 1982 he entertained foreign visitors late at night by drawing

sketches explaining just how the Israelis would do it.”

With the departure of Arafat, the IDF ostensibly accomplished their main goal of ‘Operation Peace Galilee.’ Since Israel no longer held their ‘terrorism card,’ they would come to the diplomatic table and agree to a pullout.

Conventional wisdom suggests the first American peacekeeping action was a true success. Greater bloodshed was averted, violence among the varied civil factions calmed, a new leader (Bashir Gemayel) solidified a legitimate base of power for the new Lebanese administration, and the PLO was pushed from West Beirut. More importantly, the American cost was extremely low. Because of the success, American leaders decided to pull the Marines 17 days after landfall – earlier than the Pentagon expected. American military action also created the opportunity to roll out the ‘Reagan Peace Plan.’ Interestingly, the plan reversed previous Reagan positions by calling for a freeze on Israeli settlements in the West Bank, recognizing the legitimacy of a Palestinian ‘entity’ in the region linked to Jordan, and a re-iteration for Arab states to recognize Israel. The successful use of force legitimized continued US efforts to bring the participants back into a peaceful settlement.

However, the Lebanese war had not ended, and plans for a comprehensive peace were overturned by an upsurge in civil violence. Marines would return to Beirut, and this time, the native population would not greet them with open arms. As one PLO soldier commented, “I’ll tell you what this war taught us. It taught us the real enemy is the

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299 This uncharacteristic plan led one scholar to characterize the diplomatic endeavor as “a somewhat sophisticated and un-Reagan like document, representing, perhaps, the high point of State Department influence during his presidency” (Winslow, *War and Politics* (1996), 238). Of course, the diplomacy was still-born, as Israel rejected the plan. To Begin and Sharon, the plan’s emphasis on getting closer to Arab
United States. It is against you that we must fight. Not just because your bombs killed our people, but because you closed your eyes to what is moral and just.\textsuperscript{300}

THE SECOND DEPLOYMENT: DECISION-MAKING FROM SEPTEMBER 29\textsuperscript{TH} THROUGH PULL-OUT (FEBRUARY 1983)

On September 14th, Bashir Gemayel, the newly elected leader of Lebanon, was assassinated while attending a party meeting. The bombing shattered the relative calm left by the forced withdrawal of the PLO, and signaled an end to Israeli plans for Lebanon. Begin and Sharon would not have taken the chances they did without the support of the native Lebanese forces. More importantly, Begin and Sharon cultivated a relationship with Gemayel, hoping to gain a Christian ally on the northern border. The leadership of Bashir insured the satisfaction of one of the prime justifications for Operation Peace Galilee – protection of northern settlements from guerrilla attacks. Instead, with the assassination of Bashir, Lebanese leaders stepped away from recognizing the Israeli state. And in the end, the only victory “which could be claimed was the expulsion of the PLO from Lebanon, and even that is debatable.”\textsuperscript{301}

A fresh set of civil conflicts arising in the aftermath of the assassination broke the uneasy civil peace, as supporters of Gemayel took their vengeance on Muslim refugees. Beginning September 17\textsuperscript{th}, Christian militiamen sneaked across Israeli lines into two

\textsuperscript{300} Quoted by Mackey, \textit{Lebanon: Death of a Nation} (1989), 181. The soldier was referring to the cluster munitions used by the Israeli air force. Cluster bombs were explicitly limited by the Reagan administration; when they were sold to Israel, they were to be limited to very specific circumstances. Although the Reagan administration did object to the use of the clusters during Operation Peace Galilee, they did not stop arms sales to Israel. As the PLO soldier commented, many in the Middle East viewed this complicity with disdain.

\textsuperscript{301} Schulze, \textit{Israel’s Covert Diplomacy in Lebanon} (1998), 135.
refugee camps. For a period of thirty-eight hours, 200 Lebanese militiamen massacred nearly a thousand unarmed Muslim refugees. Rumored IDF complicity in the massacre quickly spread across the countryside, creating the conditions for an even larger civil conflict.

Again, the US decided to send Marines to intervene in the conflict. On September 28, Marines re-deployed as members of an international Multi National Force (MNF).302 The President “felt it was necessary to have the force back in Lebanon even though this time it had no mission other than to ‘establish a presence.’”303 Contrary to the specific time frame attached to the initial mission, American Marines faced an open-ended deployment and energized opposition. In the meantime, diplomacy continued to operate, as Habib and the State Department attempted to create a comprehensive peace agreement.

The second decision – to redeploy the Marines after the abrupt departure on September 10th – was more informal and limited than the first. Indeed, one author, quoting a former official, claims the decision was made over a conference call between Clark, Shultz and Weinberger. Or as another participant relates, the decision was an automatic reflex. No debate between the principals occurred, no disagreement, and no examination of the pros and cons. Advisors relied on the success of the first mission, suggesting low risk and even lower possibility ethnic war would continue. Even the decision to use Marines was an offhand plan. According to a former NSC staffer, “When

302 Marines were following the lead of French and Italian troops who re-entered Beirut a day earlier.

303 Weinberger, Fighting for Peace (1990), 152.
the Defense Department agreed to send troops, they did everything they could to deploy the worst possible choice of force. They picked the Marines because they were available.304

Yet, there was internal disagreement concerning the deployment, as the Defense Department, State Department, and National Security Council fought for turf. William Clark and George Shultz would continually ‘gang up’ on the arguments presented by the military chiefs and Caspar Weinberger, often through the use of subordinates and deputies. For example, Robert ‘Bud’ McFarlane, Deputy to NSA Clark, argued in favor of a large American contingent to not only create peace, but force out both Syria and the IDF. Only a new MNF, led by a larger Marine presence, could ensure peace through forcefully ejecting enemy troops from Lebanese territory. In the face of these attacks, Weinberger and Clark reiterated the need for short-term, well-supplied Marines. Absent an exit strategy or clear set of objectives, any Marine deployment would not work. Anything more than a small presence only placed more troops in harms way, while exacerbating anti-Americanism in the broader Lebanese population.

Similar to his advisors, Reagan felt the previous engagement was a success – the US accomplished diplomatic goals through the application of a preponderance of force. This seemed to favor Clark and Shultz: a small amount of force worked to calm the violence, an even greater amount could now be used without risking casualties. For Reagan, the counter-arguments of the military seemed consistent with their negative assessments of any use of force. But the stubbornness of Weinberger began to sound like a broken record. As one scholar argues “The more Weinberger said no or stalled, the

greater the temptation to bypass him became.” Weinberger’s failure to change the
debate and prevent the redeployment would hold severe consequences, as Marines were
sent as an interpositionary force due to “a great eagerness by the State Department and
the NSC staff, and by Israel, to have an American troop presence in Lebanon even
without any defined objective.”

Although the second deployment lacked a calendar, planners did not intend
Marines to be stationed for a long period of time or meet stringent opposition. Military
planning followed this assessment to the detriment of Marine safety. As Weinberger
noted in his memoirs, the second MNF was so lightly armed that groups realized the US
could not (much less would not) present a strong disincentive for conflict. Armed groups
started to view Marines as “simply a prop for an unpopular Lebanese government whose
writ was too weak to run except in the areas where the MNF was billeted, and certainly
not elsewhere in Lebanon . . . the second MNF was not designed or intended to deal
militarily with any other forces.” A commander on the ground, Lt. Col. Blankenship
related this reticence to use force, noting “it was minimal force necessary . . . we told our
Marines, ‘If a guy shoots at you and you feel it is directed fire . . . then you use minimal
force necessary to take care of the situation . . . Just because a man in shooting at you
with small arms doesn’t mean that you can call in naval gunfire on them or a flight of F-
14s with napalm or something like that.”

306 Weinberger, Fighting for Peace (1990), 152.
307 Ibid. 154.
Perhaps the biggest obstacle to the peace process was peace itself. As the status quo concretized, principal actors began to play the US for a better deal. Israel, Syria, Lebanon, and the PLO recognized the US did not want to stay in the region as a peacekeeper; in other words, the US was not willing to pay the military price to guarantee peace. Further, the period of peace allowed Lebanese militias to rearm, as Syria began funneling Soviet arms into the hands of their Palestinian allies. Using the UN and other multinational forums sent a message to the regional players: “Attempting to sponsor various settlements rather than take the lead meant that poor Gulliver was likely to get torn up in the Middle East souq again . . . [Amin] Gemayel, Assad, Begin, and Arafat used Reagan as a means of furthering their particular goals, mostly to block each other as much as possible and hold onto what they already had.”

Operational directives did eventually change with the deterioration of diplomacy. In response to re-armed Syrian forces and secret re-deployment of PLO guerrillas, troops improved their readiness for military action. For example, on March 25th, Marines started patrolling with loaded magazines in their weapons – a drastic change from the beginning of the deployment. Less than a month later (April 18th), the US embassy in Beirut was destroyed by a car bomb. The attack killed 63 embassy workers (including 17 Americans). As a result, the Pentagon added a new mandate to the ‘presence’ mission – embassy protection. Simultaneously, the unit changed their rules of engagement to “permit a Marine to fire if he ‘perceived’ hostile intent.”

311 Ibid., 63.
Eventually, domestic pressures on both Israel (the IDF faced increasing amounts of guerrilla activity within Beirut) and the United States (especially news of the embassy bombing) forced officials on both sides to seriously consider an agreement for lasting peace. These pressures convinced even Shultz peace could hold if the US promised to serve as guarantors to the new government, and publicly threaten to deteriorate the US-Israeli relationship. Shultz’s change of heart was dramatic. For example, on October 19th, Shultz took a hard line with the Lebanese government, arguing that Israeli security concerns were legitimate, and necessitated the creation of security zones to be patrolled by the IDF. When the Defense Minister of Lebanon objected to any plan that included partitions, Shultz responded “Elie, I must remind you Israel won the war, you lost.”

As diplomacy stalled, Shultz realized things had to change – including getting tough on Israel.

In May 1983, Israel and Lebanon agreed to a comprehensive plan allowing for a partial Israeli withdrawal.

Reagan outlined American responsibilities (as the guarantor of the peace) in a letter to the diplomatic delegation: “ensure full observance of the Agreement, and as it deems appropriate . . . the United States will support, in appropriate ways, the economic reconstruction of Lebanon and the development of its armed forces in order to assist the government of Lebanon in fulfilling its responsibilities under the

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313 The US attempted a number of sticks throughout this diplomatic sequence, including suspending the sale and delivery of F-16s. But as the case shows, the May 17th Agreement really rises out of domestic pressures in the US following the diplomacy bombing.

314 The US paid a high price for the Israeli withdrawal, including the sale of 75 F-16s (See Winslow, War and Politics in a Fragmented Society (1996), 241).
Unfortunately, the agreement was rejected by Syrian refusals to move their troops. In the agreement, Israel agreed to withdraw troops from Beirut only if Syria moved their troops. As a result, Syria enjoyed a de facto veto on the agreement – to stop the process, they only needed to maintain their lines. An official commented: “I developed this terrible image of Assad as Red Auerbach puffing away on his victory cigar.”

The principal decision-makers realized the MNF could not hold without a true diplomatic agreement. And the longer the peace talks lasted, the greater the chance for military engagement between American peacekeepers and armed factions in Lebanon. Once the May Agreements fell apart, Weinberger sensed an opportunity to change the policy, and he pressed the issue of pulling the Marine presence. Battle lines reformed along familiar lines: Weinberger and the JCS were in favor of withdrawal, while the NSC and the State Department wanted to hold until diplomacy worked.

Weinberger clearly felt there was no chance for Syrian or Israeli movement. Even with the best efforts of the peace delegation, Syria and Israel both wanted control of Lebanon for strategic reasons. Continued patrols, mixed with re-armed and active factions, only endangered Marines at the airport, especially since they were understaffed to continue the peacekeeping mission. Of course, Shultz disagreed, arguing instead that the May 17 Agreements could work – they just needed time and increased American

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316 Weinberger says Shultz knew of this issue, but refused to understand the downside; namely, that the peace agreement would not be worth more than the paper it was written on.

pressure on Syria and Israel. Shultz pushed his perspective with Reagan, arguing the US would lose face in the region – an argument that Reagan agreed with. Their argument “played to that worry of the President’s by telling him that it would always appear that we had ‘cut and run,’ that we have been ‘driven out,’ and similar phrases designed to encourage the belief that only if we stayed in Lebanon could we demonstrate our manhood or secure any of the objectives if we wanted.”

American troops were involved in greater levels of military action throughout the summer of 1983. Lebanese civilians and Muslim militias turned on patrolling Marines, and armed factions started to use Americans for target practice. For example, on July 22, Marine and LAF (Lebanese Armed Forces) positions near the airport were shelled by Muslim militias. No longer were Marines an auxiliary target for the armed factions, but rather the principal target. Fighting continued throughout the month, culminating with widespread violence between Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) and Muslim militias.

Perhaps the biggest change occurred with American bombardment of Muslim and Druze militias. As the IDF pulled back, their positions were taken over by re-armed militias. Suddenly, the ethnic tables were turned, and militia groups started to seek revenge. Previous arrangements with the Maronite leadership mandated the use of force to aid the mountain towns under siege. Thus, as the siege of Dayr al-Qamar worsened, Robert McFarlane ordered the Sixth Fleet to fire (with ship-to-shore batteries) on the Muslim positions. The political side-effect was important. As one scholar commented,

318 Weinberger claims that after the May 17 Agreements, the NSC staff was busy planning on toppling other regimes in the area. In his words, the staff spent “most of their time thinking up ever more wild adventures for our troops” including the invasion of Libya with the help of Egypt. The reason: now that Lebanon was solved, and troops were in the area, it was now time to strike against problem regimes. See Weinberger, Fighting for Peace (1990), 159 for a full description.

319 Ibid., 160.
“This little noticed event had almost no effect on the military situation up on the mountain ridge, but it did compromise American neutrality in the sectarian wars of Lebanon. The Americans had entered on the side of the Christians against the Muslims.”

On the morning of October 24th, the Marines barracks (located at the Beirut airport) was attacked by a suicide bomber driving a van loaded with explosives. Only five days earlier, Reagan announced troops would stay until hostilities were complete; American commitment to the peace process, and to peace in the region, was set in stone. The bombings changed the calculation. In one day, terrorists sent a salient message the US would have to risk many more men to fully achieve their goals. Importantly, there was a widespread belief in the administration the bombing would only encourage Syria into continuing their belligerence, making the already demoralized Marine contingent a target of the Syrians. While Reagan continued to push for stronger military action in retaliation for any aggression directed towards Marines, the writing was on the wall.

Reagan agreed with the arguments of a Defense Department memo (written in early December) that suggested the May 17th agreements were a hindrance to the withdrawal of foreign forces, and that “the solution to the Lebanese crisis was not to be found through a continued or increased employment of American military force.”


321 Most pundits agree the barracks served a salient reminder of the failure of the peace process. One author writes, “this was the highest loss of life in a single day since Iwo Jima in 1945 . . . The suicide attack by a single terrorist changed the course of American presence in Lebanon” (Frank, *US Marines in Lebanon, 1982 – 1984* (1987), 3).

322 For example, on December 2, a meeting between the principals (McFarlane, Bush, Reagan, Shultz, Deputy DoD Paul Thayer) concluded the US should take a stronger stance in responding to any acts of aggression.
AFTERMATH

On February 5th, Muslim members of the LAF left their ranks due to heavy-handed responses against the Amal militia (a pro-Khomeini, shia group). After a night of heavy fighting within Beirut, the LAF turned once again to the US Marines for protection. But this time, public opinion, combined with a deteriorating security situation, convinced officials all was lost. The Reagan Administration announced Marines were pulling out on February 7th, officially withdrawing February 27th. The announcement and withdrawal were coupled with continued ship-to-shore bombardment of Syrian and Palestinian positions, hoping to provide enough protection for a relatively peaceful withdrawal. On February 27th, Reagan Administration officials formally announced they “would no longer by actively involved in the search for Lebanese reconciliation.”324 The toll: “In the 18 months that the MAUs were in Lebanon, 238 Marines died and 151 were wounded. Another 40 Marines suffered non-battle injuries, and seven were wounded as the result of the accidental discharge of weapons.”325

A conventional argument surrounding the “failure” of Lebanon blames President Reagan for American actions (or inaction as the case may be) that collapsed possibilities for peace. As one author comments, “This intervention was facilitated, locally, by the loose central authority in Lebanon and the lack of Lebanese nationalistic consciousness. It failed, however, because of the presence and power of an American president whose


understanding of the problem was limited, whose initiative was incomprehensible, and whose performance did not match his promises.\textsuperscript{326} In effect, the US chose a side without recognizing the pitfalls and dangers of the decision.

Yet, this trite explanation misses an important point: Reagan merely followed the consensus decision of his inner circle. But presence was a ‘stop-gap’ solution – something created to present a veneer of agreement. In reality, the inner circle was split on the issue of intervention. For several high-ranking members, intervention in Lebanon was fraught with difficulty – by closely following the geo-strategic logic of balancing, officials in the State Department and National Security Council underestimated the danger of putting Marines between enemies. Weinberger consistently remarked to the President that he could not send in troops without a full and complete understanding of the situation, and a clearly defined objective.

Perhaps the most salient lesson of the actions in Lebanon deals with this operational uncertainty. In both deployments, American Marines were unsure of their mission and even more perplexed by what they were to do. As one author describes it, “the key fact is that the Marines were sent to Lebanon to deter rather than incite violence. If the Marines were sent to Lebanon to wage war, their orders did not say so: their mission was to ‘establish an environment’ within which the LAF could carry out its responsibilities.’ If the President meant to order the Marines to fight, he did it in a roundabout way.”\textsuperscript{327}


\textsuperscript{327} Hall, \textit{The Reagan Wars} (1991), 150.
The Long Commission concurred. Incomplete operational directives and an uncertain mission were misinterpreted at all levels: “so-called ‘presence’ mission was not interpreted the same way by all levels of command . . . the commission concluded that high-level decisions regarding Lebanon were characterized by an emphasis on military operations and expansion of the roles, despite the fact that the security of the Marines continued to deteriorate as progress toward a diplomatic solution slowed. Decisions affecting the role of the MAUs were taken without clear understanding that the conditions under which the Marines first deployed to Lebanon had changed; that the nature of the American military involvement in Lebanon had changed, and that the expansion of our military involvement in Lebanon greatly increased the risks of the Marines.”328 Marines would pay the human cost behind the lack of intelligence.

5.2.5 Analysis: Successful Advising

As the case relates, the main faultline in the intervention decision pitted the State Department (led by Alexander Haig and George Schultz) and the National Security Advisor (William Clark) against the Defense Department (Caspar Weinberger) and the head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (Gen. Vecsey). State and the NSC did not believe diplomacy could solve the intractable conflict; as a result, the only way to aid Israel was to send in troops, calm the insurgents, force Arafat to leave, and maintain Israeli gains in Lebanon. Weinberger and the Chiefs did not understand why other advisors were willing to put troops in harm’s way – especially since they lacked a true vision of what the deployment would resemble. The question important to this dissertation: how did the ‘hawks’ in State and the NSC win the debate?

328 Conclusion from the Long Commission.
First, Schultz was able to convince President Reagan through a simplification argument. Schultz argued a quick, simple use of force would calm the civil conflict, force out Palestinian insurgents, and allow diplomacy to work. Not only would Reagan prevent Lebanon from falling to the Communist bloc, he could help the Israeli security situation by eliminating a terrorist base of operations. All of these arguments worked together, creating an easy solution to a complex problem.

Yet the deciding factor was consensus among the inner circle. As officials noted, ‘presence’ satisfied the basic requirements for both State and Defense – placing troops in harm’s way would calm the internal security situation, but limiting their mission and role on the ground appealed to reticence from the Defense department. Reagan seized upon the bureaucratic bargain, and signed off on the limited engagement. The failure to change the decision after the second re-deployment, buttressed by the arguments of Shultz in favor of the status quo, made the American Marine contingent a prime target for Muslim extremists. A series of gaffes only heightened the tension, and fed the misperception of American hatred of Lebanese Muslims.

The second deployment presented yet another opportunity for State to continue their argument. Again, the first deployment met with great success: the goals of the administration had been met. Indeed, absent Bashir’s assassination, the diplomatic endeavor would have won out. To solve the conflict after the assassination, Reagan turned to the status quo. Operational momentum favored the use of Marines, and even Weinberger felt troop re-deployment could work, as evidenced by the lack of a debate. Only after the American embassy bombing did Reagan perceive a salient signal to change course. But by then, it was too late, and American Marines were caught in a quagmire.
5.2.6 Analysis: Failed Advising

Perhaps the most striking part of the Lebanon case is Reagan’s dismissal of Caspar Weinberger. As mentioned in the case study, Weinberger was a close friend of the President, spanning back to his days as a confidante in charge of the California campaign. But Reagan did not follow his friend, instead favoring the use of force. Weinberger’s experience had little impact on the decision.

Perhaps the failure to invoke experience was tied to Reagan’s perception of Weinberger’s expertise. Indeed, a consistent trend in the Lebanon case is the rejection or dismissal of expert advice. Reagan simply did not think his military advisors presented a valid argument. As Philip Stodard, a former administration official, argues “There was no connection between the people who knew something about Lebanon and those who made the decisions at the top. It was part of the ideological baggage that the Reagan administration brought with it. They believed the bureaucracy was full of candy-ass wimps who were afraid to do anything.”329 This dynamic does help to understand why Shultz ‘won’ the debate. Reagan truly believed his old confidante and his Pentagon cronies lacked the will to ‘do something.’ Though military experts continually argued against the intervention, and the Pentagon reminded the President they did not know how to conduct the mission – Reagan intervened.

In hindsight, Caspar Weinberger felt personally responsible for the missteps during the Lebanon engagement, ruing his inability to persuade President Reagan. In his auto-biography, Weinberger commented “Lebanon will, in my mind, always stand as a major reproach to me because I was not more persuasive, in all the meetings we held, to

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prevent the worst loss of military lives to occur during the time I was at the Pentagon.”

Weinberger had the answer; he just could not convince the President he was right. His base of power – experience and expertise – backfired on him. The consistent arguments against the use of force (shaped by his understanding of the Vietnam conflict) prevented him from persuading the president. On the other hand, Shultz catered to Reagan’s ideological profile: force could be used – and used effectively – if only it was allowed. In this case, the Secretary of State won the military decision (over the objections of the military) merely because he mirrored Reagan’s beliefs in a salient way.

5.3 The failure to intervene: Rwanda, 1994

5.3.1 Background

Many works agree the eruption of violence in 1994 had its roots in the Rwandan colonial experience. Rwandans identified themselves according to ‘orders’ rather than ethnicities; Tutsi customarily herded cattle (a status-serving occupation) while Hutu were farmers or peasants. Vast historical experience traditionally placed Tutsi above and over Hutu, as Tutsi chieftains dictated laws and social rules to their ‘hilltop’ fiefdoms in a monarchical patron-client system. Patterns of violence between the two groups began when colonial governments and Catholic missionaries clashed. This political disagreement exacerbated the underlying division of Hutu and Tutsi, ushering in periods

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330 Fighting for Peace (1990), 173.

of domestic upheaval and setting the stage for the widespread killings. External competition between colonial European powers provoked underlying social divisions in Rwanda, letting the proverbial genie out of its bottle.

Violence in the 1990s followed an inglorious historical pattern. From 1959 through 1963, Rwanda experienced a wave of violence (roughly 50,000 Rwandans killed) as Hutu elites fought for access to the closed system. As one author describes the situation, the Hutu, “deprived of all political power and materially exploited by both the whites and the Tutsi, were told by everyone that they were inferiors who deserved their fate and also came to believe it. As a consequence, they began to hate all Tutsi . . . since all Tutsi were members of the ‘superior race’.”

When Hutu leaders finally defeated their rivals, they created a mono-ethnic ‘democracy’ that lasted for 30 years. After gaining the instrument of government, Hutu elites institutionalized marginalization of Tutsi and prevented them from participating in the political system. The resulting crackdown led to sporadic violent outbursts and refugee flows to neighboring Uganda.

When the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) attacked in 1990, this entrenched hatred catalyzed challengers to the Habyarimana regime. Trained by the civil conflict in Uganda and fueled by the support of nearly 700,000 refugees, the RPF enjoyed an upsurge in support.

More importantly, the early successes of the RPF maneuvers convinced Rwandan Tutsis that Hutu rule would end, encouraging them to join the outside marauders. Extremist elements in the Habyarimana regime became fearful of

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334 In 1991, there were approximately 5,000 members of the RPF. At the time of the 1994 genocide, there were 50,000 guerrillas.
the rising rebellion, treating the RPF as a “direct agent in internal Rwandan politics”\textsuperscript{335} that threatened the existence of all Hutu. Radical Hutu elements initialized planning to retain their hold on power by coordinating a massive internal war on the native Tutsi population.

Rather than aid the politically disenfranchised Tutsi, the attack by the RPF only convinced moderate Hutu militiamen were going to kill their families. State radio in Rwanda (controlled by the Hutu government) spread rumors of ‘cleansing’ as the RPF marched towards Kigali. But in the background, Hutu death squads organized to correct mistakes of the past. Gerard Prunier described the extremist motivation this way: “The Hutu felt that they had made a mistake by sparing the women and children in 1963. Too many exiles had been allowed to flee, and now they were returning to take vengeance. Too many Tutsi had survived within Rwanda, and now they were taking too many resources and acting as a potential fifth column within the country. This time, the Hutu elite decided, they would deal especially with the women and children so that there would be no third round, no continuing threat from the outside. As for international opinion, the French would protect them.”\textsuperscript{336}

International peace-making efforts inflamed this tension, forcing the Hutu leadership to relinquish their stranglehold on government and allow Tutsi participation. From July 1992 through August 1993, outside powers directed the Arusha talks as a multi-state peace conference devoted to ending the civil conflict. The solution imposed by these outside actors was a domestic change in government; the institution of a power-


\textsuperscript{336} Prunier, “Genocide in Rwanda” (2001), 115.
sharing parliamentary system to replace the Hutu-dominated presidential system.

Western powers optimistically believed Arusha would be a cheap way to achieve peace and guarantee a true, shared government.

Initially, participants left the conference optimistic for the future of Rwanda. Along with a cease-fire, the peace agreement primed the political system for a democratic, multi-party transition, and the end of embedded political discrimination. But internal Rwandan political pressures forced President Habyarimana’s hand; and in response, the regime began to back away from promises in the Arusha Accords.337 To maintain power in this new system, the Hutu leadership “had to achieve two things: one was to drape themselves with the mantle of legitimate power in order to benefit from the instinctive Rwandese cultural bent towards obeying authority, and the second was to instill a powerful, all-encompassing fear of the dreadful change evil strangers were about to inflict.”338 The peace plan suffered from a fatal flaw: Arusha granted military power to the Hutu dominated government. Provisions of the agreement allowed Hutu extremists to maintain control of important governmental institutions and the military. Rather than set the stage for a peaceful transition, the Western imposed agreement only provided an incentive to Hutu extremists and act soon. As one author commented, “the closer the Arusha agreement came to be realized, the more determined became the extremists to derail it by means of a coup and mass murder.”339 Outside mediators did not lessen

337 Indeed, after signing the agreement, Habyarimana reportedly called the plan just a “piece of paper,” and he had no intention of following through with most of the points of the agreement (quoted in Astri Suhrke and Bruce Jones, “Preventive Diplomacy in Rwanda: Failure to Act or Failure of Actions?” in Opportunities Missed, Opportunities Seized: Preventive Diplomacy in the Post-Cold War World, Bruce W. Jentleson, ed., Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2000), 244).

tension or sow seeds of peace, but threatened Hutu leaders. Habyarimana’s assassination created the opportunity to use the RPF threat and centuries of tension to tighten their hold on Rwandan politics. By the time the killing subsided in 1994 (a period roughly lasting 100 days), experts estimate that 500,000 to 800,000 Rwandans were murdered.  

The remainder of the chapter explores the decision making process of the Clinton Administration. International advocates consistently asked for aid, arguing military force – any force – could provide a viable deterrent threat to the genocidaires. Much like the case of Lebanon, experts felt a military presence could save the lives of thousands, and mitigate the humanitarian cost to the great powers. Even when faced with these clarion calls for aid, the Clinton Administration refrained from placing Marines into the fray. As I show, the answer to this reticence is found in the expert use of access, as members of the Clinton inner circle manipulated the hierarchy to prevent dissonant voices and opinions from reaching the President. The action, while limiting the cost in American lives, resulted in a loss of international stature – a loss bemoaned by President Clinton in the latter years of his administration.

5.3.2 Advisors and their preferences

Though Rwanda is a prime example of a missed opportunity or non-decision, the list of primary participants was quite high. A brief list of prime movers includes Secretary of State Warren Christopher, Special Assistant to the National Security Council Richard Clarke, National Security Advisor Anthony Lake, Ambassador to the

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339 Suhrke and Jones, “Preventive Diplomacy in Rwanda: Failure to Act or Failure of Actions?” (2001), 244. A second problem was found in the French support of the Hutu leadership. Hutu extremists believed the genocide would occur without end merely because of the past French support of their positions. See Prunier, The Rwanda Crisis (1995) for a discussion of the detrimental impact of this one-sided support.

340 The numbers represent nearly 11% of the entire population (and nearly ¾ the population of Tutsi in Rwanda).
United Nations, Madeline Albright; Secretary of Defense William Perry. In particular, the actions of Richard Clarke, Warren Christopher and Tony Lake played large roles in preventing dissenting information from reaching the President.

Richard Clarke had a long history in defense issues. Starting out in the Defense Department, Clarke developed a specialty in intelligence, terrorism and non-traditional aspects of security under the Reagan and Bush Administrations. During the Rwanda crisis, Clarke played a large role in convincing other members of the inner circle to use the United Nations. In particular, Clarke authored PDD 25, setting limits on the use of force to ease humanitarian crises.

Warren Christopher was the elder statesman of the Clinton Administration, having served an important role as Deputy Secretary of State in the Carter Administration. But like his compatriots during the Rwanda case, Christopher did not see the benefit of unilateral action to end the violence. In some ways, the experience of the Carter Administration loomed large, as Christopher did not want Clinton to fall into the same ‘Carter malaise.’ Throughout the Rwanda case, Christopher was relatively disinterested; rather Christopher gave his Deputy day-to-day duties as he concentrated on other hot spots in the world.

And finally, National Security Advisor Tony Lake was the third major player during the Rwanda decision. While Lake was an academic when picked by President Clinton, he served significant stints in the State Department under Presidents Johnson, Nixon, and Carter. Again, Lake counseled against involvement in Rwanda, continually suggesting to the President that Rwanda held little benefit and large risk. Further, Lake

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341 Of particular note, Christopher played an important part in winning the release of the 52 Iranian hostages in 1981.
argued the President should wait until the violence ended before sending in troops – and then, only after multilateral force was used.

Unlike the previous cases discussed in this dissertation, there was very little disagreement among the principals of the inner circle. Members of this elite group seemed to agree Rwanda held only the possibility for failure. There just were no political incentives to intervene. Nevertheless, a number of lower members of the hierarchy disagreed with this ennui. Lower level experts in the State Department, Defense Department, public intellectuals, and even the members of the Rwandan diplomatic staff pushed for help and aid. Individuals of this minor cast (including Prudence Bushnell, George Moose, John Shattuk, George Ward, and Kevin Aniston) represented the ‘silent majority’ in the decision. As the case shows, the countervailing opinion of these members held little sway over the President simply because they never reached him. The inner circle prevented these opinions from reaching the President’s ear.

5.3.3 President Clinton: Preferences and Dispositions

The Clinton White House attempted to serve the President’s own capacities to understand new information, and his desire for discussion. Indeed, the President enjoyed debate and learning the intricacies of a decision -- to the detriment of his personal life and political requirements. Clinton organized his advisory staff to foment dissent and disagreement (much the way Franklin D. Roosevelt did). For the President, the marketplace of ideas worked in favor of improved decision-making, sharpening opinions and creating incentives for better decisions.342

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Yet, Clinton did not have a well developed foreign policy mind. The President won the election by focusing attention away from foreign policy towards a domestic agenda. President Bush clearly held the upper hand on foreign policy issues, having successfully steered the ship of state through the rough transition from bipolar superpower competition to unipolar hegemony. And in the early days of his administration, the President let his foreign policy advisors run decisions, as he focused on massive social programs. The President simply did not hold much interest in Rwanda. Indeed, reports suggest the President was involved in the case only when a human rights activist (named Monique Mujawamariya) was threatened. Clinton met and befriended Mujawamariya at a conference in 1993, and used contacts to find her whereabouts after the outbreak of violence. After verifying her safety, President Clinton ignored the conflict.343

Moreover, the attention of the foreign policy hierarchy was split across several important issues, as Rwanda was not the only humanitarian crisis at play in the world. Violence in both the Balkans and in Haiti took most of the President’s agenda – an agenda increasingly narrowed by security statements through the NSC. One of the first statements from the Clinton Administration was a document that concretized requirements for humanitarian intervention in the form of a Presidential Decision Directive (PDD 25) in the months before the April outbreak in violence.344 National Security Assistant Richard Clarke spearheaded the movement to specifically list conditions that had to be satisfied to approve the use of American force for humanitarian

uses. PDD 25 specifically listed 16 factors, centered on three axes: “US participation had to advance US interests, be necessary for the operation’s success, and garner domestic and congressional support.”\textsuperscript{345} In the words of Anthony Lake, “our purpose is to use peacekeeping selectively and more effectively than has been done in the past.”\textsuperscript{346} This highly restrictive set of criteria had its share of critics; for example, Representative David Obey of Wisconsin, characterized it, “zero degree of involvement, zero degree of risk, and zero degree of pain and confusion.”\textsuperscript{347} In general, the President’s dispositions and attention clearly favored an advisory approach limiting access. As the case shows, contrary arguments never reached the President, as the inner circle protected their positions.

5.3.4 The Decision Making Process

THE BEGINNING OF THE END

Kevin Aniston (in charge of the Rwanda desk at the State Department) first received news of the assassination on April $6^{th}$\textsuperscript{348} Aniston immediately informed his superior, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Prudence Bushnell, who then sent a message to Warren Christopher. From the beginning, Bushnell realized the potential for widespread violence, and relayed her fears in a memo to the Secretary of State: “If, as it appears, both Presidents have been killed, there is a strong likelihood that widespread

\textsuperscript{344}Although the PDD was officially accepted on May 3 – nearly a month after the outbreak in violence – discussions began months before.

\textsuperscript{345}See Power, \textit{A Problem From Hell} (2002), 342.


\textsuperscript{347}Power, \textit{A Problem From Hell} (2002), 342.
violence could break out in either or both countries, particularly if it is confirmed that the plane was shot down. Our strategy is to appeal for calm in both countries, both through public statements and in other ways.349 Bushnell’s warning on the 6th eerily echoed an assessment initially posted in a memo sent weeks before (March 25th).350 The first task for the State Department was to collect relevant intelligence and form a strategy to rescue any Americans still in country. Warren Christopher placed Bushnell in charge of a “24 hour” interagency working group that served as the nerve center for incoming intelligence in the early moments of the conflict.

While the assassination was a surprise, the ensuing outbreak of violence was predicted by experts months in advance.351 The nine months between the signing of Arusha and the assassination of Habyarimana was a period of preparation for the genocidaires. State Department experts and United Nations officials knew a written strategy for genocide existed.352 Indeed, in January 1994, a desk-level analysis conducted by the CIA pointed to the possibility of genocide-level violence that could result in a half-million casualties.353

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348 Even today, there is a mythos surrounding the assassination, with explanations ranging from the probable (members of the Hutu military elite shot down Habyarimana to shore up government control) to the absurd (French black ops assassinated Habyarimana to cover up arms deals).


350 This early memo was a report on a meeting Bushnell attended with Habyarimana and the RPF leadership over violations of Arusha. Bushnell warned participants the US would not support a continuation of UNAMIR without substantial improvement and cooperation on the part of both sides. See “DAS Bushnell Meets Habyarimana and RPF,” March 1994.

351 See Suhrke and Jones, “Preventive Diplomacy in Rwanda” (2000).

352 While the genocide was not entirely surprising, the speed and organization were. For example, Habyarimana was shot down at 8:30 p.m. on April 6th, and roadblocks were up by 9:15. See Prunier, The Rwanda Crisis (1995) for a complete discussion on the march of the killing squads.

353 Interestingly, the United States did act to collect information shortly after the outbreak of violence. On April 8th, the US sent a secret ‘black ops’ mission to the country to ascertain the level and risk of the outbreak.
Moreover, these preparations were in plain sight of the ‘Blue Helmets’ on the ground. Commander of the United Nations troops in Rwanda, Canadian Major General Romeo Dallaire, warned the United Nations of the possibility for violence, hoping to drum up support for an expanded mission and greater presence.\textsuperscript{354} Dallaire knew Hutu extremists planned a systematic execution of moderate Hutu parliamentarians and the ‘cleansing’ of Tutsi throughout the country. Radicals were merely waiting for a trigger – a period of anarchy that would allow militias to carry out their tasks of ‘crossing names’ off their hit lists. In preparation for this onslaught, General Dallaire requested (in January) an additional 2500 troops.\textsuperscript{355}

From the beginning, American officials concentrated on evacuation and intelligence gathering, rather than action. Participants were wary of unilateral military solutions, instead turning their attention to the United Nations Security Council and multilateral military responses. Three options were actively discussed: add troops to force a ceasefire, decrease troops to a minimum necessary level (to guarantee safety of UN representatives on the ground), and a complete pullout.

The first two options directly involved the peacekeepers stationed in Rwanda to satisfy provisions of the Arusha talks. Beginning October 5, 1993, the United Nations Security Council authorized the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) to maintain peace as Rwanda transitioned to the new system of government. But the peacekeepers on the ground had limited effect on the violence, since the Security

\textsuperscript{354} This document is the (in)famous Dallaire fax, sent in January 1994 to the United Nations. Dallaire specifically noted both preparations, and the timing of the plan: the use of an instigating action for cover in a systematic assassination of Tutsis. For an interesting discussion on the politics behind burying the fax and Dallaire’s actions, see Philip Gourevitch, \textit{We Wish To Inform You That Tomorrow We Will Be Killed With Our Families: Stories from Rwanda} (New York: Picador, 1998).

\textsuperscript{355} When added to the troops already on the ground, the total would come to 5,000 UN peacekeepers.
Council failed to adequately supply the mission with material, men, and even mission objectives.\textsuperscript{356} This failure set the stage for UN complicity when violence broke out. “With only a small civilian policy unit and no human rights cell,” write Suhrke and Jones, “the mission had very limited ability to investigate violence incidents.”\textsuperscript{357} UN peacekeepers were not sure of their operational directives if violence broke out.

Appeals from commanders on the ground were ignored well into the massacre. A lack of operational inertia continually hampered efforts by troops to maintain any sense of order, and the Security Council refused to expand the role and numbers of peacekeepers, or even change mission directives.\textsuperscript{358} Unsure of the direction of multilateral operations, the United States, France, and Belgium started to pull embassy workers and troops from Rwanda. From April 9\textsuperscript{th} through the 10\textsuperscript{th}, the United States evacuated their embassy, and began a public relations offensive describing their decision.\textsuperscript{359} On the morning of April 9\textsuperscript{th}, 190 French paratroopers were sent as members of ‘Operation Amaryllis’ to rescue and provide protection for remaining French UN troops. Belgium sent 450 soldiers on April 10\textsuperscript{th} (in an operation known as ‘Operation Silverback’) to complete the pull out of all remaining Belgian troops.\textsuperscript{360} The remaining

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\textsuperscript{356} Suhrke and Jones (“Preventive Diplomacy in Rwanda” (2000)) point a finger at the lack of leadership shown by the United States. The United States had to pay 31\% of the total cost, and wanted a small peacekeeping force. As a result, the budget for the force was not formally approved until April 4, 1994 – mere days before the genocide started – and peacekeepers were forced to use equipment left over from the UN Cambodia mission (where 80 of the 300 vehicles deployed were unusable). See Power, \textit{A Problem From Hell} (2002), 342.

\textsuperscript{357} Ibid., 249.

\textsuperscript{358} In April 1994, there were roughly 2500 peacekeepers in Rwanda, most of whom were pulled out within days of the outbreak.

\textsuperscript{359} For example, Warren Christopher explained the situation on \textit{Meet the Press}, arguing that it was prudent for the United States to pull out and allow the civil violence to die out.
UNAMIR troops could do very little to stop the massacre. Without explicit orders and directives for engagement, and without an adequate transportation system to move troops, UNAMIR was limited to protecting small enclaves of Tutsi. Frightened by the killing of ten Belgian troops, the remaining UN troops did little more than protect themselves.

Members of the Clinton inner circle favored and pushed for the complete pullout of UNAMIR troops – the third of the initial option list. Uncertainty on the ground, mixed with the palpable failure of the Somalia mission, convinced advisors Rwanda could be ignored. On April 15th, Warren Christopher sent Madeline Albright to the UN to demand a full withdrawal to protect UN forces. Richard Clarke played a heavy hand in Christopher’s action. Clarke believed the civil war between the RPF and Hutu controlled Rwandan armed forces would not be eased by the presence of a humanitarian mission, but rather stall the inevitable end of conflict. But United Nations Secretary General Boutros Boutros Ghali disagreed, instead supporting a recommendation by Dallaire to buttress UNAMIR operations. Only by adding troops and expanding the operational directives to include the cessation of ethnic violence could peace be salvaged.

Overextension and national interest dominated the policy discussion in the Clinton Administration. Memos continually mentioned the lack of benefit and risks facing any deployment. For example, an April 21st communication from Assistant

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360 The Belgian public pushed the decision to pull out following the deaths of 10 Belgian peacekeepers, killed while protecting a politician hours after the assassination (Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis* (1995)).

361 After 410 Belgian troops pulled out, UNAMIR dropped to 1705 peacekeepers

362 In practice, UN troops could do little more than defend themselves – the limited operational directives handed to the force prevented them from getting involved in ending the mass murder or even protecting Rwandan civilians. See Klinghoffer, *The International Dimension of Genocide in Rwanda* (1998) for a full discussion of UNAMIR acts directly after the assassination attempt.
Secretary of State for African Affairs George Moose and acting Assistant Secretary for International Organizations Affairs George Ward to Strobe Talbott advocated UNAMIR withdrawal.\textsuperscript{364} According to Moose and Ward, not only would troops face an ever increasing danger from rebel and government troops, but the forces would not have the desired effect. Indeed, the presence of UNAMIR troops did not deter the outbreak of violence. Deputies argued instead the UN (and by extension, American support for UN action) should wait until conditions favored peacekeeping operations – after the ethnic violence subsided.\textsuperscript{365} Interestingly, the voices disagreeing with these memos came from African area experts, the Rwandan ambassador (and staff), and human rights activists.\textsuperscript{366} This rival camp argued any troop movement would deter the violence. The roving bands of murderers were lightly armed, carrying out their crimes with machetes. American troops would face little risk. Rwanda was not Somalia, where rival warlords used the Cold War conflict to arm their factions with updated weaponry.

The Clinton Administration followed the cacophony of officials arguing against an expansion of UNAMIR or a unilateral use of force. The White House actively pushed for the pullout, favoring diplomatic entreaties to Rwandan officials instead.\textsuperscript{367} A Security

\textsuperscript{363} The Clinton Administration attempted to deal with several ‘flare-ups’ around the world: Somalia, Bosnia, and Haiti.

\textsuperscript{364} More specifically, they argued all UN troops, excepting a group protecting 12,000 Tutsi in the soccer stadium, should be taken out. Any Security Council resolution proposing an expansion of the UNAMIR mission (i.e. Nigeria proposed such an option) should be vetoed.


\textsuperscript{366} In particular, Rwandan human rights activist and survivor of the initial violence Monique Mujawamariya visited Clinton officials on April 21\textsuperscript{st}, pleading for American help in ending the violence.

\textsuperscript{367} At this early stage of the crisis, the administration used a wait and see approach, using the ‘bully pulpit’ to call for peace in Rwanda. Specifically, the White House attempted to outline and highlight individuals (four members of the Rwandan military, in particular) responsible for the massacre, hoping rhetoric would slow the genocide.
Council vote April 21st followed the wishes of the Clinton Administration and European allies, formally accepting UN Security Resolution 912 to decrease the UNAMIR force to essential personnel (~ 210 troops); by April 25th, UNAMIR left Rwanda.

INTERNAL DISCUSSION AND CHANGE IN POSITION (April 25th – May 21st)

Throughout this month long period, ethnic violence spiraled out of control. After an initial outburst of systematic violence aimed at eliminating Tutsi elite and Hutu moderates, gangs of homicidal youth (known as interahamwe) started to cleanse remaining Tutsi enclaves. Mobs spread outward from population centers, reaching the rural countryside and myriad ‘safe havens.’ Mayhem replaced the methodical killing of the previous weeks, as bodies piled upon bodies.

Although violence on the ground increased, Clinton Administration officials continued to avoid the situation. Indeed, one author claims the Administration did not hold a single meeting involving high-level advisors and the President devoted to the crisis.368 Most meetings and decisions concerning humanitarian action were held at lower levels of the bureaucracy. While experts in the State Department sent memos urging action, bureaucrats in the Pentagon stalled, refusing to push a proactive agenda up the chain of command. As one author writes, “with no powerful personalities or high-ranking officials arguing forcefully for meaningful action, midlevel Pentagon officials held sway, vetoing or stalling on hesitant proposals put forward by midlevel State Department and NSC officials.”369 Without leadership or interest from above, bureaucratic politicking took over.

368 Power, A Problem From Hell (2002). The author goes on to argue that “Rwanda was never thought to warrant its own top-level meeting. When the subject came up, it did so along with, and subordinate to, discussions of Somalia, Haiti, and Bosnia” (366).
Although the Administration presented a sympathetic public face to decision making, internal debates raged within the policy hierarchy. Numbers of experts pushed their deputies into dealing with the Rwandan genocide, forcing the issue through unofficial channels. Memos show a central disagreement among policy advisors, centered on how to get involved with conflict reduction without becoming too entangled in any action. A May 1 memo describing the issues of the Interagency Working Group (IWG) exemplifies the problem. Though the group clearly favored a multilateral solution (involving the UN and other African states like Tanzania) to deal with spillover violence into Burundi and provide humanitarian assistance, officials refrained from supporting military action.370 Something as simple as counter-propaganda was thought to be ‘a significant increase’ in the American role. Memos supported a very low-level response, consisting of jamming radio transmissions, planning humanitarian relief missions (such as dropping food and medicine to refugee camps), and continuing an arms embargo.371

Unsurprisingly, these recommendations were consistent with the stance of PDD 25 (accepted and released on May 3). As a message from the President to his advisors related, the US would not unilaterally act to halt humanitarian crises worldwide.372 Instead, the US would aim to work within the UN system in a support role, contributing expertise, men, and material to solve humanitarian crises as threats to the stability of the international system. But this aid would come only after extensive collaboration and approval from Congress. The President justified inaction by referring to an executive,

369 Ibid., 373.
371 The arms embargo issue is particularly telling – the group continued to support an arms embargo even though they realized it would not end the violence since most interahamwe used machetes.
National Security directive limiting the President to use American power within UN missions by giving Congress the right of last refusal. Yet PDD 25 did not quell discussion within the administration. Indeed, the release of PDD 25 only heightened the discussion and urgency among policy experts. Two memos on May 9th (one from Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs John Shattuk, and one from the Defense Department) added to the internal debate. For example, the Defense Department blamed the inability of the Rwandan military to control the genocide, noting “The government lost control of the militias, and the massacre spread like wildfire. It continues to rage out of control.”

John Shattuk concurred, arguing in favor of military action to end the violence. Moreover, a unilateral use of force would send a strong message to African leaders the US was not going to ignore their plight – especially with the attention of the West focused in central Europe. He writes “I have come back persuaded that Rwanda is a test of our commitment to universal principles of human rights. I strongly believe the international community must demonstrate the same concern for Rwanda as we show in Bosnia lest we weaken universal standards.”

Although the Defense Department was “wary of another Somali-type imbroglio and mindful that it would be drawn into Bosnia simultaneously, [and] was particularly adamant about non-involvement in Rwanda,” opponents (such as Assistant Secretary of State George Moose and NSC Senior Director for Africa Don Steinberg) leaned towards activism.


These disagreements came to a head during an IWG meeting on May 11th. Reports of the meeting relate a deep and biting disagreement between the State Department, the National Security Advisor, and the Defense Department (especially the Joint Chiefs of Staff). Notes clearly show representatives from State and NSC supporting some kind of military involvement to force a ceasefire, rather than waiting for an end to hostilities. In contrast, representatives from the Defense Department supported a reactive approach, pushing for the creation of humanitarian camps on the border of Rwanda and Burundi staffed by troops who could maintain peace. Overall, the Defense Department was sanguine about any use of force, arguing mission objectives would have to be carefully planned and examined. As the writer of the memo suggests, “Joint Staff and we strongly object to signing up for open-ended missions that could lead to UN troops being in life-threatening situations without proper arms.” The Defense Department did not want to repeat mistakes of the past by sending in American troops without the proper support and mission objectives. Without a clear understanding of the consequences, the use of force was too risky. Representatives of the Department of Defense to the IWG refrained from agreeing to any proposal, instead supporting an examination of possible troop deployments.

The policy battle echoed throughout the administration. A meeting between US, French and Belgian representatives showed growing support for the proactive State Department position. The US representative (Africa Secretary George Moose) agreed American use of force was the only way to achieve the most pressing goals of the Rwandan conflict, including the end of violence, obtaining a ceasefire, restarting

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diplomatic initiatives.377 Success of the RPF military since the assassination suggested conflict would end only through an armed intervention by outside powers. In response to this pressure, Secretary of Defense Perry established a Rwanda task force to gain intelligence and coordinate the Defense Department position. But the Pentagon continued to refrain from agreeing to any proactive policy stance.

Eventually, the Clinton Administration had to face the issue of genocide – although there were great efforts among officials to avoid the ‘G’ word.378 Interestingly, Congress began pressuring the Administration to act. For example, a May 13th letter from James Jeffords and Paul Simon castigated the Clinton Administration for allowing the violence to continue, citing a lack of leadership and vision. It took six weeks (on May 21st) for the Secretary of State to even half-heartedly acknowledge violence reached the level of genocide, though other members of the bureaucracy were convinced much earlier of the violence; for example, Toby Gati (State Department Assistant Secretary for Intelligence and Research) argued for weeks that intelligence pointed to the occurrence of genocide.

International pressure started to rise. Throughout this period, General Dallaire (with allies on the Security Council) pushed for help; a multilateral military deployment could provide a disincentive against violence and force both sides to a peace agreement. But these arguments fell on deaf ears, as members of the Clinton inner circle refrained from entertaining the debate. In particular, Richard Clarke and Tony Lake continued to argue against a stepped up United Nations mission. Siding with the Pentagon, they

argued Rwanda did not need new troops to end the peacekeeping from within, but rather an ‘outside-in’ approach: creating safe havens along the borders. Congress widely supported this scaled back approach, with Congressmen from both sides of the aisle lauding the approach. The Clinton Administration eventually relented to international public opinion, agreeing to a scaled down version of the Dallaire plan combined with an arms embargo.

THE DENOUEMENT (May 17th – August)

On May 17th, the United Nations Security Council passed resolution 918, mandating UNAMIR II and the deployment of 5500 troops to protect Tutsis from killing squads. But even after agreeing to send aid, the Defense Department continued to stall. For example, 50 Armored Personnel Carriers were supposed to be sent on May 31st, yet did not arrive in Rwanda until July. Other states were similarly unimpressive in their follow-through: “Zimbabwe, Ghana, Ethiopia, Senegal, Zambia, Malawi, Nigeria, Congo, and Mali volunteered troops but no actual deployment took place as there were

378 Early memos and meetings skirted the issue, cautioning the use of the term because of international legal obligations. As some argue, the convoluted messages and language used by Administration spokespeople only heightened the absence.

379 The Dallaire approach was considered an ‘inside-out’ approach: start by ending violence in urban centers and pushing peacekeepers outwards to stop flare-ups in the countryside.

380 A noted exception occurred on May 13th when James Jeffords and Paul Simon sent a letter advocating a wider role in ending the violence.

381 Embargo announced on May 26th, and prevented the sale or export of arms to Rwanda. Interestingly, the US did not break diplomatic relations with Rwanda (which held the rotating seat on the Security Council during the crisis), nor send anyone to observe enforcement. Even the simplest act (such as simply jamming the vitriolic media emerging from Radio Rwanda), was ignored or not accomplished. See Klinghoffer, The International Dimension of Genocide in Rwanda (1998).

382 As one author remarks, UN Resolution 918 was “largely a delaying tactic, encouraged by the US to deflect criticisms regarding UN inaction” (Ibid., 52).

383 After the United States agreed to send the APCs, Pentagon officials stalled delivery because they did not think African UN peacekeepers could be trusted to use the equipment correctly.
problems with funding, transport, equipment, training and American moves to apply strict standards to peacekeeping operations.” Again, the Clinton Administration did not feel the costs were worth the (meager) benefits. In a speech on May 25th, President Clinton declared Rwanda not in the US national interest -- a position largely mirrored by public mood. Even the New York Times argued Rwanda was not in the national interest even if genocide was occurring.

Frustrated by the lack of action, Secretary General Boutros Boutros Ghali sent a letter to the Security Council on June 19th, decrying the massacre and implicating the West in its propagation. France responded to the challenge by promising to intervene if accompanied by African troops. Resolution 229 (ratified by the Security Council on June 22), endorsed the French plan. ‘Operation Turquoise’ launched a day later when 2500 French and Senegalese troops deployed to Rwanda to serve as peacekeepers and protect civilians. The operation lasted from June 14 through August 21 to aid the humanitarian effort. While the intervention occurred well after the beginning of the violence, authorities claimed to save thousands of lives – a small solace for the thousands of Rwandans killed by a cholera outbreak in refugee camps. On July 29th, President Clinton followed the lead of France by ordering 200 troops to occupy the Kigali airport


385 Again, the US was very apprehensive, arguing French action would not solve the political and ethnic problems on the ground. See Klinghoffer, *The International Dimension of Genocide in Rwanda* (1998) for a full discussion.

386 Other scholars hold a distinctly contrary view of the French action. For example, Philip Gourevitch writes “the single achievement of the Operation Turquoise was to permit the slaughter of Tutsis to continue for an extra month, and to secure safe passage for the genocidal command to cross, with a lot of its weaponry” (*We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will Be Killed With Our Families* (1998), 161).

387 French action was probably triggered more by the French concern of blame. As a supporter of the Hutu elite before the violence, and a secret arms supplier to Rwanda, France thought that they could be fingered
and aid the humanitarian mission. ‘Operation Restore Hope’ intended to ease the humanitarian crisis occurring within refugee camps in Zaire. But again, Congressional politics stalled the support mission, as the Senate approved only 170 out of the requested 320 million dollars for the humanitarian mission.

AFTERMATH

Conventional wisdom and historical judgment of Clinton’s actions revolve around two counterfactual arguments. One argument claims the Clinton Administration could not have done anything to save the Tutsi in Rwanda. Facts on the ground were confused and sporadic, and there were no trusted sources of intelligence to verify the ‘rumors’ of violence. Indeed, the Defense Intelligence Agency had the only American intelligence agent in the region – and he was stationed in Cameroon. Because of this, there was no good, hard data on what was actually occurring in the region. And by the time the United States could have acted, most Tutsis were dead.

Not surprisingly, American media altogether ignored the violence on the ground for several weeks. For example, in 1993, only CNN aired coverage of Rwandan politics. Even for major events, there was little to no coverage of African politics. ABC, CBS, and NBC carried a total of 66 stories on Africa in 1993, and no stories covered the


388 A notable work on Rwanda used the operation to make the argument the US could not have saved a great majority of Rwandans killed. The lack of information, combined with the speed and organization of the killing, did not allow a responsible or capable military operation. See Kuperman, *The Limits of Humanitarian Intervention* (2001).

389 The legislation contained the stipulation that troops had to leave by October 1st. See Power, *A Problem From Hell* (2002) for a full discussion on the Congressional politics.

massacre of 50,000 killed in Burundi. The April outbreak was not reported for seven days, when ABC Nightly News broke the story of the violence. Most television reports devoted to Rwanda were aired well after the first week of April, as bodies started to arrive on the banks of Lake Victoria, and refugees faced an outbreak of disease. Although most remember a lot of media attention, “in actuality, television coverage during the massacres was rather episodic and misleading, encouraging the mistaken belief that the slaughter in Rwanda was simply an example of ‘ancient tribal hatreds,’ rather than a planned, politically inspired genocide.”

A lack of good data, combined with a number of conflicting popular accounts, did not convince the decision makers genocide was occurring. As one author writes, “neither the media, the UN, human rights organizations nor the Tutsi rebels themselves initially appreciated the nationwide scope and genocidal nature of the violence . . . two weeks into it, reports suggested that only 20,000 Rwandans had been killed by both sides in a civil war that the Tutsi were winning, that was confined mainly to the capital, and in which violence was waning.” Clinton officials were unable to grasp the horror of the act; most advisors did not believe the gore was actually occurring. Confronted with the surrealism of the genocide, PDD 25 provided a way to avoid dealing with the actions. So, the horror of the symbolic hate allowed officials to pass it off as an inaccurate account.

391 Ibid., 226.


However, another argument squarely blames the Administration for its failures. Although information was not ideal, experts and embassy officials clearly knew genocide was underway. These authors argue that even a small force of peacekeepers would have prevented the death of thousands of civilians. UNAMIR, for example, was not threatened by the *interahamwe*. Outside of the deaths of the ten Belgian peacekeepers, UN troops were not targeted by the death squads – who were more intent on killing Tutsi. As one pessimistic account relates, “A realistic US military intervention launched as soon as President Clinton could have determined that genocide was being attempted in Rwanda would not have averted the genocide. It could, however, have saved an estimated 75,000 to 125,000 Tutsi from death . . . it would have been relatively easy in other respects, such as the limited military strength of potential adversaries and the country’s small size.”

But the lack of public pressure, the potential domestic cost, and the lack of elite advisors recommending the operation created a ‘perfect storm’ behind the failure of the Clinton Administration to act. In the end, the US stood still as tragedy happened. American actions were too few and too limited to escape culpability.

5.3.5 Analysis: Successful Advising

The advisory story behind the American non-decision really centers on the question of access. Tony Lake, Warren Christopher, and Richard Clarke clearly drove the process – at each step, the three members intervened to cut off or stay discussion concerning Rwanda. And although members of the foreign policy hierarchy clearly disagree with the stalled decision process, without a cause or opportunity, they were left outside of the discussion. Experts within the bureaucracy were either not asked for their advice or not listened to. The plight of Joyce Leader (Rwandan ambassador David

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Rawson’s deputy) is emblematic: “given a small room in a back office and told to prepare the State Department’s daily Rwanda summaries, drawing on press and US intelligence reports . . . despite her expertise and her contacts in Rwanda, she was rarely consulted and was instructed to deal directly with her sources in Kigali.”

As a result, administration officials refused to defer or even acknowledge the crucial advice that could have been provided by experts. Time and again, bureaucrats with knowledge and area expertise were either cut out of the process or given lip service. As one scholar characterizes the dynamic, “Throughout the US government, Africa specialists had the least clout of all regional specialists and the smallest chance of affecting policy outcomes. In contrast, those with the most pull in the bureaucracy had never visited Rwanda or met any Rwandans.”

Advisory motivations were straightforward. First, high-level advisors ignored the incident because the US could do little to aid the situation. Advisors just did not believe the use of force could save the Tutsi refugees. Some reports even suggest these motivations to protect the President clouded the interpretation of incoming information. Bureaucratic inertia – beginning with the top advisors – prevented advisors from ‘seeing’ the implications of the genocide. Although the Clinton Administration knew about the possibilities for ethnic cleansing and recognized the signs on the ground as it began, bureaucratic assessments frequently failed to truly ‘hear’ the intelligence. Officials possessed appropriate data, they gained necessary analyses, and yet still failed to acknowledge the genocide. In hindsight, “there is little doubt that the scale, ferocity, and

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396 Ibid., 365.
systematic nature of the genocide took the international community by surprise."397

Officials ‘spun’ their way out of recognizing the extent of the violence by relying on a clouded sense of rationality. To these officials, domestic pressures within Rwanda or even the actions of other actors would stop the bloodshed. In other occasions, officials claimed it was a civil (not ethnic) war, and thus did not necessitate the sending of troops. One author suggests that “the key agencies in Washington – the State Department, Pentagon, NSC, and CIA – either thus failed to absorb this information or explicitly rejected it as unreliable and this did not become aware of the genocide until further evidence emerged.”398 Advisors believed they were serving the President by limiting the issues on his plate.

Second the Administration feared another foreign policy fiasco, and they could not afford to lose more influence in the public mind – especially after the disaster of Somalia. For example, Richard Clarke believed “another UN failure could doom relations between Congress and the United Nations . . . [and] sought to shield the president from congressional and public criticism.”399 For the administration and other Western nations, the Somali failure demonstrated the difficulties and costs associated with quelling civil violence. As one author explains, “Remembering Somalia and hearing no American demands for intervention, President Clinton and his advisers knew that the military and political risks of involving the United States in a bloody conflict in central Africa were great, yet there were no costs to avoiding Rwanda altogether.”400 Because

397 Suhrke and Jones, “Preventive Diplomacy in Rwanda” (2000), 254.
399 Ibid., 362.
400 Power, A Problem From Hell (2002), 335.
civil violence could only be solved by ‘waiting it out,’ decision makers did not see a need to send in troops. Officials “maintained that the process of peacemaking had become dangerously overutilized, and that Rwanda was of marginal strategic importance . . .

President Clinton’s initial reaction . . . typified the US response as he called for national reconciliation and an end to the violence. The American position was thus one of regret and non-partisanship, with no imitation of strong action.”

Finally, advisors did not want the President to be distracted from more politically important crises of the day. Throughout the Rwandan genocide, the Clinton Administration concentrated on other hotspots like Haiti and Bosnia. A lack of resources and focus contributed to the overall ignorance of the Rwandan situation. As secondary source mention, advisors did not feel Rwanda deserved more attention, especially in comparison to the ethnic conflict in Central Europe and failure of democracy in the Western hemisphere. And further, the President was mired in an intense domestic policy battle with an emboldened Republican party. The President himself did not want to be bogged down in a conflict that held little promise of benefit. This notable lack of attention only aided his advisors’ attempts at limiting the debate.

5.5.6 Analysis: Failed Advising

Although Clinton’s inner circle dominated the information game during the decision, it did not quell all dissent. Many experts in the State Department did see the need, and attempted to force the inner circle to engage the issues of the case. In daily meetings, these experts consistently argued the United States did have the knowledge and capacity to end the bloodshed, able to save Rwandan lives. But they lost the advisory battle as bureaucratic maneuvers de-legitimized their advice and participation.

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As mentioned above, expertise really failed to convince the President because he
did not want to engage in the debate. Advisors tried to capture his attention by using
salient symbols and outside members (like Congress). For example, Prudence Bushnell
arranged for Monique Mujawamariya to personally plead for help. In other moments,
bureaucratic subordinates continually tried to use the word ‘genocide,’ realizing
international conventions required action. But President Clinton refused to devote more
time to the crisis, deferring to his inner circle – and they did not budge.

Could dissenters have won the debate and engage the President in military
solutions? Unfortunately, the facts of the Rwanda case point in a negative direction.
Experts were not allowed to even make their case in high level meetings – and without
access advisory strategies usually fail. In the end, Rwanda would mar the historical
legacy of the Clinton Administration. Even recently, President Clinton soberly refers to
the lack of action in policy speeches. The Rwandan failure weighed heavily on the
Clinton Administration, eventually leading to the Clinton Doctrine – “If the world
community has the power to stop it, we ought to stop genocide and ethnic cleansing.”
If experts had reached the President in time, the doctrine could have saved thousands of
lives.

5.6 Conclusions and Lessons

Lebanon and Rwanda ended quite differently for the United States, although both
are remembered as failures. On one hand, the Reagan decision to send troops to Lebanon

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402 As one author quotes President Clinton: Rwanda was “one of the greatest regrets of my Presidency . . .
Neither I nor anyone on my foreign policy team adequately focused on sending troops to stop the slaughter.
With a few thousand troops and help from our allies, even making allowances for the time it would have
taken to deploy them, we could have saved lives” (in Rothkopf, Running the World (2005), 337).

is not recalled for its relative success. By all accounts, Marine presence during the 17
days of the first deployment was highly successful. But popular history focuses instead
on the disasters and pratfalls of the second deployment. Rwanda is a failure for a
different reason – the failure to not do enough. A population was decimated by gangs of
homicidal soccer clubs fueled by drugs and alcohol. Even a small contingent of
American troops could have saved lives. Though Somalia was used by decision makers
to refrain from action, it presented an easy opportunity for a deployment – Marines were
already in the area because of the Somali humanitarian mission. The world’s sole
superpower watched as Rwanda burned.

The impact of advisors, however, is very different when comparing the cases. For
Lebanon, the decision was dominated by a conflict between two factions: those who
stressed caution (Department of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff), versus those who
stressed action (the National Security Council and Department of State). As the case
relates, the decision to intervene emerged from a simplification argument related by
Schultz, and consensus among the inner circle. Reagan was moved by Schultz’s opinion;
a short, strong American presence would quell violence and send a message to rivals.
But Reagan balked at approving a decision to intervene until the group agreed. After
consensus was reached, Reagan rubber-stamped the use of force.

Importantly, both strategies proved successful in the experimental section of the
dissertation. Subjects significantly altered their policy preferences when given a
simplification argument or the consensus argument. The power of simplicity and group
recommendations clarifies information. Psychologically, Reagan was troubled by
information overload, and uncertainty on how to solve the problem. Much like subjects
in the lab, he reacted strongly to the simplification and consensus of his inner circle; a reaction that continued through the second deployment.

Advisors during the Rwanda decision acted much differently. Unlike Reagan’s inner circle, there was little disagreement among the principal advisors in the Clinton Administration. Advisors simply did not see the benefits of involvement in Rwanda. Clearly burned by the Somalia experience and wary of public opinion, Clinton’s foreign policy team prevented the issue from gaining center stage. By limiting access to only those who agreed with a ‘wait and see,’ multilateral response, President Clinton never received countervailing opinion until well after the massacre began. As the case relates, it takes over a month before the Administration is willing to declare Rwanda a genocide, and even then they balked at action. A de facto consensus of the inner circle led to American inaction.

The intriguing counterfactual centers on access: what if Prudence Bushnell, for example, had the access Strobe Talbott enjoyed? Would history have been different? If President Clinton received an audience with Rwandan experts, would he have supported a use of force? Psychologically, experimental results suggest that it would have been different. Clinton was notorious for his insatiable desire to understand the intricacies of every policy; a very high need for cognition. In general, this suggests a tendency to change preferences. And if a talented advisor used a simplification argument, there is a good chance he would have reacted differently. Clearly, this was the fear of his inner circle, which prevented access simply because they felt President Clinton would have supported a humanitarian intervention. By limiting access, the foreign policy team of the Clinton Administration felt they succeeded in preventing another foreign policy gaffe.
6.1 Introduction

In a complex foreign policy hierarchy, who advises depends on an understanding of what advisors provide, what leaders desire, and how advisors craft their message to combine both to their advantage. When advice is structured to take advantage of the momentary opportunity, advisors move the world, influencing leaders into war or peace.

Although advisors matter in foreign policy, few works provide a general framework to explain successful and unsuccessful political advising. Only recently have authors explored the politics surrounding the advisory process. In particular, the current debate over American actions in Iraq spurred a cottage industry in new scholarship devoted to foreign policy advising. A common argument uniting most of these books echoes a common refrain: the Bush Administration went to war due to neo-conservative advisors and their influence over the President. Like-minded advisors sharing intellectual affinities took advantage of the September 11th terrorist attack to stress the case for proactive American foreign policy. ‘Vulcans’ at every level of the foreign policy hierarchy pushed an agenda focusing on the invasion of Iraq.

Yet this heavy-handed influence of proactive advisors is hardly unique. American foreign policy is dotted with the influence of confidantes and mavericks, ranging from Colonel House to Robert Kennedy to Bill Moyers and Henry Kissinger. Foreign policy
decisions result from the actions and opportunities of presidential advisors. American strategy is not upon the lonely shoulders of leaders; the inner circle eases the burden of decision making, moving a decision to its conclusion. Failed and successful foreign policy depends on arguments and actions of a trusted few at the top.

The second chapter developed a framework explaining the outcome of this politicized process. Successful advisors are those who draw from four bases of power (access, expertise, experience, and rhetoric) to posit salient appeals. However, these appeals are constrained by leader dispositions (such as militant assertiveness and political knowledge) and the strategic situation (the foreign policy problem a decision maker faces). I constructed a set of hypotheses that combined bases of power, leader dispositions, and advisory strategies, and tested these understandings in the remainder of the dissertation.

This chapter revisits empirical findings and comments on the framework introduced earlier in the dissertation. In the first section, I re-state results from the empirical analyses. Case studies and experimental data suggest consistent trends concerning advisory impact. The second section explores implications of these trends, suggesting new questions concerning foreign policy advising. The chapter concludes with a look to future research avenues and comments on several unanswered questions of the model.

6.2 Questions & Empirical Answers

The dissertation began by asking a set of questions concerning advisory influence in foreign policy. Specifically, I set out to understand the impact of the inner circle on foreign policy behavior; a question simply posed as ‘who advises?’ Which participant of
the inner circle affects presidential decisions on the use of force? And how do these participants ‘win’ the debate in their favor – do they strategically use information to get what they want, and/or does the structure of the foreign policy system limit their attempts?

To answer these questions, I developed a framework centering around three axes: politics, power, and persuasion. Each dimension holds important expectations for political advising. For example, if politics matters most, then advisors are trapped by roles the play – presidents create a structure limiting advisory influence, directing content of advice in particular directions. Advisors explain little variance in foreign policy behavior, and instead dispositions loom large in the policy choice. Contrarily, if advisory power determines influence, then distinct patterns in successful advising should emerge across situations and leaders. For example, if expertise plays a salient role in the process, advisors with military knowledge should enjoy the most pull during military decisions. Advisory influence is dictated by qualities of the advisor or advice, rather than leader dispositions.

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I argued these variables (in isolation) do not capture the variance of advisory influence. Rather, to understand successful advising requires an approach integrating the views into a coherent framework. For example, I hypothesized experts matter only when presidents view them as experts; or metaphors (as a persuasion strategy) affect choice only when information is lacking or the President is a foreign policy neophyte. Politics, power, and persuasion create patterns of constructive interference, making advice and prescriptions salient to presidents. The dissertation used a methodological two-step to empirically gauge these connections: an experiment testing the internal connections between advice and persuasion, and case studies tracking advisor arguments in four cases of American foreign policy.

6.2.1 Experimental results

Experimental data revealed several patterns. First, dispositions both limit and hasten persuasion in a two-stage model of decision making. In the first stage, initial information and data are interpreted by leaders who create a mental model or picture. This initial view creates predilections affecting the acceptance of advice in the second stage of the process. Empirical evidence suggests interaction effects between subject dispositions, subject cognitive styles, and qualities of advice. For example, a subject rating high on the internationalist scale is more likely to prefer more diplomatic policies. Yet, even with this constraint, advice creates policy change – especially if the advice is both consistent with a diplomatic solution, and the subject has a cognitive style favoring discussion.

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406 Initial preferences for military and diplomatic choice were significant and negatively correlated with persuasion.
Second, foreign policy knowledge significantly alters the effectiveness of advisory strategies. Unsurprisingly, the amount of foreign policy knowledge a subject holds constrains persuasion attempts. Subjects with high knowledge rely on their own stores of knowledge to make decisions, thereby limiting the need for information. When generalizing experimental results to foreign policy, foreign policy experience and knowledge insulate leaders from ploys of the inner circle. Finally, several advisory strategies operate regardless of subject dispositions. Embellishment, simplification, subtraction, and consensus significantly increased the chance of persuasion across the personality spectrum. Logically, it follows that advisors who use their rhetorical skill or bureaucratic affiliations for influence are less constrained by leader dispositions.

While the experiment demonstrated the internal links between advice, information, and psychology, it lacks an understanding of how advisors use these strategies within a foreign policy episode. Chapters four and five used experimental findings as a starting point, and traced the use of advice through four cases of American foreign policy. Experimental results clarified the theoretical internal mechanism, and provided clues to the success and failure of different techniques in the cases.

6.2.2 Pueblo Decision Making

Although Johnson preferred a military solution to the Pueblo case, military advisors did not ease operational uncertainty. Uncertainty and confusion among the President’s inner circle – a small group Johnson used for Vietnam decision making during ‘Tuesday lunches’ – exacerbated geo-political pressures against a strong use of force. Experts that were supposed to enjoy all relevant information failed to live up to the standard of ‘expert.’
Clark Clifford took advantage of this lapse. Johnson trusted his incoming Secretary of Defense from past, informal discussions on national security and Vietnam. When Clifford realized the president was getting frustrated by the inconsistencies of his inner circle, he changed the major decision axis. No longer should Johnson worry about ‘sending a message’ to other states; rather Johnson needed to focus on getting the crew home safely. Since military options held the risk of both failing to recover the sailors and setting off an international conflict, the argument for restraint carried the day.

Importantly, experimental results agree with this finding. In the experiments, subtraction and embellishment significantly affected subject preferences; eliminating a number of policy options and invoking a metaphor was significantly correlated with change. Clifford used a similar tactic. Johnson faced a difficult decision making task, weighting and comparing a dozen possible diplomatic and military responses. Subtraction simplified the decision, allowing Johnson to decide from only non-military responses. And by minimizing the seizure by comparing it to a ‘tweak of the beard,’ Clifford swayed Johnson.

The *Pueblo* case reveals an important lesson on expertise as a base of power; namely, expertise is fleeting and “shallow,” easily disappearing. The main benefit of expertise – its salience in times of crisis or uncertainty – also sows seeds to its own demise, especially if information is absent. Experts and expertise must be maintained to successfully impact the decision making process; otherwise, the door is opened for other bases of power to enter the picture.
6.2.3 Mayaguez Decision Making

The capture of the *Mayaguez* serves an important counterpoint to the lessons of *Pueblo*. Ford’s decision could have taken a number of forms: diplomatic entreaty, recapturing the ship, invading Cambodian territory, bombing the mainland, or a combination of all four. And like the *Pueblo*, there was confusion – intelligence was spotty at best. Even the location of the crew was largely unknown, with assessments driven by a report of ‘Caucasians’ on a boat.

Unlike the *Pueblo* case, Kissinger’s tactic of using analogies (including the *Pueblo* case) and metaphors convinced Ford something had to be done. Indeed, the historical judgment of the *Pueblo* guided Ford: Johnson’s failure to ‘not do enough’ carried a heavy cost, as he suffered the disapproval of the American public by choosing to use diplomacy on the hopes of recovering the crew. Public disappointment, mixed with a personal sense of urgency to ‘be presidential,’ created a need in Ford’s mind to seize a policy option that could shore up public and international perceptions of weakness. Clearly, perceptions of American power at home and abroad were at a low point with the fall of Saigon (occurring a month before the seizure). Kissinger’s appeal served a salient role in this environment, convincing Ford the risk was worth it. By invoking the *Pueblo* analogy and painting a vivid picture of American failure, Kissinger convinced Ford a dramatic use of force was necessary. Importantly, this confirms another experimental result. As Chapter Three describes, embellishment dramatically impacts subject preferences, pushing subjects into more extreme foreign policies. Ford followed these expectations, ordering a substantial use of force to recover relatively few crew members.
But again, experts were ignored. During Mayaguez decision making, military advisors consistently reminded the President of the difficulties involved with the risky military action. The military lacked men and material to effectively carry out the complicated orders; a fact brought up in every meeting. But Kissinger’s argument resonated with Ford. Frustrations of military experts eventually boiled over with a salient act of defiance, as Secretary of Defense Schlesinger subverted direct presidential orders by canceling two of the four bombing runs. Though Schlesinger’s position was verified by hindsight, it failed to resonate with the President and restrain his temptation to use force.

6.2.4 Lebanon Decision Making

Lebanon is noteworthy for its consistency. After the initial decision to deploy troops, American decision makers failed to re-examine or change mission directives. As one participant relayed, the decision to re-deploy after Bashir’s assassination was an automatic reflex – no debate, no discussion, just action. Even with the continued and increasing violence against American Marines, Reagan essentially froze the decision at the status quo, unsure of how and when to pull out troops. The continued ‘presence’ mission was a face-saving measure to assure Middle East allies (especially Israel).

What explains the initial decision to deploy Marines? In some ways, the policy of presence was a ‘salami tactic,’ devised to satisfy the proactive push by the NSC and the reticence of the Pentagon. A simple, low-level and low-risk troop deployment, involving Marines that did not actively patrol or arm their machine guns, set the stage for the more involved mission after Gemayel’s assassination. In the Lebanon case, we see Reagan ignoring both his military planners and his friends, in favor of a policy without clear
goals. Reagan dismissed the fears of Caspar Weinberger (a close friend dating back to his California days), and instead supported the stance of those actively supporting the Israeli agenda.

More importantly, the theoretical framework and experimental results predict consensus as an important strategy when time is not a constraint. Consensus generally emerges from a bureaucratic process, as bureaucrats bargain with each other. In the Lebanon cases, ‘presence’ is a perfect example. The State Department pushed for an active use of force to reassure allies and prevent Soviet dominance. But military planners in the Defense Department believed an active use of force only put Marines at risk, placing them among heated rivals. ‘Presence’ paved a middle way between both positions: a use of force, but troops would be a member of a Multinational Force, with strict protocol limiting engagement. The persuasive impact of a consensus agreement moved the President to approve the mission, though it meant going against respected members of his bureaucracy.

6.2.5 Rwanda Decision Making

Finally, Rwanda presents a different advisory tactic at work. In the three previous cases, there was at least a veneer of information exchange among experts of the inner circle: Clifford rebuked the militarism of Johnson’s council, Kissinger clashed with Schlesinger and the Pentagon, and the State Department and National Security Adviser dominated the countervailing opinion of Weinberger. But the Rwanda case controverts this trend; indeed, Clinton policy towards Rwanda was notable for the lack of concern and discussion of the humanitarian crisis.
Importantly, Rwanda decision making illustrates the power of limiting access as a successful advisory strategy. Supporters of military action in Rwanda did exist; African experts in the State Department, the diplomatic mission to Rwanda, and even CIA officials suggested a small troop presence could end the genocide. But those closest to President Clinton – Strobe Talbott, Warren Christopher, and Richard Clarke, in particular – did not allow these voices to reach the President. Clinton’s lack of interest in the genocide, combined with PDD 25, domestic disapproval, and other crises (including Haiti and the Balkans), allowed the inner circle to sweep Rwanda under the rug. By limiting information and opinion in the upper echelons, a few important members of the inner circle controlled the decision.

6.2.6 Summary of findings & revisiting the framework

When considered together, experiments and case studies demonstrate the contingent nature of advising. Presidential dispositions set limits on who participates and the impact of what they say. But this structure is far from determinative – at best, the dissertation demonstrates dispositions only set the tone or general direction for a policy decision. Valid predictions of advisory influence are made only after examining advisors, leaders, and advice together. However, empirical results also suggest a number of changes to the theoretical framework introduced in the theory chapter. Table 6.2 delineates the hypotheses and results for each of the seven strategies I explored in the empirical analysis.

The first strategy examined in the analysis centered on gaining access. Successful advisors gain face time and attention with leaders, and prevent dissonant voices from
reaching the inner circle. As the Rwanda case shows, advisors at the top used their power to limit access to experts who disagreed with American inaction. Preventing dissonant voices from reaching the President guaranteed their advice against intervention would not meet with resistance. Consistent with past work on the advisory process, delimiting the voices presidents hear is a powerful tool of influence.408 Even the most powerful, expert, or persuasive advisors can not influence the process without a path to the Oval Office.

The next two strategies focused on the persuasive appeal of expertise within complex decisions. However, contrary to conventional wisdom and past scholarship, expertise does not appear to be an effective resource for advisors. A common hypothesis concerning advisors centers on the value of information: leaders use their most expert advisors to guide decisions.409 Perhaps the most robust finding from the analysis is that this is not the case. Expertise does not guarantee influence in decision making. In fact, the opposite seems to be true; as the empirical work indicates, expertise is easy to dismiss. In crises, the presence of uncertainty and incomplete information erode the ‘expertness’ of advisors. In non-crises, expert arguments are diluted as more voices and advice are added to the decision. For both situations, expertise fails to provide a base of power for advisors. The simplistic assumption that experts will matter because leaders will turn to them in times of need is incorrect.

407 Consistent with the experiment and case studies, humans with experience or knowledge in foreign policy rely less on given advice. See Lupia, “Who Can Persuade Whom?” (2000); Cialdini, Influence (2001); and Druckman, “On the Limits of Framing Effects” (November 2001).


409 In general, works agree experts have power simply because they understand information that leaders cannot, such as highly technical information. See Schilling, “Scientists, Foreign Policy and Politics” (June
Instead of invoking expertise, expert advisors should instead attempt to persuade other members of the inner circle to follow their lead. Experimental results show consensus arguments successfully persuade: having a coalition behind your argument grants leverage. The Lebanon case confirms this dynamic, as the ‘presence’ mission was a result of bureaucratic bargaining. Both the Department of State and Department of Defense acceded to the mission parameters, convincing President Reagan to approve the intervention. In general, the dynamics suggest expertise directed at other members of the inner circle resonate more than an expert who stands alone.

Flip-flopping (based on experience) follows a distinctly different pattern. Past scholarship suggests reputation and personal history create trust and patterns of influence. For example, Ronald Reagan chose Caspar Weinberger to be his Secretary of Defense because of a long personal friendship that started when Reagan was governor. These interpersonal patterns grant advisors a powerful tool of influence. As the theoretical framework argues, experience provides resonance to flip-flopping. But as the experiment and case studies show, flip-flopping did not operate according to the framework. The internal connection was not significant in the experiment, and flip-flopping did not work in the case studies; indeed, in the case studies, flip-flopping was not attempted.


410 Most scholarship in support of experience draws from biographies and anecdotes. For example, Bradlee (Conversations with Kennedy (1975)) uses Kennedy’s mistrust of the military (and his trust in his brother) to demonstrate how experience creates patterns of influence. See also Porter, “Advising the President” (Autumn 1986); Medved, The Shadow Presidents (1979); and Mann, Rise of the Vulcans (2004)
The lack of confirming evidence suggests two points. First, flip-flopping may be a rarely used strategy simply because it holds too high a cost. In general, advisors protect their reputations and do not want to give the impression that they lack convictions. Though flip-flopping is a dramatic strategy that could make advice salient, advisors may ‘hold off’ on using it unless the policy is personally important to them. Second, experience and patterns of advice, when repeated, actually diminish the impact of an argument. For example, Caspar Weinberger’s reputation for military restraint blunted his criticism of any military intervention in Lebanon. Although Weinberger was a trusted member of Reagan’s inner circle, his reputation preceded him, limiting impact. Like expertise, using experience to highlight an argument may not be as powerful as previous scholars suggest.411

The final three strategies (embellishment, simplification, and subtraction) center on the ability to craft salient advice; or what I term, the rhetorical base of power. Rhetoric created the most impact of the four bases of power examined in the dissertation. Experimental data and case studies indicate certain persuasive strategies play a large role behind advisory influence. Advisors who draw from history and use rhetorical strategies (such as using metaphors or analogies) persuade leaders in their favored policy directions. Simplification was also a successful persuasion tool. Experimental results and the Lebanon case demonstrate the use and utility of a simplification argument. Finally, subtraction followed a similar pattern, successfully creating change in the Pueblo decision and in the experiment.

411 In particular, Randall Calvert (“The Value of Biased Information” (June 1985)) notes the impact of flip-flopping or ‘going against’ one’s reputation. Obviously, Calvert is right about the salience of flip-flopping; but the benefits may not be worth the cost unless the decision holds particular significance to an advisor.
When compared, the most successful base of power in the advisory process is rhetoric. Constructing or weaving information into a salient picture of the situation significantly increases the chance for persuasion. In some ways, this is not a surprising result. Advising is a process of providing information to leaders in a comprehensive and salient way. Advisors blessed with a ‘silver tongue’ hold a distinct advantage in the process.

6.3 Lessons of Advising

6.3.1 The power of rhetoric & the use of information

Conventional wisdom suggests leaders make decisions based upon the content of information. In complex political decisions, leaders complete their mental image by seeking counsel and appropriately amending their internal understanding of the decision. Advisors matter because they provide necessary direction, enlightening leaders and filling in any information gaps. Once this mental picture is complete, leaders choose the most appropriate policy through balancing risks, benefits, and expediency.

But findings from the empirical section highlight a secondary quality of rhetoric; namely, the power of argumentative forms. As evidenced by the experiment and case studies, the style of an argument plays a central role in the acceptance of advice. The use of analogy and metaphorical allusions provide salience to policy prescriptions. Arguments do more than provide content; rather, policy prescriptions highlight or frame important features of the incoming information. While this is unsurprising to those who study psychology, it is not a common theme in studies of presidential advising. Members

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of the inner circle, much like spokespersons on television, influence choice by ‘spinning’
advice. Studies of advisorship that fail to acknowledge the showmanship side of advising
are missing an explanatory variable behind the behavior. The only surprising outcome
would be to not find the use of analogies or metaphors somewhere in the decision making
process.

This finding also explains why decision makers fail to use history well. Lessons
from history are not well-learned, or at least ignored, in decision making processes. Results from this dissertation present a different argument on the use of history. It is not
the case leaders learn history poorly, but that history is used as a rhetorical tool rather
than actually guiding policy processes. History is learned not to guide, but to justify
decisions. Successful advisors realize the power of the historical lesson, and use it to
their advantage.

6.3.2 The ‘Dirty Hands’ of Advising

The dissertation shows advisors play an integral role in the construction of foreign
policy. Leaders grant advisors powerful positions in the construction and maintenance of
state interests, and advice often impacts the choice for war or peace. But this power
presents ethical dilemmas. For example, who do advisors serve? Do advisors use their
power and expertise to protect and serve their leader, or do they have a deeper obligation
to the interests of state and nation? More importantly, what about their bureaucracy?

413 Ernest May, Lessons of the Past: The Use and Misuse of History in American Foreign Policy (New
York: Oxford University Press, 1973) and Richard E. Neustadt and Ernest R. May, Thinking in Time: The

414 Work on the use of analogies in Congressional debates grants suggestive proof of this dynamic. In a
study detailing Congressional debate surrounding the Persian Gulf Crisis in 1991, Andrew Taylor and John
Rourke find analogies were used only in a post-hoc fashion. Analogies did not effect decisions, but instead
bolstered them. See Andrew J. Taylor and John T. Rourke, “Historical Analogies in the Congressional
Should advisors violate their bureaucratic vassals to protect leaders? Powerful advisors face a thorny ethical dilemma: to whom and how should they use the power of persuasion?

Advisors face cross-cutting loyalties as members of the inner circle. Obviously, leaders require advisors to aid decision making. But what happens when leaders choose a decision their advisor knows to be wrong? Is it permissible to manipulate leaders into better decisions? These ethical dilemmas are very real in foreign policy decisions. The seizure of the *Mayaguez* demonstrates both dynamics, as Schlesinger violated presidential orders and aborted two bombing runs, while Kissinger unilaterally and knowingly filtered intelligence that went against his prescriptions. In general, I have avoided comment on the ethical dilemmas of advising in favor of exploring and explaining the mechanism behind advisory influence. But as history shows, the normative question is an important pressure in the process. The lesson related by one scholar concerning presidential leadership applies equally well to foreign policy advisors: citizens “require the talent, but fear the artfulness. We wish skill to be combined with morality and yet tire of unskillful leaders, no matter how moral they are.”

These dilemmas do impact advisory arguments and action. Like leaders, advisors face a divided loyalties problem. Along with their responsibility to their leaders, advisors must follow loyalties to their bureaucracy, their ideology/public interest, to professional frames of reference, and to themselves. How advisors square the ethical circle and satisfy these loyalties powerfully determines the selection and implementation

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phases of decision making. Again, the history of the Mayaguez case is informative. Both Kissinger and Schlesinger violated their roles in the hopes of doing the right thing, although it meant violating Ford’s trust. The ‘dirty hands’ of advising is more important than previous scholars imagined.

6.3.3 The ‘Hero in History’

When historians and political scientists judge presidential actions, they often laud praise or criticism on the Oval Office. In some respects, this is only natural, since the president is the most salient figurehead. The adage of Sidney Hook is particularly apt, writing “Whoever saves us is a hero; and in the exigencies of political action men are always looking for someone to save them.”417 Humans accord great weight to leaders responsible for troubles and benefits.

Yet, the dissertation suggests this view is too simple, as advisors play a large role in the selection of policy, from constructing options to manipulating presidents in specific directions. Leaders abdicate responsibility to their inner circle when faced with difficult and complex decisions. Advisors collect information, create prescriptions, present their preferences, and generally argue amongst themselves to create the best possible policy. Leaders take a subsidiary role in this process, serving as a ‘rubber stamp.’ Although presidents give lip service to Truman’s adage that the ‘Buck Stops Here,’ it is tough to accord that credit or blame.

But a bigger issue arises for students of foreign policy. In the quest to discover the pressures and variables behind state behavior, scholars simplify reality into more digestible chunks. The difficulty of according responsibility, and thus explanatory

417 Sidney Hook, The Hero in History (1943), 12.
weight, is made even more tangible by including advisors. Adding another level of politicking and complexity only complicates the task of understanding decision making.

6.3.4 Do advisors restrain leaders?

In an oft-cited article on the impact of individuals on international security, Byman and Pollack suggest scholars re-examine the impact of important figures on historically powerful moments.\textsuperscript{418} For example, the article presents Napoleon as a figure who multiplied the power of his nation through will and tactical brilliance. The general rule from the work is that scholars often overlook individuals in favor of states, and that security studies should integrate findings from psychology and history in their policy prescriptions.

Obviously, individuals dictate the course of international relations. As this dissertation demonstrates, leaders are impacted at least tacitly by the arguments and machinations of their advisors. Leaders follow the advice of their inner circle, and the arguments leaders use to justify their stance often comes from the ‘birds perched on their shoulders.’ But this presents a slippery slope. For example, if advisors were responsible for the invasion of Iraq in 2002, then we have to engage a new set of counterfactuals, such as ‘what if Colin Powell won the policy debate?’ Restated differently, can advisors restrain their leaders from going to war?

Results from the dissertation suggest advisors do have the power to change their leaders’ minds. For example, President Johnson continually hounded his advisors for a military solution that could release the crew. Even in the midst of the Vietnam War (just days before the Tet Offensive), Johnson did not have his fill of war. Without Clark

Clifford, there is a chance of a second Korean War. Future avenues should examine these counterfactuals in greater depth. As the dissertation demonstrates, who is involved matters as much as what they say. Mimicking the words of Byman and Pollack, it is time to praise great advisors.

6.3.5 The shibboleth of expertise

In a study of Vietnam decision making, H.R. McMaster argues Johnson’s military advisors failed him. The Joint Chiefs of Staff did not tell Johnson the truth about the declining ability of American troops to combat NVA guerrillas. Johnson’s advisors only exacerbated the dearth of proper advice by disregarding reports contradicting the generally rosy predictions of the Defense establishment. McMaster argues the Vietnam quagmire could have been prevented if civilian and military advisors did their job by speaking truth to power.

Across scholarship, this advisory lesson is probably the most common. Leaders could have avoided a ‘bad’ decision if only members of the inner circle had the backbone to speak up and tell their leader the truth. Unfortunately, the results of this dissertation present a different story. Even if Johnson’s military experts ‘spoke truth to power,’ there is no reason to believe they would have been followed. On the contrary, I find that experts (especially military experts) rarely hold an advantage during foreign policy decisions, simply because expertise is either drowned out by other experts or used to justify decisions already made.


420 This is a main conclusion from Richard Betts. Military advisors are only followed if they argue directly to leaders against the use of force. But as my work shows, even this lesson fails to explain advising. See Richard K. Betts, *Soldiers, Statesmen, & Cold War Crises* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1977).
manipulated by advisors competing with each other. Blandly stating a counterfactual ignores the political nature of the inner circle, and incorrectly assumes that some objective quality of ‘expertise’ will always win the day.

6.4 Conclusion

The goal of this dissertation is to understand how and when advisors matter in foreign policy decision making. I argued an accurate accounting of this effect is accomplished only through an approach combining leader dispositions, advisory bases of power, and strategies of persuasion. Although I believe this approach captures the essential aspects of the process, several variables or techniques were left out of the discussion. In this section, I explore several of these variables, and comment upon their relative impact on advising.

One failing of this dissertation concerns access. In general, the dissertation does not comment on how ‘gatekeepers’ use their power of limiting access. Advisors or officials with the power to create groups or change the composition of a meeting hold power in especially drawn out discussions. As the Rwanda case demonstrates, access manipulates the dimensions of a policy debate (and thus favors certain arguments in a marketplace of ideas). While previous works focus more heavily upon this dimension, I am relatively silent on the issue of gaining and keeping this type of advisory power.\textsuperscript{421} One future direction is to understand the evolution and use of access. Again, common past arguments associate this type of power exclusively with the foreign policy hierarchy. For example, scholars suggest Nixon’s affinity and preference for a ‘tight’ foreign policy hierarchy granted Kissinger a powerful role in dictating access. As the gatekeeper to the Oval Office, Kissinger wielded an enormous amount of influence on
who met with the President, and what they had to say. Presidential dispositions,
routinized into administrative information pathways, explain the patterns of advisory
influence through a manipulation of access. Future research should examine how
advisors use their power to not only influence policy decisions, but the actual alignment
of the policy apparatus. In other words, a further avenue of exploration would examine
how advisors change the foreign policy hierarchy to favor or discourage the power of
access during decisions.

A second area of exploration concerns differing advisory strategies. Generally
speaking, the seven strategies tracked in the empirical sections represent a broad
spectrum of what advisors could use to gain the attention of a leader. But this is not an
exhaustive list. Although I have already mentioned access, it remains an advisory
strategy not well explored by my model. Advisors strategically manipulate access – both
limiting and granting participation. These patterns could hold clues explaining influence

An interesting strategy I did not explore is the threat of resignation. Advisors
always have the choice of resigning their positions, and presidents worry about losing
their most talented and trusted aides. Resignation holds significant symbolic and
signaling power, since turnover in an administration usually signals an ill-equipped or
maladaptive policy hierarchy. Advisors could use the salient power of a threat to resign
and gain power in policy discussions. For example, to win the domestic policy battle in
the Clinton Administration, Dick Morris presented the President with an ultimatum:
either follow my advice, or I will resign. Since the President credited Morris with many
of his political successes, the threat was enough to push the President in Morris’
direction. As Morris relates, the tactic was successful, as the “threat to resign created

421 See Garrison, Games Advisors Play (1999).
power and promoted his ideas by getting closer to the ear of the President.” The threat of losing his talented advisor convinced Clinton to go in another direction, and deepened Morris’ power in the administration. In foreign policy, the picture of Kissinger emerges once again, as the Secretary of State often used the threat of resignation to move the President closer to his own views. Simply threatening to leave can powerfully change decisions.

A final comment on the framework involves my differential treatment of presidents and advisors. When developing the framework, I used simplified characterizations of advisors and leaders. In general, my framework presents leaders as ‘obstacles’ to successful advising (e.g. dispositions or preferences); leaders are passive, personality-driven decision makers. Advisors, on the other hand, are described as political entrepreneurs attempting to move leaders in particular ways; advisors are politicized information providers.

In reality, leaders and advisors are both. Leaders consciously lobby and push advisors to accomplish political goals. For example, Johnson constantly manipulated his decision making group to guarantee control of the process. Advisors, in turn, are also bounded by their own personalities and preferences. Again, Caspar Weinberger is emblematic: the preference against military uses of force was part of his dispositional being, driving his own interpretation of events and the strategies he chose to persuade the president.

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423 See Rothkopf, Running the World (2005), 147.
Though this simplification is necessary to accomplish a first take on advisory influence, further research would explore this dialectic. Questions concerning patterns of advisory strategies would enlighten the choices advisors make when persuading leaders, while patterns of Presidential ‘politicking’ would grant a better description of the advisory process. Both processes hold important clues to how advisors choose to advise. Obviously, this is an important question: when and how do advisors choose to advise? Moreover, it is possible that personality dictates the content of advice. For example, a ‘hawkish’ advisor may always choose to stress military uses of force to accomplish goals. The match between dispositions and advisory strategy is found within the advisor, not the decision making environment. A fuller accounting of this internal processing would enlighten both the acceptance of advice, and the use of advice.

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This dissertation explored an often overlooked and maligned member of every foreign policy team – the ‘advisor.’ Although each advisor develops a mythos or aura while they have the ear of the president, this role-playing often obfuscates the true nature of the policy process and the advisor’s role within it. The truth, like most things, lies somewhere in the middle. Advisors rarely have absolute power over their leader, regardless of professional pundits and observers who accord them this influence. On the other hand, advisors are not insignificant. Indeed, it is hard to imagine a Nixon without his Kissinger, a Bush without his Scowcroft, or a Wilson without his Colonel House. The history of the world turns on the complex and embattled relationship between leader and confidante.
Table 6.1: Successful advising and case studies (successful strategies in bold; significant experimental results are marked with an asterisk ‘*’).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expectations</th>
<th>How tested</th>
<th>Support</th>
<th>Conclusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gaining Access</strong></td>
<td>1. Successful advising is attached to the amount of access an advisor has with their leader (e.g. Garrison 1999)</td>
<td>Experiment: Not examined.</td>
<td>Rwanda decision – Clinton’s inner circle prevented dissenting voices from reaching the President.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Case study: Tracking who had access to the President.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Gaining access is a necessary but not sufficient cause behind successful advising.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Invoking expertise</strong></td>
<td>2. Leaders turn to different advisors based on the problem they face. When advisors invoke expertise, they rely on their own base of knowledge to convince leaders. Advisors with expert knowledge in an area are favored by leaders (e.g. Benveniste 1977)</td>
<td>Expt.: experimental manipulations used fictional ministers of state and defense to invoke expertise.</td>
<td>Did not find support for expertise in either experiments or case studies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Case study: tracked the use of expertise in the case studies.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Expertise is limited by both the perception of expertise and the amount of ‘experts in the room.’ In both cases, expertise fails to create a salient message – the lack of data during crises erodes the perception of ‘expertness,’ while the longer time frame in intervention decisions dilutes their message.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Building a coalition</strong></td>
<td>3. Leaders are persuaded by recommendations accepted by the majority of their inner circle. As a result, advisors who reach out to other advisors to create bureaucratic bargain will be followed in the decision (e.g. Allison 1971; Halperin 1974).</td>
<td>Expt.: members of the fictional advisory group supported the position of one advisor.</td>
<td>Experiments suggest coalition building is a very successful way to persuade leaders. In the Lebanon case, building a consensus (between the Dept. of State and Defense) led to the ‘presence’ mission.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Case study: tracking group consensus and the development of a coalition.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Coalition building is a successful advisory technique: the power of the group persuades decision makers. The one caveat deals with time. In general, advisors need a long amount of time to create an acceptable deal among the inner circle, making it an inappropriate technique for crises.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Flip-flopping</strong></td>
<td>4. Advisors who violate their expressed biases or preferences persuade leaders. The cost of ‘flip-flopping’ creates a credible signal, that in turn creates persuasion (e.g. Calvert 1985)</td>
<td>Expt.: fictional advisors went against their biases (i.e., the Minister of State supported military options).</td>
<td>Experiments found no significant evidence in support of flip-flopping. In the case studies, no advisor attempted to violate their reputations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Case study: tracking the content of individual arguments to see if they violate previous stated positions.</td>
<td></td>
<td>It is possible that the very reason flip-flopping is theoretically powerful is the reason it is not used: its cost Violating preferences can ‘mark’ an advisor as being untrustworthy, thereby decreasing power. As a result, flip-flopping will occur only under extreme circumstances.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.2. Hypotheses & empirical results.
| Embellishment | 5. When decisions are limited by short time frames or a lack of information, advisors that are able to fill in information gaps by using metaphors and analogies can minimize leader uncertainty, and make their recommendations salient. Embellishment interacts with information scarcity to persuade leaders (e.g. Neustadt & May 1986; Khong 1992) | Expt.: the manipulation used metaphors to represent embellishment Case study: tracked the use of metaphors and analogies in the case studies | Experimental results provide significant proof for this effect. When subjects lacked information and time, they were persuaded by embellishment. Interestingly, case studies mimicked this result; for example, in both crisis cases (Mayaguez and Pueblo seizures) the ‘winning’ advisor used either metaphors or analogies to make their recommendation salient. | Argumentative forms matter more than the content of a recommendation. In general, leaders facing a lack of decision resources are persuaded by rhetoric that fills in gaps in knowledge. |
| Simplification | 6. Contrarily, when decision makers face information overload (an abundance of information and time), they often times stall or hedge. Advisors that simplify the cacophony minimized uncertainty cause by information overload, and make their recommendations salient (e.g. Vertzberger 1990) | Expt.: the manipulation used simple, cause-and-effect arguments to represent simplification Case study: tracked the use of simplification arguments in the case studies | Again, experimental results concur: simplification interacted with time and information in predicted ways. Case studies also show proof, as evidenced by Alexander Haig’s simplification argument during the Lebanon case. Simplification eases uncertainty and aids persuasion. | Much like above, argumentative forms matter more than the content of a recommendation. When understanding persuasion, scholars need to examine how rhetoric changes or manipulates leader uncertainty. |
| Subtraction | 7. Work by Tversky (1972) suggests uncertainty is a function of the number of options leaders must choose from. In general, decision makers feel uneasy when comparing two similar options. As a result, advisors that eliminate options during decisions will make their arguments more persuasive. | Expt.: the manipulation had a fictional advisor that ‘subtracted’ options from the decision Case study: tracked the use of a subtraction argument in the case studies | Both experiments and case studies provide proof concerning the efficacy of subtraction. In the experiments, subtraction holds a significant and positive relationship with change, while the Pueblo case shows Clark Clifford persuading the President to eschew military force through subtraction. | In general, advisors that can re-frame decisions through minimizing ‘valid’ options gain the power to persuade in decisions. By changing the dimensions of a decision, advisors can make their arguments salient. |

Table 6.2. Hypotheses & empirical results.
APPENDIX

EXPERIMENTAL MATERIALS
Instructions to participants

This exercise is a foreign policy simulation of a crisis involving the seizure of a naval vessel. You will play the part of the Prime Minister, asked to resolve the crisis. Please take your time, thinking about the information given and options available to you. Work through the following simulation material in the order specified, and follow all directions completely. *As with all real-life decisions, there is a trade-off between the amount of information you consider and the time it takes to make a decision. The timer on the screen is measuring the amount of time it takes for you to make your decision.*

You may decline to participate at any time, and may leave without penalty. Your honesty and candor are appreciated.

Thank your for your participation.

PLEASE TURN TO THE NEXT PAGE
You are the Prime Minister of Ussel, a wealthy and industrialized state that is in the midst of a crisis. Yesterday, the SS Malay, an aged cargo ship of Ussel registry, was ambushed and taken captive by a gunboat from Pulo, a poor, authoritarian state. On board are forty crew members, food, clothing, chemicals (e.g. pesticides), and parcel post. The boat and its crew were taken to a Pulon port-of-call, and subsequently put on trial for spying.

The incident could not have happened at a worse time for your government. Economically, Ussel is in the midst of an economic downturn, leading to a high level of unemployment and a retreat from international markets. Further, the historically important international status of Ussel as a world power has slipped due to disastrous military interventions, and the loss of several colonies that gained independence. One of these colonies, Pulo, recently signed military, diplomatic, and economic agreements with the main Usselian rival, Utland. The attack on the SS Malay seems to have been provoked by this new relationship, although ships from other nationalities were recently stopped.

To date, you have attempted diplomatic appeals to the Pulon ambassador, stressing the illegality of the action, and threatening an escalatory response. These appeals have gone unheeded.
DECISION GROUP TRANSCRIPT – MANIPULATIONS

DECISION GROUP TRANSCRIPT
After receiving the latest briefing on the crisis, you convene your national security team. Your advisors posit the following advice.

MINISTER OF DEFENSE

“Recent actions on the part of the Pulo military are indeterminate. A number of ships have been recently seized in the same area, usually by rogue bandits not associated with the government. But the last radio message sent by the Malay suggests a force that may have been trained by Pulo. We have forces at the ready for a military response.” *(Control statement)*

“As the senior member of your advisory group, my experience in crisis situations suggests this is a matter for the military, even though recent actions on the part of the Pulo military are indeterminate. A number of ships have been recently seized in the same area, usually by rogue bandits not associated with the government. But the last radio message sent by the Malay suggests a force that may have been trained by Pulo. We have the forces available to assert control over the area, and we should retrieve our ship.” *(Strategy 1)*

“Sir, the facts are clear. Pulo wants to gain stature in the international system at our expense. By capturing the sailors of an Usselian vessel, Pulo is sending a message. We must respond in kind with a strong military response.” *(Strategy 3)*

“Sir, throughout my career, Utland has consistently provoked our ire, and threatened the security of Ussel. This is but one more attempt to undercut our international status. It is obvious that the signed agreements between Utland and Pulo show a unified front that must be met appropriately. As they say, ‘Birds of a feather, flock together.’ The military is prepared and ready to meet this threat with a strong military response.” *(Strategy 4)*

“Recent actions on the part of the Pulo military are indeterminate. A number of ships have been recently seized in the same area, usually by rogue bandits not associated with the government. But the last radio message sent by the Malay suggests a force that may have been trained by Pulo. We have the forces available to assert control over the area, and we should exercise that force by not only rescuing our sailors, but bombing the area. The appropriate response in this case is not a proportional response.” *(Strategy 5 -- addition)*
“Recent actions on the part of the Pulo military are indeterminate. A number of ships have been recently seized in the same area, usually by rogue bandits not associated with the government. But the last radio message sent by the Malay suggests a force that may have been trained by Pulo. We have the forces available to assert control over the area, and we should exercise that force by rescuing our sailors. The appropriate response in this case is a proportional response.” (Strategy 5 – subtraction or reducing the number of available options)

“Recent actions on the part of the Pulo military are indeterminate. A number of ships have been recently seized in the same area, usually by rogue bandits not associated with the government. But the last radio message sent by the Malay suggests a force that may have been trained by Pulo. We have forces at the ready, although you should exercise caution. I suggest we use diplomatic channels to get our boys back.” (Strategy 6)

MINISTER OF STATE

“Diplomatic appeals have been virtually ignored by Pulo. We attempted contact through diplomatic back-channels – including the Utlandian embassy in Pulo – to engage their government. Unfortunately, we received little help from either. International support and sympathy is clearly in our favor, but we are far from having a broad-based coalition of supporters. Any decision must be carefully constructed to maintain our status in the international system.” (Control)

“As the senior member of your advisory group, my experience in crisis situations suggests this is a matter of diplomacy, even though Diplomatic appeals have been virtually ignored by Pulo. We attempted contact through diplomatic back-channels – including the Utlandian embassy in Pulo – to engage their government. Unfortunately, we received little help from either. International support and sympathy is clearly in our favor, but we are far from having a broad-based coalition of supporters. Continued diplomatic levers need to be used to resolve this crisis” (Strategy 1)

“Recent actions on the part of the Pulo military are indeterminate. A number of ships have been recently seized in the same area, usually by rogue bandits not associated with the government. But the last radio message sent by the Malay suggests a force that may have been trained by Pulo. We have the forces available to assert control over the area, and we should retrieve our ship.” (Strategy 6)
MINISTER OF INTELLIGENCE

“Satellite flybys remain unclear. There appear to be troop movements from both Utland and Pulo. Previous intelligence tells us that Utland is engaging in coastal war-games, but we have no information about Pulonian movements. Satellites confirm that the SS Malay is in dock, but we have no information on the status or health of the crew. TV feeds and newspapers show crew members in jail cells and in court with captions such as ‘Usselian Spies Caught Red-Handed.’ Editorials use inflammatory language, stressing the threat facing Pulo from its former colonial government.” (Control)

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(Strategy 2)

MINISTER OF DOMESTIC AFFAIRS

“Polls indicate that there is widespread support for actions leading to the release of the prisoners. But one should note that there is always popular support with the beginning of any crisis. Leaders of Parliament are likewise subdued in their critiques of your policies. Past experience dictates that this support could be short-lived, and a swift end to the crisis is needed.” (Control)

“Polls indicate that there is widespread support for actions leading to the release of the prisoners. But one should note that there is always popular support with the beginning of any crisis. Leaders of Parliament are likewise subdued in their critiques of your policies. Past experience dictates that this support could be short-lived, and a swift end to the crisis is needed. I agree with the position of the Minister of State – we must use diplomatic action to end this crisis before it gets out of control.” (Strategy 2)
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SURVEY QUESTIONS AND SUPPORTING MATERIALS

DIRECTIONS: Please follow all directions completely, and answer all questions honestly. At any time, you may refuse to answer any questions, and you may opt out at any time. Work through the questions at your own pace, and feel free to ask any questions you may have. The questionnaire should take no more than 15 minutes to complete.

We would like to know a little about your personality and personal beliefs. Please mark your level of agreement with the following statements.

1. I only think as hard as I have to.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

2. I like tasks that require little thought once I have learned them.

3. Thinking is not my idea of fun.

4. I prefer my life to be filled with puzzles that I must solve.

5. I prefer complex to simple problems.

6. I enjoy strongly liking and disliking new things.

7. I often prefer to remain neutral about complex issues.

8. I like to decide that new things are really good or really bad.

9. I only form strong opinions when I have to.

10. The best way to ensure world peace is through American military strength.

11. The use of military force only makes problems worse.

12. Rather than simply reacting to our enemies, it’s better for us to strike first.
13. Generally, the more influence America has on other nations, the better off they are.

14. People can be divided into two distinct classes: the weak and the strong.

15. The facts on crime, sexual immorality, and the recent public disorders all show that we have to crack down harder on troublemakers if we are going to save our moral standards and preserve law and order.

16. Obedience and respect for authority are the most important virtues children should learn.

17. Although at times I may not agree with the government, my commitment to the US always remains strong.

18. The Bush Administration provided sufficient justification for invading Iraq.

19. Iraq posed a significant and eminent threat to the security issues of the United States.

20. In times of national crisis, personal security should be the ultimate goal of national government.

DIRECTIONS: Some people know a lot about politics and foreign policy, others don’t keep up with these issues. We would like to find out how much you keep up with these issues. If you don’t know the answer, just leave the space blank or mark ‘N/A.’

1. Who is the current vice-president of the US?

2. How much of a majority is required for the US Senate and House to override presidential veto?

3. Which political party currently holds the majority in the House of Representatives?

4. Which political party is more conservative?

5. Whose responsibility is it to determine whether a law is constitutional?

6. Who is the current speaker of the House of Representatives?

7. Who is the current majority leader of the US Senate?

8. Who is the current minority leader of the US Senate?
9. Who is the current Secretary of State?

10. Who is the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court?

11. Who is the Secretary General of the United Nations?

12. Who is the British Prime Minister?

13. What does NAFTA stand for?

14. What does EU stand for?

15. What does NATO stand for?
RESPONSE SHEET #1 AND RESPONSE SHEET #2

NOTE: All information you provide is anonymous and confidential.
Now that you have received some information about the crisis, which of the following policy options do you prefer (please check the most appropriate response for each issue).

DIPLOMATIC RESPONSE

_____ Level 1: resume normal diplomatic relations with Pulo.
_____ Level 2: further attempt to establish negotiations with Pulo to resolve the crisis.
_____ Level 3: continue verbal protests, urging Pulo to release the crew
_____ Level 4: condemn Pulo for its blatant assault upon an unarmed crew
_____ Level 5: Level 4, plus set a vague deadline for the release of the crew
_____ Level 6: Level 5, plus break relations with Pulo, expel Pulon diplomats, and close the Usselian embassy in Pulo
_____ Level 7: Level 6, plus setting a firm deadline, after which an attack will ensue
_____ Level 8: declare war on Pulo

Why did you select this policy? (Provide a brief justification for your selection)

MILITARY RESPONSE

_____ Level 1: no military response
_____ Level 2: put military bases into high state of alert and begin spy plane flyovers
_____ Level 3: Level 2, plus order naval vessels to the Gulf of Pulon
_____ Level 4: Level 3, plus order blockade of Pulo
_____ Level 5: Level 4, plus land covert reconnaissance teams
_____ Level 6: order covert ops to rescue the crew
_____ Level 7: bomb strategic targets in Pulo
_____ Level 8: Level 7, plus ground force assaults

Why did you select this policy? (Provide a brief justification for your selection)

On a scale from 1 to 100 (with 1 meaning “no confidence”), how confident are you in your decision?
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