A RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF SELECTED SPEECHES OF LYNDON
BAINES JOHNSON ON THE WAR IN VIETNAM

DISSERTATION
Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

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INTRODUCTION

Justification

Writing the foreword to Sorensen's *Decision-Making in the White House*, John F. Kennedy called the American Presidency a "formidable, exposed, and somewhat mysterious institution."^1^ "It is formidable," explained Kennedy, "because it represents the point of ultimate decision in the American political system. It is exposed," he continued, "because decision cannot take place in a vacuum: the Presidency is the center of the play of pressure, interest, and idea in the nation, and the Presidential office is the vortex into which all the elements of national decision are irresistibly drawn. And," said Kennedy, "it is mysterious because the essence of ultimate decision remains impenetrable to the observer. . . ."

What Kennedy observed about Presidential decision can be extended to cover Presidential public persuasion. First, it is formidable. We are pretuned to expect that somebody will be in charge; we abhor a vacuum. Above all other political figures in America, the President is in a position to be the spokesman for the nation. The members of the Supreme Court seldom comment on issues, since cases

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involving these issues may come before the Court. The members of Congress often are tied to local concerns. A free press is anxious to carry the President's every word and action, and radio and television provide him with direct, unmediated access to the individual citizen. By the careful use of his advantages, the President can set the tone of debate about any national issue.

In the second place, the persuasion of the President is exposed, because it must be. We have created a position of great power, but, as Richard E. Neustadt reminds us, "Presidential power is the power to persuade." However, this persuasion, to be effective, cannot end with Neustadt's definition—"The power to persuade is the power to bargain." Presidential persuasion must involve more than the use of appointment, veto, budgeting, and deals, which Louis Koenig has called "closed politics." The President must use "open politics," as well; he must take his case, sooner or later, to the public. In The American President, Sidney Hyman argues that the distinction between "strong" and "weak" presidents can be drawn in terms "of how they manage the slippery imponderables of public opinion." The President is expected not only to execute the will of the public, but

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\(^2\) Ibid., p. 45.


to guide that will by educating, explaining, and exciting to action.

Finally, Presidential persuasion is somewhat of a mystery. The varied audiences at which the President aims from his array of vantage points, the varied appeals which he makes, the possible motives which prompt the appeals— all demand careful analysis.

So far, we have noticed three principles which lie at the foundation of this thesis:

1. The President of the United States is in a position favorable to the exercise of persuasion;

2. The maintaining of the position demands the exercise of public persuasions;

3. Our understanding of his position demands our analysis of this persuasion.

Let us now add a fourth principle: The President's public persuasion concerning his Vietnam policies is a legitimate area for rhetorical analysis.

The President's part in the verbal battle over Vietnam is an important case of Presidential persuasion, in the first place, because it represents a Presidential attempt to resist the natural inclination of the public. In The Public Philosophy, Walter Lippmann reminds us that "public policy is made in a field of equations."\(^6\) Those deciding policy must strike a balance between what is desired and what is possible, by adding to or subtracting from the terms of the equation. Compared with one another, the sides of

the equation differ in that one is the more agreeable, the more popular. Usually, the more pleasant and more popular side reflects what we desire, and the harder side reflects what is needed in order to satisfy the desire. "Now," Lippmann leads on, "the momentous equations of war and peace, of solvency, of security and of order, always have a harder or a softer . . . a popular or an unpopular option." Lippmann believes the pressure of the electorate is "normally for the soft side of the equations," and that the "normal propensity of democratic governments is to please the largest number of voters." To maintain his policy of a limited war for limited objectives, President Johnson has attempted to dissuade the majority of the American public from choosing what he believes is the "soft side" of the equation, from slipping through frustration or fear, into either of what he believes are two extreme camps. As the war has ground on, with neither clear victory nor the prospect of negotiation in sight, Presidential persuasion has had to do more than fend off those opposed to the war; it has had to keep the majority who have supported his policy from wearying of it—from slipping little by little into a war psychosis, a win-at-any-cost mood.

In the second place, the Vietnam policy battle provides an interesting case of Presidential persuasion, because it forces the President to change his arguments and appeals to adapt to the mutations of policy which changes with an ever-changing world situation. In elucidating the nature of
the United States commitment, the President has migrated from base to base, turning his back on past positions.

In the third place, the debate over Johnson's Vietnam policy provides an inclusive case of Presidential persuasion, because of the wide scope of its objectives. Any question of foreign policy is always, in our times, tied closely to politics, economics, psychology, and public opinion, as well as to military and diplomatic questions. Bernard C. Cohen reminds us, it is not always easy to draw a clear and useful line of demarcation between foreign policy and domestic policy.7 Our enlarged interests now span the globe and cover such an extensive variety of relationships—economic, cultural, scientific, psychological, etc., as well as political and military—as to involve all the realms of public policy. Therefore, our foreign relations today are constantly affecting or being affected by issues of domestic policy. There are, therefore, in Johnson's Vietnam rhetoric, arguments and appeals of social strategy, in which the President seeks to keep an impatient public from outrunning his middle-of-the-road policy of limited warfare; there are, as well, arguments and appeals of political strategy in which he seeks to win votes for himself and his party; there are arguments and appeals of diplomatic strategy in which he seeks to convince other nations that our presence in Vietnam

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is not due to any claims which we wish to make for ourselves in Southeast Asia; finally, there are arguments and appeals of military strategy in which he seeks to keep the Communists from underestimating the strength of American resolution.

Finally, Johnson's campaign of persuasion is imposing because of the size of his endeavor. James Reston of the New York Times recently wrote, tongue-in-cheek, "On the home front as in Vietnam, the President is bombing the opposition. He is on television these days more than Walter Cronkite. . . ." 8 On November 8, 1965, the New York Times reported Johnson had appeared on live television fifty-eight times in less than two years in office--nine times more than Eisenhower did in eight years in office and twenty-five times more than John Kennedy in nearly three years. 9

Problem and Method

The rhetorical critic is not just a historian extracting and judging ideas. The rhetorical critic is interested in revealing and evaluating a speaker's means of expressing his ideas.

In attempting to evaluate the arguments within the various areas of Johnson's Vietnam rhetoric, we have been limited. We could note assertion and evidence presented by

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Johnson and his opposition; we could find appeals which distracted from the process of reasonable discussion; we could examine the machinery of his arguments to determine their validity. We could not determine, however, whether all of the evidence presented by Johnson is empirically true, since much of the information on foreign policy questions is regarded by the government as "classified." Whenever possible, however, we have made speculative judgments concerning either the truth of some evidence or the wisdom of some philosophic assumption from which the President has operated.

In isolating the appeals by which Johnson has given energy to his arguments, we have relied heavily, for a model, upon Henry O. Murray's list of "psychogenic needs."\(^{10}\) We have not intended, however, to present them as some sort of list of "impelling motives" such as appears in some early textbooks in the field.\(^{11}\) Complex audience behavior cannot be explained merely by saying that by making a motive appeal to a basic drive a speaker sets in motion a certain basic, universal urge to which it is connected. The whole man, himself, determines in a given situation what is the most important thing, at that time, for self-actualization. We

\(^{10}\)The list appears in Edward J. Murray, Motivation and Emotion (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964), p. 97. These social motives were not broached by Murray capriciously. A small number of normal subjects were studied intensively with interviews, questionnaires, and psychological tests. One of these, the Thematic Apperception Test, is now widely used as a personality test.

\(^{11}\)See, for example, Arthur Edward Phillips, Effective Speaking (Chicago: The Newton Company, 1921).
have attempted to base our study of Johnson's pathetic appeals upon probable audience attitudes and not just upon general drives. For example, whereas Murray's list of needs says that people will tend to act in a way which will reduce fear of danger, we have attempted to ask, further, what people in a specific audience were likely to be fearing when Johnson addressed them.

The measure used to determine Johnson's effectiveness has not been merely his effect on the critic, but his effect upon his intended audiences. One measure of American audience behavior has been the public reaction surveyed in various opinion polls designed to measure public feeling toward Johnson's Vietnam policies. Another has been found in voter reaction in the November, 1966, congressional elections. One indication of his effect on leadership in foreign countries has appeared in any stated willingness or reluctance to believe Johnson's peace overtures or his defense of the United States's presence in South Vietnam.

Our analysis and evaluation of Johnson's Vietnam rhetoric has been divided into four chapters. The first, which seeks a rationale for Johnson's reversal of the policy which he upheld in the 1964 Presidential campaign, has employed the problem-solution method of organization. In the second, which investigates the rhetoric of Johnson's diplomatic strategy, we have adopted the exegetical method of a running commentary and the chronological method of division as being best adapted to an application of Johnson's rhetoric
to swiftly changing international events. The third chapter, which investigates the rhetoric of Johnson's domestic strategy, and the fourth, which draws some general conclusions concerning his invention, style, and effectiveness, have both been organized by classification because this method offers numerous possibilities for combinations of material.

Materials

Primary materials have included: the Public Papers of the Presidents, Lyndon B. Johnson, for the years 1964 and 1965; texts of Presidential addresses, news conferences, White House statements appearing in the New York Times, and the Department of State Bulletin from January, 1964, through November, 1966; texts of addresses, press conferences, statements, etc., by Presidential advisers, cabinet officers, legislative friends who serve at times as trial balloons and shock absorbers for national and congressional recoil; and texts of representative speeches and statements by chief opponents of Johnson's policies, both here and abroad.
CHAPTER I

THE RHETORIC OF A CHANGING STRATEGY

Heraclitus once observed that no man ever steps into
the same river twice. One who has waded, on different dates,
in the enflow of Lyndon Johnson’s Vietnam rhetoric might
well make the same observation. The expression of Johnson's
policy-positions has been, since 1964, constantly in flux.

As an example of this change, note Johnson's state-
ments on the issue of whether the United States should bomb
North Vietnam. In April, 1964, Richard Nixon, in a speech
to the New York City Chamber of Commerce, urged that the
United States make military strikes against Communist bases
in North Vietnam and Laos. ¹ Nixon was articulating what
others had been speculating. Two months before, James Reston
of the New York Times, had taken the pulse of Johnson’s more
militant advisers and had raised basic questions. He won-
dered about the response of the Chinese Communists, the rest
of Asia, Moscow, and our European allies should the United
States bomb North Vietnam. ² Although Johnson did have the
question of bombing under discussion at this time in policy-

²"That Deeply Dangerous Game in Vietnam" (editorial),
ibid., February 26, 1964, p. 34.
planning sessions, his rhetorical response, until August 5, 1964, was limited to reporting plans for stepped-up military activity against the Viet Cong and to reasserting the United States's commitment to defend South Vietnam.

Then, dramatically on August 5, in a postmidnight news conference, Johnson and Secretary of Defense McNamara unfolded the details of our aerial attacks upon North Vietnam P-T boat bases in retaliation for the Gulf of Tonkin incident. The bombing was, however, an incident, a tactical reaction, and not a new, continued strategy. On August 8, McNamara revealed that his and Johnson's speeches announcing the attack came over an hour before the first target was hit and that a forewarning was given others (presumably China and North Vietnam) of the limited nature of the attack. The bombing was an event message, which, alone, could have been misunderstood.

Those who had hoped that the bombings would continue were disappointed. As the Presidential campaigning began,

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3 See Henry F. Graff, "How Johnson Makes Foreign Policy," ibid., July 4, 1965, Sec. 6, p. 17; Graff, Professor of History at Columbia University, reports on an interview he had with McGeorge Bundy, in which Bundy said the Administration had the possible bombing of North Vietnam under discussion for about a year before the actual bombing began.


7 Ibid., September 29, 1964, p. 1; September 30, 1964 (editorial), p. 42.
Johnson, in a Manchester, New Hampshire, speech, replied to suggestions by Goldwater, Rockefeller, Scranton, and others that the war be extended to North Vietnam. He barred their suggested action on the grounds that it would bring Red China into the war. Campaigning in Oklahoma on September 25, Johnson rebuked those who were calling for continued bombing with the same warning—that it would bring war with Red China:

There are those that say you ought to go North and drop bombs to try to wipe out the supply lines, and they think that would escalate the war. . . . We don't want to get involved in a nation with 700 million people and get tied down to a land war in Asia.

As the campaigning rolled into October, Johnson's stand against a campaign of bombing in North Vietnam continued. "You don't get peace by rattling your rockets," warned Johnson. "You don't get peace by threatening to drop your bombs."

Candidate Johnson, adamant against continued bombing, was opposed, as well, to any attempt to force North Vietnam to the negotiation table. Our military strength, he declared, "Cannot and must not be used to compel and to frighten all others into following our command. Peace does not come from threats, or intimidations, or humiliations, or

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overpowering. The only consequence of such a policy," warned Johnson, "would be constant conflict, rising hostility, and deepening tension."¹¹ In Louisville, Kentucky, speaking at a breakfast for Indiana and Kentucky state party leaders, Johnson made use of a number of governors (who represented several past inner-feuds, but who were together on the platform) to make the same point:

There is not an ultimatum that any President can issue that could have produced one of these former Governors on this platform, not a single ultimatum. You could take all the tanks in our combat divisions, and all the planes in the sky, and all the Polaris missiles, and you couldn't have made a one of them come up here. But you can reason with them. So that is our problem right out there in Vietnam.¹²

No continued bombings in the North, no ultimatums; Johnson's position seemed clear. Yet, less than five months later, the White House announced that the President was implementing "peace through pressure" plans which had been prepared by his advisers and was opening a continuous limited air war against North Vietnam to bring it to the negotiation table.¹³

A reversal of position is equally evident in the Johnson rhetoric concerning an increase of the American forces in Vietnam. In his first live television news conference, Johnson explained, "We are furnishing advice and

¹¹From a speech to members of the New Hampshire Weekly Newspaper Editors Association, Manchester, N. H., September 28, 1964, ibid., II, 1163.

¹²Ibid., II, 1267.

counsel and training to the South Vietnam army, and we must rely on them for such action as is taken to defend themselves."\textsuperscript{14} Adding to this reassurance, Secretary McNamara, in an April, 1964, news conference, opposed direct United States intervention and stated that the Americans should stay only long enough to train their Vietnamese counterparts.\textsuperscript{15} Campaigning in the fall of the year, Johnson promised, "We are not about to send American boys 9 or 10,000 miles away from home to do what Asian boys ought to be doing for themselves." He warned of danger of war with China if America increased its forces:

We have now some 18,000 men in Vietnam, officers and men, advising, counseling, leading them. . . . We can seek a wider war. China is there on the border with 700 million men, with over 200 million in their army. And we could get tied down in a land war in Asia very quickly if we sought to throw our weight around.\textsuperscript{16}

With the new year, however, there came a new subtle tone in the Johnson rhetoric. The promise to keep American boys out of Asian wars began to seem less sure. As Johnson delivered his Inaugural Address, he offered American lives "for the liberation of man." "If American lives must end, and American treasure be spilled in countries that we barely know, then that," said Johnson, "is the price that change

\textsuperscript{14}Ibid., March 1, 1964, p. 44.

\textsuperscript{15}Ibid., April 25, 1964, p. 2.

\textsuperscript{16}From a speech at Akron University, October 21, 1964, Public Papers of the Presidents, 1963–1964, II, 1390–1391.
has demanded of conviction and of our enduring covenant."¹⁷

Outweighed and almost eclipsed by visions of fruitful domestic progress to come, Johnson's words of foreign commitment seemed but a decoration to satisfy tradition; it was, however, a harbinger of events to come. By June, headlines in the New York Times read, "U. S. Officer Sees G. I. Combat Role in Vietnam Soon" and "High Aide in Saigon Predicts Limits on Use of Troops Will End in Summer."¹⁸ Soon, the Times reported that Saigon sources were saying the United States was about to take over the main burden of combat.¹⁹ At the end of July, President Johnson announced that the United States military commitment in Vietnam would be raised by 50,000 men "almost immediately," and that draft rates would be gradually doubled.²⁰ At the end of 1964, American servicemen committed to Vietnam numbered 23,000 and Americans had elected a President who had campaigned against a significant increase. By the end of 1965, American servicemen in Vietnam totaled 181,250;²¹ by October, 1966, 331,000 were there, over 5,000 had been killed, and over 31,000 had been wounded.²²

To many, Johnson's complete reversal of policy after the elections signified that, in his earlier campaign statements, he had hidden his real intent in order to gain votes. Charging Johnson with a lack of candor and with the use of misleading statements, the House Republican Committee on Planning and Research issued a "white paper" entitled "Vietnam: Some Neglected Aspects of the Historical Record."

Noting the discrepancy between his earlier campaign statements and his subsequent actions, the committee charged,

Miscalculation was encouraged by President Johnson's campaign oratory of 1964. In order to make his opponent appear reckless and trigger happy, the President in several statements set limits to American participation in the Vietnamese conflict. 23

However, commenting upon the same obvious change in Johnson's stance and statements, James Reston of the New York Times was not as certain as the Republicans of the reason behind the change. Reston reflected,

In 1964, L.B.J. talked a lot about being in Vietnam to help the Vietnamese help themselves; by May, 1965, he was treating Vietnam as a vital national interest to be defended at any cost. It is not clear whether this represents a carefully calculated change of emphasis, or merely a series of personal L.B.J. responses to the increase of the pace of Communist activity. 24

Of these two possible reasons for the policy shift seen in Johnson's Vietnam rhetoric, the second seems the more credible--Johnson's change was a result of the final decision-maker's view of how to adapt to rapid changes in

the total situation of the war. Policies, according to
experts in political science, are supposed to be a decision-
maker's reaction to the total situation, the output produced
by the interaction of the policy-maker's mind with the total
input of events, problems, assets, and obstacles before him.\(^{25}\)
It follows, therefore, that policies must be constantly in
change, since the situations that call them into being are
forever changing. As Charles O. Lerche, Jr., Professor of
International Relations at the American University, has
written:

Foreign policy does not just happen; the state's
decision to act is always the result of some
change in the situation . . . with which it is
faced. Since . . . the situational elements of
international politics are in constant flux, it
would be logical for us to conclude . . . that
the foreign policy process is constantly opera-
tive . . . each new situational change touching
off a new chain of adjustment.\(^{26}\)

Further, as the decision-maker's policies change,
his rhetoric stating, explaining, or defending these poli-
cies should change also, since it is but the expression of
the policies. It is possible, therefore, that the policy
shifts, reflected in the changing Johnson rhetoric from the
fall of 1964 through 1965, were changes necessitated by

\(^{25}\) Louis W. Koenig, Congress and the President:
Official Makers of Public Policy (Chicago: Scott-Foresman,
Inc., 1965), pp. 152-159; Charles O. Lerche, Jr., and Abdul
A. Said, Concepts of International Politics (Englewood

\(^{26}\) Foreign Policy of the American People (2d ed.);
alterations in the President's view of the international situation.

In order to pursue this view, we shall take two generic steps: First, we may consider what factors interact in the President's foreign policy formulation to produce a change in the mosaic of policy in general. Then, having isolated and examined, in a framework, certain factors, we shall see if we can find these factors interacting to produce what seemed to be necessary changes in our Vietnamese War policies.

In asking what factors interact in Johnson's foreign policy formulation, we may view that formulation as a system in action. A "system" is an entity composed of several interacting variables. The materials of international politics may be treated in terms of "systems of action" in which the variables move through successive states.27 The "state of a system" designates a description of the variables of a system at any given time. When a physician records such things as pulse, temperature, respiration rate, and blood pressure he is describing, in part, the state of the physiological system at a given time. Similarly, in the President's foreign-policy-making system, the national interest, the international environment, and the total personality of the policy-maker may all be taken as variables that move

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through successive states. The state of each at the time of
decision-making influences the decision made.

The National Interest

Having isolated three factors which influence for-
eign policy formulation, we are ready to investigate, in
detail, the effect of each. First, how does the national
interest affect the making of foreign policy? In essence,
the national interest amounts to the sum total of all the
nation's values--values which can be regarded as "the prod-
uct of its culture and as the expression of its cohesion."28
Each society which deems itself a "nation" has a social code
that contributes to its peculiar identity. These value
preferences--aspirations, ideals, needs, wants--often re-
quire governmental action if they are to be fulfilled and
realized. Therefore, they "activate and energize all polit-
ical action," including foreign policy. Governments become
obligated to "structure their international efforts so as to
reflect the mass value judgments of the people they repre-
sent."29 These mass shared values, applied to long-range
and fixed conditions, interact with official points of view
to produce a formula of national interest.30 Only until the
policy-maker takes a reading of these national values and

29 Lerche and Said, p. 3-4.
30 Lerche, Foreign Policy of the American People, p. 7.
shapes them into some framework which he calls "the national interest" do they affect foreign policy. As two students of international politics, Lerche and Said, explain, "It is the task of the officials charged with policy-making to shape this broad spectrum of needs and wants into some semblance of integrity and to apply the resulting value synthesis to the phenomena of international politics."\(^{31}\) The national interest, when applied to the evolving international conditions, results in the selection of precise objectives or goals the state wishes to reach. These, in turn, lend to the formulation of policies or courses of action designed to realize the goals.\(^{32}\)

The International Environment

Policy-making cannot exist except as it is called into being by such situational factors as—the global distribution of power; the effectiveness of the existing international institutions; the general climate of state relationships; the known and predictable responses of other states, requiring resistance, cooperation, or accommodation.\(^{33}\)

From what sources does the President receive information on these and other factors in the evolving international environment? A complex international communication system

\(^{31}\textit{Concepts of International Politics}, p. 5.\)

\(^{32}\textit{Frankel}, pp. 51-52; \textit{Lerche}, p. 7.\)

\(^{33}\textit{Koenig, Congress and the President}, p. 152; \textit{Lerche}, pp. 16-22.\)
such as the one keeping the President informed of the international environment may include the following features, all of which affect his view of the state of the international system: (1) "sensors" placed in the environment to detect and report events and changes; (2) "scanners" and "samplers" that will give special notice to events of significance; (3) "integrators" to collect and collate information from a variety of incoming messages; (4) "condensers" and "filters" to narrow or widen the dispersion of messages according to need; (5) "monitors" and "censors" watching for errors; (6) "warning systems" that show malfunctions in the system.  

Johnson's "sensors," placed in the international system to record events and changes, include not only the Central Intelligence Agency, but State Department area chiefs, ambassadors, and military leaders. Secretary of State Rusk, interviewed by Professor Henry Graff of Columbia University, reported that he "relies heavily" on his area chiefs by sending them frequently into conference with the President in order to help express the position of the State Department. In June, 1965, the New York Times reported that Johnson had begun to read a larger daily sample of cables from United States ambassadors. Their function is

to offer advice as well as information. For example, upon his nomination to be Deputy Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs, Foy D. Kohler, the United States Ambassador to Moscow, testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that an American blockade of North Vietnam might raise the risk of a military confrontation with the Soviet Union.\textsuperscript{37} Thus, for a President directing wars of containment, military "sensors" are indispensable. In one recent news conference, Johnson reported:

General Westmoreland and I talked last evening until the early hours of the morning today. We discussed the overall situation and went into considerable detail on more than three dozen specific subjects. . . . My talks with General Westmoreland have confirmed the conviction that . . . the single most important factor now is our will to prosecute the war until the Communists, recognizing the futility of their ambitions, either end the fighting or seek a peaceful settlement.\textsuperscript{38}

In keeping informed on attitudes and events in the international environment, President Johnson relies, as well, upon "scanners" and "samplers" that give special notice to phenomena of significance. By selecting and describing certain events and public feelings, the news wire services and the elite press become "scanners" and "samplers" at the President's disposal. Bernard C. Cohen, in interviewing 150 people who had held office, asked what effect the press has on foreign policy. His study suggested three things the


\textsuperscript{38}\textit{Department of State Bulletin}, September 5, 1966, p. 335.
news services make available to the policy-makers—information, a measure of the importance of events, and a sampling of opinions. Cohen felt the press makes information available in three ways. First, it provides an independent report outside of the diplomatic channels. Next, it provides information faster than the State Department cables which must not only be decoded but also run four to five hours behind the press tickers. Finally, the press provides information because policy-makers are physically unable to read everything that comes into the State Department through official channels.\(^{39}\)

Not content with merely providing information, the press, points out Cohen, is also a measure of the importance of events. By giving an issue prominence, the press helps nudge it somewhat higher on the list of items claiming the attention of policy-makers. Finally, it makes available editorials from which the decision-maker can regularly tap an informed and articulate segment of public opinion.\(^{40}\)

The New York Times, observes Cohen, is the single most important newspaper for those in the government having an interest or responsibility in foreign affairs. Yet, it is not the only source. On the desks of policy-makers are other leading newspapers, such as the Washington Post, the


\(^{40}\) Ibid.

Theodore Sorensen, former Special Counsel to President Kennedy, was not as enthusiastic concerning the importance of the press as was Cohen. In his Decision-Making in the White House, Sorensen wrote that the nation's press serves "as a key presidential adviser," but added parenthetically, "though not nearly to the extent it imagines." While admitting that Kennedy read newspapers "partly to gain new insights for himself," Sorensen believed that he perused them "primarily to know what the public and the Congress are reading, to see how his actions or choices appear to others without his access to the facts." 41 Kennedy, then, seemed to use the press not so much to scan and sample the international situation as to scan and sample the public's view of the international situation.

The President's system informing him of the international environment includes not only "sensor" sources and "scanner" and "sampler" sources, but "integrators" to collect and collate information from these sources, and "condensers" and "filters" to narrow or widen the dispersion of messages according to need. Presidential advisers and assistants serve in these functions. McGeorge Bundy has pictured the role of Presidential advisers as being like "prisms" through which public problems are perceived by the President. 42

Expressing a similar view, Louis W. Koenig suggested that the work of the corps of White House assistants is to "help analyze and refine the problems injected unremittingly into the White House by the busy conveyer belts from the world outside." That Johnson makes extensive use of these data seems clear. One reporter has observed that he takes to his bedroom each night a stack of up to 150 memoranda representing the entire output of the White House staff and other key advisers. In 1965, Johnson held weekly lunches with Secretaries Rusk and McNamara, or McGeorge Bundy, his Special Assistant for National Security Affairs. These lunches were "non-agenda" affairs, designed so that Rusk, McNamara, or Bundy could bring up any subject which they felt needed the President's attention.

Other major channels of sifted information about the international environment are the Council of Economic Advisers which watches over the nation's economic pulse, the National Security Council, a channel of collective advice on national security policy in all its aspects, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Congressional leaders. William Moyers, Johnson's Presidential Assistant, has reported that the Joint Chiefs can be in touch with Johnson without going

44 Mohr, New York Times, June 13, 1965, Sec. 4, p. 3.
45 Graff, ibid., July 4, 1965, Sec. 6, p. 6.
through McNamara. Moyers mused that any President "would be a fool if he worshipped the system, and thus denied himself sources except those at the top of the greasy pole."46 He further reported that at weekly breakfasts which Johnson was holding with Congressional leaders, more than half the conversation was revolving around foreign affairs.47

Finally, the President's information system on the international environment includes "monitors" and "censors" and "warning systems" that watch for informational errors and for malfunctions in the system. One information-source filling these roles is the President's "devil's advocate," a close associate in the President's "inner circle" who argues the case of the opposition. James Reston has described Undersecretary of State George Ball as "Mr. Johnson's loyal opposition in the State Department," and as one who has "kept arguing with great force but with civility and even amiable good humor, against the trend toward deeper involvement in the war."48 Moyers, who was regarded as Johnson's pivot man at the White House, described Ball as "a necessary and effective devil's advocate who seeks diplomatic and political options which might be pursued."49

When Johnson chose Undersecretary Ball to serve as

46 Ibid., Sec. 6, p. 18.
47 Ibid., p. 18.
49 Graff, p. 18.
executive chairman of a new and powerful interdepartmental committee to direct the country's nonmilitary operations abroad, Reston observed, "The President does not want to be left alone with the hawks... So he created an advisory committee of hawks presided over by a dove." 50

The press, also, may serve as a "monitor" or "warning system." Douglas Cater, Jr., points out that the reporter in Washington cannot only illuminate policy and assist in giving it sharpness and clarity, he can, just as easily "prematurely expose policy and, as with underdeveloped film, cause its destruction." 51 It would appear that this is a monitoring of policy Johnson opposes. Recently, Reston lamented what he called Johnson's doctrine of "no speculation before action," in which all Presidential options are to be protected from advance press speculation. 52 Reston quoted Presidential Assistant Moyers as explaining,

> It is very important for a President to maintain up until the moment of decision his options, and for someone to speculate days or weeks in advance that he is going to do thus and thus is to deny the President the latitude he needs in order to make, in the light of existing circumstances, the best possible decision.

Calling this "something new in the catalogue of Presidential privilege," Reston charged, "The function of criticism itself

50 "The Johnson System," Sec. 4, p. 11.


52 "The Press, the President, and Foreign Policy," Foreign Affairs, 44 (July, 1966), 564-565.
has changed in an odd way during President Johnson's administration." In the past, he observed, "there has been a reasonable expectation among people writing political criticism, that if they identified a problem, checked it out thoroughly, and proposed a reasonable remedy, publication of these things would be read within the government in good faith and maybe even considered worthy of executive action."

The catalogue of roles in Johnson's international-information system would not be complete without the vast duplicator of several roles, the Central Intelligence Agency. A team of New York Times correspondents--consisting of Max Frankel, Tom Wicker, and others--reports that "every hour of every day, about 100 to 150 fresh items of news, gossip, and research reach the CIA's busy headquarters in Virginia and are poured into the gigantic human and technological computor that its analysis section resembles." The agency then delivers to the President each evening a summary of the report. 53

The kaleidoscopic assortment of international-environment information funneled to the President is deemed necessary for Presidential problem solving. It will include, therefore, data which identify a problem--a perceived disequilibrium, a discrepancy between national desire and national capacity. It will contain, as well, some suggested goals or conditions which the President's advisers feel will remove the disequilibrium. Further, it will include

information on the position in which the nation finds itself in relation to these suggested goals. This report on position will consist of listings of resources available for use, with an evaluation of their potentialities in various combinations. There will be, likewise, a list and evaluation of obstacles which will hinder either actually or potentially the nation's progress toward each suggested goal. Finally, incoming information on the international environment will contain suggested plans for circumventing these obstacles.54

As the President receives information which spotlights obstacles and which inventories resources for circumventing these obstacles, it is certain he will be receiving some information concerning the state of public opinion.

Yet, there are some who believe a President should have little interest in public opinion. Walter Lippmann maintains a President should be an executive, not a representative. "His duty," he states, "is to his office and not to the electors. Their duty is to fill the office and not to direct the office-holder."55 Lippmann's position is negated, however, by an increased communication between the President and the people, which has brought about a change in the periodicity of American political life. In the early days of our nation, the vastness of our country and the


paucity of communication allowed the voter to focus his attention on a cluster of issues only temporarily at the time of national election. Politics was an occasional pastime; elections were brief interruptions of the routine of life, with a barbecue, holiday atmosphere. As communications to, as well as from, public officials multiplied, however, the need increased for the President to "trim his sails to the shifting winds of opinion."  

This does not imply that public opinion decides foreign policy. Rather, it suggests that the public sets both the general direction in which the government must aim its policy and the outer limits within which policy-makers feel they may operate. By asserting that the public sets the "general direction" of policy, we mean—as Robert A. Dahl expresses it—"The citizen is not in a position to decide what means will produce a given set of consequences. But he is in a position to decide what set of consequences he prefers." In maintaining that the public sets the "outer limits" of policy, we mean the public consensus indicates how far the policy-makers can go in conducting foreign

56 Daniel Beerstain, "Selling the President to the Public," The President: Roles and Powers, pp. 272-273.
57 Lerche, Foreign Policy Of the American People, p. 52.
policy by outlining their "area of operating freedom," by staking off "the area of free decision the policy maker enjoys at any given time."

President Johnson's interest in the state of public opinion concerning his Vietnamese policies is seen in his practice of observing closely public opinion polls and private surveys. References to polls frequently appear in White House statements, in Johnson's new conference pronouncements, and in his addresses.

In order to get some advance idea of public response to his future policy decisions, a President may send up "trial balloons." The decision of the Administration to bomb North Vietnam's P-T boat pens in retaliation for the Gulf of Tonkin incident may have been a test case to gauge public reaction to a possible later campaign of bombing.

Having noticed two inputs which interact in the President's foreign policy-making system, the state of the national interest and the state of the international

60. Lerche, p. 53.
65. Ibid., June 10, 1966, p. 3.
environment, let us now add a third—the state of the policy-maker's total personality.

The President's Personality

Up to this point, we have seen that policy decision and the resulting action are the product of a confrontation of national codes, needs, and desires with the problems, obstacles, and assets within the international environment. This confrontation, however, takes place in the mind of the decision maker, the terminal for the merging lines bringing information on the national values and the international environment. Policy making, therefore, is influenced not only by world events and attitudes, but by the policy maker's world of ideals and ideas, values and attitudes. Louis Koenig writes:

The environment of the mind in policy making abounds with assumptions as to what is and what should be in the conduct and purposes of rivals, voters, and leaders and peoples of other nations. Assumptions may shut out certain policy decisions and shape and control others.67

The Johnson personality comes into play, for example, in his willingness to accept only some information regarding public feeling toward his policies. According to Presidential Assistant Moyers, Johnson supplements the public polls and his private surveys with his "great natural gift for knowing, feeling, and sensing the mood of the American people." Johnson has, adds Moyers, "antennae that, give or

67 Congress and the President, p. 153.
take one or two degrees, keep him pretty closely attuned to the problems, moods, and attitudes of the people." In a recent news conference, Johnson seemed to reflect a belief in this professed ability to divine the pulse of the American people. Responding to a reporter who inquired if Johnson saw "something in the political wind" in a New York and Delaware campaigning trip, the President replied, "I have seen on the faces of the people of this country a happiness, and a pleasure, and a satisfaction that is not always reflected in what I read." Alluding to an anecdote, he continued,

I might be like Uncle Ezra. You know the doctor told him he had to quit drinking if he'd improve his hearing. But when he went back the doctor said "well, are you still drinking?" And he said "yes." The doctor said "I told you you'd have to quit it to improve your hearing." And he said "Well doctor," he said, "I like what I drink so much better than what I hear that I just didn't take your prescription."  

On the record, Johnson is highly interested in receiving information about public opinion. In his first live televised news conference, he intoned, "I go along with the view expressed by Jefferson that the collective judgment of the many is much to be preferred to the selective decisions of the few." But when it comes to getting what he feels is the real and final picture of public feeling, the Johnson pride seems to prefer its own selective decision to the

69 Ibid., October 14, 1966, p. 18.
70 Ibid., March 1, 1964, p. 44.
collective decisions of columnists and commentators. Johnson told the reporters:

I think that those of us who sit here in Washington and watch what three networks put on the air and three men decide—you can observe from Vietnam to all the international incidents, read six or seven columnists, two or three or four newspapers. Sometimes we don't get it first hand and sometimes there's a little personal equation that gets into it and sometimes personal opinions are substituted for facts, and I think it's good to get out and see the people and talk to 'em and I am convinced that the complainers in this country and the critics in this country and the prophets of doom in this country and the fear artists in this country are very, very much in the minority.71

Up to this point, we have taken the following steps:

(1) We have highlighted what seems to be a glaring change in some Vietnamese War policies as expressed in the flow of Lyndon Johnson's rhetoric; (2) We have suggested that this alleged discrepancy, between Johnson's avowed Vietnam policy before the 1964 Presidential election and Johnson's actual Vietnam policy after the election, may be due to changes in policy which were necessitated by changes in the total situation Johnson faced after the elections; (3) Postulating that one cannot pass judgment on a change of stance reflected in Presidential rhetoric unless he investigates the sources of invention which interplayed in the Presidential policy-making systems to bring about the change, we decided to investigate the interplay of inputs in two basic steps. First, the various factors which interact to produce any change in Presidential policy were to be placed in some sort of

71Ibid., October 14, 1966, p. 18.
framework; next, using this framework, we were to see what factors interacted to produce a change in Johnson's Vietnam policies. Having isolated certain policy-influencing factors under a three-fold-framework—the state of the national interest, the state of the international environment, and the state of the Presidential personality—we are now ready to examine the inflow of events, reports, and feelings which brought about specific changes in the Johnson Vietnam-policy stance.

The State of the Johnson Personality

A President of the United States is no Ahasueras whose policy, once stated, is made unalterable by "the Laws of the Medes and Persians." We have already seen that stated foreign policy is often altered to fit the shape of new international events and new domestic interests. However, the shape or image to which the remade policy must conform exists in the mind of the President; the policy is shaped to fit international and domestic phenomena as he views them. The mind of the President is more than a reservoir for information and advice; it is, to use Kenneth Boulding's words, "an active, internal organizing principle" which greatly dominates what the President does with information intended for him.72

Boulding, who is an economist at the University of

Michigan, argues that the behavior of each person is governed by his image of the world around him—a psychological structure that includes all of his perceptions, values, beliefs, and emotions. This "image," he further holds, filters the messages which reach it. If a message is perceived to be hostile, the image will resist the message, either by ignoring it or by reacting to it in anger, hostility, or indignation. If the resistance of the image is very strong, it will take very strong or often repeated messages to penetrate the image, but when the image is penetrated, the effect is a reorganization of its structure. On the other hand, messages which are favorable to the existing image, while readily received, made little impact on the image other than increasing its stability.

Another scholar who reminds us that one's belief system serves not only as a framework for knowing, but for warding off messages perceived as hostile, is Milton Rokeach in The Open and Closed Mind. 73 Contrasting open and closed belief systems, Rokeach states that the closed belief system actually becomes a "defense network against anxiety" in which defense mechanisms like repression, rationalization, denial, projection, and reaction are all at work in some form. 74 The person with a relatively closed belief system will be sensitive to communications, warnings, and prohibitions

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74 ibid., pp. 69-70.
issuing from his own group, and less apt than an open-minded individual to see information about a subsystem in which he disbelieves. Further, when he is given a variety of information which stems from a common source of authority, instead of assessing each incoming bit of information on its own merits, the relatively closed person will tend to accept or reject all the information in a "package deal," depending on whether he perceives the source of authority to be for or against his belief system. 75

Several experimental studies, also, tend to show that an individual's existing attitudes and values are sources of listening problems. W. S. Watson and G. W. Hartmann, for example, studied the ability of theistic and atheistic students to recall material which supported or denied the validity of their position. The authors state that their results buttress the conclusion that material which supports the attitude frame of the subject is retained better than material which opposes it. 76 Experiments by A. L. Edwards seemed to show that the tendency to forget material heard in speeches is related to conflict between the material and the listener's frame of reference. 77

75 Ibid., pp. 61-63.
Studies by Hovland, Lumsdaine, and Sheffield, 78 by Lumsdaine and Janis, 79 by Jarrett and Sherriffs, 80 and by Cooper and Jahoda 81 indicate the resistance of the "image" to the undesirable message, the filtering taking place in the belief system of argument opposed to his position.

There are some who believe that President Johnson’s belief system acts in the way just described. Michael Davie, deputy editor of London’s The Observer, writes,

In the White House there are those – Johnsonist loyalists though they are – who consider that the President is willful, and who feel that advice, sometimes, doesn’t get through to him. If he is convinced that a particular course of action is the right one, he is inclined to regard attempts to divert him from that course, however well intentioned, as sabotage. 82

James Reston writes of what he calls "Johnson's Two Front War." Reston feels that when the President invites members of Congress to White House briefings and asks them for suggestions, he is courting instead of consulting. 83

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Johnson, he says, is trying to "neutralize or at least minimize" the opposition both within the country and within the Western Alliance by those "personal and political techniques" he developed as a Senate majority leader. 83

Reston's observations may explain how Johnson handles a dissonance arising from a clash between two strong features of his personality. The President not only seems to have a strong pride in his own belief system, he has, as well, a strong desire to reach a consensus which absorbs the opposition.

This second feature of the Johnson personality, the desire for consensus among policy-makers, has its counterpart in a desire to be loved by all of the public, which shows itself in Johnson's intense interest in public opinion polls on his popularity. 84

For a President directing a war, both of these personality features are fraught with dangers. The belief that Johnson has a strong pride in his own choices of action, which causes him to look with disfavor upon conflicting ideas, and, at times, upon the bearer of those ideas, can have an effect upon the sources in his information system. David Halberstam, an American correspondent covering the Vietnamese War, points to this danger in The Making of a Quagmire, in which he claims to expose means by which

American leaders are cut off from the realities of the war by a flow of wish-fulfilling information from their "experts" and advisers lower down the chain of command.\footnote{London: Bedley Head, 1965.}

Johnson's desire to be loved by the people also presents the danger that the President will listen to those advisers who seem to echo the popular mood of the people while neglecting an intelligentsia whose ideas have not filtered nearly so well down to society. In his \textit{Congress and Foreign Policy}, Robert A. Dahl laments that, "in a society where a considerable measure of . . . rationality among ordinary citizens is a prerequisite to competent public policy," there is a "breakdown of communication between intelligentsia and citizens."\footnote{New York: W. W. Norton and Co., Inc., 1964, pp. 92-93.} This is not to imply that the President fails to receive any important advice from the intellectuals. Indeed, seven members of the Johnson cabinet are former professors. The White House has reported that of the 371 major appointments the President made in his first two and one-half years in office, there were, collectively, 738 advanced degrees.\footnote{Roscoe Drummond, "President Attacked by Intellectual Left," \textit{The Philadelphia Inquirer}, May 15, 1966, Sec. 7, p. 5.} There is the danger, however, that the President will tend to ignore advice from other academicians who have not had an appreciable influence upon the public.
Up to this point, we have indicated merely in a general way how President Johnson's personality may have had a negative effect upon the formulation of his Vietnamese policies by warding off undesired information or advice. Now, with a more specific and more positive focus, let us ask three questions: First, what dominant philosophy of the President seems to be a factor in his decision to escalate America's activity in the war early in 1965? Next, what view did Johnson take of the state of the national interest, and how was this a factor in his decision to escalate? Finally, what picture did Johnson receive of the state of the international situation, and how was this a factor in his change of policy?

One idea which seems to saturate the Johnson belief system undoubtedly had an effect upon his decision to widen American participation in the war. Bill Moyers has reported that the President is guided to a large extent by the American experience of the 1930's and 1940's, believing that the isolationist sentiment of those years greatly misled the Germans concerning our willingness to fight.88 A look at Johnson's speeches confirms this observation by Moyers. In a speech at a Democratic fund-raising dinner held in Chicago, May 16, 1966, Johnson declared: "We know from hard-won experience that the road to peace is not the road of concession and retreat."89 Two weeks later, in a Memorial Day address

at Arlington National Cemetery, the President reflected: "In the first half of this century we learned that there can be no peace if might makes right—if force used by one nation against a weaker nation is permitted to succeed. We have learned that the time to stop aggression is when it first begins. And that is one reason we are in South Vietnam today." On nation-wide television July 12, 1966, he warned:

Americans entered this century believing that our security had no foundation outside of our own continent. Twice we mistook our sheltered position for safety. Twice we were dead wrong. If we are wise now, we will not repeat our mistakes of the past.

Finally, on October 8, in a major policy address on improving relations with Eastern Europe, Johnson vowed: "We shall never unlearn the lessons of the Thirties, when isolation and withdrawal were our share in the common disaster."

Faced in late 1964 with an increase in Viet Cong strength, with which the South Vietnamese and the small force of American advisers were unable to cope, Johnson seemed to find but two broad alternatives—he could bring in more American strength to cope with the enemy, or he could leave the field to him. And while a drastic increase in American participation would have meant a reversal of his campaign promises, to abandon the field would have demanded

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90Ibid., May 31, 1966, p. 3.

91"The Essentials for Peace in Asia," Department of State Newsletter, August, 1966, p. 3.

a denial of his cherished philosophy—it would have meant, to Johnson, walking the road of retreat and appeasement to the isolation of the Thirties.

When the Johnson belief system copes with problems of foreign policy formulation, he forms not merely a view of the state of the international system, but of the state of the national interest, as well. The "overriding rule" of foreign policy, the President recently explained in Denver, is that it "must always be an extension of our domestic policy." 93

Arthur Krock, writing recently in the New York Times, felt the Administration had "assumed the burden of a ground war between Asians in Asia" because of its view of the national interest. Krock saw the United States "acting on a new geopolitical concept of world stewardship of national self determination." 94 In effect, he saw Johnson's view of the national interest as a blending of two concerns—national self-interest and national idealism. Robert E. Osgood, in his Ideals and Self Interest in American Foreign Relations, saw national self-interest as "a state of affairs valued solely for its benefit to the nation," and national idealism as "a disposition to be concerned with moral values that transcend the nation's self interests." 95

93 Time, September 29, 1966, p. 46.
suggested: "In neither personal nor international relations does one find pure idealism or pure self-interest, but only a strange mingling . . ."\(^{96}\) For America after World War II, self-interest became rooted in a new type of domestic security requiring international involvement, and our national idealism expressed itself in a messianic fervor for extending the gospel of the "American Way" to all peoples.

In the months after the war, America began to sink from optimism's zenith into the nadir of an emerging struggle between the western democracies and the Soviets. By March, 1946, Winston Churchill saw an "Iron Curtain" descending upon Europe. By July of the next year, George Kennan, in an anonymous essay for *Foreign Affairs*,\(^{97}\) described Soviet political action as "a fluid stream" which sought to fill "every nook and cranny available to it in the basin of world power," but which would accept philosophically the barriers in its path. To cope with this Soviet enflow, Kennan proposed a "vigilant application of counterforce at a series of constantly shifting geographical and political points" corresponding to shifts in Soviet policy. This doctrine of "containment," as it came to be called, was originated in the context of a Soviet threat to Western Europe. The containment of Communism in Asia was never seriously attempted by the United States until after 1950, when the Korean War


\(^{97}\) "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," *Foreign Affairs*, 25 (July, 1947), 566-582.
became the turning point of our policy in the Far East.

In Korea, Americans were deprived of a clear victory and denied major help from old allies. As a result, in the years following, our foreign policy became uncompromising. Obsessed with the challenge of saving ourselves and others from Communism and sensing ourselves to be almost alone in the struggle, we came to feel that all depended upon us. Like Atlas, we had no one to whom we could hand the burden of the world. 98

As the Soviets had lowered an iron curtain, the United States moved to weld an iron ring of universal containment, which began with a quest for military bases, and which led to an indiscriminate quest for allies. At times, this quest aligned the United States with marginal, synthet-ic governments, and, inevitably, we became committed to improving their fortunes. In the doctrine of containment, our national self-interest and our national idealism had found a mingling-place.

It was this blending of national self-interest and national idealism which became a factor in Johnson's decision to increase American involvement in Vietnam. In a perusal of Johnson's speeches on Vietnam, one finds both interests appearing. In his 1966 State of the Union address, for example, Johnson appealed to each to justify his large

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increase in American participation in Vietnam. The first appeal was to national self-interest: "Tonight," he intoned, "as so many nights before, the American nation is asked to sacrifice the blood of its children and the fruits of its labor for the love of its freedom." Following his decision to increase American effort in Vietnam to precedents of response established in past dangers, Johnson continued:

How many times in my lifetime and in yours have the American peoples gathered as they do now to hear their President tell them of conflict and tell them of danger? Each time they have answered, they have answered with all the effort that the security and freedom of this nation required, as they do again tonight in Vietnam.

Following this sentence came Johnson's appeal to national idealism. Painting a picture of the Vietnam of 1954, Johnson sketched a "peaceful if troubled land" in which there was an independent Communist government in the North and, in the South, a people who "struggled to build a nation with the friendly help of the United States." Then Johnson added somber hues: "North Vietnam decided on conquest," and soldiers and supplies "moved from north to south in a swelling stream." With such a picture before him, Johnson saw but two alternatives, and one was incongruent with our national idealism:

As the assault mounted our choice became gradually clear. We could leave, abandoning South Vietnam to its attackers and to certain conquest, or we

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could stay and fight beside the people of South Vietnam.101

Pledging to stay, the President explained, "A just nation cannot leave to the cruelty of its enemies a people who have staked their lives and independence on America's solemn pledge. . . ."

In a nationwide radio and television address, July 12, 1966, Johnson used the same two components of national interest—self-interest and idealism—to refute opposition claims that "we have no business but business interests in Asia."102 Again, appealing first to national self-interest, Johnson charged that such claims did not "stand the test of common sense." Common sense, he felt, would tell us that:

The economic network of this shrinking globe is too intertwined—the basic hopes of men are too interrelated—the possibility of common disaster is too real for us to ever ignore threats to peace in Asia.

Appealing next to national idealism, Johnson charged that claims asserting the United States had no commitments in Asia "do not stand the test of human concern, either." "The people of Asia do matter," he warned. "We share with them many things in common. We are all persons. We are all human beings."103

In May, 1966, at Princeton University, Johnson replied to Fulbright's charge that America was developing an

101 Ibid., p. 3.
103 Ibid., p. 3.
"arrogance of power," by describing America's "agony of power." Dedicating Princeton's new Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, Johnson again ascribed our actions in Vietnam to motives of national idealism. "We are still trying to provide a world safe for democracy, just as Wilson did." Then the President turned to national self-interest: "We are still trying to gain freedom, just as Roosevelt did."104

While reminding his audience that the United States was involved in Vietnam because freedom "still has adversaries whose challenge must be answered," Johnson's greatest emphasis, in this address, was not upon challenge, but upon conscience. "An uneasy conscience," he mused, "is the price any concerned man pays, whether politician or professor, for a share of power in the nuclear age." What other nation, he asked, "has spent the lives of its sons and vast sums of its fortune to provide the people of a small striving nation the chance to elect a course we might not ourselves choose?"105

It seems clear, therefore, that in the Johnson belief system, the state of the national interest was strongly influenced by inputs warning of danger and reminding of destiny. To Johnson, the danger is the peril to our own freedom, a danger to our national self-interest from a rising and militant Red China. He seems to feel that the cold

104 The Philadelphia Inquirer, May 12, 1966, p. 3.
105 Ibid., p. 1.
war with the Soviets is passing. In a recent major policy speech favoring improving relations with Eastern Europe, Johnson argued, "When we know that the world is changing, our policy must reflect the reality of today and not yesterday." 106 Presidential adviser Walt Rostow, who was chairman of the Policy Planning Council of the State Department before replacing McGeorge Bundy, believes the United States, having passed since 1945 through two periods frustrated by Soviet offensives, entered with the Soviets after the Cuban missile crisis, a third major effort for coexistence. 107 It is obvious, however, that the President sees no thaw in the cold war in Asia. To him, Asian Communist aggression endangers our own freedom, and, therefore, national self-interest demands that we follow a policy of containment in Asia.

However, as Johnson views it, the state of the national interest contains not only variables of self-interest, but variables of selfless idealism as well. For him, in the wake of the Korean War Americans found a deposit of duty and destiny—a demand to save and remake a world, alone if necessary. Edward Stillman and William Pfaff have observed:

After Korea our moral sense ruled... Calvinists that as a nation we are, we saw depravity manifest in the world, and we, the elect, had to combat it.

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Again it was permanent intervention that we undertook: for swept up by a sense of great ethical issues and great events, feeling ourselves alone in our perception of the almost Manichean scale of this struggle, we came to sense that all depended on us.\textsuperscript{108}

Because of this sense of an exhilarating destiny, Stillman and Pfaff noted, "Young men are today commended to the Foreign Service as they were once commended to the ministry."

While the above was an observation of American idealism in 1961, it has relevance today. For in June, 1966, Lyndon Johnson, addressing the graduates of the Foreign Services Senior Seminar in foreign policy, reminded them that:

\ldots experience and dedication to country and belief in the ideals and principles of our Founding Fathers, better equip us ultimately to find the answers that will preserve the liberty and freedom not only of these few of us who are fortunate enough to occupy this hemisphere, but we hope, ultimately to all people who desire freedom and liberty in this world.\textsuperscript{109}

In asking what inputs influenced Lyndon Johnson's decision to increase American involvement in the Vietnamese War, we postulated that a President's foreign policy making system is influenced by the view which he takes of the state of the national interest and the state of the international situation. In examining Johnson's view of the state of the national interest, we have found it to be a composite of national self-interest and national idealism. We have maintained that, because Johnson's belief system see Communist Asian aggression as a threat to our self-interest, he has

\textsuperscript{108} Stillman and Pfaff, pp. 34-35.

\textsuperscript{109} Department of State News Letter, June, 1966, p. 3.
continued in Southeast Asia a policy of containment which inevitably throws us into idealistic commitments to small, threatened nations. We have argued that Johnson's belief that national self-interest and national idealism required that we remain in Vietnam was a factor in his decision to increase American involvement in order that we might remain there.

Perhaps no paragraph from any Johnson speech better sums up these ideas than the following from his 1966 State of the Union address:

Tonight the cup of peril is full in Vietnam. That conflict is not an isolated episode, but another great event in the policy we have followed with steady consistency since World War II. The touchstone of that policy is the interest of the United States. But nations sink when they see that interest only through a narrow glass. In a world that has grown small and dangerous, pursuit of narrow aims could bring decay and even disaster.110

Having noticed how Johnson's view of the state of the national interest influenced his policy-making system, let us ask what roles were played as a result of his view of the state of the international environment.

In February, 1965, just before the United States dramatically increased its involvement with a campaign of bombing in North Vietnam, Max Frankel noted the problem which the changing international situation was posing for Johnson's policy-making system:

The commitments that the Johnson Administration is trying to define anew each morning under the pressure

of developments halfway around the world, actually rest upon the decisions, promises, tactics, and judgments of four Administrations. These, in turn, developed in response to similarly shifting policies and tactics by competing as well as cooperating Communist nations.111

About the same time, C. L. Sulzberger was explaining how the changing international environment was affecting Johnson's policy-making regarding Vietnam. It was, according to Sulzberger, reducing the alternatives available to the Administration. He wrote:

Because of steady deterioration in Vietnam during the past year, the United States seems to have lost all room for maneuver. Twelve months ago, it was possible to contemplate political or military initiatives that now seem excluded.112

From the American point of view, the situation in Vietnam by the end of 1964 was dark. Indeed, a survey of South Vietnam in the late fall showed loyal hamlet and village officials being killed or kidnapped at the rate of eighty to a hundred per month; Viet Cong strength and infiltration from the North were up sharply; and a lack of continuity of leadership had had an adverse effect on the South Vietnamese fighting morale.113

On December 15, 1964, President Johnson conceded that the situation had worsened.114 On December 23,


Secretary Rusk suggested that the United States would have to cut its aid if a unified government was not restored to South Vietnam.\textsuperscript{115} In the Senate, Wayne Morse was urging the President to lay the problem before the United Nations,\textsuperscript{116} and in Red China, leaders were proclaiming 1964 as a year of "spectacular victories" for Communism.\textsuperscript{117} The following summer, William Bundy, responding to questions by Henry F. Graff of Columbia University, revealed that Johnson had recognized by December, 1964, that if the military situation did not improve, both bombing and an increase in American forces would become necessary.\textsuperscript{118}

In December, Johnson had submitted to him a plan for bombing North Vietnam, in which it was proposed that the United States carry on continuous, surreptitious, and undeclared air raids against North Vietnam. Already, attacks of this type were being carried out over Laos. According to this plan, the raids were to be neither announced nor officially admitted, and would be restricted initially to a small number of planes on each raid. The plan advised that the United States strike at the southern third of North Vietnam, the part below the 19th parallel, in order to support assurances to Moscow and Peking that the raids were

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{115}Ibid., December 24, 1964, p. 1.
\item \textsuperscript{116}Ibid., December 24, 1964, p. 1.
\item \textsuperscript{117}Ibid., December 27, 1964, p. 4.
\item \textsuperscript{118}Graff, \textit{ibid.}, July 4, 1965, Sec. 6, p. 16.
\end{itemize}
aimed neither at China nor at the destruction of the Hanoi Government. The plan submitted that large-scale, publicized raids might provoke Chinese intervention and would force the Soviet Union to make gestures of solidarity with Hanoi, would make it more difficult for North Vietnamese leaders to back down without a loss of prestige, and would place Washington under pressure from its allies to enter prematurely into talks. The bombing plan which Johnson later employed retained the limiting features in the beginning, but rejected the idea of unannounced and unadmitted bombing because of the adverse effect which it might have on American public opinion. 119

Early in 1965, in light of the worsening situation, and under pressure from military leaders, the President ordered continued air strikes against North Vietnam. 120 Undoubtedly, one of the factors moving him toward this decision was a situation in which doors to other alternatives were being closed. In the summer of 1964, Johnson and his advisers could choose from among several alternatives: they could make a modest, further increase in the American force in South Vietnam; they could make a heavy commitment of American forces to the area; they could bring military pressure upon the North in an effort to bring it to the negotiation table; they could give up South Vietnam as a lost cause.

and gradually withdraw American forces. For a time, the first alternative was chosen; forces were modestly increased by the end of 1964. As events in Vietnam further deteriorated, however, the President was under pressure to add the "carrot-and-stick" alternative of bombing, as well. Alternatives are not always mutually exclusive; they also may be mutually reinforcing. The policy maker does not always choose between alternatives; at times, he determines how many he can combine in a policy.121

Hoping that the introduction of bombings would make further increases in American involvement unnecessary, the President explained in an early April Johns Hopkins University speech:

In recent months, attacks on South Vietnam were stepped up. Thus it became necessary for us to increase our response and to make attacks by air. This is not a change of purpose. It is a change in what we believe that purpose requires.122

But the purpose required more. In a news conference on July 9, Johnson admitted that the situation in Vietnam "will get worse before it gets better." Lamenting that the Viet Cong had had another "substantial increase in the aggression forces," he announced that United States troops would have to be increased to exceed 75,000.123

121Koenig, Congress and the President, p. 158.
alternative of a modest increase in fighting men had closed, and Johnson was constrained to support either a heavy commitment of American troops or accept defeat. To Johnson, the state of the international environment left only these two alternatives, and the state of the national interest (as he had come to view it) made undesirable the idea of accepting defeat.

Ostensibly, the variables in the state of the international environment which functioned to increase American involvement were an escalation in North Vietnamese infiltration, an increase in Viet Cong aggressiveness, and a decrease in South Vietnamese morale. These are the international factors which Johnson mentions in his defense of the American bombings and build-up. In his 1966 State of the Union address, for example, Johnson explained:

Last year, the nature of the war in Vietnam changed again. Swiftly increasing numbers of armed men from the North crossed the borders to join forces that were already in the South; attack and terror increased. . . . Despite our desire to limit conflict, it was necessary to act to hold back mounting aggression, to give courage to the people of the South, and to make our firmness clear to the North. 124

Some analysts, however, believe that there was another international factor in Johnson's decision to make a strong display of American force. An editorial in the Swiss Review of World Affairs reported:

French and British observers who generally incline to take an extremely critical view of the American intervention in Southeast Asia are agreed that with the blow against North Vietnam the United States

has essentially achieved its present aim, which is to convince the Soviets of its capacity and determination to wage the struggle with superior means of power, to persuade them to use greater caution in re-entering the conflict . . . 125

At the time the bombing plans were finalized, Soviet Premier Kosygin was en route to North Vietnam. Upon his arrival in Hanoi he had lauded the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong operations and had pledged Russian aid if North Vietnam was attacked by United States forces. 126 Philip Geyelin, of the Wall Street Journal, reports in his Lyndon B. Johnson and the World that most American experts interpreted the Kosygin visit as a sure sign that the Russians, feeling that America did not intend to escalate the war, felt it safe to become more involved on the side of Hanoi. 127

A third factor in the international environment functioned to bring about Johnson's bombing decision. At Pleiku, February 7, 1965, while Kosygin was lauding Hanoi audiences, Viet Cong guerrillas were lobbing mortar shells into Holloway Air Base. Out of 180 American "advisers" billeted there, eight were killed and 108 were wounded. 128

From the ashes of Pleiku, American public feeling, smoldering from the bombing of American officers' quarters in

Saigon on Christmas Eve, burst into flame. Suddenly, Johnson had not only contingency plans for bombing the North, but a public expecting some form of retaliation.

Now that we have examined the role Johnson's view of the international environment played in his decision to increase American force and participation in the war, it is essential that we ask who among Johnson's information system played the prime roles in helping form this view.

Although "sensers" in the international environment kept the Administration informed of events in Vietnam (such as the rate of infiltration from the North) and in other participant states (such as the actions of Soviet or Red Chinese leaders), the prime forces in forming Johnson's view were the "integrators," "condensers," and "filters" who took raw incoming information and funneled it to the President in the form of advice and interpretation.

Chief among these advisers and interpreters who helped form the Johnson view were the Joint Chiefs of Staff. In November, 1964, in contingency planning sessions, the Army opposed taking on the burden of the war without the widespread use of air power to pound supply lines from the North. After the first retaliatory bombing raids in February, 1965, the New York Times reported that the President was under "considerable pressure" from his military

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130 Geyelin, p. 215.
advisers to continue bombing the North. By the end of
the month, the White House announced a policy of "continuous
limited bombing" against targets in the North.

In a recent Presidential news conference, Johnson
voiced a preference for the advice of the Joint Chiefs over
that of the Senate in regard to military matters. Stating that he "welcomed" statements and recommendations from
Senators on military strategy, Johnson noted, however, "We
don't always find that in the judgment of our more profes-
sional military leaders that this is the wisest military
judgment." Noting that one Senate critic had had some ex-
perience in the military field and that another was a "very
sincere man," Johnson reminded the reporters:

But I also have to consider what General Wheeler
thinks is best. And I have to consider what General
Johnson, Chief of Staff of the Army, thinks is best;
General Greene, Chief of Staff of the Marines, Ad-
miral McDonald, Chief of Naval Operations, and Chief
of Staff of the Air Forces.

Relying upon anecdote, as he often does, Johnson next told
how, as a Congressman, he had once been too hasty in offer-
ing his advice on military matters:

I recall what Mr. Rayburn said one time when I was
suggesting to him a course of military action that
was not completely being followed by President
Eisenhower, who was then in the White House. And
he said to me: "Lyndon, if these people in the
Joint Chiefs of Staff, and a man of General Eisen-
hower's military experience, don't know more about

133 Ibid., October 14, 1966, p. 18.
this than us civilian legislators, then we've been wasting a lot of money on West Point all these years."

Obviously, Johnson intended these remarks for more than collectors of memorabilia.

While promising to "carefully consider" any military suggestions from Senators, at the same time Johnson revealed the perspective in which he would probably view their criticism:

But I'm not sure that everybody has all the information on this subject that the chairman of the Joint Chiefs has. You recall Senator Borah who was somewhat guilty of harassing another President at another period. And one time he said he had better information than the President. Well, in the light of the developments a little bit later, that statement didn't stand up very well.

Some of the President's critics have complained that Johnson allows himself to be governed by the "hawks" among his military and diplomatic advisers. Former Presidential Aide Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., for example, has charged that United States policy in Vietnam is being shaped by the same men who wanted to bomb Cuba during the missile crisis and who pushed the Bay of Pigs invasion. "The people who elected Johnson President want him to make the decisions," Schlesinger told the audience at an Americans for Democratic Action dinner. "They don't want the decisions to be made by military or diplomatic bureaucrats."\(^{134}\) A week earlier, Schlesinger had said on a television program in New York that Johnson lacked the judgment to overrule wrong advice.

\(^{134}\)Philadelphia Inquirer, May 16, 1966, p. 2.
about Vietnam from the State Department and the Pentagon. However, in an apparent reply to Schlesinger, former Special Presidential Assistant McGeorge Bundy said in a Tokyo speech that "the President himself—and not anyone else" is "in full and final command of the great decisions of the United States in Vietnam."135

The military and diplomatic bureaucracy which Schlesinger felt was controlling Johnson's policies has been explained by Joseph Kraft in his Profiles in Power. Affirming that in government there has developed an immense "foreign-policy bureaucracy," Kraft charged:

On the whole, the bureaucracy has tended to favor the hardline military approach to foreign problems. The military, after all, makes up the largest component of the bureaucracy; the State Department, especially under Dean Rusk, has wanted to seem just as tough as anybody else; and the military emphasis has seemed like sure-fire stuff with the Congress. Moreover, most of the foreign-policy bureaucracy, having grown up in the shadow of the cold war, has a vested interest in the maintenance of tension. The United States, in other words, has been burdened with a cold-war bureaucracy that does not easily come in out of the cold.136

It seems unfair, however, to say that Johnson is under the thumb of the "hard-line" group. At the time that Schlesinger made his charge, Richard Fryklund of the Washington Star revealed a rift between Johnson and those who want to escalate the war. Fryklund wrote:

Pentagon and congressional sources say that for more than a year the joint chiefs have wanted to hit the

135Ibid., May 11, 1966, p. 3.
enemy in both North and South Vietnam as hard and as suddenly as possible. Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara and President Johnson, however, have ordered gradual, almost imperceptible escalation of the bombing in the north and a moderate buildup in the south.\(^{137}\)

Explaining the Johnson view, Pryklund continued:

The administration philosophy is the result of nuclear-age studies which conclude that it is too dangerous to plunge suddenly into any war. The country which defends its interests with restraint and caution is the country that survives and prevails.

In reinforcing the President's philosophy, Bill Moyers, appearing a few weeks before on ABC's "Issues and Answers," gave an implied rebuke to General Maxwell Taylor who, two weeks earlier, had proposed that the United States mine the North Vietnamese harbor of Haiphong.\(^{138}\)

Nor are military advisers the only ones who have shaped Johnson's views of what to do in Vietnam. Bill Moyers has observed that when some military advisers felt the United States should bomb areas closer to Hanoi, George Ball (whom we have described earlier as a "devil's advocate," a monitor in the President's information system) argued against the plan and had great effect on the President's decision.\(^{139}\)

Johnson's actions in January, 1966, when he was pondering whether a bombing pause should be ended, give us some indication of his willingness to accept opinions from

\(^{137}\) Detroit News, May 11, 1966, p. 20-B.


\(^{139}\) Graff, ibid., July 4, 1965, Sec. 6, p. 18.
nonmilitary advisers. The New York Times reported that, faced with divided counsel in Congress and within his own Administration, Johnson went outside the government to seek the advice of Clark Clifford, a Washington lawyer; John J. McCloy, a New York lawyer and former coordinator of United States disarmament activities; and Robert M. Lovett, a New York banker who was a former Secretary of Defense. The Times further reported that Johnson had asked several Administration officials who urged an end to the bombing pause to submit memoranda favoring its continuance. Others who wanted the pause to continue were asked to sum up arguments for ending it.140

Some Conclusions

We have noticed, in the speeches of Lyndon Johnson, what appears to be a discrepancy between his avowed Vietnam policy before the 1964 Presidential election and his actual Vietnam policy after the election. In order to find a reason for this change of stance, we isolated policy-influencing factors under a framework which included the belief system of the President, and the national interest and the international environment as perceived by that belief system. We can now conclude that Johnson's view of the national interest determined the ends or goals for which he felt his Vietnam policy should strive, and that his view of the international environment determined the means for reaching those ends and

the obstacles hindering their success. Thus, as rapid
changes took place in the state of the international environ-
ment, new obstacles were raised requiring new means to cope
with them if Johnson expected to push toward his original
goal. Johnson was constrained, therefore, to respond either
by changing the means, as he did, or by changing the goal.
Whether he should have altered the means or the goal is, for
our present purposes, immaterial. To have chosen either
alternative—to have introduced new American action to reach
victory over the Viet Cong, as he did, or to have dropped
the idea of saving South Vietnam from the Communists—would
have meant a change from the stance which he had assumed in
his campaign rhetoric. Without arguing which Johnson should
have changed—the means or the goal—we have sought to make
two points: (1) Johnson had to make some policy change; and
(2) Johnson's belief system gave him a view of our national
interest which made a change of national goals unacceptable.

The necessity of making some policy shift became
evident after November, 1964, because the part of the inter-
national environment with which his policies were designed
to cope had been changed. Some feel that Johnson knew long
before the elections that a major policy change was planned,
but that he deliberately withheld it from the American
people in order to profit politically. For example, Charles
Roberts, Newsweek's White House correspondent, in his LBJ's
Inner Circle, states that Johnson told him that he had
actually made up his mind in October to bomb North Vietnam.\textsuperscript{141}

While noting that, if Robert's account is true, Johnson would be "guilty of gross deceit," Philip Geyelin of the \textit{Wall Street Journal}, contests Robert's statement. Mentioning that Johnson's public campaign promises not to bomb in the North "were matched in private by far more fervent expressions of his hopes and intents not to widen the war," Geyelin adds, "There is little reason to doubt his sincerity; indeed, in November, aides found it difficult even to draw his attention to serious consideration of the Vietnam war." He concludes, "It seems more likely that the decision made by the President was more of a personal conclusion that something would have to be done to turn the tide of battle . . . for some of his closest advisers hotly deny that any such decision (to bomb) was conveyed to them."\textsuperscript{142}

But even if Johnson had not decided before the elections to bomb, we can be certain that he knew, at the time of the campaign, that changes in the Vietnamese situation might require a change in America's policy-stance. This may be seen from examination of Johnson's speeches made early in 1964, prior to both the campaign and the later announcements of his decisions to continually bomb targets in North Vietnam and to heavily commit American troops. He at times

\textsuperscript{141} Roberts, pp. 19-31.

\textsuperscript{142} Geyelin, pp. 214-215.
implied, and at times made explicit, that changes in the Vietnam situation might require a change of American stance in the direction of measures that he did not then feel were wise. As early as 1961, while serving as Vice-President, Johnson reported to President Kennedy after a Southeast Asia fact-finding tour, advising the President that the United States had come to the point where it had to make a decision to meet Communist challenges in Southeast Asia with a "major effort" or "throw in the towel." He further pointed out that the decision should be made "with the knowledge that at some point we might be faced with the further decision of whether we commit major U.S. forces to the area . . . ." 143

Shortly after becoming President, in a Los Angeles speech, February 21, 1964, Johnson said that victory in the war was up to South Vietnam but added that those engaged in the external support and supply of the Viet Cong were "playing a dangerous game." 144 On the last of the month, in his first news conference on live television, Johnson was asked to clarify what he meant in his California speech by "dangerous game." In his reply, Johnson was no more explicit:

In my California speech, I intended to say just what I did, that aggressors who intend to envelop peaceful, liberty-loving, free people, and attempt to do


so through aggressive means, are playing a very dangerous game.\textsuperscript{145}

In March, 1964, one could see Johnson implying that if many prior alternatives should fail, he would "send in the Marines." In a speech to a national legislative conference of the Building and Construction Trades Department of the AFL-CIO, Johnson reasoned, "The people of the world, I think, prefer reasoned agreement to ready attack. And that is why we must follow the prophet Isaiah many many times before we send the Marines, and say 'come, now, and let us reason together.'"\textsuperscript{146}

However, as spring gave way to summer, the Administration's intention to take any action which future situations would warrant was made clear. On May 22, 1964, Secretary of State Rusk, in an address before the American Law Institute, said that the war might be expanded if the Communists continued their aggression.\textsuperscript{147} On June 20, the Administration formally advised Washington newsmen to convey word that the United States commitment against Communist aggression in Asia was "unlimited."\textsuperscript{148} On June 28, President Johnson, in a Minneapolis speech, said the United States would "not hesitate to risk war to preserve peace." The \textit{New York Times} reported that the statement was an alteration of

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{145} \textit{Ibid.}, March 1, 1964, p. 44.
\item \textsuperscript{146} \textit{Ibid.}, March 25, 1964, p. 4.
\item \textsuperscript{147} \textit{Ibid.}, May 23, 1964, pp. 1, 4.
\item \textsuperscript{148} \textit{Ibid.}, June 20, 1964, p. 1.
\end{itemize}
the prepared text which said the United States would use the force necessary to help maintain South Vietnamese freedom.\textsuperscript{149} In an effort to make clear that these statements represented not the presently desired and planned performance, but the potential and actual performance of the Administration should events warrant them, Secretary Rusk, in a July 1 news conference, said that peace was the United States's objective and that it should be possible without extending the fighting.\textsuperscript{150}

The distinction between which the aggregate of all these statements seems to make—the distinction between desired action and necessary action, between prime-choice policy and potential policy—is vital to the clarification of the alleged discrepancy between Johnson's campaign statements against enlarging the war and his subsequent enlargement of it. Johnson's 1964 campaign statements, seen in the light of Administration policy statements throughout that year, were an expression of desired action and prime-choice policy; his decisions to increase the American commitment and to enlarge American participation in the conflict were an expression of necessary action and alternative policy.

During the campaign of 1964, however, Johnson did not make it clear to the American people that when he talked of maintaining the present level of American involvement that

\textsuperscript{149}Ibid., June 29, 1964, p. 1.

\textsuperscript{150}Ibid., July 2, 1964, p. 1.
he was voicing hopes not prophecies. Had people listened closely they would have heard statements which should have indicated that Johnson understood that foreign policies must be floated on circumstances (which may change) and cannot be rooted always in a generic ideal which never changes with circumstances. At Manchester, New Hampshire, on September 28, 1964, for example, Johnson mused:

But if you just think we have a crisis a week you are optimistic. We have one a day. And the only thing you can do with them—you can't take an aspirin and get away from them—is you just have to take the best information you have got, take things as you found them, and make the best judgment you can under the circumstances.\textsuperscript{151}

But statements like these are rare. Johnson, who had been reminding the public that policies must change with circumstances, began to talk, during the campaign, as if he were rooting all future United States action in unchanging generic principles. This happened because Johnson and Goldwater debated what policy was desirable instead of what was probable.

We can indict Johnson, therefore, not for changing policy after the campaign but for failing to make clear to the public that his desired policy might not be the probable policy. Desired policy is never a prospective reliable system where it is highly probable that input A will produce output B, because output B, in foreign policy, will be determined not just by the action of the state introducing input

\textsuperscript{151}Public Papers of the Presidents: Lyndon B. Johnson, 1963-1964, II, p. 1164.
A, but by the actions of other states as well. The 1964 campaign rhetoric of Lyndon Johnson left the impression that future United States policies would be determined by the unchanging hopes of the American people and their President instead of by the changing international obstacles with which these hopes must cope.
CHAPTER II

THE RHETORIC OF JOHNSON'S DIPLOMATIC STRATEGY

An Introduction to Johnson's
Diplomatic Rhetoric

In the preceding chapter, we learned how a rapidly changing situation in the Far East made necessary a major shift in the military strategy implementing the foreign policy of the United States and in Presidential rhetoric stating, explaining, or defending that strategy. The new Johnson rhetoric, however, expressed more than a new military stance; it represented a switching of emphasis from domestic to diplomatic matters. Throughout 1964, Johnson had attempted to relegate the Vietman conflict to his war on poverty. Concentrating his attention in the spring and summer on the premise of the American economy, and emphasizing in the fall his restraint in committing American forces to battle in Vietnam, Johnson cultivated what his critics began to call a "business-as-usual atmosphere" in foreign affairs.¹ Yet, in 1965, pushed by the pressure of our swiftly deteriorating military position in Vietnam, the President's head slowly turned from the Great Society to the greater problems in the Far East.

The Move from Domestic to Diplomatic Emphasis

Just as Woodrow Wilson's progressive plans were postponed by the First World War, and Franklin Roosevelt's similar hopes by the Second, Lyndon Johnson's domestic programs were slowed by the Vietnam conflict. In 1916, Wilson sponsored a series of measures that set the Federal government upon a broad new course of economic and social activity. Having earlier proclaimed American neutrality in the war in Europe, he was interested in waging war on trade-repelling tariffs, industrial accidents, child labor, and unfair competition. "There will be peace in the business world," he declared, "and, with peace, revived confidence and life." After only seven months, however, Wilson was forced to ask Congress to declare Germany's U-boat action "nothing less than war" against the United States and to "exert all its power and employ all its resources to bring the Government of the German Empire to terms and end the war."3

Franklin Roosevelt's experiences were similar to Wilson's. In March, 1937, while the scales of American public opinion were tipped toward the isolationists, Roosevelt made war at home against what he termed the "spring floods threatening to roll down our river valleys," and "the Dust

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3Address to joint session, April 2, 1916; ibid., pp. 755-757.
Bowling to blow again."⁴ Soon, however, the German juggernaut which threatened to roll across Europe forced him to change battle fronts. Despite a hard core of isolationism in the United States, he began to direct his people's attention to trans-Atlantic dangers. By 1940, his State of the Union address was devoted almost wholly to foreign relations, as he denied the United States could live "happily and prosperously, its future secure, inside a high wall of isolation."⁵

Once again, a President of the United States has been forced to shift his rhetorical emphasis from domestic to diplomatic matters. Like the New Freedom and the New Deal, Lyndon Johnson's Great Society has been slowed by United States involvement in an overseas war. Now, Johnson is immersed in Far East problems, and his speeches are saturated with Vietnam. The radical nature of his shift may be judged only by contrasting the diplomatic depths to which he plunged with the domestic heights from which he jumped. And the peaks of his preoccupation with the Great Society may be measured by the contrast between the intended audience in his 1965 Inaugural address and the one John Kennedy sought to reach in his 1961 Inaugural.⁶ Kennedy's speech was

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⁶Ibid., January 21, 1965, p. 16; cited hereafter as Johnson Inaugural.
primarily an appeal and a pledge to other nations. More than urging fellow Americans to "ask what you can do for your country," he pled, "Fellow citizens of the world, ask ... what together we can do for the freedom of man."\(^7\) Johnson, on the other hand, gave foreign nations only fleeting attention, as he appealed to "capitalist and worker, farmer and clerk, city and countryside" to "increase the bounty" of all Americans.\(^8\)

Yet, paradoxically, while Johnson chose to petition a more limited audience and to solicit action within less extensive bounds, he presented the same basic types of appeals which John Kennedy had used to seek international cooperation.

The Motive Appeals of Domestic Emphasis

We determine that the domestic appeals made by Johnson early in his Administration correspond to those of foreign diplomacy made by Kennedy, when we classify the appeals of their Inaugural addresses under five categories: Discontent, The Enemy, The Movement, The Leader, and The Heritage.

Appeals Reminding of Discontent

In order to gain interest and to make his audience disposed to his ideas, each of the speakers linked his points

\(^7\)Ibid., January 21, 1961, p. 8; cited hereafter as Kennedy Inaugural.

\(^8\)Johnson Inaugural.
with the emotional nature of his hearers, by utilizing some discontent which he believed was felt by his audience. Kennedy addressed his appeals to discontent in the form of anxiety, foreboding, and concern. He warned, "Man holds in his mortal hands the power to abolish all forms of human life"; he deplored "the slow undoing of those human rights to which this nation has been committed"; he promised, "We shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and success of liberty"; he found that his generation of Americans had been granted "the role of defending freedom in its hour of maximum danger."^9

Johnson, too, addressed appeals to discontent, but to discontent expressed in feelings of exclusion from a better life, from luxuries long due. Affirming that all should "share in the fruits of the land," he pled, "In a land of great wealth, families must not live in hopeless poverty. In a land rich in harvest, children must not grow hungry. In a land of healing miracles, neighbors must not suffer and die unattended." Appealing for "shoulder-to-shoulder" effort to "increase the bounty of all," Johnson poked the coals of discontent by asserting, "No longer need capitalist and worker, farmer and clerk, city and countryside struggle to divide our bounty."^10

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^9Kennedy Inaugural.

^10Johnson Inaugural.
Appeals Presenting an Enemy Responsible for the Discontent

The two speakers not only made use of a social situation which aroused frustration, each also found an "enemy" whom he held responsible for the hostile world faced by his hearers. Alluding to the enemy he had come to believe was guilty of producing anxiety and world concern, Kennedy rallied hearers to his cause by making plain his determined opposition: "Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall . . . oppose any foe to assure the survival and success of liberty." He warned, "We dare not meet a powerful challenge at odds and split asunder." He resolved, "This peaceful revolution of hope cannot become the prey of hostile powers."\(^{11}\)

Johnson, too, found an enemy responsible for the problems of his hearers. At first, the foe was the opposite of the Great Society—the waste which withholds the rights to America's bounty: "For more than thirty years," observed Johnson, "I have believed that this injustice to our people—this waste of our resources—was our real enemy. For thirty years or more, . . . I have vigilantly fought against it." Then, artfully, he equated the opponent of the Great Society with the enemies of justice and union: "When any citizen denies his fellow, saying, 'His color is not mine,' or 'His

\(^{11}\)Kennedy Inaugural.
beliefs are strange and different—in that moment he betrays America."  

Appeals Presenting the Movement to Defeat the Enemy

While the situations pictured by the two speakers were real, and although the enemy alleged to be responsible for each disconcerting situation was not imagined, the motive for their presentation was more than a mere desire to inform people about world or national problems. Each speaker presented to his hearers a problem to be met and someone charged as the cause of the problem, in order that his hearers would feel the need for some movement or program to defeat the opponent blamed for their common discontent.

The presentations of their two respective movements are parallel in at least three ways: First, each speaker used the movement as a rallying standard for unity. Intending to defeat the aggressive and powerful enemy by making him a friend, Kennedy sounded the call for each side in the cold war to unite against "the common enemies of mankind" and to "forge against these enemies a grand and global alliance." In a similar vein, Johnson called upon America to "seek greatness with the sweat of our hands and the strength of our spirit" and announced, "For the hour and the day and the time are here to achieve progress without

12 Johnson Inaugural.
13 Kennedy Inaugural.
strife, to achieve change without hatred."\textsuperscript{14}

Next, each speaker warned that his movement would involve a long, hard struggle. Reminding his hearers that his plan would not be finished in the life of his Administration, "nor even perhaps in our lifetime on this planet," Kennedy summoned them to "bear the burden of a long, twilight struggle, year in and year out."\textsuperscript{15} In like manner, Johnson warned that arriving at the Great Society would involve "always becoming, trying, probing, falling, resting, and trying again."\textsuperscript{16}

Finally, each speaker promised that his program, religiously followed, would bring a new world. Kennedy's "grand and global alliance" was, in his words, "a historic effort" that could assure "a more fruitful life for all mankind." His plea was: "Let both sides join in creating a new endeavor, not a new balance of power, but a new world of law, where the strong are the just and the weak secure and the peace preserved."\textsuperscript{17} Equally confident that his programs would usher in a new world, Johnson promised, "Is our world gone? We say farewell. Is a new world coming? We welcome it—and we will bend it to the hopes of man."\textsuperscript{18}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{14}Johnson Inaugural. \\
\textsuperscript{15}Kennedy Inaugural. \\
\textsuperscript{16}Johnson Inaugural. \\
\textsuperscript{17}Kennedy Inaugural. \\
\textsuperscript{18}Johnson Inaugural.
\end{flushright}
Appeals Presenting the Leader for the Movement

Having seen how each of the two Presidents directed appeals to the listener's desires to be free of a disturbing situation, how each provided an enemy whom the hearer could blame for his problem, and how each then advertised his policies and plans as the weapon to defeat that foe, we are ready to notice how each presented himself as the leader behind that weapon. Kennedy set before the people a buoyant and confident profile of courage:

Let the word go forth from this time and place to friend and foe alike, that the torch has been passed to a new generation of Americans, born in this country, tempered by war, disciplined by a hard and bitter peace, proud of our ancient heritage, and unwilling to witness or permit the slow undoing of those human rights to which this nation has always been committed, and to which we are committed today at home and around the world.

In the long history of the world, only a few generations have been granted the role of defending freedom in its hour of maximum danger. I do not shrink from this responsibility; I welcome it.19

At this point, the image presented by Kennedy contrasts sharply with that offered by Johnson. In Johnson one does not see the fresh, vigorous leader of a new generation; he views only a tireless man who has been followed "down a long, winding road," and who points his hearers to "the old promises and to the old dream." One sees in Johnson, not the boundlessly confident young man who will "go forth to lead . . . asking His blessings and His help, but knowing

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19 Kennedy Inaugural.
that here on earth God's work must truly be our own." He sees, instead, the more cautious, older man who has learned to say, "I will lead and I will do the best I can." One finds confidence tempered with concern in the prayer which Johnson inserted: "Give me wisdom and knowledge, for who can judge this Thy people that is so great?"\textsuperscript{20} One gets the impression that Johnson wanted to bend his old image---of a crafty and vain politician---into a new profile, as much as he wanted to bend a new world to the hopes of man.

\textbf{Appeals Presenting the Heritage Calling For Action}

Although each speaker moved at his own pace through the series of appeals discussed above, each also presented an appeal for action, an appeal to rally behind the leader, by pointing to the train in which his hearers should follow. An appeal to follow America's founders and pioneers was woven into the texture of each address from beginning to end. Each urged this action in the same way, by calling for an old gospel in a new world, for old and enduring qualities in a new age. Kennedy announced, "The world is very different now. . . . And yet the same revolutionary belief for which our forefathers fought is still at issue."\textsuperscript{21} Johnson observed, "Ours is a time of change. . . . Our destiny in the midst of change will rest upon the unchanged character of

\textsuperscript{20}Johnson Inaugural.

\textsuperscript{21}Kennedy Inaugural.
our people and on their faith."\textsuperscript{22} Kennedy spoke of preserving the rights to which our forefathers were committed, and Johnson of keeping the covenant which they had made. Kennedy reminded Americans that "since this country was founded, each generation of Americans has been summoned to give testimony to its national loyalty," and then told them, "Now the trumpet summons us again."\textsuperscript{23} Johnson asked Americans to remember "in each generation—with toil and tears—we have had to earn our heritage again."\textsuperscript{24}

Conclusions

This comparison between the motive and attitude appeals in the Kennedy and Johnson Inaugurals cannot be extended to their deliveries. Kennedy's presentation was effervescent and sublime, while Johnson's was pedestrian and bland. This does not mean, however, that we cannot profit from a study of Johnson's rhetoric. Quintilian reminds us that "some speeches contribute more to our improvement when we hear them delivered, others when we peruse them."\textsuperscript{25} The fruit from Johnson's Inaugural address did not fall during delivery; it hung to be picked with perusal. Upon reading it, one discovers a skillful use of appeals similar to those employed by John Kennedy in 1961.

\textsuperscript{22}Johnson Inaugural.
\textsuperscript{23}Kennedy Inaugural.
\textsuperscript{24}Johnson Inaugural.
\textsuperscript{25}\textit{Institutes of Oratory} x. 1. 16.
The Motive Appeals of Diplomatic Emphasis:
The Johns Hopkins Address

The appeals in Johnson's domestic rhetoric are significant in a study of his diplomatic rhetoric, for when he was forced to turn most of his attention from challenging Americans to conciliating other nations, the same early appeals reappeared. They can be found, for example, in the Johns Hopkins University address of April 7, 1965, Johnson's first major speech devoted wholly to Vietnam after his shift of emphasis that spring.

Appeals Reminding of Discontent

In the Johns Hopkins address, Johnson chose, like Kennedy in 1961, to win attention by presenting a scene of anxiety and crisis. Whereas Kennedy, however, had talked of the slow undoing of human rights, Johnson spoke of a sacrificial loss of human life. "Tonight," he began, "Americans and Asians are dying for a world where each people may choose its own path to change." 26

Besides the winning of attention, the summoning of the specter of sacrifice seemed to serve a larger design, as the President continued:

Vietnam is far from this quiet campus. We have no territory there, nor do we seek any. The war is dirty and brutal and difficult. And some 400 young men, born into an America bursting with opportunity and promise, have ended their lives on Vietnam's steaming soil. Why must we take this painful road?

26See the full text of the Johns Hopkins Address in New York Times, April 8, 1965, p. 16; cited hereafter as Johnson, Johns Hopkins.
Why must this nation hazard its ease, its interest, and its power for the sake of a people so far away? We fight because we must fight if we are to live in a world where every country can shape its own destiny. And only in such a world will our own freedom be finally secure.27

At least three further purposes are implicit in this paragraph: First, by presenting himself as one sensitive to the sorrows, anxieties, and discomforts brought on by the war, Johnson hoped to facilitate identification between himself and his hearers. Therefore, he termed the war "dirty and brutal and difficult." Further, before blaming North Vietnam and Red China for the war bringing discontent, he hoped to absolve the United States of all such responsibility. He attempted this not only by denying that America sought territory in Vietnam, but by affirming, through contrast, that her sons were giving up all to go there. For this nation, the road to Vietnam was a "painful" one and the venture there a "hazard."

Finally, by reminding his audience of the disconcerting situation in Vietnam, the President hoped to heighten the feeling against the enemy whom he was about to present as responsible for the blood, sweat, and tears over Vietnam. A symbol in a communicative event can be multi-purposive. The symbols employed by Johnson at this point in the speech—promising careers cut short as altruistic boys died on a steaming soil far from home, a nation devoted to the interests of others hazarding its own ease, interests, and power,

27Johnson, Johns Hopkins.
and a peaceful people forced to fight to live in a free world—were designed not just to acquit America, but to arouse world feeling against the nations he was about to indict.

**Appeals Presenting an Enemy Responsible for the Discontent**

Preceding with his indictment, Johnson at first spoke of the enemy only in general terms. The arrival of a world in which freedom will be "finally secure" was being delayed by men of weak character: "The infirmities of man are such that force must often precede reason, and the waste of war, the works of peace." Expressing regret that this was so, Johnson continued, "But we must deal with the world as it is, if it is ever to be as we wish." The style Johnson employed in these statements gave them an aphoristic glow. Using antithesis, he set forth contrasts (between force and reason, waste and works, reality and wish) in which the unpleasant had to be endured if the pleasant was to be realized.  

Further, he used a style which was strikingly similar to that of John Kennedy. In his Inaugural address, as Kennedy alluded to world opponents responsible for anxiety

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28 Ibid.

29 There is little evidence that the speeches had the same writers. Sorensen, who had done much of the preparation of the Kennedy addresses, resigned from Johnson's staff on January 15, 1964. While two of Sorensen's assistants stayed on, Johnson kept his earlier speech writers, Busby, Reedy, Fortes, and Siegal. *New York Times*, January 16, 1964, p. 1.
and foreboding, he employed the same device of contrasting two situations in which the input of the one was necessary to assure the output of the other: "We dare not tempt them with weakness," he warned, "For only when our arms are sufficient beyond doubt can we be certain beyond doubt that they will never be employed."\(^{30}\)

Johnson's maxims had introduced the enemy only in general terms—as a militant obstacle on the path to peace around whom we cannot tiptoe. But unwilling to remain general, Johnson identified the first "reality" delaying the realization of a better Asia:

The world as it is in Asia is not a serene or peaceful place. The first reality is that North Vietnam has attacked the independent nation of South Vietnam. Its object is total conquest. Of course, some of the people of South Vietnam are participating in this attack on their own government. But trained men and supplies, orders and arms, flow in a constant stream from North to South. This support is the heartbeat of the war.\(^{31}\)

Johnson uses here a method of demonstrating ethos suggested by Thonssen and Baird. In cataloging ways for a speaker to give credibility to his message, they prescribed that to focus attention upon the probity of his character a speaker should not only associate himself or his message with what is virtuous and elevated, but should link his opponent or the opponent’s cause with what is not virtuous.\(^{32}\)

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\(^{30}\)Kennedy Inaugural.

\(^{31}\)Johnson, Johns Hopkins.

Using this device, Johnson followed identification with description:

And it is a war of unparalleled brutality. Simple farmers are the targets of assassination and kidnapping. Women and children are strangled in the night because their men are loyal to their Government. Small and helpless villages are ravaged by sneak attacks. Large-scale raids are conducted on towns, and terror strikes in the heart of cities. 33

The lack of an attempt to detail evidence backing up these assertions may be understood in the light of the President's purpose in this speech. Johnson's aim in the Baltimore address was to make a clear statement of America's position and intentions in regard to North Vietnam. For several months he had been receiving criticism for not clarifying and articulating his foreign policies. On February 5, for example, James Reston had written:

It is now possible to find the most experienced and well-informed Ambassadors here with quite contradictory views of President Johnson's intentions toward Vietnam. . . . And presumably, they are reporting these quite contradictory views to their governments. 34

The Administration's case for the assertions in Johnson's identification and description of the enemy had already been detailed in a Department of State White Paper released in February. 35 To have repeated the evidence which the government had used to justify its indictment would have

33 Johnson, Johns Hopkins.


left little time for the President to state the Administration's intentions toward the accused. What Johnson wished at this point in the Johns Hopkins address was to be precise about America's general posture toward North Vietnam while being concise in his statement of it.

One tool for the type of precision and conciseness which Johnson sought is the metaphor that verbal shorthand carrying thought and feeling which, otherwise, could be expressed only through a long, cumbersome phrase. Therefore, Johnson pictured "men and supplies, orders and arms" which "flow in a constant stream from North to South," and termed this support "the heartbeat of the war." People became "targets," villages were "ravaged," and "terror strikes in the heart of cities." 36

The emotive value of Johnson's words of identification and description should not be overlooked. North Vietnam did not merely attack South Vietnam, but "the independent nation of South Vietnam"; they do not simply send men south, but "trained men"; these men do not just come, but "flow in a constant stream"; it is not South Vietnamese who are their victims, but "simple farmers," "women and children," and "helpless villages"; these people are not attacked or killed, but become "targets of assassination," are "strangled in the night," and are "ravaged by sneak attacks." (Italics mine.)

36 Johnson, Johns Hopkins.
These two paragraphs identifying and describing the North Vietnamese as the enemy are excellent examples of the effect of style upon appeals to affective states. They represent a skillful use of contrast, in which the terms usually carrying pejorative connotations made the North Vietnamese appear blacker, when set opposite the South Vietnamese described in words having ameliorative connotations. And while no particular term will be affectively charged for all people, it seems probable that, with those who did not already believe the government guilty of begging the question, the contrast was effective.

Convinced that "the contest in Vietnam is a part of a wider pattern of aggressive purposes," Johnson named a second enemy: "Over this war—and all Asia—is another reality: the deepening shadow of Communist China. The rulers of Hanoi are urged on by Peking."37 While he did not make China a co-partner with North Vietnam, expressions such as "the deepening shadow of Communist China" and "urged on by Peking" left no doubt that Johnson intended to indict Red China as an accessory before the fact.

As with North Vietnam, description followed identification. To strengthen his charge that Peking was bellicose, Johnson suggested that from Red China's past aggressiveness we may infer its present militancy: "This is a regime which has destroyed freedom in Tibet, which has at-

37 Ibid.
tacked India and has been condemned by the United Nations in Korea. It is a nation which is helping the forces of violence in almost every continent.  

In choosing these three specific examples from which to infer a general policy of Peking, Johnson chose well, for he based his generalization on instances to which almost every hearer and reader would give credence. This meant that Johnson could state the examples in condensed form, leaving the audience to fill in the details of those events, while he moved on to fulfill the main purpose of the address. We have noted, already, that the Johns Hopkins speech was designed primarily to inform not only Americans, but other nations, of the Administration's intentions in Southeast Asia. The sudden and serious change in policy implementation made by the United States with the initiation of bombing in North Vietnam had left others uncertain of our goals and plans. Consequently, the beginning remarks of the address, which reminded of the distress brought by the conflict and indicted an enemy for it, were designed to show justification for the policy statements Johnson was to unveil. Hence, his style which condensed his discussion of the enemy was suited to the main purpose of the speech.

Appeals Presenting the Movement to Defeat the Enemy

Up to this point, the President had observed, "The world as it is in Asia is not a serene or peaceful place,"

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Ibid.
and had named two of its realities as responsible for its distressed state. But the world was wanting to know how Johnson planned to react to those realities. His answer was divided into two parts—a defense of American presence in Vietnam and a definition of American presence there.

A Defense of American Presence

"Why are these realities our concern?" he began.
"Why are we in South Vietnam." His answer contained three reasons, each supported by an appeal to fear of consequences of withdrawal:

We are there because we have a promise to keep.
... To dishonor that pledge, to abandon this small and brave nation to its enemies, and to the terror that must follow, would be an unforgivable wrong.
We are also there to strengthen world order.
... To leave Viet-Nam to its fate would shake the confidence of these people in the value of an American commitment and in the value of America's word. The result would be increased unrest and instability and even wider war.
We are also there because there are great stakes in the balance.... The central lesson of our time is that the appetite of aggression is never satisfied. To withdraw from one battlefield means only to prepare for the next. We must say in Southeast Asia—as we did in Europe—in the words of the Bible: "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further."39

From verses in the book of Job, celebrating the creation decree which set bounds for a restless sea, Johnson drew a picture of America's stand against rising tides of aggressive conquest. It was his conclusion to a series of arguments forewarning of unfavorable consequences if the nation did not continue to take its stand in Vietnam. These

39Ibid.
warnings were actually what Hovland, Janis, and Kelley term "threat appeals." They explain:

We use the term "threat appeal" to refer to those contents of a persuasive communication which allude to or describe unfavorable consequences that are alleged to result from failure to adopt and adhere to the communicator's conclusions.40

In any part of a highly polished speech, one should be able to see reflections of preceding and succeeding sections. How do Johnson's series of threat appeals relate to what had gone before in the Johns Hopkins address? It is important that we ask this, for Hovland, Janis, and Kelley hypothesize that "the content of the threat appeal must be such that it presents cues to which the individual has learned to react emotionally." They expound:

If a state of affairs is depicted (with the intention of conveying a threat) that happens to be meaningless to the audience, in the sense that they have never previously experienced it or heard about it, the anticipations evoked by the rehearsal of the communicator's sentences will fail to arouse emotional tension.41

In view of this hypothesis, the arrangement of the Johns Hopkins address becomes significant. By sketching a disconcerting situation and relating the atrocities of the nations held liable for it, before he presented and defended his plans for thwarting enemy designs, Johnson was able to make description of the threat precede the allegation of it,


41Ibid., p. 66.
thereby making the appeal to fear more meaningful.

How do the threat appeals relate to what was to follow in the Johns Hopkins address? Resorting, again, to Hovland, Janis, and Kelley's discussion of fear-arousing appeals, we read:

When a communication arouses emotional tension by depicting potential dangers or deprivations, the most effective reassurances are likely to be statements which elicit anticipations of escaping from or averting the threat. We shall use the term "reassurance" to refer to those verbal statements—resolutions, plans, judgments, evaluations, etc.—which successfully reduce emotional tension. One main type of reassurance consists of imagining oneself as engaging in one or another form of activity which will avert the threat.42

Again, Johnson's arrangement is significant, for his fear arousing appeals become useful only when followed by resolutions and plans promising to bring a deal with the sources of tension in a way that eventually will alleviate them.

Before turning to Johnson's program for reducing Asian discontent, however, we must note that the success of his fear appeals depended upon more than their place in the scheme of the speech. They depended, as well, upon Johnson's ethos. Hovland, Janis, and Kelley state:

Whenever a communication contains predictions about potential threats, the emotional impact will depend to a considerable extent upon appraisals of the communicator. For instance, if the communicator is regarded as completely uninformed, his predictions may be immediately discounted and therefore fail to arouse the sort of anticipations which cue off emotional reactions. Similarly, if the communicator is perceived as having an obvious intent to manipulate

42Ibid., p. 62.
the emotions of the audience, disbelief would be the expected reaction.\textsuperscript{\textit{43}}

It seems, therefore, the weakness of Johnson's fear-arousing appeals based on the threat of future Asian Communist aggression may lie in world appraisal of him. An evaluation of Johnson's ethos with overseas audiences will appear in a later section of this chapter.

A Definition of American Presence

In order to understand the next section of the Johns Hopkins address, we must investigate first the nature of problem-solving. Following John Dewey's analysis of thinking,\textsuperscript{\textit{44}} Harnack and Fest have divided the structure of problem-solving into two parts—the "problem description phase" and the "problem solution phase."\textsuperscript{\textit{45}} Problem description involves, first, a desire to reach some condition other than the present one, a perceived disequilibrium, "a realization of some discrepancy between desire and capacity." It requires, next, that one select a goal which should remove, when realized, the effects of the undesirable situation. Further, it demands that one determine where he is in relation to his goal, and what obstacles prevent or hinder its realization. Problem solution involves finding some way of

\textsuperscript{\textit{43}}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 73.

\textsuperscript{\textit{44}}\textit{How We Think} (Boston: Heath and Co., 1933).

overcoming or circumventing the obstacles in order to reach
the goal.

The organization of the Johns Hopkins address shows
the structure of problem-solving. Johnson’s discussion of
the discontent, of the enemy responsible for it, and of the
consequences of American withdrawal from Vietnam present the
perceived disequilibrium between the desired world and the
actual world. "We wish that this were not so," he lamented,
as he told of the disconcerting situation in Vietnam, "But
we must deal with the world as it is, if it is ever to be as
we wish." Further, as the address moved from a defense of
the American presence in Vietnam to a definition of what
that intervention would involve, Johnson completed the
problem-description phase by making explicit a goal, the
realization of which should remove the problem: "Our objec-
tive is the independence of South Viet-Nam and its freedom
from attack. We want nothing for ourselves—only that the
people of Vietnam be allowed to guide their own country in
their own way." 46

Introducing the problem-solution phase, Johnson re-
solved, "We will do everything necessary to reach that
objective, and we will do only what is absolutely necessary."
His proposed solutions may be divided into two parts: those
for which he had to win belief and those for which he desired
to win support.

46 Johnson, Johns Hopkins.
The appeals seeking belief. --Johnson's first solution for Southeast Asian discontent was a peaceful settlement in Vietnam. But problem-solving is retroactive, i.e., the implementation of any solution is, in itself, a problem-solving situation within the larger problem-solution scheme. Thus, in order to bring about a peaceful settlement, Johnson faced the problem of convincing the Communists and influential neutrals that he actually desired to negotiate.

It is ironic, but the bombing of the north, which the Administration hoped would bring North Vietnam to the negotiation table, had become an obstacle to negotiation, by reflecting on America's desires for peace. Therefore, winning belief required that Johnson explain the bombings were "a necessary part of the surest road to peace."

Let us examine now the types of appeals Johnson used to win belief. Robert T. Oliver classifies persuasive appeals into three types: emotion, reason, and rationalization. Johnson's explanation of the bombing of North Vietnam was, in his mind, predominantly an appeal to reason. He began with an enthymeme, reasoning from cause to effect: "In recent months, attacks on South Vietnam were stepped up. Thus it became necessary to increase our response and to make attacks by air." The audience was expected to supply the warrant for the causal relation: In wartime, a nation

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facing an increase in forceful enemy action must increase the force of its own reaction. Then, making a distinction between the goal and the strategy used to reach it, he offered three reasons why the bombing of the North did not mean the United States had veered from its goal of peace in Southeast Asia:

In recent months, attacks on South Vietnam were stepped up. Thus it became necessary to increase our response and to make attacks by air. This is not a change of purpose. It is a change in what we believe that purpose requires. We do this in order to slow down aggression. We do this to increase the confidence of the brave people of South Vietnam who have bravely borne this brutal battle for so many years and with so many casualties. And we do this to convince the leaders of North Vietnam, and all who seek to share their conquest, of a very simple fact: We will not be defeated. We will not grow tired. We will not withdraw, either openly or under the cloak of a meaningless agreement.49

While the President's explanation of the bombings was predominantly an appeal to reason, it was an appeal to emotions, as well. By using short sentences with parallel structure, and by repeating certain words, Johnson sought a force, directness, and emphasis which would give the prestige of a maxim to each reason for bombing and a dramatic effect to the whole defense. Further, by using value labels, or "bias words," Johnson slanted the discussion against North Vietnam: In bombing, the United States was slowing down "aggression," was increasing the confidence of the "brave" in a "brutal battle," and was convincing all who sought to "share" in "conquest" that we would not withdraw

49 Ibid.
under "the cloak of a meaningless agreement." ⁵⁰ (Italics mine.)

Not all of Johnson's audience received his appeals in the same way. Miller reminds us that "the meaning of anything to a person is the total history of his interaction with that thing." ⁵¹ It seems certain that the bombing of North Vietnam would mean different things to the diverse groups within Johnson's wider audience. Those Americans interested in ending the war quickly would have seen the bombings as the force which would bring the fulfillment of their wishes. But success may be expressed quantitatively by placing the degree of expectation-realization over the larger, total expectation. Anticipating that Americans would become frustrated should the above numerator be small in relation to the denominator, and unwilling (at that time) to take further action to increase the probability of his being able to structure events in Vietnam, Johnson sought to obviate American frustration by reducing the denominator of American expectations:

We hope that peace will come swiftly. But that is in the hands of others beside ourselves. And we must be prepared for a long continued conflict. It will require patience as well as bravery, the will to endure as well as the will to resist. ⁵²

Again, there is a similarity between this statement

⁵⁰ Ibid.
⁵² Johnson, Johns Hopkins.
and an appeal in the Inauguration Day address of Kennedy. Each speaker warned that his movement would involve a long, hard struggle. Reminding Americans that his plan would not be finished in the life of his Administration, "nor even perhaps in our lifetime on this planet," Kennedy had summoned them to "bear the burden of a long twilight struggle, year in and year out, 'rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation.'"

Continuing his Johns Hopkins address, the President next addressed the North Vietnamese concerning the message they should see in the bombings. The raids were designed to be persuasive communications, even though nonverbal. Wallace C. Fotheringham uses the term "event message" to describe phenomena in which a deliberately planned event acts as a message. The President's explanation for the air attacks showed that he regarded this offensive weapon as a way of delivering a message: "We do this to convince the leaders of North Vietnam, and all who seek to share their conquest, of a very simple fact. . . ." Yet, the fact that Johnson was constrained to give a verbal explanation for the bombing raids demonstrates an inherent weakness in an event message: Alone, it is easily misunderstood, because it is ambiguous.

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53 Kennedy Inaugural.

54 Perspectives on Persuasion (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1966), p. 70.

55 Johnson, Johns Hopkins.
Several factors were operating among the North Vietnamese which would have made it easy for them to misunderstand the event message in the bombings. First, they interpreted the bombings within a different culture. As an example of how culturally formed attitude sets can influence the way in which persuasion is understood, Brembeck and Howell cite the effectiveness of the persuasive appeals given the Japanese Kamakaze pilots during World War II.\textsuperscript{56} In the second place, the North Vietnamese interpreted the air raids not as the attackers but as the attacked. Finally, they interpreted them within a framework of an ever-changing military capability to defend against attacking planes with ground fire.

Lest the North Vietnamese misunderstand the message in the bombings, Johnson sought to make its meaning more clear to them:

\begin{quote}
I wish it were possible to convince others with words of what we now find it necessary to say with guns and planes: Armed hostility is futile. Our resources are equal to any challenge because we fight for values and we fight for principles, rather than territory or colonies. Our patience and determination are unending. Once this is clear, then it should also be clear that the only path for reasonable men is the path of peaceful settlement.\textsuperscript{57}
\end{quote}

Again, in his 1961 Inaugural, Kennedy had voiced the same unending patience and determination, but in a style

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\textsuperscript{57}Johnson, Johns Hopkins.
\end{flushright}
much more sublime: Anxious that "the word go forth... to friend and foe alike," that Americans would be "unwilling to witness or permit the slow undoing of human rights," Kennedy had assured, "Let every nation know... that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and the success of liberty."  

Thus, in the explanation of the bombings, Johnson sought to insure that neither Americans nor North Vietnamese would misunderstand their meaning. Yet, he was concerned, also, that interested liberals and neutrals not view the raids as any indication of an American unwillingness to negotiate. Since early in the year, when America had initiated its bombing campaign, Johnson had been under a growing pressure from liberals at home and neutrals abroad to arrange a peace parley. Before the United States Senate, on February 23, Senator Thomas J. Dodd had complained of a "rising clamor for a negotiated settlement" from what he called "the new isolationism." On April 1, an appeal by seventeen nonaligned nations had been made public by the Yugoslav Information Center in New York. It had demanded "immediate negotiations without any pre-conditions for a political solution to the war in Vietnam." On April 4,

58 Kennedy Inaugural.
the Americans for Democratic Action, holding a meeting in Washington, D. C., had called for a cease-fire in Vietnam and the establishment of a neutralized zone for former Indo-chinese states. A vocal minority had urged at the meeting that if a negotiated settlement could not be reached, the United States should withdraw from Vietnam.\footnote{The United States and Southeast Asia,} Communist Affairs: A Bi-Monthly Review of the School of International Relations, University of Southern California, March–April, 1965, p. 11.

Thus, in the beginning of his Johns Hopkins address, as if to underline what he felt were the inadequacies of his critics' approach to Vietnam policy, Johnson had stressed that "force must often precede reason," and that "we must deal with the world as it is, if it is ever to be as we wish."\footnote{Johnson, Johns Hopkins.} Yet, in spite of this firmness, Johnson's position did shift slightly under the weight of liberal and neutral pressure. For after seeking to allay the American hope that the war soon would end, and the North Vietnamese hope that American determination would fail, he assured those urging negotiation:

We will never be second in the search for such a peaceful settlement in Vietnam. There may be many ways to this kind of peace: in discussion or negotiation with the governments concerned; in large groups or in small ones; in the reaffirmation of old agreements or their strengthening with new ones. We have stated this position over and over again fifty times and more, to friend and foe alike. And we remain ready, with this purpose, for unconditional discussions.\footnote{Ibid.}
Viewed against the backdrop of Kennedy's Inauguration Day plea for negotiation, the above style of Johnson seems unexciting. In urging an end to the "Cold War," Kennedy had used antithesis to give each sentence the pointedness of an aphorism:

So let us begin anew, remembering on both sides that civility is not a sign of weakness, and sincerity is always subject to proof. Let us never negotiate out of fear, but let us never fear to negotiate. Let both sides explore what problems unite us instead of belaboring those problems which divide us.65

Yet, while Johnson's appeal for discussion seemed more pedestrian, its style was suited to the occasion. Kennedy's was an occasional address traditionally associated with a general discussion of the future and highly abstract language. Johnson, on the other hand, was delivering a major policy proposal which demanded that impressiveness be sacrificed for clarity and specificity.

The style of his plea in the Johns Hopkins address belied the importance of its contents. For while he sought to make it appear that his offer for "unconditional discussions" was but the restatement of an old position, Johnson was, in reality, showing a new flexibility. His earlier statements may be interpreted as showing him against unconditional negotiations. In a news conference on February 4, asked if he were opposed to suggestions by Senators Gore and

65Kennedy Inaugural.
Church recommending exploration of a negotiated settlement, he had replied:

We are there to be as effective and efficient as we can in helping the people of South Vietnam resist aggression and preserve their freedom. You will find from time to time that Senators from both the Democratic and Republican parties will have different viewpoints to which they are entitled, and they will express them, as I have expressed mine.66

On March 13, in answer to a news conference question on his reaction to pressures mounting around the world to negotiate the situation in Vietnam, he had pointed out that the United States had received no indication that Hanoi was "prepared or willing or ready to stop doing what it is doing to its neighbors," and that "the absence of this crucial element affects the current discussion of negotiation."67 Remembering this earlier unwillingness to enter into unconditional discussion, Hans Morgenthau wrote, in review of Johnson's Johns Hopkins offer:

On the one hand, the President has shown for the first time a way out of the impasse in which we find ourselves in Vietnam. By agreeing to negotiations without preconditions he has opened the door to negotiations which those preconditions had made impossible from the outset.68

Johnson's appeals for belief, then, were divided among three audiences. He sought to convince Americans that


the bombings were "a necessary part of the surest road to peace," but only a part. He hoped to convince Hanoi and its supporters that America's "patience and our determination are unending." He intended to convince the liberals and neutrals that America was searching for a peaceful settlement in Vietnam and would "remain ready with this purpose for unconditional discussions."  

The appeals seeking support.--In the Johns Hopkins address, the President made no direct appeal for the active support of other countries in the military effort. He did, however, seek their support in an Asian war on poverty.

He made the transition from the first war to the other in two steps: First, he argued that one was a sign a change of life was desired:

This war, like most wars is filled with terrible irony. For what do the people of North Viet-Nam want? They want what their neighbors also desire--food for their hunger--health for their bodies--a chance to learn--progress for their country, and an end to the bondage of material misery.

Next, he proposed that the desired change could be realized "far more readily in peaceful association with others than in the endless course of battle." "Neither independence," he asserted, "nor human dignity will be won though by arms alone. It also requires the works of peace."  

Johnson's transition was a good one, for it demonstrated a relationship between the desire for peace and the

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69 Johnson, Johns Hopkins.

70 Ibid.
proposal that men should undertake a war on poverty in Asia. By making use of learned response tendencies against war, he hoped to harness emotional energy in support of his proposition. The transition made the connection or transfer of effect between the two.

The plea to support his "works of peace" began with a broad alliterative appeal for a "much more massive effort" to improve man's life in that "conflict-torn corner" of the world. The cornerstone of the effort was to be cooperation. He called upon all the countries of Southeast Asia "to associate themselves in a greatly expanded cooperative effort"; he expressed the hope that North Vietnam would take its place in "the common effort"; and he asked the Secretary General of the United Nations to use his prestige to initiate with the countries of that area "a plan for cooperation." 71

There is a strong resemblance, here, to the Kennedy and Johnson inaugurals. Both of the earlier addresses had promised a program which could bring a new world. Kennedy's was a "grand and global alliance" to assure "a more fruitful life for all mankind"; 72 Johnson's was a national effort to "increase the bounty of all." 73 Further, both had used the vision of a better world as a rallying point for unity.

71 Ibid.
72 Kennedy Inaugural.
73 Johnson Inaugural.
Kennedy had called upon each side in the Cold War to "explore what problems which divide us" and to establish a "beachhead of co-operation"; Johnson had asked the nation to "achieve progress without strife" in a "shoulder-to-shoulder" effort.

Our analysis of the Johns Hopkins speech, up to this point, has revealed a progression from problem presentation to solution proposal via a discussion of a disconcerting situation, of the enemy responsible for the discontent, and of the movement or program to defeat that enemy. The solution proposal, we have seen, was divided into two parts: those solutions for which Johnson had to win belief and those for which he sought support. He asked for belief in the wisdom of American presence in Vietnam; he entreated for support of a cooperative, international effort against poverty and disease in Southeast Asia.

Further, we have found thus far a correspondence between the broad categories of appeals presented in the Kennedy and Johnson Inaugural addresses and those in the Johns Hopkins address which inaugurated a rhetorical campaign to facilitate diplomacy abroad.

Appeals Presenting the Leader for the Movement

The similarity of appeal types continued. The Johns Hopkins speech, like the earlier two inaugurals,

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74 Kennedy Inaugural.

75 Johnson Inaugural.
presented a leader for the movement to defeat the enemy responsible for the discontent. Yet, Johnson's treatment of this category, as we shall see, more closely approximates his 1965 State of the Union address than it does either of the Inaugurals.

The active leader.—Having appealed to others to support a South Asian development program, the Johns Hopkins address presented a list of American moves by which Johnson hoped to further the effort to replace terror with progress. Such an agenda served two purposes. First, it was a device seeking good will by showing America's altruistic nature. Next, it was designed to motivate others to action by giving the program a strong start. The idea of the activity of the United States through its President was made emphatic through the use of epanaphora, a figure in which the mention of each separate action began with the same words: "I will ask the Congress . . ."; "I would hope . . ."; "I also intend . . ."; "I will very shortly name. . .".  

Johnson employed the same figure often in his 1965 State of the Union address which set forth the plans for the American "Great Society." When he listed, for example, accomplishments of the Union in the 1960's, he began six distinct thoughts with the words, "In this period . . ."; again, in offering the generics of his "Great Society" he introduced each of nine broad ideas with the words, "I propose that . . ."; further, he employed the figure in a more specific discussion of some of the major

76 Johnson, Johns Hopkins.
ideas; and, finally, he relied on the device to build to a climax in his conclusion: describing a President's vision of America, he declared, "It existed . . ."—"It has guided . . ."—"It sustains . . ."—"It must be interpreted . . ."—"It shall lead us. . . ." 77

The understanding leader.—In the Johns Hopkins address, while Johnson sought good will by showing the personal benefits Americans were willing to provide, he hoped to win it, also, by social consideration, i.e., by showing an understanding of the desire of societies for a better life and by recognizing the right of others to disagree:

This will be a disorderly planet for a long time. In Asia, and elsewhere, the forces of the modern world are shaking old ways and uprooting ancient civilizations. There will be turbulence and struggle and even violence. Great social change, as we see in our own country, does not always come without conflict. We must also expect that nations will on occasion be in dispute with us. It may be because we are rich, or powerful, or because we have made mistakes, or because they honestly fear our intentions. 78

The selfless leader.—Again, Johnson pursued the good will of his audience by presenting the United States as magnanimous, willing to make sacrifices for noble ends. "No nation," he assured, "need ever fear that we desire their land, or to impose our will, or to dictate their institutions. But we will always oppose the effort of one nation to conquer another nation." 79 Similarly, in his


78 Johnson, Johns Hopkins.

79 Ibid.
State of the Union address three months before, he had said:

We seek not fidelity to an iron faith, but a diversity of belief as varied as man himself. We seek not to extend the power of America, but the progress of humanity. We seek not to dominate others, but to strengthen the freedom of all people. . . . For ourselves we seek neither praise nor blame, neither gratitude nor obedience. We seek peace. We seek freedom. We seek to enrich the life of man.  

In the Johns Hopkins speech, to show that America's intervention in Asian affairs sprang from more than mere self-interest in its own security, Johnson declared it to be part of an old dream:

For centuries, nations have struggled among each other. But we dream of a world where disputes are settled by law and reason. And we will try to make it so. For most of history men have hated and killed one another in battle. But we dream of an end to war. And we will try to make it so. For all existence most men have lived in poverty, threatened by hunger. But we dream of a world where all are fed and charged with help to make it so.

Again, as in the 1965 State of the Union address, Johnson employed repetition of words and sentences to achieve force and emphasis.

Yet, there is in these paragraphs, another parallel to that State of the Union address, for it had ascribed to the Great Society the motivation of an old dream:

There was a dream—a dream of a place where a free man could build for himself, and raise his children to a better life—a dream of a continent to be conquered, a world to be won, a nation to be made.

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80 Johnson, 1965 State of the Union.
81 Johnson, Johns Hopkins.
82 Johnson, 1965 State of the Union.
Appeals Presenting the Call to Action

Whereas the two Inaugural addresses by Kennedy and Johnson, as well as Johnson's State of the Union address in 1965, had all appealed for action by pointing to the need to use a heritage left by pioneers of the past, the Johns Hopkins address called for action which would secure for the common people of the world a heritage in the future. Calling attention to "the ordinary men and women" throughout the world, who "are filled with the same proportions of hate and fear, of love and hope," and who "want the same things for themselves and their families," Johnson urged: "Well, this can be their world yet. Man now has the knowledge--always before denied--to make this planet serve the real needs of the people who live in it." 83

The appeal to achievement.--Listeners often experience a conflict of motives. A drive in one direction may be held in check by an equally strong desire in another direction. 84 At this point in the Johns Hopkins speech Johnson recognized this obstacle. Having called for cooperative action in Southeast Asia, he confessed:

I know this will not be easy. I know how difficult it is for reason to guide passion, and love to master hate. The complexities of this world do not bow easily to pure and consistent answers. 85

83Johnson, Johns Hopkins.


85Johnson, Johns Hopkins.
In order to create a dominance of motives favorable to his proposal, Johnson contrasted power with the progress for which he called. First, he disparaged power:

We often say how impressive power is. But I do not find it impressive at all. The guns and the bombs, the rockets and the warships, are symbols of human failure. They are necessary symbols. They protect what we cherish. But they are witnesses to human folly.86

Then, in contrast, he emphatically listed products of a development program, amplifying his treatment of one with a picture of what rural electrification did for his own region of Texas:

A dam built across a great river is impressive. In the countryside where I was born, and where I live, I have seen the night illuminated, and the kitchen warmed, and the home heated, where once the cheerless night and the ceaseless cold held sway. And all this happened because electricity came to our area along the humming wires of the REA. Electrification of the countryside—yes, that, too, is impressive.

A rich harvest in a hungry land is impressive. The sight of hungry children in a classroom is impressive.

These—not mighty arms—are the achievements which the American nation believes to be impressive. 87

In his State of the Union address three months before, Johnson had summoned up the same view of his Perdernales country to justify the intervention of government for American rural development:

It was once barren land. The angular hills were covered with scrub cedar and a few large live oaks. Little would grow in that harsh caliche soil of my country. And each spring the Pedernales River would

86 Ibid.
87 Ibid.
flood our valley. But men came and they worked and they endured and they built. And tonight that country is abundant—abundant with fruit and cattle and goats and sheep. And there are pleasant homes and lakes and the floods are gone.  

The appeal to avoidance.—Continuing his Johns Hopkins address, in an allusion to Moses' challenge to the nation of Israel, Johnson completed his call for action by appealing to the desire to take precautionary measures to avoid possible danger:

We may well be living in the time foretold many years ago when it was said: "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live."

This generation of the world must choose: destroy or build, kill or aid, hate or understand. Effect modeling, Johnson declared, "Well, we will choose life. And so doing, we will prevail over the enemies within man, and over the natural enemies of all mankind." And thus, he concluded his address.

Conclusions Concerning the Johns Hopkins Address

Lyndon Johnson's Johns Hopkins address of April 7, 1965, was more than a report to the American people. It was the inaugural of a rhetorical campaign to clarify and justify the Vietnamese policies of his Administration to the rest of the world.

88 Johnson, 1965 State of the Union.
89 Deut. 30:19.
90 Johnson, Johns Hopkins.
The ideas for which Johnson sought acceptance were divided into two categories: Those for which he sought belief, and those for which he sought active support.

He used, primarily, three methods of winning and holding attention: (1) Vitalness—by unveiling American intentions in a war which was having its effect upon diplomacy throughout the world; (2) Conflict—by portraying aggressive and defensive forces and poverty and progress in a battle against one another; and (3) Concreteness—by reducing the complexity of the war to a simple, dichotomous relationship of good being attacked by evil and by substituting picture words for vague terms.

In order to facilitate audience comprehension, Johnson attempted the following: (1) He sought to assist listeners in distinguishing ideas by asking leading questions to introduce them and by the use of exophora to make them stand out; (2) He tried to assist listeners in understanding ideas through the use of a plain style, short sentences, and simple words, and by making allowance for the diverse postures from which different segments of his total audience would view the war.

Attempting to identify with his hearers, he placed himself among those hating war, expressed his sympathy for all suffering due to the conflict in Vietnam, and denied that he had all the answers for its problems.

Hoping to increase belief in the wisdom of the United States's presence in Vietnam, Johnson set forth at
least five ideas: (1) He presented the North Vietnamese as brutal aggressors who were responsible for the suffering in Vietnam; (2) He presented the idea of a defensive war fought by the United States and South Vietnam as a tool for peace; (3) He presented the need for a nation to honor its pledges; (4) He presented the United States as having asked for peace negotiations and the North Vietnamese as having turned them down; (5) He presented the United States as fighting in Vietnam for selfless, magnanimous reasons. In making these arguments, he was appealing to the tendency of most to reject aggression, to take counteraction to avoid harm, to nurture the weak, and to defend one's autonomy.

In order to gain support in the Asian war on poverty, he appealed not only to a spirit of nurturance but to the desire to affiliate, the desire to achieve, and the preference for order. The devices Johnson most often employed in making his appeals were contrast, value labels, highly emotive metaphors, and maxims.

Johnson's organization should have increased both comprehension and acceptance. He arranged his main ideas in a series so that each led logically to the next.

Of these rhetorical elements, most were to reappear again and again in Johnson's future international communication concerning Vietnam. The Johns Hopkins address of April 7, 1965, was to prove to be the archetype of Johnson's diplomatic rhetoric to come.
An Analysis of Johnson's Diplomatic Campaigns

In the preceding section, we noted that the President's Johns Hopkins address served as an introduction to a series of diplomatic efforts designed to influence the reaction of other countries to American action in Vietnam. In this section, we shall investigate this campaign of efforts which sprang from the diplomatic inaugural at Johns Hopkins.

This April 7 address served as an introduction to a subsequent flow of his Vietnam-centered rhetoric. This is true, not merely because it was his first major speech after he was forced to turn from a domestic to a diplomatic emphasis, but because it gave a preview, both of the ends which Johnson would seek in the coming months, and of the appeals which he would use.

An examination of the address has shown that Johnson pursued two ends: (1) to win belief, i.e., belief in the wisdom of America's presence in Vietnam, in her willingness to maintain that presence as long as necessary, and in her willingness to negotiate for peace and withdrawal; and (2) to win active support from other countries in the form of cooperative participation in his Asian development program.

These joint ends of belief and support do not imply a conviction-persuasion duality, but a conviction-behavior

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duality, both of which may be goals of persuasion.\textsuperscript{92} Of course, in Johnson's case, the belief he sought would be an effect instrumental to the further end of influencing the actions of others.

The Campaigns to Win Belief

Between the Johns Hopkins effort on April 7, 1965, and the Congressional elections in November, 1965, one may trace three distinct campaigns seeking belief. The first began with the summer of 1965. The second major peace effort began in December, 1965, after Johnson had been under pressure from liberals throughout the fall. The third effort which we will investigate began in the summer of 1966 and continued until the elections in November.

The First Campaign

Had Johnson been successful in winning the belief he sought through the speech at Johns Hopkins, there would have been no need for follow-up speeches designed to further the same end. He was not, however, completely successful, and Communist and neutralist reaction to the address called forth from him further responses.

The Reply to Communist Rejection

Communist response to the Johns Hopkins attempt to win belief in American willingness to negotiate seemed anything but encouraging: On April 8, Peking radio charged

\textsuperscript{92} Baird and Knower, p. 383; Hovland, Janis, and Kelley, p. 10.
that the peace offer was a trick, full of lies, and that it was designed to induce the Viet Cong to disarm while the United States prepared for war. Two days later, a Pravda article complained that the address did not contain "a word about the United States' intention to halt its aggression." On April 11, North Vietnam officially rejected Johnson's offer to negotiate.

Hoping to capitalize on the Communist rejection of his open peace plea, Johnson held before the world the contrast between those seeking discussion and the Communists who had refused it. In an April 17 news conference he said:

It has been a week of disappointment because we tried to open a window to peace only to be met with tired names and slogans—and a refusal to talk. They want no talk with us, no talk with a distinguished Briton, no talk with the United Nations. They want no talk at all—so far. But our offer stands. We mean every word of it.

The contrast was a device for building ethos, for it associated the Communists with the desire to continue war and the United States with those wanting peace. Continuing to employ contrast to his advantage, the President repeated his offer of unconditional discussion:

Peace is too important, the stakes are far too high, to permit anyone to indulge in slander and invective.
We will not reply in kind. The window to peace

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96. Ibid., April 18, 1965, p. 2.
is still open. We are still ready for unconditional discussion.  

One hallmark of Johnson's rhetoric during this period was the amplification by redundancy which always followed his offer to negotiate. He seemed to use this method to insure against any misunderstanding of the extent and meaning of his offer. Thus, he continued:

We will impose no conditions of any kind on any government willing to talk, nor will we accept any. On this basis we are ready to begin discussion next week, tomorrow, or tonight.

Anticipating that Communists and other critics would charge the continuation of United States military activity was a demonstration of its insincerity, Johnson argued American action was a necessary response to Communist provocations. With short sentences and repetition of a key word, he made his point more emphatic:

Nor can the continuation of the war be used to doubt the sincerity of our peaceful purpose. The infiltration continues. The terror continues. Death in the night continues. And we must also continue.

To those governments who doubt our willingness to talk, the answer is simple: Agree to discussion. Come to the meeting room. We will be there.

The above argument that American effort must continue, in spite of the wish to end the war, because the Communists continue their infiltration and night raids, is an unusual enthymeme, because it combined several of the topics

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97 Ibid.
98 Ibid.
99 Ibid.
for enthymemes listed by Aristotle.\textsuperscript{100} It was, first, a reasoning from cause to effect, arguing that the Communist action was the cause of the American reaction. It was, also, reasoning derived from analogy of results, arguing that if the Communists continue to take aggressive action, the United States was justified in responding with militant action. It was finally, argument from degree, for Johnson's word choice relegated the American response to a more brutal type of warfare carried on by the Communists. This section shows another characteristic of Johnson's campaign for belief, i.e., a careful balance between the plainly stated determination to meet force with force, and the equally unambiguous offer to talk peace with any foe willing to come to the table. In a summary statement, Johnson employed antithesis to give equal weight to each side of this balance:

Our policy also remains the same: to strive for peace, but not to yield to aggression, to use what power we must, but no more than we need; to stay until independence is secure, but to leave when that independence is surely guaranteed.\textsuperscript{101}

Yet, while the Johns Hopkins address had been planned to convince other nations that America desired negotiations, Johnson's bombing of North Vietnam had become, to many, an event message contradicting his peace pleas. Therefore, in his April 17 news conference, he sought to turn the bombings to his advantage, again by the use of contrast, arguing that

\textsuperscript{100}See Thonssen and Baird, pp. 66-68, for the full list.

American raids were military necessities aimed at only military targets, but that the Viet Cong were exploding bombs indiscriminately. He described first the bombing of North Vietnam: The raids were "carefully limited," they were "directed at concrete and steel and not human life." Then, with a series of sentences designed to catch the ear with parallel phrasing, he contrasted the air attacks with the bombings by the enemy:

I understand the feelings of those who regret that we must undertake air attacks. I share those feelings, but the compassion of this country and the world must go out to the men and women and children who are killed and crippled by the Viet Cong every day in South Viet-Nam. The outrage of this country and the world must be visited on those who explode their bombs in cities and villages, ripping the bodies of the helpless. The indignation of this country and the world must extend to all who seek dominion over others with a violent and ruthless disregard for life, happiness, or security.102

Here is a case of an emotional, and yet logical, appeal being used as an ethical appeal. The picture of women and children being "killed and crippled," of bombs "ripping the bodies of the helpless," and of those who have a "ruthless disregard" for others stirred the emotions against the Viet Cong. In contrast, the Americans seemed more humane. Yet, while this was an appeal to emotion, it was, equally, an appeal to reason, for it was an enthymeme based both upon the application to one's opponent of anything that has been said about oneself, and upon argument from degree. Johnson was not merely arguing that those criticizing American
bombed should be critical, as well, of Communist atrocities. He was maintaining that the inconsistency of his critics was made more graphic when the carefully-limited military targets of American action were contrasted with the indiscriminate Communist attacks of civilians.

The Reply to Neutralist Rejection

In his April 17 news conference, Johnson had argued that his continued military response to Communist military action should not cast doubt upon the sincerity of his expressed desire for negotiation and peace. Some neutralists, however, did doubt it. On April 20, for example, India's Shastri stated that, to nonaligned nations, Johnson's reply would have been more meaningful had he again halted the bombing. Therefore, on April 27, Johnson replied in a televised news conference, renewing the offer of unconditional discussion, but defending the bombing of North Vietnam. "I will," he affirmed, "continue along the course that we have set: firmness with moderation; readiness for peace with refusal to retreat." The news conference remarks which preceded this slogan were designed to justify and clarify his stand.

Justification.---To justify his refusal to retreat from Vietnam, Johnson presented an argument in three steps: There was, first, the assertion of phenomena, "Independent

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104 Ibid., April 28, 1965, p. 16.
South Vietnam has been attacked by North Vietnam. The object of that attack is total conquest."105 Again, as in the Johns Hopkins address, the President made no attempt to back his assertions by data. Obviously, those who believed the Vietnam conflict began as a civil war within South Vietnam, would have dismissed Johnson’s statement as propaganda. Next, the President drew a progression of three conclusions from the assertion of North Vietnamese aggression:

Defeat in South Viet-Nam would deliver a friendly nation to terror and repression. It would encourage and spur on those who seek to conquer all free nations that are within their reach. Our own welfare, our own freedom, would be in great danger.106

Finally, Johnson presented a warrant for the leap which he had made from assertion to conclusion: "From Munich until today we have learned that to yield to aggression brings only greater threats and even more destructive war."107 He was arguing from cause to effect, maintaining that since yielding to aggression causes more aggression, to yield in South Vietnam would bring more. This was the "falling dominoes" argument, fully stated.

To justify America’s increase of force taking place at that time in Vietnam, Johnson maintained that moderation without firmness was viewed by the enemy as weakness. Arguing from generalization, he presented a number of examples

105 Ibid.
106 Ibid.
107 Ibid.
where American inaction seemed only to motivate the Communists to more bold action:

Through the first seven months of 1964, both Vietnamese and Americans were the targets of constant attacks of terror. Bombs exploded in helpless villages, in downtown movie theaters, even at the sports fields where the children played. Soldiers and civilians, men and women, were murdered and crippled, yet we took no action against the source of this brutality—North Viet-Nam.108

Next, came examples of the similar futility of token American response:

When our destroyers were attacked in the Gulf of Tonkin, as you will remember last summer, we replied promptly with a single raid. The punishment then was limited to the deed. For the next six months we took no action against North Viet-Nam. We warned of danger; we hoped for caution in others.

Their answer was attack, and explosions, and indiscriminate murder.109

From these examples, Johnson drew his generalization justifying firmness:

So it soon became clear that our restraint was viewed as weakness; our desire to limit conflict was viewed as a prelude to our surrender. We could no longer stand by while attacks mounted and while the bases of the attackers were immune from reply. Therefore, we began to strike back.110

Both of his arguments in this section were intended to justify firmness, the first by showing the danger of a lack of it, and next by showing the ineffectiveness of a lack of it.

108 Ibid.
109 Ibid.
110 Ibid.
Clarification.—Hoping to make it clear, however, that America still desired negotiations, Johnson argued that her new firmness was not a change of purpose, but of tactics:

But America has not changed her essential position, and that purpose is peaceful settlement. That purpose is to resist aggression. That purpose is to avoid a wider war. 111

In order to make his desire for negotiations and peace emphatic, he relied upon three stylistic devices:

(1) Epanaphora, in which one word is emphatically repeated: "I say again that I will talk to any government, anywhere, any time, without any conditions, and if any doubt our sincerity, let them test us"; (2) Alliteration: "Each time we have met with silence, or slander, or the sound of guns"; (3) Antithesis: "But just as we will not flag in battle, we will not weary in the search for peace." 112

Quintilian remarked that the true end of style is that the hearer not only understand, "but that he may not be able to misunderstand." 113 In our analysis of Johnson's earlier April 17 news conference, we noted that he sought to insure against misunderstanding by the use of restatement in simple words and short sentences. Both restatement and the word choice and sentence construction can be forms of

111 Ibid.
112 Ibid.
113 Institutes of Oratory. viii. 2. 24.
intentional redundancy to reduce noise in the system. 114

Again, in this April 27 news conference, Johnson used the same redundancy schemes:

So I reaffirm by offer of unconditional discussions.
We will discuss any subject and any point of view with any government concerned.
This offer may be rejected, as it has been in the past, but it will remain open, waiting for the day when it becomes clear to all that armed attack will not yield domination over others. 115

This section, however, seeks to maintain clarity in yet another way. The statement that this was a reaffirmation of his Johns Hopkins offer, and the assurance that the offer would remain open, were designed to leave no doubt about how Communist rejection of the Johns Hopkins negotiation plea would affect American willingness to come to the table in the future. It is an example of anticipating audience questions and encoding to meet them.

The Relationship of Johnson's Speeches to One Another

Coherence.—Between the Johns Hopkins address and Johnson's news conference speeches of the weeks following, there was a harmony of purpose and method. In the speech at Johns Hopkins he, first, had indicted an enemy responsible for distress in Southeast Asia; in the first news conference, which followed ten days later, he again presented


North Vietnam as the force responsible for the sorrow of citizens, by contrasting American moderation with Communist indiscrimination. In the Johns Hopkins effort he, next, had defended his program to defeat the enemy responsible for the distress; the same thought appeared in the first part of his second news conference, on April 27, when he justified his plan of refusing to retreat, while expressing a willingness to talk. Finally, in the Johns Hopkins address, Johnson had defined his program to defeat the enemy, an idea on which he touched, again, in the second half of his April 27 news conference, when he clarified his stand of resistance to aggression and readiness for negotiation.

Thus, the two news conferences relate not just to the major address on April 7, but to one another, as well. Together, they produce three purposes and three main points to meet them: Hoping to capitalize on Communist rejection of his Johns Hopkins offer and to win neutralist approval, Johnson contrasted his moderation with North Vietnam's lack of it; wishing to overcome neutralist rejection of his method of winning negotiations, he justified his coupling of firmness with that moderation; desiring to avoid misunderstanding, he clarified what future action was implied by the union of the two in one policy.

Central thought.—Our preceding investigation of Johnson's first peace campaign not only showed a pattern woven from several speeches, but it revealed in the warp of the Johns Hopkins address and the woof of the subsequent
speeches a thread of common color—the idea of determined but measured might. It appeared in the major policy address on April 7 in these words: "We will use our power with restraint and with all the wisdom that we can command. But we will use it."\footnote{Johnson, Johns Hopkins.} 116 It was restated in the news conference speech of April 17, as Johnson explained that his policy was to "strive for peace, but not to yield to aggression; to use what power we must, but no more than we need."\footnote{New York Times, April 18, 1965, p. 2.} 117 It may be seen in his statements on April 27 as he resolved to follow a course of "firmness with moderation; readiness for peace with refusal to retreat."\footnote{Ibid., April 28, 1965, p. 16.} 118 On May 7, in a speech occasioned by the signing of a resolution appropriating funds for the war, the phrases from the Johns Hopkins address reappeared: "We will use our power with restraint and we will use it with all the wisdom that we can command. But we will use it."\footnote{Public Papers of the Presidents: Lyndon B. Johnson, 1965, 1, 506.} 119

Each of the above statements has the ring of a slogan. Compare them, for example, to Lincoln's policy for a warring nation: "With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see
the right."\textsuperscript{120} The value of the slogan is that it gives point to the particular proposition or purpose of the speaker. It epitomizes the ideas of the speech into a central theme or governing idea.\textsuperscript{121} This seems to be the use to which Johnson put his statements mentioned above. He placed each at the close of a section to sum up and to emphasize his central thought.

The recurrence of the same idea in each of the speeches in his first campaign not only promoted clarity but also encouraged the acceptance of his idea by exerting a cumulative effect in the perceptual field of the listeners. Eisenson, Auer, and Irwin, in explaining the rationale for this principle, have stated:

Listeners tend to yield to the repetition of stimuli. Although we have said that listeners tend to believe and to do as they are told, telling them only once may not be enough. Inattentiveness may mean that the listener fails to hear the stimulus words; simple inertia may keep him from taking them seriously; or he may receive them with skepticism or even hostility if they conflict with more potent habits of behavior, dominant attitudes, or strong beliefs. By employing the principle of summation of stimuli, however, succeeding repetition of an idea normally encounters less resistance.\textsuperscript{122}

\textsuperscript{120}From Abraham Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address; the full text appears in Lewis Copland (ed.), The World's Great Speeches (New York: The Book League of America, 1942), pp. 315–317.


\textsuperscript{122}Eisenson, Auer, and Irwin, p. 823.
The Request to the United Nations

On June 25, 1965, Johnson took his case for negotiations to the United Nations, asking its help in bringing North Vietnam to the table. The fact that he felt a need to make the request was indicative of the failure of his twelve-week campaign. Had he merely sought consummatory effects in his receivers, i.e., had he valued comprehension or belief as goals in themselves, he might have considered himself successful. Johnson, however, was interested in producing understanding and conviction primarily because they were instrumental to his goal of negotiation. This can be seen, for example, in remarks made by him on May 7, 1965: "Once this message is clearly understood by all—all the aggressors—there should be much greater hope for peace. For then, the men who now seek conquest by force will learn to seek settlement by unconditional discussions."

The instrumental design of Johnson's message may be seen again by what he said on June 28, 1965: "Once the Communists know, as we know, that a violent solution is impossible, then a peaceful solution is inevitable." But Johnson was wrong. Comprehension, or even belief in the sincerity of his offer to negotiate, would not necessarily have led the Communists to peace talks.


124 *Public Papers of the Presidents: Lyndon B. Johnson*, 1965, 1, 506.

Granted, the President was using a powerful appeal in presenting a threat situation and coupling to it a way to escape. Certainly he used strong, plain language and backed it with bombing in the North, to insure that the Communists would believe his determination to carry out his threats, if necessary. As he said on June 27, 1965:

We are going to persist, if persist we must, until death and desolation have led to the same conference table where others could now join us at a much smaller cost.\textsuperscript{127}

Yet, Johnson forgot the principle of the conflict of motives. In his assurance that the fear-arousing appeals would move the Communists to negotiate, once they understood and believed his message, he failed to take into account other values which North Vietnam might esteem above the reduction of danger. As Baird and Knower explain:

The listener may experience a conflict of motives. The drive in one direction is held in check by an equally strong drive in another direction. To appeal successfully to motives in conflict, a speaker must succeed in so organizing his appeal that he creates a dominance of motives favorable to his proposal.\textsuperscript{128}

The address Johnson made to the United Nations on June 25, 1965, was not merely the valedictory of his first campaign for belief in America's willingness to negotiate, it was the summation of his efforts and of the groundwork

\textsuperscript{126}See the discussion on fear-arousing appeals in Hovland, Janis, and Kelley, pp. 56-98.


\textsuperscript{128}Baird and Knower, p. 389.
which had preceded them. Lamenting the ineffectiveness of these moves for peace, he said:

Bilateral diplomacy has yielded no result.
The machinery of the Geneva Conference has been paralyzed.
Resort to the Security Council has been rejected.
The efforts of the distinguished Secretary-General have been rebuffed.
An appeal for unconditional discussion was met with contempt.
A pause in bombing operations was called an insult.
The concern for peace of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers has received little and very disappointing results.129

The style employed here by Johnson contributed heavily to his purposes. He intended, first, to make each individual effort stand out from the others. This was achieved in a series of seven sentences, all parallel in phrasing.

Johnson hoped, further, to blame the Communists for the lack of results from the peace attempts, and thus to win favorable opinion for America. This is demonstrated in his remarks which immediately preceded his listing of the unsuccessful peace attempts:

The most elementary purpose of the United Nations is that neighbors must not attack their neighbors, and that principle today is under challenge. The processes of peaceful settlement are blocked by willful aggressors contemptuous of the opinion and the will of mankind.130


130 Ibid.
The style of six of the seven sentences listing peace efforts is especially suited to the indictment of the North Vietnamese for preventing peaceful settlement. For with the exception of the first statement in the series, each of the others employed the passive voice, and this gives the impression that each move for peace had become the passive victim of Communist rejection. The attempts, for example, had "been paralyzed," had "been rejected," had "been rebuffed," and were "met with contempt."

As with his report of the lack of progress in the past, Johnson's request for United Nations participation in peace-seeking efforts was also a presentation of ethos in that it contrasted the United States support of those efforts with the North Vietnam rejection of them:

I now call upon this gathering of the nations of the world to use all their influence, individually and collectively, to bring to the table those who seem determined to make war. We will support your efforts, as we will support effective action by any agent or agency of these United Nations.131

The Results of the First Campaign

With Johnson's appeal to the United Nations, his first major campaign to bring about negotiations came to an end. In it, Johnson had sought to convince neutrals of the wisdom of American military presence in Vietnam, and all powers of the willingness of America to negotiate. From our analysis of the news conferences following the Johns

131 Ibid.
Hopkins address, it would appear that the President's goal was getting North Vietnam to negotiate. Winning both the good will of the neutrals and the belief of all powers in our readiness to talk were effects which Johnson considered instrumental to that goal.

There is some indication that the first campaign came to an end when it did, not because Johnson had failed to convince Hanoi that he wished to negotiate, but because he had been too successful in doing so. In September, 1965, James Reston wrote:

> If Johnson and Rusk are calling publicly for negotiations once or twice a week, the Communists seem to assume that this is very much in American interests and therefore very much against their own interests. So they reject and even sneer at the offers.\[132\]

Reston explained that both American officials who agreed with Johnson's objective of negotiated settlement and diplomats of other countries who had been trying to arrange a compromise had come to feel that the constant talk about negotiation was misleading the Communists and thereby hampering the chances of settling the war by diplomacy.

In spite of its failure to bring about negotiations, the Administration felt its overtures in the spring and summer of 1965 had improved the position of the United States in world opinion.\[133\] It also reported foreseeing, however,

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a costly military campaign before the initiation of a new peace effort.\textsuperscript{134}

\textbf{The Second Campaign}

In late October, 1965, liberals again began to pressure Johnson to make another peace move. Fulbright renewed his plea for a temporary suspension of raids on North Vietnam in hopes of improving the chances for talks to end the war.\textsuperscript{135} The \textit{New York Times}, in its editorial pages, called upon the United States to pause in its bombing of the North arguing that recent changes would soon bring an optimum ground for negotiation.\textsuperscript{136} On November 27, at least 15,000 peacefully demonstrated outside the grounds of the White House, urging negotiations.\textsuperscript{137}

Johnson responded to his critics by saying that while the United States was ready to negotiate, North Vietnam was not. In an address to the AFL-CIO convention on December 9, he reported that his ambassadors had been alerted for a sign that Hanoi might negotiate, but there had been none.\textsuperscript{138} Actually, Johnson's remarks were, themselves, a sign to Hanoi that Washington was about to try once more for negotiations. It was a harbinger of more explicit peace-

\textsuperscript{134} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{135} Ibid., October 25, 1965, p. 3.
\textsuperscript{136} Ibid., November 1, 1965, p. 40; October 24, 1965, sec. 4, p. 10.
\textsuperscript{137} Ibid., November 28, 1965, p. 1.
\textsuperscript{138} Ibid., December 10, 1965, p. 13.
feelers to come. Further hints of a new campaign came on December 16, 1965, with the President's remarks at the lighting of the national Christmas tree in Washington. In statements definitely intended for North Vietnam, he said:

We declare once more our desire to discuss an honorable peace in Vietnam. We know that nothing is to be gained by a further delay in talking. Our poet Emerson once said that "The God of victory is one-handed, but peace gives victory to both sides." 139

In order to add ethos to his claim that he desired negotiations, Johnson argued from circumstances, claiming that the presence of the British Prime Minister that evening was a sign that they were working together in an official search for peace in Vietnam:

On the platform with me this evening is the very distinguished and very great Prime Minister of Great Britain. . . . He has told me that his Government will renew the quest for peace as cochairman of the Geneva conference. I have told him that any new way he can find to have peace will have a ready response from the United States. 140

The Peace Prospects through Diplomats

On December 25, Vice-President Humphrey revealed in a radio speech that the President had instructed our diplomats to spur peace moves. 141 Three days later, the White House announced that the United States had not resumed bombing after the end of the Christmas truce, and that the

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140 Ibid.

Administration had informed North Vietnam that the pause was intended as a "feeler" toward peace talks. The following day, Johnson launched a major diplomatic effort by sending Special Ambassador Harriman to Warsaw, United Nations Ambassador Goldberg to the Vatican, Vice-President Humphrey to Japan, and by asking Ambassador Kohler to confer with the President of the USSR.

While lauding his decision to initiate a second peace campaign, some seasoned observers believed Johnson's methods were slightly theatrical. James Reston wrote, for example:

> Effective diplomacy, according to the tradition of the past, must be quiet. It must be impersonal. It must be precise. It must be patient. Above everything, it must not raise popular expectations. . . . Lyndon Johnson, however, follows no man's rules. . . . He is not, by nature, quiet, precise, patient, impassive, tolerant or detached.

Arthur Krock, as well, noted that "the President is congenitally disposed to dramatize the setting in which his decisions, big or little, are made public."

The drama of his move was, judged Reston, "the main weakness of Johnson's airport diplomacy." He noted that, in dealing with the Communists, one must "remember that in their mind what is secret is serious, and what is public is propaganda." Because of this, he concluded that Johnson's

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bypass of the normal, private diplomatic channels made his techniques "subject to misinterpretation." What was intended, therefore, as a clarification of American purpose to Europeans may have resulted in leaving the wrong impression with the Communists.

The Peace Proposition by the President

On January 12, with the bombing pause in its twentieth day, Johnson delivered his State of the Union address. The scene was the same as it had been a year before, but the mood of the audience was different. In January, 1965, the President had been riding the crest of an overwhelming election victory, and a consensus-minded Congress was ready to accept his Great Society program with few questions. Thus, the 1965 address was devoted almost entirely, as we have seen earlier, to domestic problems. In January, 1966, however, the President faced a different Congress. It was one disturbed by the impact the Vietnam war was having on the economy and on domestic programs.

Further, by the time of the 1966 State of the Union address, a certain suspense had built up. The nationally televised address was to be Johnson's first public statement since the beginning of the peace offensive just after Christmas.


Following the plan which he had used in the Johns Hopkins address nine months before, the President first defended American presence in South Vietnam, then dispensed another peace proposal to North Vietnam. An analysis by the New York Times described the speech as "delicately balanced" because it "pledged constant effort to reach a settlement and a steady resistance to aggression." 148

**Defense of American participation.**—Johnson's defense of American action in Vietnam rested upon two main points: (1) It was another episode in the policy which America had been following "with strong consistency" since World War II; and (2) It would be a continuation of five lines of policy which America had followed under the last four presidents.

The first main argument was based upon precedent because of the audience for whom it was intended. It was intended, primarily, to justify, to Americans, the action of the Administration. Johnson maintained, therefore, that his policy was consistent with American feeling over the last twenty years. To show the unity between precedent and his moves in Vietnam, he argued from comparison claiming a parity between the war in Vietnam and the American defense against aggression in Greece, Turkey, Berlin, Korea, Formosa, and Cuba. 149

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149 Johnson, 1966 State of the Union.
Johnson's second main point in defense of United States military action in Vietnam was that it fitted into American broad plans for future foreign policy. Five intents of future policy were discussed: (1) to maintain enough strength to meet all of America's commitments; (2) to control and reduce nuclear weapons; (3) to build associations of nations for economic cooperation; (4) to attack problems of disease, hunger, and poverty in the world; and (5) to support the rights of nations to independence. The President was arguing from the whole to the part, reasoning that what was needed throughout the world was needed in Vietnam. The argument formed, however, not merely a defense but a definition of future policies in Vietnam. Therefore, it asked Congress for a specific commitment of funds to meet commitments in Vietnam; it implied America's continued refusal to use atomic weapons there; it foretold of steps to be taken later in the year toward regional development programs; and it reaffirmed America's intent to stay in Vietnam "until aggression has stopped."\textsuperscript{150}

Desire for Asian peace.—Next, in a section definitely intended for more than American ears, Johnson again proposed negotiations for peace. His transition to this part of the discussion stated his proposition as well: "Our desire to stand firm has been matched by our desire for peace."\textsuperscript{151} He then supported this contention with three

\textsuperscript{150}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 2-3.
\textsuperscript{151}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 3.
types of arguments: examples of past action, an assurance of his present purpose, and a statement of his future intentions.

For his first argument, Johnson reviewed the history of his search for negotiations since the beginning of 1965, giving special attention to his efforts since December when he halted the bombing raids on the North:

For twenty days now we and our Vietnamese allies have dropped no bombs in North Vietnam. Able and experienced spokesmen have visited in behalf of America more than forty countries. We have talked to more than a hundred governments, all 113 that we have relations with and some that we do not.152

We must continue to keep in mind that Johnson’s diplomatic rhetoric was multi-purpose. For he not only sought from the North Vietnamese faith in his willingness to negotiate, he hoped, as well, to convince neutral opinion leaders that the United States desired a peaceful settlement honorable to all Vietnamese. In short, he hoped to demonstrate American ethos by reminding others of American attempts to initiate peace talks. That Johnson had this goal in mind may be seen from the summary statement which followed his review of this second diplomatic campaign to end the war:

In public statements and in private communications to adversaries and to friends in Rome, Warsaw, in Paris and Tokyo, in Africa and throughout this hemisphere, America has made her position abundantly clear.153

The second argument by which Johnson maintained America’s

152 Ibid., p. 3.
153 Ibid., p. 4.
desire for peace consisted of assurance of her present purpose in Vietnam. Attesting that the United States sought "neither territory nor bases, economic domination or military alliance in Vietnam," he affirmed, "We fight for the principle of self-determination, that the people of South Vietnam should be able to choose their own course."\textsuperscript{154}

The final argument by which he supported his position was a statement of America's future intentions. Avowing that there were "no arbitrary limits to our search for peace," Johnson pledged:

We will meet at any conference table. We will discuss any proposals—four points or fourteen or forty—and we will consider the views of any group. We will work for a cease fire now, or once discussions have begun. We will respond if others reduce their use of force, and we will withdraw our soldiers once South Vietnam is securely guaranteed the right to shape its own future.\textsuperscript{155}

It was this paragraph which especially caught the attention of newsmen. Calling it the "most crucial in the President's remarks" because of "the light thrown on his attitude toward the Vietcong's National Liberation Front," the New York Times remarked in an editorial: "Major concessions on these points were not to be expected in a public speech. Nevertheless, the President's comments did hint at the increased flexibility of the American position."\textsuperscript{156}

James Reston viewed it as a move toward those who had argued

\textsuperscript{154}Ibid., p. 4.
\textsuperscript{155}Ibid., p. 4.
\textsuperscript{156}Ibid., January 14, 1966, p. 38.
that Johnson should be willing to talk to the political arm of the Viet Cong.\footnote{157}

Yet, it was not merely in this paragraph but in the entire speech that Johnson showed moderation. In the middle of a delicate diplomatic effort, he was keeping all of his options open. Thus, he put no time limit on the moratorium on bombing in the North, and he did not commit himself prematurely to any certain course should the Communists reject his peace offers. He gave the Communists time for reflection and himself room for maneuver.

The Progress of the Second Campaign

Thirty-seven days after Johnson had begun his second major peace drive the United States resumed its bombing of North Vietnam.\footnote{158} The President's nationally televised statement explaining the resumption of the raids reported failure in the attempts to persuade Hanoi to negotiate:

For thirty-seven days no bombs fell on North Vietnam. During that time we have made a most intense and determined effort to enlist the help and support of all the world in order to persuade the Government in Hanoi that peace is better than war, that talking is better than fighting, and that the road to peace is open. Our effort has met with understanding and support throughout most of the world, but not in Hanoi and Peking. From these two capitals have come only denunciation and rejection.\footnote{159}

\footnote{157}{To Govern Is Not to Choose," \textit{ibid.}, January 14, 1966, p. 38.}
\footnote{158}{\textit{Ibid.}, January 31, 1966, p. 1.}
\footnote{159}{\textit{Ibid.}, February 1, 1966, p. 12.}
Johnson's narration was designed to do more than merely report the phenomena connected with past events. It was persuasive, as well. First, it presented a rationale for negotiations. "Peace," he affirmed, "is better than war, . . . talking is better than fighting." Further, it was an attempt to demonstrate ethos through the contrast of Johnson's desire for negotiation with the Communist rejection. As he continued, it became evident that the President was heightening this contrast by darkening the picture of Communist character:

The answer of Hanoi is the answer that was published three days ago; they persist in aggression, they insist on the surrender of South Vietnam to Communism. It is therefore plain that there is no readiness or willingness to talk. No readiness for peace in that regime today. 160

It seems clear, however, that Johnson believed he had found victory in the Communist repudiation of his negotiation offers. The rejection was a demonstration that his critics had been wrong, and he reminded his audience of it:

We have given a full and decent respect to the opinions of those who thought that such a pause might give new hope for peace in the world. Some had said that ten days might do it. Others said twenty. Now we have paused twice the time suggested by some of those who urged it. And now the world knows more clearly than its ever known before who it is that insists on aggression and who it is that works for peace. 161

Others agreed with Johnson that his peace drive had increased his ethos. A New York Times survey, for example,

160 Ibid.
161 Ibid.
showed that most Europeans were reacting favorably to it.\textsuperscript{162} James Reston commented that Johnson had "made it difficult for the critics of his Vietnam diplomacy to argue that he was more interested in waging war than in waging peace."\textsuperscript{163} Yet, a month later, Reston qualified his appraisal of the campaign by noting that "many United Nations delegates" still had "a misunderstanding of the policies and purposes of the United States in Vietnam." He explained:

They do not quite believe the United States is making all this effort, taking all these casualties, and appropriating all this money in order to defend a principle and then go away. The world is not accustomed to powerful nations fighting 10,000 miles from home for anything but commercial or strategic interests.\textsuperscript{164}

In all fairness to Johnson, however, we should note that no amount of persuasion by anyone could have surmounted the barrier Reston described. The wall lay between Johnson and those United Nations delegates because they had no experiences by which they could understand the messianic fervor of America's postwar consciousness which Stillman and Pfaff have defined as "a sense of assuming the burden of destiny as a chosen people."\textsuperscript{165} There was no way to leap this communication barrier by persuasion; only an actual demonstration of withdrawal would have convinced these

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{162} Ibid., January 6, 1966, p. 2.
\item \textsuperscript{163} Ibid., January 2, 1966, sec. IV, p. 12.
\item \textsuperscript{164} Ibid., February 4, 1966, p. 30.
\end{itemize}
delegates that the United States had no designs on Vietnam.

The Third Campaign

In the summer of 1966, the President began what was to become a series of indirect appeals for peace in Vietnam. Two earlier campaigns to bring the North Vietnamese to the negotiation table had failed. Each of these had been a series of rather direct appeals to North Vietnam itself. In this third effort, Johnson attempted to reach the mind of North Vietnam through the ears of others who were friendly to them or even indirectly involved with them as allies in the war.

The Appeal to Communist China

On July 12, 1966, Johnson delivered the first plea of the new series. The occasion for the speech was the annual meeting of the American Alumni Council, held at White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia. Because of bad flying weather, the President was unable to appear in person. Instead, he spoke to the Council by telephone from the White House theater. His speech was carried nation-wide over radio and television outlets.166

While the address was to present a major diplomatic peace appeal to Red China, the entire speech was multi-purposive and contained varied remarks intended for several

166 The full text of the White Sulphur Springs address is contained in the Department of State Newsletter, August, 1966, pp. 2-4; cited hereafter as Johnson, White Sulphur Springs.
different audiences. The relation between the other purposes of the speech and the approach to China may be seen best by a survey of its panorama.

The address took as its theme peace in Asia. Following a problem-goal-solution scheme of outlining, the President spoke first of the need for peace in Asia, next of the desirability of the peace for which he was pleading, and, finally, of the essentials for such a peace.

To show the need for peace in Asia, Johnson chose a simple enthymeme based upon antecedents and consequences. Supporting his general antecedent proposition that "Asia is now the crucial arena of man's striving for independence and order, and for life itself" he presented three antecedents with which most of his audience would agree immediately:

This is true because three out of every five people in all this world live in Asia tonight. This is true because hundreds of millions of them exist on less than 25 cents a day. This is true because the communists in Asia still believe in force in order to achieve their communist goals.

Having shown from population, poverty, and power that Asia is a "crucial arena" of the world, he pointed to one consequence of this condition to show the need for peace in Asia:

So if enduring peace can ever come to Asia, all mankind will benefit. But if peace fails there, nowhere else will our achievements really be secure.167

Having presented a general problem, i.e., the need

167Ibid., p. 2.
to find an enduring peace in Asia, Johnson molded from it a more specific goal by defining the type of peace which Asians should seek. His argument by definition was not strict, but oratorical, for Johnson sought action and not merely understanding. In his definition of an enduring peace, he used both circumstances and contrast to show the type of peace he did not mean and then the kind he did have in mind. First, he listed circumstances which would not mean an enduring peace:

By peace in Asia I do not mean simply the absence of armed hostilities. For whenever men hunger and hate there can really be no peace.

I do not mean the peace of conquest. For humiliation can be the seed of war.

I do not mean simply the peace of the conference table. For peace is not really written merely in the words of treaties, but peace in the day-to-day work of builders.

Then, in contrast, he listed circumstances which would occasion a desirable peace:

The peace we seek in Asia is a peace of conciliation between Communist states and their non-Communist neighbors; between rich nations and poor; between small nations and large; between men whose skins are brown and black, and yellow and white; between Hindus and Moslems, and Buddhists and Christians.

It is a peace that can only be sustained through the durable bonds of peace; through international trade; through the free flow of people and ideas; through full participation of an international community under law, and through a common dedication to the great task of human progress and human development.168

The parallel phrasing and word repetition employed by Johnson in these paragraphs contributed greatly to making

168 Ibid., p. 2.
each point in his definition stand out. More important than the style, however, for our purposes, are the ideas to which the style was giving emphasis. His definition was a harbinger of what was to come later in the speech. His remarks hinted that this was to be an address designed not just to defend the presence of the United States in Vietnam, but to propose settlement leading to accord and tolerance as a beginning to understanding.

Yet, true to the pattern we have seen in his earlier speeches on Vietnam, Johnson prefaced the statement of his readiness for peace with a defense of his resistance to aggression. In one paragraph near the end of this address he gave his justification for his dichotomous presentation of American intentions.

We have learned in our relations with other such states that the weakness of neighbors is a temptation, and only firmness, backed by power, can really deter power that is backed by ambition. But we have also learned that the greatest force for opening closed minds and closed societies is the free flow of ideas and people and goods.169

To Johnson, the two lessons were complementary. While recommending the gradual, peaceful impact of each society upon the other, he believed, as well, that there can be no exchange of ideas until an ambitious belligerent learns that it cannot profit from an exchange of gunfire.

This philosophy controlled the outline of Johnson's White Sulphur Springs address. In listing what he termed

169 Ibid., p. 2.
"essentials" for peace in Asia, before suggesting reconcili-
atation with Red China, he upheld American activity in Vietnam.
His first three "essentials" were both an assurance and a
defense of resistance; the fourth was an offer of reconcili-
atation.

Johnson's discussion of the need for peace in Asia,
and his formulation of a goal in a definition of the type of
peace to be sought, led naturally to the solution phase of
his means for reaching that goal. The means consisted of
Johnson's four essentials.

The first essential.—The first was the determina-
tion of the United States to meet our obligations in Asia as
a Pacific power. For a forceful presentation, Johnson pre-
sented his positive proof in the form of an answer to a sup-
posed objection:

You have heard arguments the other way. They are
built on the old belief that "East is East and West
is West and never the twain shall meet."

The attack upon an old maxim or oft-repeated proverb was a
device for arousing interest. As he continued to ready the
ground for a positive argument in the framework of a reputa-
tion, he rapidly listed in capsule form five claims al-
legedly being made by his political opponents and critics
who were seeking less United States involvement in Asia.

They claim:
— that we have no business but business interests in
Asia;
— that Europe, not the Far East, is really our proper
sphere of interest;
— that our commitments in Asia are not worth the re-
sources they require;
--that the ocean is vast, the cultures alien, the language strange, and the races different; --that these really are not our kind of people. 170

By omitting a lengthy discussion of each individual objection to his Asian policy, and by refuting all, instead, as a group, Johnson succeeded in keeping the attention of the audience upon his arguments while dismissing in one sweep those of his critics. "But all of these arguments have been thoroughly tested," he replied. "All of them, I think, have been thoroughly tested and have been found wanting." 171

Johnson then charged the remonstrations against involvement in Asia with failing four tests. The support for each of the four censures was actually a positive argument in favor of his occupation with Asian problems. He assisted his audience in distinguishing each of his points by repeating the same words in the topic sentence of each of the four paragraphs:

They do not stand the test of geography: Because we are bounded not by one, but by two oceans. Whether by aircraft or ship, by satellite or missile, the Pacific is as crossable as the Atlantic.

They do not stand the test of common sense. The economic network of this shrinking globe is too intertwined—the basic hopes of men are too interrelated—the possibility of common disaster is too real for us to ever ignore threats to peace in Asia.

They do not stand the test of human concern, either. The people of Asia do matter. We share with them many things in common. We are all persons. We are all human beings.

They do not stand the test of reality, either.

170 Ibid., p. 2.

171 Ibid., p. 2.
Asia is no longer sitting outside the door of the 20th Century. She is here, in the same world with all of us, to be either our partner or our problem. 172

Each of Johnson's four tests was basically an appeal to logic, arguing from circumstances. Yet, each also asked indirectly for a desired emotion. With the exception of the third, which was an appeal for sympathy toward Asians in need, the others were threat appeals seeking to channel the energy from feelings of fear into support for his proposition. Picturing the world circumstances by a missile crossing the Pacific, by a "shrinking globe," by intertwined networks, and by Asians no longer outside this century's door, Johnson was giving the grounds for the emotion through graphically pictured detail and was then letting the anticipated evil produce its effect of fear.

The second essential.—Turning from present circumstances to historical facts or precedents, Johnson argued by comparison to show the need of his second essential for peace in Asia:

Americans entered this century believing that our own security had no foundation outside our own continent. Twice we mistook our sheltered position for safety. Twice we were dead wrong. If we are wise now, we will not repeat our mistakes of the past... The second essential for peace in Asia is this: to prove to aggressive nations that the use of force to conquer others is a losing game. 173

Fundamentally, the argument was an appeal to reason.

Through use of the equally-so comparison, he was affirming

172 Ibid., p. 3.
173 Ibid., p. 3.
that what was likely on one case would be likely in future similar cases. Yet, for two reasons, his presentation of his point contained a strong emotional appeal to many in his American audience. First, the argument from history itself, usually carries an emotional charge for the people who experienced the events to which the speaker refers. Jesuit rhetorician Francis P. Donnelly has explained why this is true:

The emotional force of comparisons, especially of historic examples, is very great, because comparison furnishes a measurement of good or evil and because the audience has already in many instances for one term of the comparison the desired feeling which may be readily directed to the other term.174

In the second place, Johnson's presentation of the argument possessed emotional force because it contained the necessary condition of all force, popular aptness, the quality of being promptly understood and felt by the people. The President was addressing, in this nationally televised speech, not just the learned, but the many of all ages and sexes whose education was the average of their time and place. Therefore, he used language which would reach the minds and hearts of these people, language which was concrete, contemporary, local, and personal. "Twice we were dead wrong," approached slang; it also, however, reached people. Again, few people missed the point when Johnson spoke of a "losing game." Unlike Franklin Roosevelt who

seemed to be able to instantly distill or condense into some
catching phrase the mood of the common man, Johnson relied
upon expressions which were less fresh. They were not so
trite, however, that their emotional energy had been de-
hydrated.

To build another argument in support of his second
esential, Johnson reasoned again from circumstances. De-
scribing the world as one "where the rewards of conquest
tempt ambitious appetites," he concluded:

As long as the leaders of North Vietnam really
believe that they can take over the people of South
Vietnam by force, we must not let them succeed. We
must stand across their path and say: "You will not
prevail; but turn from the use of force and peace
will follow."

Johnson's enthymeme was fallacious, for it began by
begging the question. He assumed the antecedent, the cir-
cumstances he described, to be undeniable. Yet, the enthym-
eme was subtle, for once the antecedent was accepted with
an American audience believing in defense against agression,
the consequent would follow naturally. Further, the con-
trast between those with "ambitious appetites" and Americans
who would "stand across their path" gave emotional force to
the argument.

As we have indicated, Johnson designed this part of
his address for his American audience. He felt, as he ex-
plained in his next remarks, that "every American must know
exactly what it is that we are trying to do in Vietnam."

175Johnson, White Sulphur Springs, p. 3.
There was, however, a second target audience in Johnson's mind. His remarks were intended not merely as a justification for his determination to Americans, but as an assurance to the North Vietnamese of his resolute resistance:

However long it takes, I want the Communists in Hanoi to know where we stand. First, victory for your armies is impossible. You cannot drive us from South Vietnam. Do not mistake our firm stand for false optimism. As long as you persist in aggression, we are going to resist.176

Johnson had begun the White Sulphur Springs address with the assurance that "the peace we seek in Asia is a peace of conciliation between Communist states and their non-Communist neighbors." Then, lest his desire for conciliation be interpreted as vacillation, he had assured friend and foe that he considered an unwavering defense of South Vietnam to be essential to the realization of peace in Asia. Yet, the keynote of Johnson's earlier campaigns to win belief had been a balance between refusal to retreat with readiness for peace. The third campaign was to provide no exception. For having made known the clenched fist of firmness, Johnson again balanced it with the outstretched hand of reconciliation:

The minute you realize that a military victory is out of the question and turn from the use of force you will find us willing and ready to reciprocate. We want to end the fighting. We want to bring our men back home. We want an honorable peace in Vietnam. In your hands is the key to that peace. You have only to turn it.177

176 Ibid., p. 3.
177 Ibid., p. 3.
The language in the above paragraph was intended for ears other than the North Vietnamese leaders. Johnson was concerned not just with persuading North Vietnam to negotiate, he was interested in improving the American image among neutrals. To achieve this purpose, he chose contrast heightened by climax. America wanted not only to end the fighting, but to bring its men home; it wanted not only to bring its men home, but to negotiate an honorable peace. Having built to that climax, Johnson asked, in effect, what North Vietnam wanted. It was a device by which he hoped to place above their heads any cloud of world distrust which would come from further fighting.

The third essential.—The third condition which Johnson felt essential to peace in Asia was "the building of political and economic strength among the nations of free Asia." His discussion of the point was designed to demonstrate the probability of such a build-up. His seat of his first argument was comparison, as he affirmed a parity between successes of recent history and the state of free Asia in the future:

Many of you can recall our faith in the future of Europe at the end of World War II when we began the Marshall Plan. We backed that faith with all the aid and compassion we could muster. Our faith in Asia at this time is just as great. And that faith is backed by judgment and reason. For if we stand firm in Vietnam against military conquest, we truly believe the emergency order of hope and progress in Asia will continue to grow and to grow.  

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178 Ibid., p. 3.
179 Ibid., p. 3.
The final sentence, expressing qualification, provides a link between Johnson's discussion of this third "essential" and his prior remarks. He had argued, earlier, the need for America to "stand firm in Vietnam against military conquest." He was, therefore, continuing to support this firmness by maintaining that the consequences of such action would be economic and political strength in free Asia.

The second argument for the probability of a future economic and political maturity in Asia was inductive. In a series of compact examples, Johnson alluded to the following symptoms of progress: better relations between Japan and Korea and between India and Pakistan; Indonesia's break with Communism; Japan's economic progress; the formulation of the nine-nation Asian and Pacific Council; the participation of thirty-one nations in the new Asian Development Bank; and the development of the Lower Mekong River Basin. "Throughout free Asia," asserted Johnson, "you can hear the echo of progress." Once again, Johnson was defending his military policy in Vietnam by urging that the economic and political progress in Asia was the consequence of his firmness. This can be discerned in his next remarks: "This is the new spirit taking shape behind our defense of South Vietnam. Because we have been firm ... others have taken new heart."180

The fourth essential.—Up to this point, the White Sulphur Springs address had presented nothing which Johnson

180 Ibid., p. 3.
had not said in earlier statements on Vietnam. He had expressed his desire for peace, his intention to protect South Vietnam, and his willingness to negotiate with North Vietnam. The innovation in the speech came with the discussion of Johnson's fourth essential for peace in Asia. This one, he said, might seem "the most difficult of all." It was "reconciliation with nations that now call themselves enemies."

The President left no doubt that the foe he had in mind was Communist China:

A peaceful mainland China is central to a peaceful Asia. A hostile China must be discouraged from aggression. A misguided China must be encouraged toward understanding of the outside world and toward policies of peaceful cooperation.

For lasting peace can never come to Asia as long as the 700 million people of mainland China are isolated by their rulers from the outside world.\textsuperscript{181}

Saville Davis of the \emph{Christian Science Monitor} has noted that this was "the first expression, looking beyond Hanoi and directly at the eye of Peking, of what Mr. Johnson considers a firm but flexible policy toward that great problem country at the heart of Asia."\textsuperscript{182} In his Johns Hopkins address, fifteen months before, Johnson had alluded to Red China in a way that showed he believed it to be a part of the foe in Vietnam, but he had done so without a hint of flexibility. In support of increased American military activity, he had said:

\begin{quote}
We do this to convince the leaders of North
\end{quote}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[181]\textit{Ibid.}, p. 4.
\end{footnotes}
Vietnam, and all who seek to share their conquest, of a very simple fact: We will not be defeated. We will not grow tired. We will not withdraw, either openly or under the cloak of a meaningless agreement.183

The address at White Sulphur Springs definitely enlarged the boundaries of national policy. With Presidential approval, the United States appeared to be moving toward a new and more flexible China policy with reconciliation as an acknowledged aim. The nearest parallel to this in recent American foreign policy was the American University speech of President Kennedy on June 10, 1963. At that time, Kennedy called on Americans to "re-examine our attitude toward the Soviet Union" and to the cold war. He asked that they take the new look "not to see only a distorted and desperate view of the other side, not to see conflict as inevitable, accommodation as impossible, and communication as nothing more than an exchange of threats."184

There were, however, some obvious differences between the timing of Kennedy's American University address and Johnson's expression of flexibility at White Sulphur Springs. When Kennedy looked beyond the cold war and called for a new policy toward the Soviets, both the Berlin crisis of 1961–62 and the Cuban confrontation of 1962 were already past. A thaw in the cold war had already begun in Europe, and Kennedy was able to announce an agreement with Khrushchev

183 Johnson, Johns Hopkins.
for immediate high level talks on a nuclear test ban treaty. By contrast, when Johnson offered his hand to Communist China no improvement in relations was in sight. The confrontation with Communism in Asia was still intense.

Some have speculated, however, that Johnson was intending his remarks to a group other than China's present "hard-line" leaders. John Hughes, for example, wrote from Hong Kong in the *Christian Science Monitor*:

> Beyond Mao Tse-tung and his aging revolutionaries is another class of Chinese Communists. For the moment these men are bearing the brunt of a sweeping purge designed to stifle political dissent and to reassert the dominance of the hard Maoist line.

> Yet if one reads between the lines of recent developments in China, one deduces they represent a group which is prepared to nudge China toward more pragmatic policies both at home and abroad. Whether these men will ever be in a position to achieve these aims is unknown. At the moment, they are on the receiving end of a bitter purge.

> But with little prospect of compromise or conciliation from Chairman Mao, many observers believe President Johnson may have been directing his remarks beyond China's present leadership to those potential leaders who may one day be influential.

If Johnson, indeed, was attempting to reason with a yet unseated generation of Chinese leaders, it was not because he was assuming unrealistically that these faceless men upon assuming power would jetison Communism. It was because he believed they might abandon militancy and work out some gradual cautious accommodation with China's present foes.

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Lamenting that Red China had continued to reject various American initiatives, such as an offer to exchange newsmen and to lend experts in public health and medicine, Johnson explained why the United States would continue to offer them:

We persist because we believe that even the most rigid societies will one day awaken to the rich possibilities of a diverse world.
And we continue because we believe that cooperation, not hostility, is really the way of the future in the 20th Century.
That day is not yet here. It may be long in coming, but I tell you it is clearly on its way, because come it must.187

Although his address ended in language which sounded predictive, it was obviously prescriptive. Having offered words which did not disguise America's determination to remain as long as necessary in Vietnam, and having offered hope for some ultimate rapprochement between the United States and Peking, Johnson hoped, in the White Sulphur Springs address, to convince many in mainland China of the wisdom of following a peaceful course in Asia.

The Appeal through the United Nations

The second major indirect approach of Johnson's third campaign was made through the forum of the United Nations. In June, 1965, during his first series of diplomatic rhetoric on Vietnam, Johnson had addressed the United Nations in San Francisco calling upon all nations to use all

187 Johnson, White Sulphur Springs, p. 4.
their influence, individually and collectively, to bring to
the table those who seem determined to make war.188 On
January 31 of the following year, Arthur Goldberg, the chief
American delegate to the United Nations, had submitted a re-
quest that the Vietnam question be debated in the Security
Council.189

It soon became clear that if and when the Vietnam
question was to be debated in the United Nations, Goldberg
would be Johnson's apostle, speaking in his stead. On
February 11, 1966, the Ambassador released a statement that
the President had asked him "to reiterate his conviction
that negotiations either without conditions or on the basis
of the Geneva Accords of 1954 and 1962, could serve to work
out a mutually acceptable political solution, restore peace
and tranquility. . . ."190 In his news conference on
September 22, the day Goldberg made his first speech in the
General Assembly debate, Johnson left no doubt that Goldberg
was his spokesman, remarking: "I approve of what the Ambas-
sador says. I think it is good for him to say it. We are
very anxious, as you will know, to do anything and every-
thing we can through every forum we can, to try to promote
peace in the world."191 Goldberg's speech on September 22,

189 U.S. Department of State, Department of State
Bulletin, LIV (February 14, 1966), 229.
190 Ibid., February 28, 1966, 309.
1966, contained major peace proposals. Writing in the Christian Science Monitor later in the fall, Earl W. Foell speculated as to why Johnson had chosen to announce a new high-ranking offer through Goldberg. He wrote that many diplomats at the United Nations believed Johnson was exposing Goldberg "as his chief dove" in the hope that "at some point when talks become a serious possibility the United Nations envoy will be convincing to the other side."\(^{192}\)

On September 20, 1966, the United Nations opened its twenty-first General Assembly. Few heartfelt supporters of the American war policy in Vietnam could be found. Secretary General U Thant had announced his resignation September 1, saying that the war had blighted the prospects for the harmonious development of world affairs and making the assessment that the relations between the United States and the Soviet Union had reached a new low. Viewing these factors, Donald Grant of the St. Louis Post-Dispatch wrote: "There have been troubled times in the history of the United Nations, but none has been more somber than the opening of the twenty-first General Assembly."\(^{193}\)

Entrusted with the task of explaining United States foreign policy within this diplomatic context, United States


Ambassador Arthur J. Goldberg addressed the Assembly on September 22.\textsuperscript{194}

The organization of Goldberg's speech was classical. He moved carefully through exordium, narration, proposition, argument, and refutation. His style was judicial. The address contained none of the highly emotive metaphors which had characterized Johnson's earlier speeches on Vietnam, and it employed little of the alliteration and word repetition which was common to the President. Nevertheless, Goldberg preached Johnson's message.

The exordium.—Goldberg's opening remarks were designed to awaken voluntary interest or deliberate attention by depicting his subject as important. There was really little need to argue this point. The audience was agreed the subject was vital. We have already noted that the delegates were in "deep gloom" over the effects of the war. Reasoning, however, from the general to the specific, Goldberg showed his subject to be one of consequence. He began by pointing to all the questions of great moment faced by the Assembly and to the need to act on them, not just to talk about them:

The peoples of the world, Mr. President, expect the United Nations to resolve these problems. With all their troubles and aspirations they put great faith in this organization. They look to us not for pious words but for solid results—agreements reached, wars ended or prevented, treaties written, cooperative

programs launched—results that will bring humanity a few steps, but giant steps, closer to the purposes of the Charter which are our common commitment.\footnote{195}{Ibid.}

From the essentiality of United Nations debate in general, Goldberg then affirmed the significance of the specific Vietnam problem. He concluded that rather than trying to attempt a review of many important questions he could "make a more useful contribution" by concentrating on the dangers to peace in Asia, since its repercussions are worldwide:

It diverts much of the energies of many nations, my own included, from urgent and constructive endeavors. It is, as the Secretary General said in his statement on September 1, a source of grave concern and is bound to be a source of even greater anxiety, not only to the parties directly involved and to the major powers but also to other members of the organization.\footnote{196}{Ibid.}

The narration.—Before stating his proposition, Goldberg recounted events in Vietnam. It was not, however, strict narration having only a subject. His review contained both a subject and a predicate, that is, events were not simply related; they were selected and explained in such a way as to effect the speaker's purpose. Noting the division of Vietnam into two political realities separated by the demarcation line agreed upon in Geneva in 1954, Goldberg charged North Vietnam with violating provisions in the agreement against military interference and infiltration by one
side in the affairs of the other:

Yet, despite these provisions, South Vietnam is under an attack already several years old, by forces directed and supplied from the North, and reinforced by regular units—currently some 17 identified regiments—of the North Vietnamese Army. The manifest purpose of this attack is to force upon the people of South Vietnam a system which they have not chosen by any peaceful process. 197

Going further, Goldberg maintained that by such action the North Vietnamese had violated, also, the United Nations charter and a General Assembly resolution against the use of force and subversion as a means of reunifying a divided country.

The first proposition.—Goldberg's narration had presented North Vietnam as an aggressor against South Vietnam. Using these data as a cause calling for an effect, he then offered the following proposition:

Mr. President, it is because of the attempt to upset by violence the situation in Vietnam, and its far-reaching implications elsewhere, that the United States and other countries have responded to appeals from South Vietnam for military assistance. 198

There was an implied warrant forming the bridge over which Goldberg moved from North Vietnam's use of violence to the reaction of America and her smaller allies. He was maintaining, in effect, that whenever one government is attacked by another in violation of international agreements, third-party countries should respond to the appeal of the nation under attack. Among those who might have agreed with

197 Ibid.
198 Ibid.
Goldberg's data concerning North Vietnam, there were, no doubt, some who disagreed with his conclusion because they could not accept the warrant upon which the cause-effect reasoning was based.

The **supporting arguments.**—In defense of his proposition that the United States had intervened in Vietnam only to answer the request of a nation under attack, Goldberg offered two arguments based upon definition. The first explained that American aims were "strictly limited": "We are not engaged in a holy war against Communism," he said, in obvious reply to some of Thant's recent statements which had implied the United States was so committed. He denied, further, any American intention to seek an empire in Southeast Asia, to establish permanent bases there, to force South Vietnam to align with the West, to overthrow the Hanoï government, or "to do any injury to mainland China."\(^{199}\)

Having said, then, what American aims were not, he reaffirmed what they were: The United States sought, said Goldberg, "a political solution, not a military solution to this conflict." It rejected the idea that North Vietnam had the right to impose a military solution. And it was convinced the reunification of Vietnam should be decided "through a free choice by the peoples of both North and South without outside interference."\(^{200}\)

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\(^{199}\)**Ibid.**

\(^{200}\)**Ibid.**
The second proposition.--In the Johnson speeches which we have investigated, we found the President seeking agreement from other nations for two propositions: (1) that the American military action in Vietnam was wise; and (2) that the United States was willing to negotiate without preconditions. In the United Nations address which we have been examining, Goldberg sought to sustain the same two propositions. Already, we have seen in his arguments from definition an attempt to defend Johnson's first proposition concerning the wisdom of an American presence in Vietnam. In like manner, Goldberg's second proposition was parallel to that of Johnson's own speeches. It upheld the willingness of his nation to negotiate.

Goldberg's transition to the second proposition tied it to Hanoi's differences with the American aims he had defined: "We are well aware of the stated position of Hanoi on these issues," he said. "But no differences can be resolved without contact, discussions or negotiations. For our part, we have long been and remain today ready to negotiate without any prior conditions."201 His proposition, therefore, was that there was really nothing which should prevent the commencement of discussions.

The arguments.--As Johnson had done in the White Sulphur Springs address, Goldberg presented his proof under the form of an answer to various objections. His refutation

201 Ibid.
consisted of the presentation and denial of three situations which had been called obstacles to negotiation.

The first supposed obstacle considered was the United States bombing of North Vietnam. To deny that the air raids were holding back discussions, Goldberg employed comparison. He asked his audience to predict how North Vietnam would respond to a pause in air attacks by noting what had been their reaction during earlier moratoriums on raids on the North:

Let it be recalled that there was no bombing of North Vietnam for five years during which there was steadily increasing infiltration from North Vietnam; during which there were no United States combat forces in Vietnam; and during which strenuous efforts were being made to achieve a peaceful settlement. And let it further be recalled that twice before we have suspended our bombing, once for 37 days, without any reciprocal act of de-escalation from the other side, and without any sign from them of a willingness to negotiate.\(^{202}\)

Then, in a bid for ethos, an effort to place upon North Vietnam the blame for any failure to commence future negotiation, Goldberg announced the United States was "willing once again to take the first step." "We are prepared," he assured, "to order a cessation of all bombing of North Vietnam, the moment we are assured, privately or otherwise, that this step will be answered promptly by a corresponding and appropriate de-escalation on the other side." He then rhetorically urged the North Vietnamese government to answer a question raised by his proposal: Would Hanoi "in response

\(^{202}\)Ibid."
to a prior cessation" of American bombing "take correspond-
ing and timely steps" to reduce or end its military activi-
ties against South Vietnam.\footnote{Ibid.}

The second alleged obstacle discussed by Goldberg
was "North Vietnam's conviction or fear that the United
States intends to establish a permanent military presence in
Vietnam." Denying there was any basis for such a fear, he
posed a second question: Would North Vietnam be willing to
agree to a schedule for a "supervised, phased withdrawal
from South Vietnam of all external forces," its own as well
as those of the United States and its allies?\footnote{Ibid.

Goldberg's offer to enter into reciprocal arrange-
ments to end the bombing and withdraw forces did not go as
far as a proposal made by French President Charles de Gaulle
in a speech on September 1. He had called for a unilateral
renunciation of America's "distant expedition" which he
characterized as "unprofitable and unjustifiable."\footnote{Ibid.

Goldberg's proposals were a way of saying the United States be-
lieved de Gaulle had gone too far in urging that American
forces withdraw from South Vietnam without some assurance
that North Vietnam's military activity there would end.

Dealing with a third supposed obstacle to negotia-
tions—the role of the Viet Cong in peace talks—Goldberg

\footnote{Ibid., September 2, 1966, p. 1.}
quoted Johnson as saying that this would not be "an insurmountable problem." He invited Hanoi to consider whether this obstacle "may not be more imaginary than real."

Goldberg's proposals were a direct response to a three-point program for beginning negotiations which the United Nations Secretary General, U Thant, had offered. Thant's program, which Senator Fulbright, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, had already endorsed, called for an end to the bombing of North Vietnam by the United States, de-escalation of the war in South Vietnam, and peace talks to include the National Liberation Front, the political arm of the Viet Cong.

The American position as set forth by Goldberg differed from Thant's three steps in one important respect. They asked for assurances of a reduction in military activity by North Vietnam before the United States would end its bombing. While Goldberg had repeated Johnson's statement that the role of the Viet Cong in any peace negotiations would not be "an insurmountable problem," he had gone further. He had assured the delegates the United States did not "seek to exclude any segment of the South Vietnamese people from peaceful participation in their country's future.


207 St. Louis Post Dispatch, September 17, 1966, p. 2.

Ambassador Goldberg obliquely criticized the position of the Secretary General and some neutralists. The successful approach to peace, he explained, would "not be one which simply decries what is happening in Vietnam and appeals to one side while encouraging the other." 209

The United States reaction.—Following the address, the Gallup Poll reported a majority of Americans favored the President's peace proposal offered through Goldberg. Nearly three persons in every four approved in general the basic concepts of the plan or accepted it with minor reservations. Only one person in six in the survey expressed disapproval. The American Institute of Public Opinion qualified the report of the results, however, by reminding readers that the public, "in almost every survey of public survey opinion, has supported any plan which would let the United States withdraw its troops from South Vietnam in an honorable way and without abandoning the South Vietnamese." 210

Even liberals previously critical of Johnson's policies appeared to be pleased with Goldberg's speech. James Reston reported:

One thing is different here at the opening of this year's General Assembly. President Johnson has satisfied most of his prominent critics in Congress that he is genuinely trying to reach an accommodation. Senator Fulbright and Mansfield have warmly supported Ambassador Goldberg.

209 Ibid.
There are still some here and in the universities who think the President has not gone far enough, and others who feel he has gone too far, but on the basis of his last proposals he now has behind him a much more united country.\footnote{St. Louis Post Dispatch, September 27, 1966, p. 16.}

Calling the address "the best and most conciliatory presentation of the American position yet made," a New York Times editorial explained it would strengthen the image of the Administration:

\footnote{New York Times, September 23, 1966, p. 34.}

It is true that, in substance, the United States has at one time or another made just about every offer that Ambassador Goldberg made yesterday. However, his speech was a solemn, formal commitment before the most important of world organizations. The always vexing problem of "credibility" will be more difficult to impugn now. So will the charge that the American position is inflexible; almost every offer is accompanied by a willingness to consider alternate approaches.

\textbf{The neutralist reaction.---}The United Nations General Assembly is an echo chamber of seventy foreign ministers from all over the world. While waiting to see what sound would come from that majority of nations generally considered neutral in the Vietnam conflict, Reston speculated on the effect which a neutralist rejection of Goldberg's offer, in favor of U Thant's three points, would have upon Johnson:

It will be a great and dangerous misfortune if, in this situation, the brunt of the pressure at the UN is now directed at President Johnson to accept, not a withdrawal of all forces, but a unilateral withdrawal of American forces, leaving the North Viet Namese and the Viet Cong in control of the battlefield. In the first place, such pressure has no chance
of success. President Johnson will not do it, and would not be supported by the nation if he tried. The only result of any attempt to condemn the U.S. in the General Assembly would be to encourage Hanoi to continue the war, and to strengthen those in the U.S. who have said all along that concessions were useless and only the application of much more air and ground force against the North would succeed. 213

The rejection which Reston feared was not long in coming. With polite, disdainful logic, French foreign minister Couve de Murville called upon Washington to make "the new move" needed to get negotiations started. He made a telling thrust when he skillfully quoted Goldberg's own words of the week before. Goldberg, clearly referring to the Soviet Union, had said that the greater a country's power, the greater its responsibility. Couve de Murville turned to the author of the phrase and asked who has greater power and influence, and therefore greater responsibility in this situation, than the United States itself? 214

The question must have struck home, for Goldberg did what the American delegation seldom does when the French speak in the General Assembly; he rejoined. Asking Americans to stop fighting without making a similar appeal to North Vietnam, he said, had no chance of success. 215 In the past, the Administration had been restrained in its comments on speeches by President de Gaulle and his ministers, even when their contents were hostile to and critical of American

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213 St. Louis Post Dispatch, September 27, 1966, p. 16.
215 Ibid.
policy in Southeast Asia and Europe. Recognizing, however, that the French appeal for new American initiatives to bring about negotiations reflected the sentiments of most delegates, Goldberg replied again on October 18. In regard to suggestions that the cessation of bombing by the United States would issue a challenge to North Vietnam: "We have considered this advice," he said, "and having considered it we would like to know from Hanoi privately or publicly what would happen if we followed it." 216 Of Communist demands for a withdrawal of United States troops in Vietnam, he remarked:

"Similarly," he continued, "we have offered to take the first step toward de-escalation . . . the moment there is assurance that there would be a response from North Vietnam." 217

Assuring that the peace proposals the United States had made before the assembly were genuine and that they remained open, Goldberg made a final appeal:

To those who doubt their sincerity, I would make the most direct reply I could think of: There is only one way to test the sincerity of a man or a country . . . challenge him to make good through deeds what he offers in words. We are prepared to accept—and make good on—


\[217\] Ibid.
that challenge.  

What the Administration wanted to do in the United Nations debate was to explain and defend the American position and to make clear to the mass of allied and nonaligned delegations that the United States wished to negotiate. It was a difficult task. Many delegates from the newer nations of Africa and Asia appeared ignorant of the origins and objectives of the war. Recently freed from colonial rule, they tended to see any Western involvement in an African or Asian country as neocolonialism or imperialism.

Goldberg's first speech, however, and his brief but telling replies, seemed to restore some balance. United Nations correspondent Drew Middleton reported in the New York Times:

After three weeks of public debate and private discussion, there is a slightly better understanding in the General Assembly of the United States position in Vietnam. Quite a few delegations are not ready to concede that the Administration really is trying to end the war, if the other side will play ball. This may not sound like much of an achievement outside these halls. But given the hostility to the war and to the United States role in South-East Asia as it existed on September 20, when the Assembly session opened, it represents a considerable advance, in the view of objective diplomatic sources.

The Communist reaction.—On September 28, the St. Louis Post Dispatch commented on the Administration's peace offer in the United Nations: "Almost no first-ranking diplomat believes it will result in a negotiated settlement of

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218 Ibid.

the war in Vietnam. ... No one, of course, expects Hanoi to accept this, and Hanoi has not."220 On the Communist reaction to the Goldberg proposals the New York Times reported:

Many delegates here are convinced that the ultimate Communist answer to this program is unlikely to be disclosed until after the United States elections. East European, Asian and African diplomats believe that the leaders in Hanoi and Peking, true to Marxist doctrine, anticipate a popular ground-swell at the polls against President Johnson's policy in Vietnam.221

Others felt, however, that Johnson's peace drive would have to go far beyond November 8. Joseph Kraft, for example, maintained the North Vietnamese mistrusted the President's professions of peaceful intent in North Vietnam, seeing them only as an attempt to mix his diplomatic moves with domestic policies. He wrote:

With conciliatory actions so visibly connected with short-term exigencies of domestic politics and so much offset by other actions also enjoined by domestic political considerations, it is not surprising that the other side remains suspicious. It is plain that to break down suspicion, the President will visibly have to disengage his diplomacy from the calculus of domestic political advantage.

Specifically, he will have to carry the current peace initiative well past the congressional elections.222

James Reston also contended that the Communists did not believe the latest peace offer to be sincere, but suggested a different reason for its lack of plausibility:

The basic problem is that Hanoi, Moscow and

Peking do not believe the U.S. when it says it does not want to keep its military power and military bases in Viet Nam. It is still apparently inconceivable to them that the U.S. would fight a war at a cost of two billion dollars a month and then go away when the fighting stops and leave the people of that country free to determine their own political future.223

The Johnson Administration certainly made it easier for its opponents to give credence to its proposals. The New York Times remarked editorially that the credibility of Goldberg's words were "undermined—unwittingly or not—by other American officials and military men." The day before and the day after Goldberg spoke, B-52 strategic bombers came over from Guam, for the first time in five months, and bombed North Vietnam. The day of the United Nations speech, Secretary McNamara announced a 30 per cent increase in the production of war planes for next year. The day after the address, McNamara told a NATO committee in Rome that the United States had doubled the nuclear warheads at NATO's disposal since 1961. Six days later, Johnson announced plans to attend a summit meeting of the United States and her six Asian and Pacific allies in the Vietnam war, a meeting which the New York Times said will "almost inevitably take on, in the eyes of the world, the coloration of a war council."

223 St. Louis Post Dispatch, September 22, 1966, p. 3-E.

The Appeal to the Soviet Union

On September 23, 1966, the day after Goldberg's first address, the Soviet Union replied by demanding the immediate withdrawal of all United States forces as the only way to peace. Rejecting Goldberg's three-point peace offer, Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko said "there are still no signs testifying to the seriousness of the intention of Washington to seek a settlement." He dismissed the United States proposals as part of a "so-called peace offensive" and said each new peace move was followed by "a further escalation of aggressive actions." 225

The Soviet rejection of the Goldberg proposals was a clear indication of what the North Vietnamese response would be, for by that time, Hanoi had moved into the sphere of Soviet influence. On September 10, Peter Grose, Moscow correspondent for the New York Times, had reported that "in the view of senior Western diplomats" there, the Russians were "in a stronger position now than ever before for pressing their counsel on the Hanoi leadership." It was believed, he explained, that China's erratic internal politics had disillusioned Hanoi and consequently increased their dependence upon Moscow. 226

Therefore, on October 7, hoping to make it easier for the Soviets to play the role of conciliator, Johnson made a major policy address before the National Conference

226 Ibid., September 11, 1966, p. 2-A.
of Editorial writers in New York, advocating the improvement of relations with Eastern Europe.\textsuperscript{227} The heart of his remarks was arranged in a problem-solution order.

\textbf{The problem}.—The problem-solving process, write Harnack and Fest, must be "triggered by some discrepancy between desire and capacity."\textsuperscript{228} Johnson, therefore, began by describing the state of affairs in which such a perceived disequilibrium was existing:

Europe has been at peace since 1945 but it is a restless peace that's shattered by the threat of violence. Europe is partitioned. An unnatural line runs through the heart of a very great and very proud nation. History warns us that until this harsh division has been resolved, peace in Europe will never be secure.\textsuperscript{229}

He then set forth his goal, the condition which he perceived would remove the effects of the undesirable situation he had just presented. "We must turn to one of the great unfinished tasks of our generation," he urged, "and that unfinished task is making Europe whole again." He avowed that he hoped for a restored Europe where alliances could "provide a framework in which West and East can act together."\textsuperscript{230}

\textbf{The solution}.—Declaring that his goal of European reunification could only be accomplished "through a growing

\textsuperscript{227}For the full text of the address, see \textit{New York Times}, October 8, 1966, p. 12; cited hereafter as \textit{Johnson, Eastern Europe}.

\textsuperscript{228}\textit{Group Discussion: Theory and Technique}, p. 61.

\textsuperscript{229}\textit{Johnson, Eastern Europe}.

\textsuperscript{230}\textit{Tbid}.
reconciliation," and that there were "no shortcuts," Johnson proposed three complementary tasks as the action to be taken to reach the goal:

So we must move ahead on three fronts. First, to modernize NATO and strengthen other Atlantic alliances; second, to further the integration of the Western European community; third, to quicken progress in East-West relations.231

The first of these dealt with unity within the alliance. Discussing the modernization of NATO, he advanced three innovations: that it become "a forum for increasingly close consultations" covering "the full range of joint concerns"; that it cooperate on attacking the problem of international monetary reform; and that it work to "accelerate the growth of the developing nations."232

The second task was concerned with a wider unity within all of Western Europe. It was, however, intended only as a springboard for the third phase of his solution. This appeared plainly in his rationale for Western unity. "A united Western Europe," he asserted, "can move more confidently in peaceful initiatives toward the East."233

It was Johnson’s third task which attracted the attention of the world. Calling for "a shift from the narrow concept of coexistence to the broader vision of peaceful engagement," he announced: "One great goal of a united West

231 Ibid.
232 Ibid.
233 Ibid.
is to heal the wound in Europe which now cuts East from West, and brother from brother." Lest anyone misunderstand just how this new fraternal relationship would be achieved, Johnson explained: "That division must be healed peacefully; it must be healed with the consent of Eastern European countries and consent of the Soviet Union." That would happen, he continued, only as East and West succeeded in "building a surer foundation of mutual trust."\textsuperscript{234}

The hortatory tone of the address continued as Johnson exhorted Americans and Europeans to "intensify, accelerate, and strengthen" efforts toward "healthy economic and cultural relations with the Communist states." Assuring the Soviets and Eastern Europe that "we and our allies shall go step-by-step with them just as far as they are willing to advance," Johnson announced new steps the United States was taking: early action on a Soviet-American consular agreement; credit from the Export-Import Bank to four Eastern European countries; the easing of Polish debts; a Civil Air Agreement with the Soviets and steps to liberalize travel to Communist countries in Europe; and, finally, the exchange of weather information gathered by satellites.\textsuperscript{235}

\textit{The central thought.—}Again, as in the addresses of his first peace drive of 1965, Johnson sought to balance statements maintaining a readiness for peace, with others

\textsuperscript{234}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{235}Ibid.
attesting his refusal to retreat before aggression. While discussing, for example, the modernization of NATO, he not only asserted that the Atlantic Alliance was a "living organism" which had to "adapt itself to the changing conditions," he had added, as well:

Let no one doubt for a moment the American commitment. We shall never unlearn the lessons of the Thirties, when isolation and withdrawal were our share in the common disaster. We are committed and we are committed to remain firm.236

Later, he had declared, "Where necessary, we shall defend freedom. Where possible, we shall work with the East to build a lasting peace."237 Finally, in his peroration he carefully continued the same balance between firmness and moderation:

Our object is to end the bitter legacy of World War II and let all of those who wish us well, and all others, also, know that our guard will be up but our hand will always be out. . . .

We believe that moral agreements are much to be preferred to military means, the conference table instead of the battlefield. But Americans will never close their eyes to reality. We back our word with dedication and we also back it with a united resolve of a patient, of a determined, of a freedom-loving and a peaceful people. Together we shall never fail.238

The Soviet reaction.—Johnson had laid down a broad new European strategy for the United States, calling for reconciliation with Soviet Union and Communist East Europe. By easing relations with the East, he sought to make the

236Tbid.
237Tbid.
238Tbid.
Soviets more willing to play the role of conciliator between the United States and North Vietnam. A week later, however, Soviet leader Leonid I. Brezhnev brushed aside Johnson's call for better East-West relations, saying "pirate raids" on North Vietnam barred any improvement at that time. "If the United States wants to develop mutually profitable relations with the Soviet Union—and we would like this principle—it is necessary to remove the main obstacle," Brezhnev said.239

To the Soviet leader, firmness in Vietnam and moderation in Eastern Europe were not complementary but contradictory. Noting Johnson had presented the situation as if better relations with the Soviets and other Communist countries could develop despite the war in Vietnam, Brezhnev declared this was "strange and misleading."240

Marshall D. Shulman, Professor of International Politics at Harvard's Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, and a research associate at the Russian Research Center there, concluded, upon returning from visits to Russia and the major satellite capitals, that Johnson's address was dismissed as "empty and sporadic gestures intended for domestic politics or foreign propaganda, unrelated to actual policy." Shulman saw Johnson's efforts at international communication failing throughout Eastern Europe. He wrote:

With overwhelming unanimity, there appears to

240 Ibid.
be a total misreading of signals from Washington in that part of the world. The intentions of the United States are universally interpreted within a framework which completely vitiates the Administration's overtures toward an improvement of relations. The President's speeches on this point are simply not believed.241

Noting that a "steady diet of television and newspaper pictures of Vietnamese women and children wounded by American "bombs" has had a cumulative effect upon the people of Eastern Europe, Shulman concluded:

The best one can say is that a discriminating effort to sift propaganda from real perception in innumerable conversations leads to the conclusion that the United States is genuinely regarded as suffering from a militant fever. The idea is expressed with varying degrees of sophistication, but in one form or another it is just about universal in that part of the world.242

With the Soviet rejection of his proposals, and as they continued to ascribe bad motives to his efforts, Johnson ended his third major peace drive to await events from the coming Manila Conference and the Congressional elections in the United States.

Some Conclusions concerning the Campaign to Win Belief

We have investigated three separate peace drives conducted by Lyndon Johnson from April, 1965, through October, 1966. Each was a series of speeches and related diplomatic moves in which the President sought to convince the world that America sought peace in Vietnam. No series

242 Ibid.
was preplanned. All evolved step-by-step as halting responses to one crisis after another in a fog of uncertainty.

In these rhetorical campaigns, Johnson sought credence, basically, for two propositions. He sought to convince neutrals and allies of the wisdom of America's presence in Vietnam. He hoped, as well, to win faith from all powers in America's willingness to negotiate. Between these two ideas, he maintained a delicate balance. In each address, he prefaced his plea for negotiations with assurances of his willingness to meet force with force.

The Johns Hopkins address of April 7, 1965, served as a prototype of Johnson's speeches throughout the three campaigns, not only in proposition, but in other facets of rhetoric, as well. The problem-solution arrangement found in the Baltimore speech was maintained in most of the others.

Again, the style of his subsequent rhetoric was like that of the speech at Johns Hopkins. For clarity and emphasis, Johnson employed redundancy by repeating ideas and words. To keep his central idea before his audiences, he often made use of slogan-like statements from earlier addresses. Usually, to heighten emotion against the North Vietnamese and the Viet Cong, he turned to narration and description.

The emotions which Johnson sought most frequently to arouse were fear of Communist designs and sympathy for Communist victims. These, in turn, were expected to be
instrumental in producing feelings of rejection directed toward the aggressor.

By picturing the North Vietnamese as calloused and determined belligerents who had rejected America's frequent overtures for peace, Johnson hoped to build American ethos. It was the device of contrast, by which one presented himself as a good man by discrediting his opponents. Largely, however, he was unsuccessful in this effort with other nations. Two things seemed to contribute to his failure. First, his calls for peace seemed contradicted by his constant escalation of America's military activity. Again, because America is a large nation fighting on foreign soil, and the North Vietnamese small and on their traditional home ground, the United States has been seen, by the Asian and African countries, as a colonial power attempting to take the place of France in Vietnam.

Throughout the campaigns, Johnson used basically the same type of logic. To support the wisdom of American military activity in Vietnam, he used two arguments. First, from the nature of circumstances in South Vietnam, he asserted the North Vietnamese were guilty of aggression. Usually, little support was offered for the assertions. Johnson evidently hoped his audience would accept as probably true the circumstances as he related them, and that they would see them as a sign of North Vietnamese aggression. The second argument by which he upheld the American military presence was the historical analogy. From the painful lessons of
isolation before World War II, and from the successes of America's firm stands in Greece, Turkey, Korea, Formosa, Cuba, and Berlin, Johnson concluded the United States should contain Communism's advance in Vietnam. To demonstrate his Administration's desire to negotiate, the President relied upon the roll-call of past American peace moves which, he charged, the North Vietnamese had repudiated.

We may conclude that Johnson's three peace campaigns were relatively unsuccessful. As 1967 began, the President reported there were "no serious indications" that the other side was ready to negotiate, and world leaders were still calling for an end to the bombing of North Vietnam as a necessary prelude to peace talks.

The Campaigns to Win Support

The European Effort

While the world's attention was being captured by the drama of Johnson's three peace campaigns and by the ostentation of his Asian tour, a more unobtrusive rhetorical effort was attempting to win, from West Europeans, military support in Vietnam.

In December, 1965, at the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Paris, American Secretaries Rusk and McNamara sought to persuade their European partners that it

244 Ibid., March 3, 1967, p. 32-M.
was in their own interest to give the Atlantic pact a global scope by preparing to treat Red China as the chief enemy of NATO in future years, and by supporting, specifically, the struggle of the United States in Vietnam. 245

Six months later, on May 31, 1966, Secretary of State Rusk again flew to Europe to enlist sympathy for United States policy in Asia. The occasion was the formal opening of the NATO Council in Brussels. And although one of his objectives was to help reorganize NATO in the wake of France's withdrawal from the military pact, Rusk also intended, in his talks with a number of European leaders, to try again to spark more support for the Administration's actions in Vietnam. 246

In December, 1966, again at a Paris NATO meeting, Rusk made a third attempt. He reminded his treaty allies that they were as much committed to defend the United States as she was to defend them. He then pointed out that the western frontier of the United States lay in the fiftieth American state, Hawaii, out in the mid-Pacific, an area that would soon be in reach of Chinese nuclear missiles. Again, Rusk was unsuccessful in winning NATO support. 247


246 *Detroit News*, May 31, 1966, p. 5-B.

247 *Nashville Tennessean*, December 25, 1966, p. 5-B.
Reasons for Failure

There were at least three reasons for the NATO rejection of Rusk's appeal. The first concerned the West European view of China as a major threat to the NATO alliance. For the United States, China had become the principal enemy. American policy was treating the Soviet Union as less dangerous than China and was striving to resume its efforts toward better relations with Moscow. While most of the West European countries sympathized with the goal of tension reduction, few saw the Soviet Union in the role of the less dangerous power. Commenting on the stone wall of rejection Rusk met, the Swiss Review of World Affairs explained:

That on Asian soil Moscow appears as Peking's rival in any event does not have the same significance for Europe as for the United States. Western Europe is bound to look upon the Soviet Union as a dangerous neighbor, whom only a strong system of alliances has prevented from using pressure and violence so far.248

Thus, for Europe, Rusk's appraisal of the Soviet Union as the more harmless power was valid only in comparison with the more revolutionary China, and this comparison could not be exported to Europe. For them, the task continued to be the protection of the stability and security of the Continent by a strong counterweight, the Western alliance, to the pressure and threatening power of the Soviet Union.

A second reason for Western Europe's rejection of

Rusk's appeals for support in Vietnam centered around their view of the American commitment there. Joel Blocker, Paris bureau chief for *Newsweek*, has pointed out that by 1965, few Europeans concerned themselves with Vietnam, at all. Their Asian colonial empires were gone, and they had become "an affluent and essentially inward-looking people preoccupied with local politics and adjustment to the novelties of a consumer economy." Europeans had come to view Vietnam as an American battle, just as the Algerian war was a French problem, as the Congo uprising was a Belgian affair, and as Indonesia was a thron in the flesh of the Dutch. "The French, the Belgians, and the Dutch know," Blocker noted, "that the United States did not exactly rush to their aid at the time." The effect of this emotional view was disassociation. "Whatever their political views," he continued, "Europeans want no part of the war."  

Several public opinion polls seem to support Blocker's judgments. In a poll conducted recently for a Republican senator in five West European nations, 46 percent of those questioned thought the world was "further" from peace as a result of United States policies under President Johnson. The results of a Gallup poll in September, 1966, showed that more British desired to see the United States withdraw its troops from Vietnam than believed we

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249 *Newsweek*, October 31, 1966, p. 35.


should continue our present efforts or escalate them. For withdrawal, there were 42 per cent, while only 17 per cent believed America should carry on the present level, and only 16 per cent felt that she should increase the strength of her military activity.\footnote{San Francisco Chronicle, September 27, 1966, p. 16.} In a similar Gallup survey of Great Britain, eight in ten said they would disapprove if their government were to send British troops to fight alongside the South Vietnamese in Vietnam. Only 8 per cent favored such a course.\footnote{St. Louis Post Dispatch, September 2, 1966, p. 1-C.}

After Rusk's third attempt to win support, Walter Lippmann pointed to his arguments, themselves, as a chief reason for Europe's rejection of them. He wrote:

Secretary Rusk could have done nothing to make the Europeans realize more vividly the point of Gen. Charles de Gaulle's case against NATO. For what the general has been telling Europeans is that if they do not break with the integrated command structure and renounce the automatic character of the commitment they run a grave risk of being drawn into nuclear war by the United States in its quarrel with China.\footnote{"Vietnam War a Year Later," Nashville Tennessean, December 25, 1966, p. 5-B.}

Lippmann concluded that nothing Rusk could have said could have done more to make Europeans stay clear of the Vietnamese war and the whole American policy in Asia. "Rusk's trip," he asserted, "has done more than anything else in
recent times to make certain that what is called Gaullism will, in fact, become postwar Europeanism. 255

The Asian Tour

On April 7, 1965, in his address at Johns Hopkins University, Lyndon Johnson inaugurated not one program, but two. As we have noted, the speech was not only the beginning of his campaigns to win world approval for his Vietnam military activities, but was the formal announcement that America was going to seek support for the creation of an Asian development plan. 256

Through the following weeks and months, Johnson advertised his idea, imputing to it the highest of motives. In his news conference the week following the Johns Hopkins speech, he said of his development program:

Our purpose should not be misunderstood. We do not seek to buy peace. If the price of ending aggression is blood and men, we are ready to pay that price. We do this because it is necessary to the health and independence of the countries of southeast Asia. We do it because it is right in this world that the strong and the wealthy should help the poor and the weak. 257

The following December, during his remarks at the lighting of the National Christmas tree, he said:

We know, too, that peace is not merely the absence of war. It is that climate in which man may be liberated from the hopelessness that imprisons his spirit.

255Ibid.
257Ibid., April 18, 1965, p. 2.
In this strong and in this prosperous land there are many that are still trapped in that prison where hope seems but a dream. We shall never rest until that hope becomes a reality.

But hope cannot be our province alone. For we shall never know peace in a world where a minority prospers and the vast majority is condemned to starvation and ignorance. This evening, inspired once more by Him Who brought comfort and courage to the oppressed, we offer our hand to those who seek a new life for their people.258

On March 16, 1966, the President signed an act authorizing the United States to ratify the charter of the Asian Development Bank. Calling the signing a "moment in which history and hope meet and move from here as partners," Johnson continued: "This act is an economic Magna Carta for the diverse lands of Asia. Its charter links thirty-one countries in a union against the involuntary economic servitude imposed on the people of Asia by time and circumstances, and by neighbor and nature." Further extolling the Bank, he termed it "a symbol that the twain have met, not as Kipling predicted, 'at God's Judgment Seat,' but at the place of man's shared needs." Asia need no longer, he declared, "sit at the second table of the Twentieth Century's concern."259

Yet, vital as the act was to the development of Asia, without the cooperation of Asian nations, it would be a machine without power. Therefore, in the early fall of 1966, as he planned for the seven-nation Manila conference, Johnson determined to emphasize to his Asian allies the


economic and social opportunities which lay behind the actual fighting in Vietnam. Peter Lisagor wrote, in route with Johnson on his seventeen-day Far East trip:

    He would like the Asian countries to take dramatic initiatives in organizing the peace, when and if it comes to Southeast Asia, and intends to reassure them that the United States will remain a steadfast ally in the effort. 260

    There were strategic as well as humanitarian reasons for the economic cooperation of the Asian Nations. For a decade United States diplomats had dreamed of somehow persuading the disunited nations along China's periphery to stand together in order to stand up to Communist China. Some Americans had envisioned a non-Communist arc anchored in the north on Japan's industrial might and swinging southwest along China's frontiers, to anchor in the south on the land and population mass of India. Potentially, even without backing from the United States, non-Communist nations in Asia have the population and economic power to counterbalance China. 261 When Johnson began his Asian tour, however, there was one flaw, which had prevented these statistics from being transformed into anti-Communist military and economic realities: The non-Communist nations in the arc of containment had not shown the will to band together.

    Hoping to encourage the economic and political cooperation necessary to insure their freedom and prosperity,

Johnson visited and spoke in six Asian nations during his trip to the Manila Conference. The one theme which recurred in all of his speeches on the tour was that of a new Asia.

The Honolulu Address

Just as the Johns Hopkins address was the archetype for Johnson's later international rhetoric concerning Vietnam, his speech at Honolulu, Hawaii, the first stop on his Asian tour, became the model for his remarks to the other nations. 262 The body of his address was divided into three sections, which dealt with the request for a new Asia, the reality of a new Asia, and the role of America in the new Asia.

The request for a new Asia. --To define the cooperative society he hoped to see grow up in Asia and the Pacific, Johnson employed the specific example backed by descriptive adjectives:

Hawaii itself is what it has been for many, many years—a beautiful part of the world where different races and peoples have learned to live in mutual forbearance and respect, maintaining the historical characteristics of their people while working for the common good of the community.

That is the kind of society we hope each nation of Asia may become—free, proud, prosperous, individualistic, and devoted to peaceful cooperation with its neighbors. We pledge our efforts in helping Asia to achieve such a society—for it is that kind of Asia that will serve the peace throughout the world. 263

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262 The full text appears in New York Times, October 18, 1966, p. 16; cited hereafter as Johnson, Honolulu.

263 Ibid.
But action, and not merely understanding, was Johnson's aim. By using Hawaii as a symbol of the successful cooperation of races in the Pacific, he was advancing it as the earnest of what was to come from Asian cooperation. It was, therefore, argument by parallel case.

To emphasize America's sympathy with the Asian desire for independence and modernization, Johnson again used the parallel case. He noted that through colonialism the West earlier had "intruded its then superior power into the East," leaving "deep scars" on Asian hearts. Contrasting the example of the United States to this, he alleged: "While many Western countries were trying to acquire special and exclusive privileges for themselves, we were arguing for an Open Door." Then, affirming that what was American policy in this first instance had its parallel in present American programs, he added, "American policy today must be the policy of an open mind." The fallacy in this argument lies in Johnson's failure to differentiate between the stand for an Open Door and our real reasons for that policy. He was confusing tactics and motives. For while by virtue of John Hay's Open Door notes, the nation did commit itself to the protection of the territorial integrity of China, the policy had its origin in our own commercial objectives. By the acquisition of the Philippines, the United States had interjected itself into the "cockpit of the Orient," where Japan

264 Ibid.
and the European powers were all struggling for territorial and commercial supremacy. Realizing the Philippines would be valueless if all China was closed to American trade, the United States announced it would oppose any attack on China's territorial integrity. 265

With the open mind, Johnson continued, Americans could listen as Asians spoke freely of their hopes for security from outside attack and internal subversion, for higher living standards and increased educational opportunities, and for a voice in the choice of those who would lead them. "They wish to make modern societies," he stressed, "but societies true to their own traditions, their own culture, their own ambitions." This was also, he added, "as good a definition of what the United States wants to see in Asia" as he could offer. 266

The reality of a new Asia.--From the Asian and American request for a modern Asia, Johnson foresaw its reality. "Behind the terrible costs of combat and hostility," he announced, "a new Asia is gradually coming into its own. The progress is slow, but the signs are unmistakable." Giving data for his generalization, he listed seven compact examples showing results from Asian cooperation: the Japanese-Korean settlement of differences; the formulation of the


266 Johnson, Honolulu.
Asian and Pacific Council; the establishment of the Asian Development Bank; the growth of an Asian technical institute in Bangkok; and meetings which had been held between economic ministers, educational ministers, and agricultural specialists. 267

In order to emphasize the idea of concert among these nations, Johnson was deliberately redundant, describing the coaction in Asia in three different ways:

One after another, the nations of Asia are casting off the spent slogans of earlier narrow nationalism. One after another, they are grasping the realities of an independent Asia. . . . A new spirit is clear at work; a self-confidence that permits cooperation. 268

Having spoken of the ideas being grasped by Asians and of the results which already had been achieved, Johnson predicted the vision of their new society would prevail. Confessing that there remained in Asia what he termed "Voices of extremism and apostles of militance," he charged that they were "out of tune with the new currents in Asia." The mixed metaphor was poor style, but its meaning was not ambiguous. Johnson meant, as he explained further, that these voices were becoming "increasingly irrelevant and increasingly isolated." In language probably as much prescriptive as descriptive, he averred that "Asia's leaders and Asia's peoples are looking beyond narrow nationalism."

267 Ibid.
268 Ibid.
They were seeing, he asserted, "the absolute necessity of matching Asia's needs with Asia's resources." 269

The role of America in the new Asia.—"What then," asked Johnson, "is America's role in this new emerging Asia?"

His answer was reminiscent of the limited Vietnamese war performance he had cast for America during the 1964 Presidential election campaign. "We can help," he said. "We must help. We are helping. But we see our role as that, not more. We can give advice and technical assistance.... Asia will provide its own leadership." Here was an attempt to exonerate the United States in advance of the charge, which would almost surely come, that Johnson's proposals for political and economic cooperation were but a smoke screen behind which he sought to plant American imperialism more firmly in Asia. It was an exercise in anticipatory feedback, and to it he continued to respond with denials of any hidden American designs:

As long as danger threatens, our strength shall back our commitments in Asia. Yet we seek no special status or privileges, no primacy, no territory, no base rights in perpetuity. We recognize that our strength, our size, and wealth may impose a special obligation upon us in the transition to the new Asia. But we also recognize that the cooperative tasks of assistance and defense will be assumed more and more by others and by collective groupings as the nations of Asia build their own strength and abundance. 270

This role of "a neighbor among equals" would even be played, he stressed, in the coming Manila Conference: "I go

269 Ibid.
270 Ibid.
to see, to listen, to learn, and to act with our partners.

Conclusions.—The Johnson Honolulu address showed a strong unity and coherence: It maintained a movement toward the idea of cooperation for a new Asia, and, through a recurrence of emphasis on that central idea, kept it constantly in view. While the several parts of the speech were not distinguished explicitly, one could observe an orderly sequence from problem to goal to solution, because Johnson provided transitions of summary and forecast. The central idea was given a final emphasis by a return to the idea with which the address began—that Hawaii was an example of the successful implementation of the plans he was recommending to Asians:

I intend to ask the leaders I see to visit America—especially to come to Hawaii, a model of how men of different races and different cultures can live and work together in freedom and hope.272

The Subsequent Addresses

We have noted earlier that Johnson's Honolulu address became the prototype of his Asian tour speeches which followed, though not always in organization, certainly in thought. Therefore, we shall use this initial speech of the series as a model for a brief examination of the ideas in the others.

The request for a new Asia.—On his first two major stops after leaving Honolulu, Johnson stressed the need for

271 Ibid.
272 Ibid.
New Zealand and Australia to help in the economic growth of their less affluent Pacific and Asian neighbors. Addressing the New Zealand Parliament in Wellington on October 20, he sought to muster them for his war on Asian poverty:

For hundreds of millions of Asians, the most common terrorism is not that of guns or grenades. It is that of hunger, disease, of poverty, and of illiteracy. These are as capable of crushing the hopes of man as any ruthless enemy with his mortar or his bombs or his guns. Much of this war in Asia still remains to be fought. And we are calling now for volunteers for it, too.273

The following day, before a luncheon of Australian leaders in Canberra, Johnson described the cause and effect of the new Asian desires. Reminding them that in dozens of countries on the continent "hundreds of millions of people struggle to exist on incomes of scarcely more than a dollar a week," he painted their bleak picture of poverty:

Many people have less to spend on food and on shelter and on clothing, on medicine, on all their needs, than the average Australian spends for a package of cigarettes.
They live in shacks hardly worth the name.
They live without heat, water, sanitation and promise.
Their children have no schools, few doctors, almost no hospitals. They can rarely expect to live beyond 40 years. They mark those years with the weary and ancient cycle of misery and monotony.
The per capita product of the developed countries today is $1,730 a year.
In these countries of which I have spoken, it is $143, and the gap widens.274

273 The full text of the New Zealand address appears in the Department of State Bulletin, November 7, 1966, p. 705; cited hereafter as Johnson, New Zealand.

274 The full text of the Australian address appears in New York Times, October 21, 1966, p. 16; cited hereafter as Johnson, Australia.
Smoothly, Johnson's transition moved his discussion from the plight of Asia's poor to the plans of its new generation: "The shrinking of distances and the spreading of knowledge has made us more aware of other people. And it has made them aware of what is within their reach. An association of the hopeful has emerged," he declared, "and it will be heard... They know that the conditions their fathers accepted with resignation are no longer inevitable. ... And because they know, they yearn."  

The reality of a new Asia.—Only in the more prosperous Australia and New Zealand did Johnson emphasize the great economic problems of Asia. Among the Asians, themselves, he concentrated only upon their progress. For here was the kernel thought of Johnson's tour—Asian progress through cooperation. Repeatedly, he echoed the central thought of the Honolulu address. In Canberra, Australia, he stated: "This is the Asia to which I journey. From multiple creeds and cultures, from many races and tongues is coming an increased momentum of partnership." In Bangkok, Thailand, and the Chulalongkorn University, he said: "You have seen that for men to reach the highest ground, they must work together." Arriving at Manila for the Seven-Nation Conference, he declared the people of Asia were

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*275 Ibid.*  
*276 Ibid.*  
*277 The full text of the Bangkok address appears in New York Times, October 30, 1966, p. 2; cited hereafter as Johnson, Thailand.*
"building a future of co-operation rather than narrow nationalism." "They are," he said, "moving beyond independence to interdependence."278 In Korea, he announced before the National Assembly:

A new, young generation of Asian leaders is determined that there shall be security and order and progress in this region. . . .
The new Asia will remain loyal to its own traditions and culture and values, even as it works constructively with the United States and other nations throughout the world.279

The role of America in the new Asia.—Again, as in the Honolulu address, the role of the United States in the new Asia was to be that of a partner and not that of the planner. To the Australian leaders at Canberra, Johnson stressed the freedom the regional cooperation would have from American control:

We shall also be the friends and partners of those in Asia who work together to fashion their own destiny. From you must come initiative and leadership. From us will come cooperation. There will be growing pains of diversity, but from them will emerge mutual progress that does not ask any of us the surrender of our most vital principles.

In Thailand, he spoke of the mutual interchange of information and not of a one-way flow from the United States:

One year ago, at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D. C., I proposed the creation of a center for International study. I learned just a few days ago, while I was already in Asia, that


279 The full text of the Korean address appears in New York Times, November 2, 1966, p. 16; cited hereafter as Johnson, Korea.

280 Johnson, Australia.
our Congress enacted this proposal into law—the International Education Act. Its purpose is to help Americans learn from other nations and to help other nations learn from America. 281

Arriving at Manila for the Seven-Nation Conference, Johnson sought to dispel any concern that the other conference would be dominated by America's hand: "As for myself, I come to listen, to learn, and to do what I can to help chart the work ahead," he announced. And knowing that some would say that America, through the conference, was trying to exercise control over all Asians, he continued:

We are aware that some of our partners in these new constructive regional enterprises will not be with us here. We shall take no actions which narrow the range of cooperation and participation.

But I for one look forward to hearing from my friends their hopes and plans for next steps in the great adventure of regional cooperation in Asia. As I have often said, Asia and Asians must lead but we are prepared to help. 282

And, among Koreans, he stressed the leadership provided by their nation:

You have fought—and are fighting now—so that Asia can be free from aggression.
You are moving rapidly in Korea to conquer hunger, illiteracy, and disease.
You have shown leadership in helping build institutions that promise this region security, order and progress. Korea proposed, and was host to, the conference that created the Asian and Pacific Council. You became a charter member of the Asian Development Bank and helped to initiate the Manila Conference.

Furthermore, just as the United States would not

281 Johnson, Bangkok.
282 Johnson, Manila.
283 Johnson, Korea.
become the chief planner of the new Asia, neither would it become its sole provider. "It is only right that Australia become a strong partner in the new Asia," Johnson said at Canberra. "Nature gave you good land and rich natural resources. Your vigorous people have made a good life for themselves and their children and your industry has expanded rapidly in the last two decades."284

Asking New Zealand to follow America into the sphere of service, Johnson urged:

Our New Zealand friends, there is much that we two nations can prove to the world. We can prove to the world that it is possible to maintain close ties of affection with Europe without being cut off from Asia, blind to Asia's needs, or ignorant to her great culture. . . . We can prove that wealth and prosperity need not build a wall around their fortunate possessors—but can build avenues of service to mankind.285

And in Thailand, while promising the United States would continue its present aid program and "to do still more as the right programs and initiatives come forward," Johnson lauded the multilateral approach to aid within the new Asia:

And I am happy to see our efforts are being joined increasingly by those of other nations in a position to help. You know this well in Thailand. In the past five years the development assistance you have received from other nations has exceeded that which my own nation has been called on to supply.286

The responsibility of defending the new Asia.—In New Zealand and Australia, Johnson faced an extra problem.

284 Johnson, Australia.
285 Johnson, New Zealand, p. 706.
286 Johnson, Thailand.
There the war in Vietnam was even more unpopular than it was in the United States. In both countries, in the campaign for national elections to be held in November, participation in the war had become a central issue. In New Zealand the ruling National Party was opposed by the Labor Party which favored withdrawal of the token force of 300 troops which the nation then had in Vietnam. The only basic issue in Australia was the Liberal Reform Group's objection to the Holt government's use of conscripts in the war. Holt had promised to send an additional 3,000 troops, to join Australia's 4,500 already there, if re-elected by a wide margin.\footnote{New York Times, November 8, 1966, p. 2.}

Less obvious, but just as urgent, was the need to overcome apathy in the Philippines and Thailand. In the Philippines, where the talk was often isolationist, at times anti-American, and preoccupied with immediate Philippine problems, President Marcos had said, "What South Vietnam needs is the will to fight, which cannot be exported." Yet Marcos had seen the wisdom of humoring the United States with a thousand-man force in Vietnam. And while the Thai government was providing vital bases for American bombers, it was not talking about its contribution, seemingly believing it would be criticized for helping the United States. Only in Korea, which had sent two divisions to Vietnam to
support the American six, did the people seem to approve of their participation in the war.\textsuperscript{288}

Yet, hoping to win continued committal from these nations, in order that the war might have at least the image of a united front, Johnson presented basically two arguments. The first sprang from the new Asia which he was discussing. Unless the Communists were stopped in Vietnam, he maintained, there would be no hope for peace and progress. He reminded his New Zealand audience:

Yet all of our efforts—all the planning, all the devotion, all the resources free nations are able to commit to Asia—can be demoralized and destroyed if the terrorist and the aggressor ever succeed in dominating the people.

It is difficult to grow crops, to irrigate fields, to operate schools, to care for the old, to educate the young, to levy taxes, and provide for the people’s needs when you are operating in an atmosphere and a climate of terror.\textsuperscript{289}

In Australia, he spoke not only of the "drive for satisfaction" but of the "drive for security." In Vietnam, he said, "the demands of security and the urge of satisfaction mingle in a single crucible." "We must deal today with these urgent drives," he charged them. "I use ‘we’ deliberately," Johnson explained. "In early postwar years the indispensable strength was America’s. Now other nations have also gathered strength, and it has become possible to share the burdens of defense more evenly."\textsuperscript{290}


\textsuperscript{289}Johnson, New Zealand, p. 705.

\textsuperscript{290}Johnson, Australia.
To the university students in Bangkok, Thailand, Johnson was less pointed and more philosophical:

My nation today is bearing a heavy load in the Vietnamese conflict, alongside yours. . . . Sometimes a nation must do what it would not choose to do. Sometimes men must die in order that freedom may live.291

The second argument by which Johnson upheld the need of military action in Vietnam was basically an appeal to fear. "We live at a time," Johnson told the Australians, "when foreign affairs go beyond their traditional scope." Modern weapons, he explained, "make the threat of war anywhere a life-and-death issue for every nation." "We have learned," he said, "at painful costs, that aggression and upheaval in any part of the world carry the seed of destruction to free men everywhere."292

Before the New Zealanders, Johnson warned:

It may once have been possible for democracy to flourish in one country, isolated from the misery and oppression that befall other men. But neither reason nor conscience permits such a narrow view of our responsibilities today.

Using the analogy from history, he reminded them as he continued: "This basic truth came home to both our nations—and to you, I think, sooner than to us—in the course of two World Wars."293 "Men often wonder," he mused, "how the course of history might have changed if we had met Hitler

291Johnson, Thailand.
292Johnson, Australia.
293Johnson, New Zealand, p. 704.
before he started through Poland."²⁹⁴

The use of the threat appeal was well-suited to the Australian and New Zealand audiences. Marquis Childs wrote of them:

Living so close to the Asian land mass, a deep-seated fear is for survival itself. The nearest neighbor, Indonesia, with less than one third the space has ten times the close-packed population. And while the pressure is off for the time being, with the downfall of the Communists in Indonesia, this can only be a temporary reprieve.²⁹⁵

Some Conclusions concerning the Asian Tour

Johnson, in his Asian addresses, had at least three purposes: to dramatize a cooperative regional economic effort; to demonstrate his country's allied role in Vietnam; to dominate American news before the Congressional elections. How well did he succeed in these purposes?

Wisely the President sought to point out that our tasks of economic assistance should be assumed more and more by collective groupings of Asian countries. He did this, perhaps, in response to liberal criticism that the United States was trying to assume the "white man's burden" in Asia. For instance, after he had been advertising for a year the Asian development schemes he proposed in his Johns Hopkins address, Walter Lippmann wrote that as long as the United States continued to fill the vacuum left by the fall of the

²⁹⁴Ibid., p. 707.

British and French empires, the dream of political reform and economic and social development in Asia would be "a pipe dream." "It is not easy to expunge the rancors and suspicions of three centuries, and, therefore," he concluded, "it is naive and dangerously silly to think that we can treat Vietnam as if it were another Appalachia." 296

During the tour the following fall, therefore, Johnson was careful not to give chief emphasis to American contributions to Asian economic development. Instead, his constant refrain was Asia's growing cooperation and sense of regional pride.

We cannot doubt that Johnson was pointing in the right direction. Between the Asians and Johnson's goals, however, the obstacles are enormous. The people in the area are bewilderingly diverse in their language, their history, their geography, their politics, and even their religion. Economically, as underdeveloped nations, they compete bitterly for markets. Yet, reproach cannot be visited fairly upon the policy which the President outlined. He was seeking to act as a catalytic agent to bring Asians together.

Johnson's description of the readiness of Asian nations for responsibility was, however, anticipatory. He credited them with increasingly appreciating the reality that the security of every nation is threatened by an attack on any nation, and with believing that national strength can

only come with self help. He lauded their leaders for realizing that political power held by the few and the rich within a nation is power that will not survive, and for knowing that disputes settled by force will remain unsettled. These are admirable principles. They may be winning their way in Asia gradually. It was, however, premature, for Johnson to imply that they were as widely comprehended.

The second purpose behind Johnson's Asian tour was to demonstrate to the American voter that the United States was not standing alone in Vietnam. Walter W. Rostow, for example, Special Assistant to the President, told the Associated Press Managing Editor's Association: "What was accomplished at Manila? First, the conference dramatized before the world that those closest to the danger understood it best and have staked much on the proposition that this aggression must not succeed." 297

Some, however, have suggested that the allied nations, with the exception of South Korea, are not supporting the United States militarily in Vietnam because they want to, but because they feel forced to do so if they are to continue to receive American military protection. Impugning their motives, Richard Fryklund recently wrote:

They have one good and common reason: they are buying protection from the only country in the world that is rich enough to provide it—the United States. The national leaders at Manila reason that by helping Uncle Sam today, they will oblige Uncle Sam to save them tomorrow if necessary.

The Viet Nam war may be uncomfortably expensive in money and political support, but it would be im-
possibly expensive for those governments to provide their own defense forces.298

As far as his first two purposes were concerned, both required that America's role in the Pacific and in Southeast Asia be viewed as that of a partner among equals. Johnson sought to leave this impression before departing on his tour. In an October 6 news conference, he stated in reference to his part in the Manila Conference:

The invitation, as you know, was extended by other countries and I'm sure that they will have some specific plans to suggest and I want to be a good listener as well as an active participant.299

And when the Conference released its "Goals of Freedom" declaration--"to be free from aggression"; "to conquer hunger, illiteracy, and disease"; "to build a region of security, order, and progress"; and "to seek reconciliation and peace throughout Asia and the Pacific"--Johnson's Special Assistant, W. W. Rostow, said of them: "They flowed naturally from the opening statements of all those present, they represented an honest consensus, to which all actively contributed."300

The "Goals of Freedom" declaration, however, belies Johnson's denials of American domination of the seven-nation conference. Rostow would have been more accurate if he had

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298 Ibid.
said the four goals represented not "an honest consensus to which all actively contributed," but instead, the four main points of a speech which Johnson had made in Lancaster, Ohio, on September 5, 1966, and which he titled, "Four Fundamental Facts of Our Foreign Policy."

There is a correspondence between the four goals announced by the conference and the four main points of Johnson's earlier address which is more than coincidental.

The first goal of the conference was "to be free from aggression." The first fact of American policy, as listed by Johnson in Lancaster, was: "We cannot walk away from the simple fact that the peace and security of many nations is threatened if aggressors are permitted to succeed in a strategic area of the world." He then announced that we would withdraw our troops from Vietnam "when we have any evidence that aggression and infiltration and the war there will end."

The second "Goal of Freedom" the conference announced was "to conquer hunger, illiteracy, and disease." The second fact of American policy revealed in the earlier Johnson address was: "We face a second fundamental fact, that people

301 A portion of the text of the Lancaster, Ohio, address appears in Department of State Bulletin, September 26, 1966, pp. 453-454.

have other enemies in the world: hunger, diseases, ignorance, poverty. . . . We have started working together on solving problems in all that area of the world."

The third goal the conference stressed was "to build a region of security, order, and progress." The third facet of American policy as discussed by Johnson at Lancaster envisioned the same kind of society:

But the peoples of the world want more tonight than security. They want more than economic progress. This leads to the third fact of our foreign policy: The peoples of other nations want to play a bigger part in running their own affairs and in shaping their own destiny. . . . And we can look forward to increased growth and stability in each corner of the world.

The final "Goal of Freedom" declared by the seven-nation conference was "to seek reconciliation and peace throughout Asia and the Pacific." Again, Johnson's fourth "fact of foreign policy" corresponds to it:

For there is a fourth fundamental fact if we are to be faithful to a great vision of the world. Beyond the present conflict, we must prepare for the task of reconciliation which leads to lasting peace.

Therefore, willingly or not, American foreign policy, as expressed from the platform by Lyndon Johnson, did dominate the "Asian Conference" at Manila.

Some, noting that the date chosen for the Manila meeting was October 18, just three weeks before the American Congressional elections, began to see in the conference and

303 Ibid.
304 Ibid.
305 Ibid.
in Johnson's itinerant addresses surrounding it, a political move by which he hoped to dominate the nation's attention. "It is difficult," declared the New York Times, "not to assume there is some connection between the two events." 306 Senator J. William Fulbright criticized Johnson's motives, suggesting the Manila gathering had been arranged by Johnson to give the "impression of a great earnestness and desire for peace" shortly before the elections. 307 On the other end of the political continuum, Richard Nixon warned Johnson against following the "path of political barnstorming," in which he would treat Manila "like a Texas whistle stop" and "turn the Ho Chi Minh trail into a Johnson campaign trail." 308

Perhaps Johnson first got the idea of using this method to hold attention at election time from one of his critics. In the July, 1966, issue of Foreign Affairs, James Reston had written:

The press may report the news but the President makes it. If Senators are dominating the front pages with their protests against his foreign policy, and editors and professors are creating newsworthy disturbances on the university campuses and on the editorial pages, the President has a convenient remedy. He can divert public attention to himself. He can arrange a conference on an island in the Pacific, for example. Within 72 hours, he can bring the leaders of the nations on his side to a meeting that will arrest the interest of the world. Reporters and photographers will converge from all the capitals and

308 The full text of an article by Nixon appears in the Columbus Dispatch, October 19, 1966, p. 19-A.
fill the front pages with accounts of the proceedings, thereby overwhelming the less dramatic Senatorial mutterings.

This gives the President quite an edge. The reporters and commentators on the scene may see all this as an elaborate camouflage of realities and write their waspish critiques of the proceedings at his conference, but unless the great man is incorrigibly clumsy, which with the help of an experienced civil service he usually is not, the big front-page headlines will have much more effect than the witty chatter on page 32.309

Two months later, just before elections, Johnson announced he had accepted an "invitation" to attend the Manila Conference.

Again, on September 29, 1966, Reston suggested:

It will be even more embarrassing for the Republicans if Johnson happens to show up in South Viet Nam near the end of October, and is seen on the TV screens in army fatigues eating K rations with the soldiers and conferring with Gen. Westmoreland and Ambassador Lodge in some grass hut by a rice paddy. 310

One month later, a recorded speech by Johnson was broadcast to the nation from Manila, in which he revealed,

My fellow Americans, I am speaking to you this morning from Manila City only a few hours after my trip to Vietnam. I went there to visit our men at our base on Camranh Bay. 311

Aside from a more explicit assurance that the United States did not wish to be either the chief planner or the chief provider of the "new Asia," Johnson's Asian tour


310 "Good Politics, Good Diplomacy," St. Louis Post Dispatch, September 29, 1966, p. 3-C.

produced little that was different in message content. The tour is significant for students of rhetoric, however, because it serves as an example of the conflict of message with its contextual factors. Wallace C. Fotheringham has explained the interplay between message and message context as follows:

Messages occur inseparably in conjunction with other stimuli, other influences. Every interpersonal persuasive event involves essential components, such as source, receiver, situational factors, as well as message. These can be collectively thought of as context. Even in its simplest form it is difficult to conceive of a persuasive event without them and without their influence. Such contextual factors can serve to facilitate or inhibit message effect, or be of sufficient significance to the receiver that they become the major determinants of response rather than the message. 312

Now, Johnson's message was that America's military mission in Vietnam and economic role in the future of Asia was an allied one in which the United States was a "partner among equals." The message was not in harmony, however, with his public relations tour which surrounded the conference, for in it he dominated world attention and eclipsed the leaders of the smaller nations attending the conference.

An Analysis of Johnson's Diplomatic Opposition

Any estimate of the deftness of Johnson's persuasion in his campaigns for belief and support among other nations must take into account the strength of the arguments advanced

by his opposition in the international debate over Vietnam. He was attempting to convince audiences which had been inoculated with well-planned Communist propaganda attacking the United States presence in Vietnam. Some students of international political communication have already noted that the Communists shape their propaganda to fit pre-existing attitudes and opinions of their audiences. Frederick C. Barghoorn, for example, Professor of Political Science at Yale since 1957, and the author of several texts on the Russian propaganda offensive, believes a strong characteristic of Soviet propaganda is its harnessing of the grievances and aspirations of the young nationalistic and ethnic forces of our era.313

One of the most subtle ways of using the hearer's own predispositions as material for propaganda is to build the argument upon what the target assumes to be probable. An excellent example of this device has come out of World War II. At Casablanca, in 1943, Roosevelt had proclaimed an "unconditional surrender" policy and had declined later to modify this stand. To the German people, unconditional surrender meant just one thing—the kind of situation which had followed their unconditional surrender in World War I, a situation in which the allies had taken undue advantage of

them in order to feed their own desires for territory. By keeping this specter of "unconditional surrender" before the German people, the Nazis were able to convince them to prolong the war. The Nazi domestic propaganda argument against surrender took advantage of a prejudice in the German mind against the first unconditional surrender and of the assumed probability that the second unconditional surrender would be like the first.

Investigation of recent Communist short-wave radio broadcasts reveals that they are using this same device, adapting to the predispositions and prejudices of their audiences by basing their arguments opposing America's Vietnam policies upon the target's opinion of what is probable and upon his attitude toward what he thinks is probable.

The argument built on what the audience should consider probable is easily employed on radio, since broadcasts do not lend themselves readily to the direct questioning of the speaker or to the careful examination of the script by the average listener. We shall notice, therefore, several examples of this device found in broadcasts from various Communist nations in January, 1966.

Hoping to capitalize on any pre-existing suspicion that America is an imperialist state out to impose its will

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on smaller countries, and on the natural assumption that such a state would see those not with it as moving against it, a January 8 Russian domestic broadcast used American action in the Vietnam area to picture the United States as a bully:

The U.S. propaganda machine explains its actions in Vietnam by the Communist threat which allegedly exists there. But what threat is posed to the United States by the little neutral states of Laos and Cambodia? It is simply the fact that they are following an independent line of foreign policy.316

On January 7, a Radio Budapest broadcast beamed to Europe seized upon a natural audience assumption, that an aggressor nation would probably seek to make others believe it sincerely sought peace, to infer American insincerity in its Vietnam peace moves:

The trip of the Soviet delegation to Vietnam is also expected to help in ascertaining what steps can be taken to counteract the current U.S. propaganda campaign about its so-called willingness to negotiate unconditionally.317

An International Service broadcast on January 9 from Belgrade, Yugoslavia, made use of the assumed-probability device to insinuate that any United States resumption of bombing in North Vietnam would mean the Americans had only feigned peace moves:

The American halt in the bombing of the DRV is a "good sign" and "a real chance" for Vietnam peace


negotiations to start, writes Politika in a commentary today. "Naturally," the daily adds, "this chance can be used only if the American restraint is not temporary or a political." If, in other words, the American bombings were resumed, it is almost certain that every hope would be drowned at that instant, with the unpleasant difference that everything would become more difficult and dangerous than ever before.318

Note that the broadcast does not explicitly charge the United States with hypocrisy. Instead, it sets the stage for the audience to make the charge itself, when and if the United States resumed bombing. This is a delayed-action argument, with a built-in fuse set to be triggered by a specific United States move. In the event the United States were to return to bombing the North, the hearer was expected to find justification for accusing the United States of insincerity in his pre-existing opinion that any nation feigning peace moves would return eventually to conflict.

On January 8, 1966, a Peking International Service broadcast, using irony, charged the Americans with aggression in Vietnam:

Please note: It is the Vietnamese who committed "aggression" in Vietnam and the Vietnamese who are to be held responsible for U.S. aggression. As for the Americans who have crossed vast oceans to invade Vietnam, they are actually not aggressors but "heroes" checking aggression! This fantastic logic forms the premise and point of departure of the 14 points which the Johnson administration proposed as a solution to the Vietnam question.

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Here Peking built its argument on what would seem to be a maxim to many—that aggressors come from outside a country, not from the country suffering aggression.

On January 9, a Red China broadcast used the French defeat in Indochina to argue that the United States should pull out if it did not wish the same fate:

The French colonialists' war of aggression against Indochina was brought to an end through negotiations. Why was that possible? As the protracted armed struggle waged unswervingly by the Vietnamese and other Indochinese people and in particular the battle of Dien Bien Phu, had shaken Paris and brought about the fall of the George Bidault government, the French ruling group was forced to conclude that withdrawal would be preferable to being annihilated. . . . The U.S. aggressor, in fact, has lost on the battlefield of South Vietnam. But he stubbornly refuses to admit it. 320

The argument was designed for those who assumed that war number two would probably go like war number one. Here, then, is another use of the assumed-probability device. In this case it acts as a warrant for reasoning from a French defeat to a probable United States defeat.

While visiting North Vietnam in January, 1966, Russia's Shelepin addressed the people of Hanoi. Radio Hanoi beamed excerpts in English. 321 In one outburst, Shelepin attacked the United States assistance in West German rearmament by playing upon a probability existing, at least, in

320 Peking International Service broadcast in English, January 9, 1966; ibid., p. BBB-8, 9.
the minds of some who went through World War II—a rearmed Germany will be a dangerous Germany; the Germans are a militaristic people and will probably cause trouble again if given the chance:

The United States is encouraging the wolfish ambitions of the West German revanchists. Aided by the U.S. monopoly capital, nearly all the main branches of the war industry in the German Federal Republic have been restored, an army of nearly 450,000 men is being rebuilt.

On January 26, the Budapest MRI International Service showed it could make use of pre-existing opinions and attitudes to levy charges against the United States's use of tear gas in Vietnam. Counting on many of the audience to believe that when gas is used it would be deadly gas, and relying on them to have, therefore, a negative attitude against gas in warfare, the Hungarian broadcast predicted:

They are not heading toward victory this way, but toward a speedy defeat, just as the Germans when they used gas warfare in the first and second world wars. . . . It has occurred more than once recently that the poisonour gas meant for Vietnamese villages was blown back by the wind toward American and Australian forces, killing many of them. 322

The clandestine "Radio Bayrak" recently employed the probability device to argue against Turkish assistance of the United States in the Vietnam War. Charging that the United States had failed in its obligations to Turkey in the Cyprus problem, the broadcast asserted that the United States would leave Turkey to operate alone in Vietnam. As a warrant for making the jump from past action of the United States to

its predicted action, the propagandist relied on his audience to feel that one acting against Turkish interests once would do so again.

America not only has refrained from poking its nose into the Cyprus problem—to which Turkey, the most powerful NATO member in the Middle East, is a party—but also has prevented justice from appearing in this matter. America, which turned its back on its responsibility in the Cyprus problem, now wants to get other countries mixed up in Vietnam. ... We cannot speak for other NATO members, but Dean Rusk must know at this early stage that he will not receive the answer he expects from the Turkish nation. 323

Some in America believe, and many fear, that further escalation of the war in Vietnam will lead to eventual nuclear war. One Radio Moscow broadcast aimed at Eastern North America used this fear as a bridge from information about United States troop increases to its warning that events may get out of hand:

On ABC's "Meet the Press," the Secretary of State said that the very existence of mankind was at stake in this nuclear age. Rusk added that events might get out of America's control unless it were very cautious. Unfortunately, it is caution that the administration lacks. The fact that 200,000 troops have been sent to a tiny country in Asia indicates the rash character of its policy and the aerial bombing of North and South Vietnam underline it. This policy was rejected as too dangerous by the majority of voters in the last presidential elections. Yet it is just this policy that the administration follows today. 324

Perhaps the most common use of an argument based on what the audience considers probable is the use of the


epithet for invective. For example, when the propagandists refer to the United States as "interventionists," "Imperialists," or "monopolists," the labels will be accepted by those who believe that nations will usually act in their own self-interest.

_{An Estimate of Johnson's Diplomatic Rhetoric_}

Looking back over the panorama of Johnson's international rhetoric on Vietnam, we have found some lack of evidence, a few misleading statements, and some ambiguities. Yet, as a whole, it is not Johnson's content which has interfered with the international acceptance of the ideas for which he has sought belief and support. His arguments have not been without reason, and they have been charged with energy from appeals to basic motives. Further, his speeches have been skillfully organized. Actually, with a battery of competent advisers, research assistants and writers at his call, any President of the United States should be able to produce above average speech texts.

Nor has Johnson's lack of success in rhetoric of diplomacy been due to his shortcomings in delivery. For due to the two-step flow of international communication through translators, the mass media, and opinion leaders, the effect of delivery, good or bad, is often lost on the foreign populace.

Primarily, Lyndon Johnson has been a victim of the conception of America in today's world. Granted, his
political techniques of manipulation have been noised abroad as they have been through this country, and his character, as leader of the nation, has become part of the nation's image. There have been, however, other liabilities in the impression America gives those abroad, from which his rhetorical success has suffered. These have been due, not to the defects in Johnson, but to differences in cultures. James Reston has given us an excellent example of how cultural conflicts have made it difficult for Johnson to convince some national leaders that America does not want to stay in Vietnam:

'It is easy to understand the doubts of the colonial nations and of the officials in Hanoi and elsewhere who have suffered under colonialism in the past. They simply cannot believe that the United States would fight such a savage war for a principle, rather than for commercial or military advantages; but this just happens to be the American position. 325

Further, Johnson's problem has been compounded because he not only was appealing to minds having predispositions against America's wealth, military power, and world leadership, but to minds immunized by Communist counter-propaganda which makes use of these predispositions.

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CHAPTER III

THE RHETORIC OF JOHNSON'S DOMESTIC STRATEGY

An Introduction to Johnson's Domestic Rhetoric

Before taking office in 1913, Woodrow Wilson remarked to a friend: "It would be the irony of fate if my administration had to deal chiefly with foreign affairs." Yet, today, a President comes into office understanding that he will spend most of his time and make his most difficult decisions in the field of global politics.\(^1\) Within the last ten years, international leadership—a function once thought to be temporary—has become an everyday part of the American Presidency. In the previous chapter, we examined samples of Lyndon Johnson's efforts in international political rhetoric as he sought to tip the balance of world favor toward his Vietnam policies.

But his global role has placed in a new perspective the relation of the President to domestic public opinion. Before he assumed the obligation to try to lead other nations, the President could afford to follow public opinion by translating editorial sentiment into governmental action.

When international leadership was added, however, new factors came into play. Now, the President's obligation to his national constituency demands that he form public sentiment more than reflect it. On occasion, he must act against immediate popular wishes and then articulate for the public in understandable terms the reason for the action he directed to be taken abroad.

The Vietnam war has demanded that President Johnson explain again and again the heavy American commitment in Southeast Asia. When Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara first visited South Vietnam in April, 1962, the American military contingent there consisted of a few thousand Army advisers and Air Force pilots and three Army helicopter companies. The conflict was then a Vietnamese affair—a war between the Saigon Government and the Viet Cong guerrillas.

In October, 1966, McNamara was making his eighth visit to South Vietnam. The war was no longer a Vietnamese conflict, but primarily a contest between the United States and the Vietnamese Communists. For, by that time, there were 321,500 American servicemen in South Vietnam, about 17,500 more men than the South Vietnamese then had in their regular army, navy, and air force. In addition, there were about 42,000 South Koreans and 4,500 Australian and New Zealand troops under American operation control. Also, aboard the warships of the Seventh Fleet off the coast of

Vietnam there were approximately 45,000 Americans, and in
Thailand 30,000 more—all performing roles directly related
to the Vietnam conflict.\(^3\) By October, 1966, American battle
strength in Vietnam exceeded the Korean War total. The con-
flict there had become the third largest war in United
States history, and the rate of defense expenditures had
risen to over sixty billion dollars a year for the first
time since World War II.\(^4\)

With the growth of the conflict, Lyndon Johnson has
been constrained not only to increase the rhetoric of his
international diplomacy concerning Vietnam, but to devote
more of his domestic addresses, as well, to explaining to
the American people why their men and boys are in Vietnam.
The President has had to be tireless in the domestic defense
of his Vietnam policies. In August, 1966, he told an audi-
ence in Manchester, New Hampshire:

> I think it is only right that we constantly ask
ourselves the question: Why? Why are they there?
I have gone into almost every State in this
Union—I have held more than 70 press conferences
in my 1,000 days in office—I have been on tele-
vision some 40 times—trying to answer that question.
The answer is not simple, for there are times when
the war there seems like a thousand contradictions.
But I think most Americans want to know why Viet Nam
is important.\(^5\)

These remarks imply that Johnson has found the expla-

\(^3\)Ibid.

\(^4\)Boston Globe, October 12, 1966, p. 60.

\(^5\)Complete text appears in Department of State Bul-
letin, September 12, 1966, pp. 368-370; cited hereafter as
Johnson, Manchester.
nation for the war to be a never-ending task. This need for a recurring message has been due to the ephemeral nature of persuasive communication. Watts and McGuire, studying the persistence of induced opinion change, found the persuasive impact of a message and the recall of each of the various aspects of its contents decayed fairly steadily over a six-week postcommunication period. Induced opinion change, it was learned, dropped 69 per cent rectilinearly over the term. 6

But the iterative nature of Johnson's domestic rhetoric has been due also to the wearying nature of a war which will not end. Believing that the North Vietnamese leaders are relying on the hope that the United States will run out of patience with the war before they do, he has continued to appeal for its strong public support. That the President has been seeking continuance of belief, and not merely adoption, is shown by further remarks which he made in his Manchester, New Hampshire, speech: "Our task in this country, in the meantime, is to try to unite our people, to ask them to carry on until the Communists grow weary and until they are willing to turn from the use of force." "Until that day comes," he continued, "America is going to persist. We must persist. Persist we will." 7

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7 Johnson, Manchester, p. 370.
Earlier in the summer, Johnson had the same message for an audience in Omaha, as he chided his critics for the indirect encouragement they were giving the enemy:

Our staying power is what counts in the long and dangerous months ahead. The Communists expect us to lose heart. The Communists expect to wear us down. The Communists expect to divide this nation. The Communists are not happy about the military defeat they are taking in South Viet-Nam.

But sometimes they do get encouraged, as they said this week, about the dissension in the United States of America. They believe that the political disagreements in Washington, the confusion and doubt in the United States, will hand them a victory on a silver platter in Southeast Asia.8

Johnson's persuasion, however, has sought more than continued public acceptance of the American military action in Vietnam. He has attempted, as well, to place a governor upon those who would accelerate the war, desiring a quick and forceful solution through more and stronger action.

An Analysis of Johnson's Domestic Arguments

Without seeking to assign the same particular form of organization to all of Johnson's speeches, we shall examine in three groupings the arguments by which Johnson defended before domestic audiences the American military action in Vietnam.

The American Action as Needful

The President's address at Omaha on June 30, 1966, serves as an excellent sample of his arguments designed to

8Complete text of address delivered in Omaha, Nebraska, appears in Department of State Bulletin, July 25, 1966, pp. 114-119.
show the need for the United States military intervention. He began by saying: "Now I want to point out to you that the conflict there is important for many reasons, but I have time to mention only a few. I am going to mention three specifically."\(^9\)

**The Security of South Vietnam**

Giving his first reason for his defense of South Vietnam, Johnson announced: "We believe that we are obligated to help those whose rights are being threatened by brute force."\(^10\) This argument contains a spoken major premise and conclusion and an implied minor premise. To argue that, because the United States should defend those threatened by force, it should defend South Vietnam was to assume an unspoken minor premise—that South Vietnam is the victim of such force. This type of argument seems to have been characteristic of Johnson's Vietnam rhetoric. Instead of concentrating on evidence for North Vietnamese aggression, Johnson first has allowed the public to confuse the assertion of aggression with the fact of it. Then, from this premise, which most of his constituency has assumed as probable, he has drawn his conclusion. The danger in this type of argument is that an assertion the audience accepts without evidence as likely to be true may not really be probable at all.

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\(^9\)Johnson, Omaha, p. 115.

\(^{10}\)Ibid.
It was not merely Johnson's premise, however, which had come under fire from critics. Some were denying that the United States was obligated to defend the threatened. In the summer of 1966, a new and searching debate on American national priorities was emerging from the Vietnam War. People were beginning to ask if it were right for the nation to concentrate on a war half a world away when much remained to be done at home. Others noted Washington's forty alliances around the globe which involved the promise of military assistance in time of crisis. They had begun to ask if it were not time to limit foreign policy commitments and to temper them with realism.11

Johnson was more than willing to discuss the obligation to protect the threatened who ask for our assistance, believing that he stood a better chance if the debate centered over that issue than he would if the controversy were to call the public's attention to the origin of the hostilities in Vietnam. Therefore, in support of his contention that "the rights of other people are just as important as our own," he argued from comparison, maintaining that there was a parity between the rights of an individual and those of a whole nation:

Individuals can never escape a sense of decency and respect for others; neither can democratic nations. If one man here in Omaha unlawfully forces another to do what he commands, then you rebel against the injustice, because you know it is wrong

11Christian Science Monitor, August 27, 1966, p. 3.
for one man here in Omaha to force another one to do what he wants him to do. Unless human concern has disappeared from all of our values, you also know that it is necessary—I emphasize "necessary"—to help that man that is being forced to defend himself.

This same principle is true for nations—nations which live by respect of the rights of others. If one government uses force to violate another people's rights, we cannot ignore the injustice, the threat to our own rights, the danger to peace in the entire world.

"This is what is happening at this hour in South Vietnam," Johnson asserted, this time making his minor premise more explicit. "The North Vietnamese are trying to deny the people of South Vietnam the right to build their own nation, the right to choose their own system of government." 12

With the average American audience, the appeal to autonomy which Johnson was making should have given strength and energy to his argument, because he was upholding an extension of norm-related behavior. Studies by Lewin 13 and by Kelley and Woodruff 14 tend to show that a change of opinion or behavior is more likely to take place when the idea advocated in the communication is perceived to be in harmony with the group standard. Gray and Wise also remind us of

12 Johnson, Omaha, pp. 115-116.


the importance of national culture in the use of appeals:

Since among various peoples different concepts of social values may and often do lead to the formulation of different habits of thought and action, it may be expected that different motives will develop. Thus, freedom from external restraint, the privilege of choosing one’s own course of action, which is so powerful a motive in one people, may appeal so weakly to another that it can hardly be considered a motive at all.15

The Security of Asia

Johnson's second argument for the defense of South Vietnam upheld the wisdom of an antecedent (the protection given South Vietnam) by praising the consequence (a loss of a sense of futility among the small, threatened countries of Southeast Asia):

A few years ago the nations of free Asia lay under the shadow of Communist China. They faced a common threat, but not in unity. They were still caught up in their old disputes and dangerous confrontations. They were ripe for aggression.

Now that picture is changing. Shielded by the courage of the South Vietnamese, the peoples of free Asia today are driving toward economic and social development in a new spirit of regional cooperation.16

Then, to give his argument clarity and greater emotional force, Johnson employed the kind of contrast that comes from the juxtaposition of contraries:

If South Viet-Nam were to collapse under Communist pressure from the North, the progress in the rest of Asia would be greatly endangered.


16 Johnson, Omaha, p. 16.
And don't you forget that.\textsuperscript{17}

The Security of the World

The third reason Johnson offered for the American military presence in Vietnam linked it to world security by maintaining that Communist aggression there was a test case for their new tactics. "What happens in South Vietnam," he asserted, "will determine whether ambitious and aggressive nations can use guerrilla warfare to conquer their weaker neighbors."\textsuperscript{18}

At first, there appears to be nothing new in the argument as Johnson used it upon this occasion. For, as early as the Johns Hopkins address fourteen months before, he had made the war in Vietnam a test case in the struggle with Asian Communism. On that occasion, he had said: "To withdraw from one battlefield means only to prepare for the next. We must say in Southeast Asia—as we did in Europe—in the words of the Bible: 'Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further.'\textsuperscript{19}

There is, however, an important difference between that argument and this one Johnson employed in Omaha in June, 1966. The Omaha argument drew upon the fact that the Communists in South Vietnam were conducting chiefly a guerrilla operation. It was an example of reasoning from

\begin{itemize}
\item\textsuperscript{17}\textit{Ibid.}
\item\textsuperscript{18}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 116-117.
\item\textsuperscript{19}Johnson, Johns Hopkins, p. 16.
\end{itemize}
circumstances, showing that the characteristics of the Vietnam War were different from those the United States had faced in past confrontations with the Communists:

Sixteen years ago this month, North Korea attacked South Korea. By armed invasion across a national border a Communist country attempted to conquer and overrun its neighbor. The United States of America recognized this kind of aggression immediately, and we acted. North Korean aggression failed. . . .

Today in South Viet-Nam we are witness to another kind of armed aggression.

It is a war that is waged by men who believe that subversion and guerrilla warfare, transported across international boundaries, can achieve what conventional armies could not.

Thus, Johnson was denying that the conflict in Vietnam was evidence that the Korean War had failed as a test case. It had succeeded, he maintained, in proving to the Asian Communists that direct armed invasion would not accomplish their purposes. The Vietnam confrontation, however, was the test case for a new, different type of warfare.

Perhaps Johnson began to make this argument based on a distinction between the two wars in earlier, less refined test-case assertions. Critics had refuted the argument in its original form, demonstrating that no confrontation with the Communists could be called the decisive testing ground since other "tests" soon followed. Only a few weeks before the Omaha address, Random House had published a New Yorker article by Richard Goodwin, former assistant to Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, in which Goodwin argued:

Efforts to justify our presence in Vietnam by

20Johnson, Omaha, pp. 116-117.
elevating it to the ground scale of a decisive “testing ground for the war of liberation” ... are equally unnecessary and also defective. ... Win or lose, we will face similar challenges, just as our success in Greece and Turkey was followed, much later by Soviet intervention in Cuba. Invasion in Korea was halted, and Quemoy and Matsu were bombarded. Firmness in the Formosa Strait did not halt efforts at subversion in places as remote as the Congo and the Central African Republic. ... This war is another episode ... in a long and continuing conflict.21

The distinction which Johnson made at Omaha, between wars of direct aggression and warfare by guerrilla tactics, may have been, also, his answer to criticism which Hans J. Morgenthau had levied against his Johns Hopkins address in April, 1965. Morgenthau had argued that the threat in the Middle East and Asia was not one of direct military aggression, but one of political subversion. He then had concluded: “Military containment is irrelevant to that threat and may even be counter productive.”22 Making use of Morgenthau’s distinction between threats, Johnson substituted guerrilla warfare in place of political subversion.

The Subsequent Addresses

The three reasons which Johnson offered at Omaha for the defense of South Vietnam were repeated in the same order as the summer continued. In Indianapolis on July 23, he maintained, first, that it was necessary for South Vietnamese security. “The evidence is clear,” he asserted, "The guer-


rilla war in South Vietnam was inspired by Hanoi; it was organized in Hanoi; it is directed in Hanoi; and it is today being supplied from Hanoi." "If success had come," he continued, "then the spoils would have come to Hanoi. South Vietnam would be securely in the orbit of the Communists."23

Again, as in the Omaha address, Johnson's argument was characterized by assertion without backing. His amplification gave force to his point, not by adding evidence, but by using redundancy and word repetition, while, at the same time, it built toward a climax.

His second justification for defending South Vietnam again paralleled the one given at Omaha; it tied American presence in Vietnam to the security of Asia. "A victory for the Communists in South Vietnam," Johnson alleged, "will be followed by new ambitions in Asia." Completing what has come to be known as the "falling dominoes" argument, he continued: "The leaders of free Asian nations know this better than anyone. If South Vietnam falls, then they are the next targets."24 Once again, in lieu of methodical argument, he allowed the audience to supply the backing, itself, from what it had become conditioned, over the last two decades, to believe was probable. To assist them, Johnson provided a maxim: "The Communists have taught us that aggression is


24 Ibid.
like hunger: It obeys no law but its own appetite."

The third reason given at Indianapolis was also, in essence, the same as the one he had offered in Omaha: Protection of South Vietnam was necessary for world security. "A Communist victory in South Vietnam," said Johnson, "would inspire new aggression in the rest of the world." For proof, he turned to argument from authority, quoting from what he avowed was a statement by "North Vietnam's top military commander." The excerpt, read by Johnson, called the Vietnam conflict "the model of the national liberation movement of our time." It continued: "If the special warfare that the United States imperialists are testing in South Vietnam is overcome, then it can be defeated anywhere in the world."

To insure that no one miss what he intended that they see in the statement, and to supply further emphasis to his argument, Johnson repeated key words from the quotation and added his commentary:

Let me repeat to you those last words: ". . . it can be defeated anywhere in the world."

Now what he really means is this: If guerrilla warfare succeeds in Asia, it can succeed in Africa. It can succeed in Latin America. It can succeed anywhere in the world."

Later in the summer at Manchester, New Hampshire, Johnson relied upon the same three reasons which he had offered earlier at Omaha and Indianapolis. First came the

25 Ibid.
26 Ibid.
27 Johnson, Manchester.
argument concerning the security of South Vietnam. "There are times," Johnson said philosophically, "when the strong must provide a shield for those on whom the Communists prey." Again, as at Omaha, Johnson reasoned from the predicted consequence to show the wisdom of the antecedent:

We can also expect elections to be held and we can expect the Vietnamese to continue to put down foundations of self-government. To give them time to build is one reason that we are all there.28

Turning next to the security of Asia, Johnson argued:

I do not have to remind you that our pledge was in fact given by treaty to uphold the security of Southeast Asia. Now that security is in jeopardy because people are trying to use force to take over South Viet-Nam. When adversity comes is no time to back down on our commitment, if we expect our friends around the world to have faith in our word.29

The treaty to which he was referring was, evidently, the SEATO agreement. The outbreak of the Korean War in 1950, in an area in which the United States had entered into no collective security arrangements, convinced the State Department of the need of Asian security pacts designed to prevent the potential aggressor from miscalculating the United States reaction to moves threatening American interests. Therefore, in 1951, the United States concluded a tripartite agreement with Australia and New Zealand, and in 1954, signed the Southeast Asian Collective Defense Treaty with eight nations. Secretary Rusk has explained why the

28 Ibid., p. 370.
29 Ibid.
SEATO agreement functions to protect South Vietnam:

The Southeast Asian Treaty was designed to protect from aggression not only the parties to it, but also the States and territory unanimously designated in a protocol—the States of Cambodia and Laos, and the free territory under the jurisdiction of the State of Vietnam.30

In March, 1966, Arthur Krock of the New York Times wrote that Johnson's argument presenting SEATO as the basis for the commitment to South Vietnam represented a sudden shift to a new position.31 Perhaps in echo of Krock, Richard Goodwin's essay on Vietnam, published in the late spring of 1966, declared:

One can search the many statements of Presidents and diplomats in vain for any mention of the SEATO Treaty. Time after time, President Johnson set forth the reasons for our presence in Vietnam, but he never spoke of the requirements of the treaty, nor did anyone at the State Department suggest that he should, even though they surely reviewed every draft statement.32

Yet, both Krock and Goodwin were mistaken. Johnson's use of the SEATO argument was not new; he had made it before, and much earlier. For example, in a news conference on March 20, 1965, he had said:

We are doing everything we know to try to bring about freedom for South Vietnam and peace in that area. . . . That was the policy provided for in the SEATO Treaty that passed the Senate 82 to 1, which obligates us to the commitments

30 Statement before the Senate Preparedness Subcommittee, Department of State Newsletter, September, 1966, pp. 2-3, 36.
32 Triumph or Tragedy, p. 19.
we have made there.33

While Johnson's argument, then, is not new, it does overlook one important phrase in the SEATO agreement. The treaty pledges the United States, in case of an armed attack on a member (or protocol state, in the case of Vietnam), to take military action "in accordance with the constitutional processes." In regard to these last words, Chalmers M. Roberts, foreign affairs columnist for the Washington Post, has noted:

That last phrase, common to all but the NATO treaty, was a bow to Congress' jealously guarded prerogative to "declare war," even though such declarations went out of fashion when Hitler invaded Poland in 1939. Yet it has been disregarded in Vietnam, although the treaty itself has been cited by Secretary of State Dean Rusk as justification for policy made largely for other reasons.34 That same phrase could have served, as well, as an "escape hatch" to Johnson had he decided he did not want to involve American forces in South Vietnam. He could have refused military action, arguing that he was bound to observe this nation's "constitutional processes." It would appear, however, that while the means used to order protection of the South Vietnam regime violates the part of the letter of the SEATO treaty, it is in harmony with the spirit of the pact. Johnson's final argument in Manchester, New Hampshire, showing the need to defend South Vietnam was, again,


parallel to those of the Omaha and Indianapolis speeches. If aggression were to succeed there, it would be, declared the President, "a blow to the peace in the entire world." Johnson's style was less pedestrian and more sublime than usual as he argued from historical analogy:

Few People realize that world peace has reached voting age. It has been 21 years now since that day on the U.S.S. Missouri in Tokyo Bay when World War II came to an end. Perhaps it reflects poorly on our world that men must fight limited wars in order to keep from fighting larger wars; but that may be the condition that exists today. . . . We are trying to follow that policy in Viet-Nam because we know that the restrained use of power has for more than 21 years prevented the wholesale destruction that the world faced in 1914 and faced again in 1939. 35

The very fact that a whole generation of voters has had no experience of Hitler's aggression weakened the emotional effect of the World War II analogy with that group of Johnson's audience. Much of the strength of the argument from history lies in the fact that, for one term of the comparison, the audience already has the desired feeling, which then may be readily directed to the other term. But among those who have just reached voting age, there is no experience by which they can judge the Vietnam war. In regard to this, columnist Sydney J. Harris has remarked:

To teen-agers, the Depression might as well have happened during the days of Buffalo Bill, and even the Second World War and Hitlerism are as remote to their minds and imaginations as the Punic War and Hannibal; and what is distressing is that those who took part in either are incapable of transmitting

35Johnson, Manchester, p. 369.
the emotional core of these experiences to the young. 36

Some Observations

Our investigation of Johnson's speeches has revealed three basic assertions by which Johnson maintains the need for the United States military intervention in South Vietnam: It is necessary for South Vietnam's security; it is essential for Asia's security; it is necessary for the world's security. Of these three reasons advanced by Johnson, the first two are plausible. Setbacks received by the South Vietnamese army prior to 1965 demonstrated clearly that without the protection of American troops and firepower, South Vietnam's security was a myth. As for Johnson's second point, it seems reasonable that should the United States be forced to withdraw from Vietnam there would be changes threatening Asian security. As C. L. Sulzberger of the New York Times, writing from Hong Kong, has explained:

From Japan to India a trend would set in for accommodation with U.S. enemies. Thailand would re-examine its commitments, Asian neutralists would again adore the political East, and Communist fortunes in Indonesia could rise once more in sanguinary retribution.37

In addition to the demoralizing effect which an American withdrawal would have on small non-Communist nations, there would be an accompanying new motivation among the Communists. This is not to argue that, if Vietnam fell,  

37 Des Moines Register, May 12, 1966, p. 12.
other nations would topple like dominoes, until the United States was thrown back to Pearl Harbor or to the West Coast. It is to say, however, that a Communist success in Vietnam probably would increase the chances of having to face the same kind of situation again. As New York Times writer, Tom Wicker, has observed:

There is enough truth in the domino theory that it ought to be restated as perhaps the "open door theory." That is, if the technique of internal subversion assisted by a neighboring nation were successful in South Vietnam, it would greatly encourage the use of the same technique for attempted conquest elsewhere in the world.38

Confirming these observations by columnists Sulzberger and Wicker, Henry Kissinger, Professor of Government at Harvard University and consultant to the National Security Council under former President Kennedy, has viewed any failure of the United States to defend South Vietnam as a blow to the morale of Asian nations. He wrote:

In Southeast Asia, it would demoralize those countries—especially Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand—that have supported our effort. The long-term orientation of such countries as India and Japan will reflect to a considerable extent their assessment of America's willingness and ability to honor its commitments. For example, whether or not India decides to become a nuclear power depends crucially on its confidence in American support against Chinese nuclear blackmail.39

Further, he pointed out, an American withdrawal under conditions that could plausibly be represented as a Communist

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39 "What Should We Do in Vietnam?" Look, August 9, 1966, p. 26. (Kissinger writes as part of a symposium of foreign affairs experts.)
victory would give new weight and status to the more belligerent states within the international Communist movement:

Within the Communist world, Chinese attacks on Soviet "revisionism" have focused on the Russian doctrine of peaceful coexistence. A victory by a third-class Communist peasant state over the United States must strengthen the most bellicose factions in the internecine Communist struggles around the world.40

Johnson's third point, however, is not as convincing. He has told his audiences that United States unilateral military action is essential to prevent World War III, and that the fearful alternative is a return to the American isolationism of the past which enabled the first two world wars to happen.

There is, however, an essential difference between the naked national aggression of German and Japanese imperialism and the so-called "wars of liberation" proclaimed by Communist propaganda. The latter are attempts to exploit, in unstable areas, the social unrest arising from a long history of injustice and oppression. To identify this process with Hitler's aggressions is to misread the past or misunderstand the present.

The conflict in Vietnam hardly seems to be a North Vietnamese attempt to march across Asia and the Pacific. Yet, in an indirect way, the continued United States protection of South Vietnam may be necessary for world security. Herman Kahn, Director of the Hudson Institute—a nonprofit organization conducting research in the area of national

40Ibid.
security—has argued that our ability to support world
security without the use of excessive force depends in great
measure upon the faith that other nations place in American
commitments. Germany, Japan, India, and Israel, for example,
have restrained their activities in obtaining nuclear weap-
on, partly because of the pledges the United States has
made to them. Therefore, Kahn has reasoned:

To renege on commitments as serious as those we
have made in Southeast Asia could be a major step
in a disastrous erosion of faith in the United
States. If faith in our commitments became so weak
that we would have to give excessive commitments in
order to make them believable—for example, giving
minor states control over our policy (as the British
had to do with Poland in 1939)—then the likelihood
of major escalation, such as a war with China, would
be dangerously increased.41

Johnson's argument would be logically strengthened,
it would seem, if instead of comparing the North Vietnamese
role in the conflict to the attempt of Nazi Germany to domi-
nate the world, he would reason as Kahn does. Yet, admit-
tedly, while Johnson has chosen the less scholarly argument
to show the need of defending South Vietnam, he has presented
the one which probably would have more effect upon the emo-
tions of the older adults among his constituents.

One variation of Johnson's world security argument
appeared a few days after the New Hampshire address as the
President spoke on August 30 to the national convention of
the American Legion in Washington. Alluding to statements
by Red Chinese defense minister Lin Piao—in which he

41 Ibid., p. 29.
predicted the world's impoverished nations would isolate and
dethrone the wealthy nations just as China's peasants iso-
lated and overthrew China's cities--Johnson contended that
China was threatening to ignite other "wars of liberation"
and that the United States could not afford to gamble that
these threats were "only rhetoric." Communist action in
Vietnam, he said, "is meant to be the opening salvo in a
series of bombardments" and, therefore, must be repulsed.42

While Johnson's argument may be oversimplified in
attributing some sort of "master plan" for world revolution
to Communist China, it has its elements of truth. China
evidently is available to give assistance and encouragement
to Communist insurgencies, as she has done in Vietnam. As a
center of revolutionary fervor in Asia, she does serve as a
supply source and occasional training ground for dissatisfied
workers and intellectuals in other lands. If China may not
be the director of world revolutions, she is a beacon light.
Dr. Benjamin I. Schwartz, Professor of History and Govern-
ment at Harvard and an associate in Harvard's East Asia Re-
search Center, gave basically this picture of Red China's
intentions in a recent discussion of the Lin Piao document:

Much has been made of a certain document of
foreign policy which emerged just last year, the
so-called Lin Piao document, as a kind of blue-
print of China's future foreign policy. I would
say that this document is indeed a blueprint of
China's hopes--a hope for how the world may de-
velop in the immediate future. What the hope in-
volves is the infection of the whole non-Western

world with the Chinese model for making revolution, the hope there may arise in the entire world, in Africa, Asia, Latin America, Communist parties which accept guidance from Peking.

This hope is based on certain judgments about history and the situation in these areas: that the situation is ripe for such revolution. If such revolutions occur, the Chinese, I think, are prepared to help in any way they can. There can be no doubt that their optimum hopes are inimical to us and our world position. They would, at best, like to nullify or at least reduce our position in the world.  

With the black and white notions of a Chinese "master plan" put aside, the basic American interests to South Vietnam still appear reasonable. They are to make the American commitment in Vietnam strong enough to discourage further "wars of liberation" and to assist Asian social and economic development to the point where Chinese revolutionary example has little attraction for others. Johnson, it seems, could strengthen his argument for the defense of South Vietnam if he would refrain from the oversimplification which he feels is necessary if he is to rally American support for the war. Rhetoric, the President occasionally fails to remember, is designed to give effectiveness to truth, not to the speaker.

The American Action as Honorable

The President's Omaha address, on June 30, 1966, was a model in more than one way. For in addition to providing

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43 Dr. Schwartz, a recognized specialist in Far Eastern studies, holding four degrees from Harvard University, is the author of *Communist China and the Rise of Mao*, and two other books on related topics. The excerpt, from a speech by Dr. Schwartz at Temple University, appears in *Temple University Alumni Review*, Winter, 1966, p. 22.
a pattern of those arguments upon which Johnson had settled to show the need for the defense of South Vietnam, it also contained a sample of those methods by which he upheld the honor of the American action in Vietnam. By three arguments Johnson demonstrated the ethos of the Administration.

**Argument by Narration**

To focus attention upon the probity and good will of his Administration, the President recalled one example of his efforts to obtain negotiation:

> For 37 long days we halted bombing in the North in the hope that the government in Hanoi would signal its willingness to talk instead of fight. But I regret to tell you that no signal came during those 37 days.

> In many more ways than I can now tell you here in Omaha, we have explored and we are continuing to explore avenues to peace with North Viet-Nam. But as of this moment, their only reply has been to send more troops and to send more guns into the South.44

> In Manchester, New Hampshire, a few weeks later, he recounted some of the events of the thirty-seven-day pause, selecting and explaining them in such a way as to effect his purpose:

> We went to more than 40 countries with Ambassador (Arthur J.) Goldberg and Ambassador (W. Averell) Harriman as our spokesmen, Secretary Rusk and Mr. (McGeorge) Bundy and Secretary Mann (Undersecretary for Economic Affairs Thomas C. Mann), saying to those people that if you will come to a conference table we are ready to sit down and talk instead of fight. Our planes were grounded. Our men were told to sit there and conduct no further raids until they received further orders. And for more than 37 days, while we

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44Johnson, Omaha, p. 118.
pleaded with 40 countries—every place we went we received favorable response except from the two countries that could do something about it. North Viet-Nam and Red China.45

In both of these excerpts, we find Johnson using contrast; beside the American initiative was placed the Communist rejection. They were, therefore, efforts to associate the Administration with what is virtuous and to link the Communists with what is not. Both sought to place responsibility for failure to begin negotiations upon the North Vietnamese. As Johnson expressed it: "They hold the passkey to the room where the peace talks can take place."46

Argument by Assurance

The second way in which the President attempted to demonstrate his Administration's integrity and good will was to offer assurances of America's good intent in Vietnam and disavowals of selfish motives. He said in Omaha:

Our objective in Viet-Nam is not war. Our objective is peace.
There is nothing that we want in North Viet-Nam. There is nothing we want from North Viet-Nam.
There is nothing we want in Communist China. There is nothing the American people want from Communist China.47

In Manchester, he repeated his message:

To those who oppose us, I want to repeat what we have said so often to other nations in the world, to our leaders here at home that we seek neither territory nor bases, we seek neither economic domination

45 Johnson, Manchester, p. 370.
46 Ibid.
47 Johnson, Omaha, p. 118.
nor military alliance in Viet-Nam. We seek for the people of Viet-Nam, North and South, only what they want for themselves.48

Here, then, were attempts to show good will by identifying the United States with the problems of the Vietnamese and to establish character by removing unfavorable impressions of the nation and its cause.

Argument by Precedent

In addition to demonstrating that his Administration was well disposed toward the Vietnamese and exemplified high character, Johnson hoped to assert the wisdom of his action by linking it to the policies of his predecessors. At Omaha he pictured himself as merely carrying out, in Vietnam, what others had already obligated the United States to do.

Other Presidents have made the commitment. I have reaffirmed it. The Congress has confirmed it. I plan to do all that I can in my own limited way to see that we not permit 14 million innocent men, women, and children to fall victims to a savage aggression.49

Yet, Johnson's assertion that he was fulfilling a commitment made by past administrations was designed not merely to argue the presumption of its practicability but of his innocence, as well.

Johnson had made this same argument many times before, and not always without rebuttal from one of his predecessors who could still answer for himself. In February and

48Johnson, Manchester, p. 370.

49Johnson, Omaha, p. 119.
March of 1965, for example, he had asserted, in news conferences, that the policy he was following was the one which had been established by Eisenhower in 1955.\textsuperscript{50} Eventually, Eisenhower demurred, contending his Administration had committed the United States to aid, not to military programs.\textsuperscript{51} Ignoring Eisenhower's qualification, Johnson continued to make his original argument, declaring the American involvement was fulfilling a pledge made by the American people, Congress, and three United States Presidents.\textsuperscript{52}

In summary, by reference to past action and future intention, Johnson has maintained the American action in Vietnam to be honorable in origin, in objectives, and in method—to be characterized by wisdom, noble character, and good will.

The American Action as Successful

But the wisdom of Johnson's policies depend not merely upon their origin; they must prove successful. Again, the Omaha address provides a model of the more common arguments by which the President sought to demonstrate the success of his Vietnam endeavors.


\textsuperscript{52} Ibid., December 21, 1965, p. 1.
**Success in Military Action**

Seeking continued backing of the war effort, Johnson hoped at Omaha to keep morale high:

> We have learned from their prisoners, their defectors, and their captured documents that the Hanoi government really thought a few months ago that conquest was in its grasp. But the free men have rallied to prevent this conquest from succeeding.\(^{53}\)

Declaring that the "fighting allies" had "already begun to turn the tide," Johnson announced that the casualties of the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese forces were "three times larger than those of the South Vietnamese and their allies."\(^{54}\)

In view of past statements made by some within the Government, one wonders how much credence to give to the President's assurance that the tide had begun to turn. On May 7, 1963, a Pentagon spokesman, Assistant Secretary of Defense Arthur J. Sylvester, said that "the corner definitely had been turned" toward victory in South Vietnam.\(^{55}\) Yet, two years later, Johnson deemed it necessary to raise the United States military commitment by 50,000 and to double draft rates.\(^{56}\) Again, on October 27, 1965, Vice President Humphrey declared in a news conference that the tide had "turned."\(^{57}\)

At that time the American servicemen in Vietnam totaled

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\(^{53}\)Johnson, Omaha, p. 117.

\(^{54}\)Ibid.


\(^{57}\)Ibid., October 28, 1965, p. 6.
Yet, another year later, the number had grown to 331,000.59

**Success in Political Reform**

Turning to a second front in his Vietnam war, Johnson reminded his Omaha audience: "We are backing the Vietnamese not only in their determination to save their country; we are supporting their determination to build, to construct a modern society in which the Government will be their government, reflecting the will of the people in South Vietnam."60 It was necessary, therefore, for him to present some evidence of growing success in this area of political reform.

The evidence was abundant, asserted Johnson: "All you have to do is look at that map and you will see independence growing, thriving, blossoming, and blooming."61 But the President's verbal map did not quite fit the actual territory. For weeks Buddhists and students in South Vietnam had been rioting against the Saigon government and its Washington protector. The South Vietnamese prime minister, General Ky, had tried to eliminate his rival, General Thi, in the northern domain that bordered on North Vietnam, and demonstrators had taken to the streets in support of their

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60 Johnson, Omaha, p. 117.
local leaders. "The internal conflict," said the New York Times, had "cut a deep chasm in South Vietnam." The political agitation showed there was no cohesive national spirit. South Vietnam was still a tangle of competing individuals, regions, and religions—all dominated by military warlords. Viewing this situation, James Reston had written of what he termed "the gap between the evangelistic rhetoric of official Washington and the political realities of the world." The question to ask, explained Reston, was not whether the pictures in Johnson's mind were bad, but "whether they are related to the world as it is."

Unable to close his eyes to the political confusion, Johnson had sought to provide a rationale for it. He explained in a Memorial Day address that seldom in history had a people been called upon—as the South Vietnamese then were—"to build a nation and wage war against externally supported aggression at the same time." Noting that South Vietnam had "deep in its history strong regional feelings" which had "sometimes been in conflict," Johnson continued:

As they try to forge a constitutional system these differences emerge sharply. Various groups clash as they seek to influence the shape of things to come. Turmoil results.

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64 Ibid.
66 Ibid.
By the time of his Omaha address, however, he had ceased to explain and had begun to minimize the upheavals.

For the past 2 months the political struggles in South Viet-Nam have been dramatized in our newspapers. They have been published on our television screen every day.

But all during this time the Vietnamese citizens, representing every important group in the society, have been quietly meeting in orderly assembly. They have formulated rules for their elections. The rules have been accepted with only minor modifications by the Government in Saigon.67

In September, Johnson followed up this early summer position by hailing the results of the South Vietnam elections for a constituent assembly. They represented, he said, "real progress and growing momentum" in that nation's economic and social rehabilitation.68 Actually, however, the election was more of a test of political predominance than a political popularity contest between the Saigon Government and the National Liberation Front or a plebiscite on whether the populace desired a representative constitutional government. Many South Vietnamese, it was acknowledged, went to the polls not out of choice, but because of a desire not to offend village chiefs carrying out the Government's orders for a large turnout.69 Therefore, Charles Mohr of the New York Times had commented:

It is control that is really being tested in the balloting. If the Government can turn out a satisfying large vote, it will tend to prove that

67 Johnson, Omaha, p. 118.
69 Ibid., September 13, 1966, p. 3.
it has effective administrative control over a majority of the nation.70

And yet, Johnson's avowals of success in South Vietnam have not been without qualification. He warned his Omaha audience, for example, not to expect a quick end to the fighting:

No one knows how long it will take. Only Hanoi can be the judge of that. No one can tell you how much effort it will take. None can tell you how much sacrifice it will take. No one can tell you how costly it will be.71

Again, upon arriving in Los Angeles after a Honolulu meeting with the Prime Minister of the Saigon government, he had the same disclaimer for instant success in political reform. "Progress is not going to be easy," he said, "I tell you that in many fields, it is not even going to be quick."72

Johnson's qualifications were important. Several studies have tended to show that, to avoid low morale, a leader should expect those under him to expect less. In a study conducted by the Army, it was discovered that the men most dissatisfied with the promotion system were in branches of the military which had the highest rate of promotion, while those in branches which have the lowest promotion rate were the most satisfied. To explain this finding, Army researchers resorted to a "relative deprivation" hypothesis, which was based on the principle that satisfactions are, to

71 Johnson, Omaha, p. 118.
some extent, functions of expectations. Testing the relative deprivation hypothesis in a context simulating one studied by the Army researchers, Spector found that industrial personnel managers might be wise to underplay, rather than overplay, the opportunities for advancement in their organizations. He concluded that "a person's satisfaction with his state of affairs is partly a function of how certain he felt this state would come about." "Morale," he continued, "does not appear to be adversely affected by failure to achieve an attractive goal if the person's expectations of achieving this goal were low." Low expectations, he explained, seem to act as a "buffer" to morale when an attractive event does not come to pass.

It is likely, however, that many in Johnson's audiences will hear his pictures of progress without hearing the qualifications. At least one study found that qualifications were forgotten more rapidly than message main-points. The unqualified messages had consistently greater persuasive impact than the qualified.

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An Analysis of Johnson's Domestic Opposition

Johnson's explanation of his Vietnam policies has not been without its opposition. James Reston has explained why this opposition naturally has arisen:

It is obvious that all the major problems in the field of foreign policy are now increasingly complex and subject to honest differences of opinion. Therefore every course of action is open to debate and any course of action can be condemned. . . . The old classical war of open invasions across marked frontiers in defiance of international agreements raised few problems of debate. After Pearl Harbor there was only one honorable course of action open to the nation, but Vietnam is a much more complicated proposition, subject to many different interpretations and possible responses.76

Johnson's opposition has come from many and varied quarters. About the only thing in which most of the critics of his Vietnam policies agree, among themselves, is that all are opposed to the way the President is handling the situation. Thus, the critics constitute a group, only in the sense that as the individual path of each conflicts with Johnson on the Vietnam issue, it naturally will intersect briefly with other paths which move in different directions, but which also happen to disagree with the Administration's action in Vietnam.77


Opposition from Liberals

With the escalation of the Vietnam war, liberalism has taken a new direction in the United States. Indeed, Vietnam has become one of the chief factors in determining one's liberal credentials.

Through the years, liberalism has taken some strange turns. The laissez-faire liberalism of the late nineteenth century stressed freedom of opportunity for the individual. The liberalism of the New Deal era, on the other hand, featured an activist Federal government which began to play an increasing role in solving economic problems. Internationalism and the advocacy of world involvement also became a mark of the liberal in the 1930's. In mid-twentieth-century America, especially in the 1960's, internationalism with non-involvement appears to have become a standard by which one gains credentials as a liberal. 78

Origins of the War

Some of the opposition to the position of the Johnson Administration has centered around the origins of the hostilities in Vietnam. Some have argued forcefully that the war was, in the beginning, largely a civil war, being fought on both sides mainly by South Vietnamese, until the United States and North Vietnam both began sending in regular armies. These critics have maintained that, by failing

to effect land reform, by abolishing the popular election of
village chiefs, and by harrassing and even executing those
who dared criticize his regime, Ngo Dinh Diem drove the
South Vietnamese into rebellion in 1958, two years before
the North Vietnamese resolved to send aid. 79

In the main, the Johnson Administration has tended
to scoff at arguments that the conflict began as a civil war.
To them, the Viet Cong are simply an arm of the North Viet-
namese Communist Party. Making no public attempt to explain
or refute evidence presented by those disputing the war's
origin, Johnson has relied upon naked assertion and the his-
torical analogy of North Korean aggression in 1950. Note,
for example, these devices in his approach to this point in
the Omaha address:

The warfare in South Viet-Nam was started by
the government of North Viet-Nam in 1959.
It is financed, it is supported, by an in-
creasing flow of men and arms from the North into
the South. It is directed and it is led by a
skilled professional staff of North Vietnamese,
and it is supported by a very small minority of
the population of South Viet-Nam.
The military tactics are different. The na-
ture of the fighting is different. But the objec-
tive is the same as we found it in Korea. The
objective is what? The objective is to conquer an
independent nation by the force and power of arms. 80
Might makes right, so think these Communist invaders.

79 Two of the best-known exponents of this view are
Bernard B. Fall, The Two Vietnams: A Political and Military
History (5th rev. ed.; New York: Praeger Publications,
1965); and Jean Lacouture, Vietnam: Between Two Truces (New

80 Johnson, Omaha, p. 117.
Yet, the recurring boil of riots and demonstrations in South Vietnam indicates that there is serious internal dissension there, giving credence to the civil war theory held by Johnson's critics. The most plausible assessment of the role of Communism in Southeast Asian developments is that it is not the prime mover in the transitions taking place, but has served, rather, as a catalyst for many disquieting things which have occurred there. The growth of Communism has served as a crucial ingredient for the unlocking of revolutionary sentiments. These sentiments were latent; something was needed to unleash them. 81

Methods of Saving South Vietnam

Some liberal critics, believing that South Vietnam must be protected, have called for policy revisions in various forms—all aimed at substituting for increasing warfare another method of saving South Vietnam. Several have favored neutralization. Noting that not many Americans would challenge Johnson's statements that the United States should not break its pledge to South Vietnam, the New York Times remarked, "But what is clearly open to contention is whether the method chosen is one that the United States and South Vietnamese people are capable of implementing successfully." The editorial then called for neutralization of the area

because the South Vietnamese had refused to stabilize their government and fight. In a Senate speech, Senator William Fulbright has proposed accord with China and the neutralization of all Southeast Asia as a way to resolve the conflict. In October, 1966, the same recommendation was made in a study report prepared for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee by four Princeton University professors. They maintained that neutralization might be the only practical alternative to maintaining large American military forces in South Vietnam for twenty years or more.

Other moderate critics of the Administration's Vietnam policy have not questioned its proclaimed purposes of resistance to Communist aggression and self-determination for South Vietnam. They have questioned, however, the theory that the way to achieve these objectives is to intensify the war. One alternative has been set forth by political scientist James MacGregor Burns of Williams College. He has proposed stabilizing a section of contiguous territory "that would be large enough for the South Vietnamese to establish a politically, militarily, and economically viable nation." Similarly, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., former White House staff member and now a professor at City University of New York, has argued for a program of limiting our

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83 Ibid., March 2, 1966, pp. 1, 4.
84 Ibid., October 10, 1966.
85 San Francisco Chronicle, September 13, 1966, p. 22.
forces, actions, and objectives, maintaining that a stalemate is "a precondition for negotiation." 86

Results Worth the Efforts

An appraisal of anticipated results has formed part of the criticism of Johnson's liberal opposition. Gray and Wise have urged that, if an appeal for action is to be effective, "the end-result must be shown to be worth the effort it takes to achieve it." 87 Some domestic critics of the American involvement in Vietnam have maintained that its eventual fruit will be worthless in comparison to the loss of life and property entailed by the war.

Neil Sheehan of the New York Times has expressed the fear that a South Vietnamese victory would only entrench the "mandarins drawn from the merchant and land-owning families" who are now collaborating with the Americans, as they did with the French, in order to save their property and privileges. Sheehan has charged that all of the rent-reduction and land reform laws promulgated at the urging of American advisers have been sabotaged because the regimes have been composed of "men who are members of, or who are allied with, mandarin families that held title to properties


they have no intention of renouncing."\(^{88}\)

Instead of focusing on the Saigon Government's unwillingness to carry out reforms, others have maintained the United States has been keeping alive Saigon regimes that will continue to be unable to govern. For example, James Reston has written:

President Johnson has been confronted for some time with a moral question on Vietnam, but he keeps evading it. The question is this: What justifies more and more killing in Vietnam when the President's own conditions for an effective war effort—a government that can govern and fight in Saigon—are not met? By his own definition, this struggle cannot succeed without a regime that commands the respect of the South Vietnamese people and a Vietnamese army that can pacify the country. Yet the fighting qualities of the South Vietnamese are now being demonstrated more and more against one another.\(^{89}\)

Reston's prediction that no regime in South Vietnam will be able to form a successful government is not without foundation. Mark Franklund of the Los Angeles Times has pointed out that the dozens of small political parties in that country have no true popular base. "Years of persecution," he wrote, "first under the French and later under President Diem, have condemned them to the role of middle-class political cliques." He then concluded:

Given the confusion of Viet Nam's politics and the abuses still ignored by Saigon's policies, the Liberation Front, were a peace to be negotiated, would be the best organized political force in the country with the most clearcut policies. A highly-


placed government supporter estimated the chances of the Liberation Front taking over by default in such circumstances as "fifty-fifty."  

Charles Mohr of the New York Times has written of the same political weakness of the government in Saigon. He reported:

One South Vietnamese official said recently: "Frankly, we are not strong enough now to compete with the Communists on a purely political basis. They are organized and disciplined. The non-Communist nationalists are not—we do not have any large, well-organized political parties and we do not yet have unity. We cannot leave the Vietcong in existence."  

For several observers, therefore, the undesirable political results following the war would not be worth the costs of the conflict.

Effects on the Power of Congress

James Reston has noted that the Vietnam conflict has dramatized Johnson's vast, decisive power in the handling of foreign affairs. He wrote: "The balance of power has shifted in America to the Presidency. . . . Something important has happened in America since Woodrow Wilson went to his grave believing that the President of the United States was paralyzed in the foreign affairs field by the overwhelming power of Congress and public opinion."  

As if in fulfillment of Reston's statement, within a month Johnson noted in

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90 Denver Post, October 2, 1966, p. 23.


92 Ibid., February 2, 1966, p. 34.
a news conference that Congressional dissent to the war had not been widespread, and he defended his right to send troops to Vietnam without a formal declaration of war.\textsuperscript{93}

Then, three days later, the Senate voted 92 to 5 to table (and thereby to kill) the Morse Amendment, which called for a rescinding of the 1964 Congressional resolution that had granted special powers to the President after the Gulf of Tonkin incident.\textsuperscript{94}

While the Congress can still oppose and even defy Johnson on peripheral issues, on the great acts of foreign policy the President is usually free to follow his own desires. Reston has explained why this is so:

As the leader of a world-wide coalition of nations engaged in constant contention with hostile forces in scores of different theaters of action or manoeuvre, he is virtually assured of support once he proclaims his intentions. The Congress, of course, retains its power to deny him the funds to carry out his plans, but it cannot do so without repudiating him in the face of the enemy and assuming responsibility for the crisis that would surely follow.\textsuperscript{95}

Some of the criticism levied against the Johnson Administration in connection with the Vietnam war has been aimed at this growing power of the President and the corresponding decreasing power of the Congress. Fulbright lamented this situation in his "Higher Patriotism" address,\textsuperscript{96}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{93} \textit{Ibid.}, February 27, 1966, p. 36.
\item \textsuperscript{94} \textit{Ibid.}, March 2, 1966, p. 1.
\item \textsuperscript{95} "The President, the Press, and Foreign Policy," \textit{Foreign Affairs}, XLIV (July, 1966), p. 560.
\item \textsuperscript{96} \textit{New York Times}, April 22, 1966, p. 16.
\end{itemize}
and Wayne Morse has charged that Congress is abdicating its right to act as a check on the executive branch of the federal government.\textsuperscript{97}

And yet, it would be unrealistic to assume that the Johnson Administration has carried out some plot to seize more power for itself from Congress. Actually, three natural factors—crisis, communication, and complexity—have worked together to create this Presidential dominance.

\textbf{Crisis.}—In the first place, a crisis psychology usually creates a desire for Presidential leadership in critical times. As Robert S. Hirschfield has remarked: "Confronted with fantastically complex problems and asked to determine the wisdom of policies involving all areas of the world, even the responsible and informed citizen often ends up placing his trust in God and the President."\textsuperscript{98}

Similarly, Sidney Hyman has explained:

We are pretuned to expect that somebody will be in charge—and that the somebody will be one man and not a committee. As long as the President, therefore, shows some capacity for "being in charge"; as long as he exercises a will to decide—even if his decisions are wrong—he has at his command a fund of support among a people who abhor a vacuum perhaps more than nature does.\textsuperscript{99}

Again, Tom Wicker of the \textit{New York Times} has commented

\textsuperscript{97}From a speech delivered at Ohio State University, December 3, 1966.


that the President's greatest strength in keeping domestic
backing for his policies is the "tendency of Americans to
follow their leader and rally around the flag in dangerous
and complex foreign crises." 100 Even Reston, who has com-
plained of Johnson's growing authority, has admitted:

The gravity of the issues since the advent of the cold war and atomic weapons has clearly en-
hanced the power of the President. In fact, I
cannot think of a single major foreign-policy
move any President wanted to make since the Second
World War that he was unable to carry through be-
cause of the opposition of the press or of Congress. 101

Communication.—In addition to the general mood of
crisis, a second factor in the increase of Presidential
hegemony has been the advent of television and radio. The
President's power to shape and lead public opinion has been
vastly increased, because he is now provided with a direct,
unmediated access to the individual citizen. Increasingly,
by the careful use of these communication advantages, he may
set the tone of debate about any national issue. Thus,
Johnson's Johns Hopkins address, delivered on April 7, 1965,
was seen and heard by an estimated sixty million television
viewers. According to reports from the Nielsen Company and
the American Research Bureau, the President attracted rough-
ly 75 per cent of the total available television audience in
the New York area, a figure upon which the national projec-


tions were based.102 Again, his news conference of July 28, 1965, announcing an increase of American manpower in Vietnam and an increase of draft calls was seen by twenty-eight million, according to the projection of a sampling made in twenty-one cities. Trendex, Incorporated, said that 96 percent of the available television audience at that hour had their sets tuned to President Johnson.103

In addition to being able to reach his countrymen from his White House television studio whenever events justify a request for network time, the President alone is in constant communication with almost every other leader in the world. Thus he almost always has the initiative over Congress if he chooses to use the instruments at his command.

Complexity.—Robert A. Dahl, perhaps more than any other, has described how the complexity of world affairs keeps today's Congress from taking the reins of foreign policy from the hands of the President. Dahl, Eugene Myer Professor of Political Science at Yale University, has shown how the average Congressman's lack of direct experience in foreign affairs and lack of access to prime sources of information has prevented him from becoming competent in decisions concerning international affairs.104 Dahl wrote:

Now whatever may be the case in domestic

affairs, it is undoubtedly true that in international politics the executive-administrative branch has much better facilities than does Congress for interpreting reality and formulating means for dealing "correctly" with that reality.

Effects on the Psychology of the Nation

In addition to being concerned about the power of Congress, some of Johnson's Vietnam critics have worried over the effect the war is having on the nation's thinking. Probably, the most outspoken in this respect has been Senator J. William Fulbright, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. On April 28, 1966, he warned a national convention of newspaper executives that the Vietnam war had sparked the beginning of a "war fever" in the country. He charged that, as the war went on and the casualty lists grew longer, the fever would rise, and the patience of the American people would give way to mounting demands for an expanded war, for a lightning blow to end the conflict with a stroke. Moreover, he continued, the United States was beginning to exhibit "signs of that fatal presumption, that overextension of power and mission, which brought ruin to Nazi Germany." 106

A week later, Fulbright sought to explain himself further:

I do not think for a moment that America, with its deeply rooted democratic traditions, is likely

105 Ibid., 103.
to embark upon a campaign to dominate the world in the manner of a Hitler or Napoleon. What I do fear is that it may be drifting into commitments which, though generous and benevolent in intent, are so universal as to exceed even America's great capabilities.\textsuperscript{107}

On May 11, in an address at Princeton University, Johnson replied to Senator Fulbright's charge that the United States is gradually succumbing to an "arrogance of power." He contended that the exercise of power by this nation in this generation had meant not arrogance, but agony. America's power, he maintained, had been used neither willingly nor recklessly in Southeast Asia, but with reluctance and with great restraint.\textsuperscript{108}

Yet, some statements by the Administration have tended to confirm Fulbright's observations. In April, 1965, for example, Johnson spoke in a news conference of "a world in which nations follow where reason and experience lead." He then continued: "How fortunate we are to have been given the power and the courage to match this vision in this enormous time in the life of man."\textsuperscript{109} Perhaps even more revealing was Secretary of State Rusk's reply to the Senate Preparedness Subcommittee in August, 1966, as it weighed the nation's military commitments to more than forty nations. Rusk warned that the United States might be prepared to use its armed forces in "collective defense against armed

\textsuperscript{107}\textit{Detroit News}, May 6, 1966, p. 10-A.
\textsuperscript{109}\textit{Ibid.}, April 18, 1965, p. 2.
aggression" even in the absence of clear cut American defense ties with the nation under attack.\textsuperscript{110}

Effect on the Economy of the Nation

In January, 1966, the \textit{New York Times} reported that rising war costs and their impact on the nation's domestic progress could become a major issue in the next Congressional session.\textsuperscript{111} In May, Dr. Pierre Rinfert, an economist serving as adviser to 134 United States corporations, expressed the opinion that the Vietnam war was making the economy "unstable" and brought a danger that it might "blow its top." A halt in war spending, he said, could shut hundreds of factories and halt projected further plant building which might bring a recession far worse than that of the 1950's.\textsuperscript{112} In what it called "a careful calculation accepted at the highest level," the \textit{Christian Science Monitor} reported in September, 1966, that the war in Vietnam was then costing 2.7 billion dollars a month, far in excess of the 1.5 to 2 billion estimate McNamara had released at the first of the year.\textsuperscript{113} This extra military spending came at a time when the economy was nearly fully employed. The extra demand was just enough to help tip the economy over

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\textsuperscript{110}\textit{San Francisco Chronicle}, August 26, 1966, p. 1.  \\
\textsuperscript{112}\textit{Philadelphia Inquirer}, May 17, 1966, p. 27.  \\
\textsuperscript{113}\textit{St. Louis Post Dispatch}, September 22, 1966, p. 1-E.
\end{flushright}
from stable expansion to mild inflation. In addition, the added pressure from war spending became a contributory factor in an increased demand for credit, bringing a steep rise in interest rates.\textsuperscript{114}

As loans for interest rates became harder to get, and as interest rates climbed on old mortgages and new dwellings, the spending for the war became a source of widespread grumbling. Many began to believe McNamara was muffling the mounting costs of the Vietnam conflict.\textsuperscript{115}

By August, 1966, the President was constrained to discuss the effects the war was having on the economy. In a weekend tour of five New England states, he significantly omitted any reference to the responsibility of the government for inflation. Instead of admitting he should have applied the brake of higher taxes and reduced expenditures earlier in the situation, Johnson placed the blame on management and labor. "I believe that what America needs more than anything else right now is a strong dose of self-discipline," he said at Lewiston, Maine. "Unless there is restraint now," he continued, "unless there is voluntary self-discipline by management and labor, your government will be compelled to act." Most interpreted his veiled warning to mean he was preparing to raise taxes, probably after the election, and

\textsuperscript{114} \textit{New York Times}, October 9, 1966, sec. 4, p. 1.

\textsuperscript{115} \textit{St. Louis Post Dispatch}, September 22, 1966, p. 1-E.
was seeking to blame the action on industry itself.116

Yet, as Johnson's critics began to accuse him of waiting for the election before acting, he sought to gain ethos by constructing a program, before the election, which would have minimal economic but maximum political effects. In a Detroit speech on Labor Day, he said:

We are now seeking ways to cut down all nonessential spending in the private and public sectors.
We are constantly examining carefully the measures which may be overheating the economy and should be postponed. . . .
We will not succumb to the temptation of buying price stability at the expense of growth. We will not stop the economy in its tracks; we will not put men and machines out of work or cut off our efforts to improve living standards and essential public services.

He then recommended suspension of special tax advantages for business, but made no mention of a general tax raise.117

Some critics immediately charged that Johnson had balanced the advice of economists against that of the politicians. Reston wrote, for example:

After months of temporizing with inflation, President Johnson has finally acted, and he has acted in a very Johnsonian way. That is to say, he has dealt with the politics of the problem, but not with the problem itself.
The problem is that we are fighting a very costly war—now running at the rate of $2 billion a month—and pretending that we can do that and finance everything else as before, without much change or sacrifice or inflation or unemployment or restraints on wages and prices. This is ex-

117 St. Louis Post Dispatch, September 11, 1966, p. 3-J.
pecting much more than even Lord Keynes promised.\footnote{118}

As the time for elections drew nearer, however, Johnson still refused to indicate whether there would be a general tax increase in 1967. In answer to a news conference question regarding this, he replied on October 6:

I can't add anything, Sid, to the statements that I made in my message to Congress. I have succinctly summarized it the situation today as the same then. We're waiting to know how much the Congress will let us spend this coming fiscal year.

There are eight of the 15 appropriation bills that have not yet passed. Until they pass we do not know what the bill will be. You can't reduce a bill that you haven't received.\footnote{119}

Johnson's military expenditures have been attacked, also, by critics who feel the Vietnamese war is being financed at the expense of the Great Society and the Negro. The cost of the war, by September, 1966, was running at an annual rate of 14.5 billion dollars, while the Administration, at the same time, expected to spend 9.9 billion dollars on virtually the entire array of welfare programs administered from Washington.\footnote{120} Thus, complaining that in domestic policy "everything is grinding to a stop," Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., wrote:

Lyndon Johnson was on his way to a place in history as a great President for his vision of a Great Society, but the Great Society is now, except for token gestures, dead. The fight for

\footnote{118}{"Watching Politics Rather than Policies," \textit{Ibid.}, September 13, 1966, p. 3-C.}

\footnote{119}{\textit{New York Times}, October 7, 1966, p. 20.}

\footnote{120}{\textit{Ibid.}, September 23, 1966, p. 34-M.}
equal opportunity for the Negro, the war against poverty, the struggle to save the cities, the improvement of our schools—all must be starved for the sake of Vietnam.121

Effects on Vietnam

Aside from being concerned with the effects of the war on various facets of life in the United States, some of the critics among the liberals have frowned upon the effects the hostilities are having on Vietnam. A New York Times editorial has charged that "the positive factors in the picture are few" and that they are "far outweighed by the horrors that a massive war has brought to Vietnam."122 Yet, more have expressed displeasure at the effect America's handling of the situation will have upon the thinking of the Vietnamese. United States intervention, they have charged, has substituted Americans for Frenchmen in the eyes of the rural population. Schlesinger has observed that "many Vietnamese believe that the Americans having embraced Ky so wholeheartedly and supported him so long, are just as responsible as his Government for the recent repressive acts." "Instead of identifying American interests with Ky," he maintained, "we should long since have welcomed a movement toward a civilian regime representing the significant political forces of the country."123 Similarly, Hans Morgenthau,


Professor of Political Science and Modern History at the University of Chicago and a consultant to the Department of Defense and Department of State, has argued that by identifying Communism with revolution, and herself with the forces repressing it, America has become an anti-revolutionary power. 124

Effects on the Future of the World

In a California address, Senator J. William Fulbright has lamented that politicians are concerned with short-term "practical" questions to the neglect of long-term policy issues. 125 Reston had observed, the week before, that the leaders of America "are so overwhelmed by the problem of doing things that they have little time left to think about what they are doing." "Operations dominate purposes," he continued. "The practical men have taken over from the ideological men." 126

Some of Johnson's critics have contended that his Vietnam policies represent an area in which there has been a tragic lack of concern with long-range effects. Schlesinger has complained: "New experiments in escalation are first denied, then discounted, and finally undertaken. As past medicine fails, all we can apparently think to do is

124 From an address delivered at Ohio State University, December 5, 1966.
to increase the dose.\textsuperscript{127} And while Johnson has denied that the United States is caught in a "blind escalation of force,"\textsuperscript{128} Defense Secretary McNamara has told a Senate inquiry that what is foreseeable in the Vietnamese war is only a grim, expanding trial of strength.\textsuperscript{129} Hans Morgenthau has contended that if Johnson is determined to hold to his assumptions—that the war in Vietnam is a test case for "wars of national liberation," and that, in consequence, the fate of Asia, and even the world at large, is at stake—then he can do nothing else but continue to escalate the war in order to see it through to victory.\textsuperscript{130}

**Opposition from "Hawks"**

David Reisman has distinguished between what he calls the "Federal" and the "Confederate" styles in war. The former is more sober, less flamboyant. Instead of beginning a conflict, it is reactive. Instead of glorifying the military, it sees it as a last, punishing resort. Scorning the glamor of daring, it waits for overwhelming logistical supremacy, and slowly and relentlessly finishes matters. The Confederate style, on the other hand, is rash, provoca-


\textsuperscript{128}Address by Johnson at the Freedom House Award Dinner, New York Times, February 24, 1966, p. 16.

\textsuperscript{129}Philadelphia Inquirer, May 12, 1966, p. 1.

\textsuperscript{130}"What Should We Do in Vietnam?" Look (August 9, 1966), 24.
tive, impatient, and daring. Riesman viewed those who have been dissatisfied with incomplete United States involvement in Vietnam as a "nostalgic reminder of our Confederate past." ¹³¹

The 1964 Presidential election campaign provided one of the first examples of the clash between the two philosophies discussed by Reisman. In the spring, before the political conventions, Goldwater seemed to propose the use of low-yield atomic bombs to defoliate jungle areas. ¹³² Later, qualifying his statement, he explained that he had merely repeated, but had not advocated, an idea suggested by competent military people; ¹³³ he then denied that he backed the use of nuclear weapons. ¹³⁴ Without naming Goldwater, Johnson capitalized upon the discussion by criticizing the proposal to use atomic bombs, as he spoke at the United States Coast Guard Academy. ¹³⁵

In August, after Johnson had ordered the bombing of North Vietnamese P–T boat bases, Goldwater regretted that the firm response was only "an incident, not a program nor a new policy; a tactical reaction, not a new winning strategy."


¹³³ Ibid., May 26, 1964, p. 18.

¹³⁴ Ibid., May 27, 1964, p. 22.

¹³⁵ Ibid., June 4, 1964, p. 27.
While explaining that he supported the President's action, Goldwater pledged: "We will not let this one action obscure a multitude of other needed actions. . . . We must, instead, prosecute the war in Vietnam with the object of ending it." 136

Assuming Reisman's "Federal" style, Johnson replied to Goldwater's statements in a speech to the American Bar Association Convention. To the 3,000 lawyers and their guests, he said, "Our firmness at moments of crisis has always been matched by restraint, our determination by care." "Some others," he charged, "are eager to enlarge the conflict. They call upon us to supply American boys to do the job that Asian boys should do. They ask us to take reckless action which might risk the lives of millions." "We will not be provoked into rashness," he promised. 137

It seems clear that the American public in 1964 did not care for the "Confederate" style of war. Reporting on the Opinion Research Corporation's survey of the public during the 1964 Presidential campaign, Thomas W. Bench concluded, "Probably the most damaging to Goldwater was public acceptance of the idea that he was 'trigger happy.'" Of the total public surveyed, only 8 per cent felt the chance of nuclear would be greater under Johnson, while 44 per cent felt the danger would be greater if Goldwater were elected. 138

Yet, in spite of the overwhelming defeat suffered by Goldwater in 1964, some have maintained that Johnson's bigger problem will not be to cope with his liberal critics, but to keep the majority who support his policy from wearying of it under the strain of war and slipping into a mood of militarism which seeks victory at almost any cost.\(^{139}\)

Some Johnson critics, in Reisman's "Confederate" style, have continued to urge escalation of the American effort in the war. The former Air Force chief of staff, for example, retired General Curtis E. LeMay, has reasoned:

If the political objective is to bring our enemy to the conference table, then his arm should be twisted hard enough for him to yell "uncle," and the sooner the better. He can go on fighting indefinitely if we twist just below the threshold of his ultimate endurance.

"It's a losing game," he commented, "for the stronger side to deliberately drag out a conflict."\(^{140}\)

Johnson's critics among the "hawks" are to be found, also, in the Senate. Senator John C. Stennis, chairman of the Military Preparedness subcommittee, has complained about the "peacetime, piecemeal" military approach of the Johnson Administration. The time had come, he said, to appreciate the "growing bigness" of the war, to "put first things first," and to demonstrate "our ability to get the job done."\(^{141}\)

\(^{139}\)See, for example, Tom Wicker, "Vietnam Could Be a Political Ambush for Johnson," *New York Times*, December 12, 1965, sec. 4, p. 3.

\(^{140}\)*Denver Post*, October 4, 1966, p. 11.

In similar vein, Republican Senator Strom Thurmond, of South Carolina, has complained that the United States was "fighting with one arm tied behind our back." Contending that "we can win this war in 190 days and wind it up if we want to," he said, "This war has to be taken to the enemy so they feel it."\(^{142}\)

The President has reacted to this criticism by stressing the need for restraint with the use of power. The Administration’s policy, he has explained, is to "provide the maximum deterrent with a minimum involvement." It would be "the easiest thing we could do," he observed, "to get in a larger war with other nations, and we’re constantly concerned with the dangers of that." His policy, he continued, has been to provide the strength necessary "to prevent the aggressor from succeeding without attempting to either conquer or to invade or to destroy North Vietnam."\(^{143}\)

Yet, the difference between Johnson and his more militant critics has not been one of kind, but of degree. Whereas the debate between the President and some liberals has been one of ends, the clash with the "hawks" has been one of means. And seeking a victory which has not been obtained with the means employed, Johnson has been compelled by the logic of his position to increase the means in order to achieve that elusive end.

\(^{142}\) Ibid.

\(^{143}\) Ibid., October 7, 1966, p. 20.
An Analysis of Johnson's Domestic Effectiveness

David S. Broder, capitol reporter for the Washington Star, has observed: "A candidate's words may ring down the ages, but it is more important that their impact be measured on the voting machines." Measures of the success of Johnson's domestic rhetoric concerning Vietnam may be found in the public response in opinion polls and, perhaps, in the 1966 Congressional elections.

Conclusions from Changes in Public Opinion

According to the Louis Harris poll, from February, 1964, until May, 1966, ratings on Johnson's performance as a President dropped from 83 per cent to 55 per cent. The Gallup poll showed a similar decline from 79 per cent in January, 1964, to 54 per cent in May, 1966. Both of these surveys dealt with the question of how the President was handling his job in general.

Results seem to show, however, that dissatisfaction with the way in which Johnson was handling the Vietnam war was one factor in this decrease in popularity. A Louis Harris survey, for example, in May, 1966, showed that 51 per cent of those polled felt the President had "gone too far on foreign policy and needed to be checked." This represented

an increase of 19 per cent among the dissatisfied since July, 1965.\(^{147}\) Again, by September, the Harris survey found that, while 74 per cent supported the Vietnam war, only 42 per cent approved of Johnson’s handling of the conflict.\(^ {148}\)

An October Harris poll showed the same willingness of the American people to remain in Vietnam. By over two to one, voters would have been inclined to vote against a candidate advocating withdrawal.\(^ {149}\)

Johnson, himself, has interpreted this public acceptance of the war coupled with its lack of confidence in the way he has dealt with it to mean that most of the nation has grown impatient with the slow progress of the war.

Early in March, 1966, C. L. Sulzberger wrote in the New York Times:

> Mr. Johnson professes himself concerned by the American prevalence of hawks. He is not worried by dovelike opposition to his Vietnam policy emanating from the so-called liberal left, for according to White House Naturalists, this maintains a constant population level little more menacing than the pigeons on the capital’s spacious parks.

> What does worry the chief-bird-watcher is the hawks, that growing, angry, rapacious family whose warlike utterances seem to menace what remains of international tranquility. Mr. Johnson believes the U.S. hawk population is rising, and he is concerned.\(^ {150}\)

Discussing the decline of public endorsement which had


\(^{148}\)Columbus Dispatch, September 22, 1966, p. 13-A.


already begun, Sulzberger continued:

According to the President, the shift in support did not, as some people believe, go to the doves . . . instead it went to the hawks. . . . He feels public pressure for a harder line has perceptibly mounted. . . . He has found that each time a decisive and dramatic action is initiated by the United States in Vietnam, the Administration's popular backing promptly rises. 151

In a June, 1966, speech to graduates of the State Department's Foreign Service School, Johnson, himself, linked his diminishing popularity in public opinion polls to a rise in the number of Americans who want him to step up the war to win a quick victory. "Americans often grow impatient," he commented, "when they cannot see light at the end of the tunnel—when policies do not overnight usher in a new order." 152

Interpreting results of his surveys, Dr. George Gallup has agreed with the President. Reporting that his samplings of public opinion indicated that the Republicans would gain twenty-five to thirty-five House seats in the November, 1966, elections, he said: "The American public wants to see an end to the war there. They are growing more concerned as we become more involved, without any evidence we are closer to a peace settlement." 153 A month later, Gallup saw essentially the same picture:

As the war continues, the American people may

151 Ibid.
152 Ibid., June 10, 1966, p. 3.
153 Ibid., September 13, 1966, p. 32.
be getting closer to a "peace at any price" position, regardless of what happens to the "image" of our country. Early pride at our upholding the ideals of the Free World may be stifled by the grim reality of casualty lists. Frustration and discouragement give rise to the desire for quick solutions. Because America is a powerful nation, many do not see why the war need have continued this long.154

Yet, while the Democrats did suffer in the November voting, the elections provided, in the words of a New York Times editorial, "few indisputable clues to the nation's thinking." The results were seen, however, as evidence of "a widespread dissatisfaction and uneasiness about the course and prospects of the Vietnam war."155

The results from the polls, however, seem to indicate that while Johnson has been successful in convincing most Americans of the need for being in Vietnam, he has not persuaded them that his policies there are proving successful. His rhetoric of justification has been more persuasive than his plea for moderation.

Johnson's Reactions to Changes in Public Opinion

In the summer of 1966, as it became more evident that the "hawks" in the population were growing, the Christian Science Monitor noted that Johnson's earlier preoccupation with consensus was beginning to make way for a bolder approach. Saville R. Davis wrote:

His public speeches at Chicago, Des Moines,


Omaha, and Indianapolis, echoing some earlier
talks that he tried out on small groups, were
increasingly frank in rallying support for the
kind of war he is fighting.

Mr. Johnson appears to have exchanged the
muted tones of persuasion and conciliation for
the trumpet. 156

The new boldness showed, first, in Johnson's method
of argumentation. In his earlier speeches, such as the
Johns Hopkins address, 157 the President had used, in essence,
what Gladys Murphy Graham called the "natural procedure in
argument." As she explained, the basic plan of this method
was:

... simply to portray a situation which gradually,
of itself, without compulsion or contention on the
part of the speaker, through the compelling power
of a developing situation makes evident to the mind
of the hearer the necessity of one solution. The
method is not, in the orthodox and generally ac-
cepted sense, argumentative; rather, it is that of
exposition with a goodly dash of narration and de-
scription. 158

Our analysis, in Chapter II, of the earlier Johnson
speeches, revealed a plan of organization which set forth a
situation slowly, until the line of descriptive development
terminated in a conclusion, toward which he had been moving
from the beginning.

As the President, reading the polls, moved to a more
activist position, his method of argument changed. In con-

157 New York Times, April 8, 1965, p. 1; cited here-
after as Johnson, Johns Hopkins.
158 "The Natural Procedure in Argument," Quarterly
trast to the "natural" approach, he began to employ what Thonssen and Gilkinson refer to as the "in-line" style, in which he set forth in explicit manner his main proposition followed with supporting reasons. As we have noticed earlier in this chapter, the speeches at Omaha, Indianapolis, and Manchester in the summer of 1966 used this form of argument.

Johnson's new approach appeared, also, in his style. It was more bold, more direct, more colloquial. Several excerpts from his Omaha address will demonstrate this. On the nature of the war, he contended, "Let there be no doubt about it. Those who say this is merely a South Vietnamese civil war could not be more wrong." "By any definition you want to use," he continued, "any definition—any lawyer can tell you this: This is armed aggression, the philosophy that might make right." Attesting that South Vietnam had asked for help against those "trying to deny" them the right to choose their own government, and giving pledge that he would not turn down their plea, Johnson declared with sarcasm: "To those people who say they have never had this thing explained to them, I want to repeat that again." The sarcasm appeared again in connection with his praise of General Westmoreland: "He is getting some military advice


160 Johnson, Omaha, p. 117.

161 Ibid., p. 116.
on the side from some of our armchair generals in the United States, but it looks like he is doing pretty good using his own judgment."

Again, coupling sarcasm with challenge issued to his critics, Johnson said:

I hear my friends say, "I am troubled," "I am confused," "I am frustrated," and all of us understand those people. Sometimes I almost develop a stomach ulcer just listening to them.

We all wish the war to end. We all wish the troops would come home. But I want to see the alternatives and the calculations that they have to present that give them a better chance to get the troops home than the very thing we are doing.

Finally, in reference to his Vietnam program, he promised: "We are not going to junk them. But we are not going to tuck our tail and run out of South Vietnam either."

Perhaps Johnson read in the November election results the need to become even bolder. For the climax of his new, tougher stance came after the elections, in March, 1967, in an address delivered to a joint session of the Tennessee Legislature in Nashville. Reston wrote concerning the mood:

President Johnson looks more and more like a man who has decided to go for a military victory in Vietnam, and thinks he can make it. He was tough down here before the Tennessee Legislature today, not boastful or offensively

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162 Ibid., p. 117.
163 Ibid., p. 118.
164 Ibid., p. 119.
165 The full text appears in the Nashville Banner, March 15, 1967, p. 20; cited hereafter as Johnson, Nashville.
pugnacious, but calmly determined, like a poker player who had made up his mind to raise the stakes.\textsuperscript{166}

An editorial in the Nashville Banner, calling the speech "forceful, concise, definitive," said: "The President spoke as a man on the offensive." It referred to the address as "the strongest message the President has yet delivered."\textsuperscript{167}

That the editor was right seems clear. In at least two ways Johnson showed himself more determined. First, he sounded more unyielding and less apologetic as he expressed America's resolve. In explaining the military purposes of the bombing of the North, he did not emphasize only that he was trying to deny the North Vietnamese a "sanctuary," to increase the cost of infiltration, and to divert their manpower to the repair of bridges and facilities; he also declared the bombing was designed "to exact a penalty against North Vietnam for her flagrant violation of the Geneva accords of 1954 and 1962."\textsuperscript{168} Further, while he expressed regret "that some people living and working in the vicinity of military targets have suffered," he also condemned his critics for complaining about the results of the bombing of the North while they were ignoring the deliberate slaughter of innocent Vietnamese civilians by the Viet Cong. "The

\textsuperscript{167} \textit{Nashville Banner}, March 15, 1967, p. 16.
\textsuperscript{168} \textit{Ibid.}
deeds of the Vietcong go largely unnoted in the public debate," charged Johnson. "It is this moral double bookkeeping which makes us weary of some of our critics."  

Again, in 1965, he was offering to enter into "unconditional discussions," without demanding any concessions; yet, in Nashville, even though noting that "the road to peace . . . could start with discussions and move to deeds," he announced that "reciprocity must be the fundamental principle of any reduction in hostilities."  

There was a blunt, matter-of-fact tone to his explanation of why there had been no negotiations. "The problem is simple," he averred, "it takes two to negotiate, and to date Hanoi has refused."  

The second way in which the Nashville address became a climax for Johnson's new boldness is found in its clearly avowed attempt to refute and answer his critics' objections and questions concerning his policy. It was the only time in three years of rhetoric that the major portion had been devoted to rebuttal. After introductory remarks and a short statement of what America's purposes in Vietnam were and what they were not, he stated the main purpose of his address;  

On a less general level, however, the events and frustrations of these past few difficult weeks

169 Ibid.  
170 Johnson, Johns Hopkins.  
171 Johnson, Nashville.  
172 Ibid.
have inspired a number of questions about our Vietnam policy in the minds and hearts of many of our citizens. Today I want to deal with some of those questions that figure most prominently in the press and the many letters which reach my desk.173

Then, after a comprehensive and detailed summary of the results of the Vietnam war, Johnson replied to arguments and questions of his opposition, without referring directly to the sources of the criticism.

With the nationally televised address, therefore, which the White House termed a "major speech on Vietnam," Johnson had climbed to a summit of vigorous and less-reserved rhetoric, toward which he had been moving for several months.174 There is, therefore, a paradox between the increasing flexibility which the Administration was showing in its international communication through the summer and fall of 1966,175 and the decreasing resilience and increasing hardness of the primarily domestic addresses at the same time.

173 Ibid.
174 Ibid.
175 See Chapter II, "The Third Campaign."
CHAPTER IV

AN OVERVIEW OF JOHNSON'S RHETORICAL PRACTICE

Johnson as a Receiver of Information

In Chapters II and III, we analyzed discourses of Lyndon Johnson in terms of their immediate effects upon specific audiences. In this chapter, we shall employ some of the pattern often taken in neo-Aristotelian criticism, in order to take a broader view of Johnson's rhetorical practice in his Vietnam speeches.

No accurate judgment can be made of Lyndon Johnson's invention without investigating him as a receiver of cultural stimuli and feedback. For the inventive process is primarily a function of reception.

Many verbal, diagrammatic, or pictorial representations of the process of communication (e.g., Berlo, Davis, Johnson, Knower, Schramm, and Westley and MacLean) remind us

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that the source, or sender, of a message must function also as a receiver, in at least two ways: (1) He receives stimulation from his culture or field of experience; (2) He receives feedback from the receivers or communicators. In both of these functions, filtering will take place, i.e., the communicator will select from his culture and from the feedback according to his resources, responsibilities, purposes, and readiness to select.

Since the communicator, or sender, is not merely an actor, but a reactor, studies dealing with any speaker should include those which focus on the behavior of the speaker as a receiver of cultural and feedback stimuli. Numerous studies have been made on a communicator's audience-oriented reactions. Paivio, for example, has reviewed some of the literature on the effect the presence of observers can have on an individual's behavior. These studies are concerned, however, only with stage fright and similar anxieties or inhibiting effects.² None deal with the speaker as a receiver of ideas or message-building information.

If we are to determine how Johnson's reception of stimuli affects what the classical rhetorician terms "invention," we must turn to other studies. We shall postulate that, since to be an effective speaker the President must act as a receiver, some dissonance studies, which often are applied to reception or rejection of information in the

audience, may be projected to a study of Johnson's rhetoric, as well.

Several models which share the common assumption that man has a preference for consistency have appeared in psychological literature. Festinger, for example, assumed the individual strives to reduce dissonance between his cognitions.³ Others have presented models involving the assumption that disequilibrium or inconsistency will initiate change in the direction of the restoration of balance.⁴ Still other studies have assumed that the components of an individual's attitude (cognitive, affective, and behavioral) tend toward consistent interrelationships.⁵

The idea of a "strain toward consistency," which all of these studies support, asserts that one under influence from a source to adopt a given position will seek to resolve any dissonance or psychological tension created by any conflict between such cognitions as his own opinion, his evaluation of the source, and his perception of the source's position. There are a number of possible paths to the reduction of this tension. Lane and Sears list three and


suggest that, at times, they may merge: (1) the receiver may change his opinion toward agreement with the source; (2) he may change his evaluation of the source; (3) he may change his perception of the source’s position. 6 Steiner and Rogers arranged an experiment in which a subject was free to resolve his dissonance in one or more of four ways: (1) by conforming to the contrary judgment of the source; (2) by rejecting the source as one who was less competent than he had thought him to be; (3) by underrecollecting the disagreement; (4) by devaluating the importance of the topics about which there had been disagreement. They found that their subjects tended to employ the four responses as alternative means of reducing dissonance rather than as supplementary. 7 Studies by Rosenberg and Abelson suggest that, in general, the influencee will seek to decrease dissonance by changing those cognitions that are "easiest" to change. They concluded that the preferred solution to a belief dilemma is one involving "the least effortful path" and which "maximizes potential gain and minimizes potential loss." 8


Therefore, using some of these methods of dissonance reduction as a framework, we shall note some possible effects of the preference for consistency on Lyndon Johnson's reception of dissonance-arousing information concerning his policies in Vietnam.

**Reducing Exposure**

Several studies have indicated that, as a receiver, Johnson may seek dissonance-reduction by avoiding exposure to dissonance-creating information. Allyn and Festinger have shown that, if a person anticipates a communication contrary to his own view, he will ready his defenses against it.\(^9\) McGuire has concluded that individuals are more highly resistant to those arguing in a direction that increases inconsistency.\(^10\) Results seemed to confirm Brehm's prediction that commitment to a relatively great amount of discrepant behavior will increase resistance to a nonsupporting communication and will increase acceptance of a supporting communication.\(^11\)

There are some who believe that Lyndon Johnson avoids some communications which are discrepant with his

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views on Vietnam: James Reston, for example, has charged that the President has formulated the doctrine of "no speculation before action," in order to protect White House options from advance press speculation. In 1966, Reston quoted Presidential Assistant William Moyer's explanation of the doctrine:

It is very important for a President to maintain up until the moment of decision his options, and for someone to speculate days or weeks in advance that he is going to do thus and thus is to deny the President the latitude he needs in order to make, in the light of existing circumstances, the best possible decision.

Calling this "something new in the catalogue of Presidential privilege," Reston remarked, "The function of criticism itself has changed in an odd way during President Johnson's Administration." Explaining, Reston continued, "In the past, there has been a reasonable expectation among people writing political criticism that if they identified a problem, checked it out thoroughly, and proposed a reasonable remedy, publication of these things would be read within the government in good faith and maybe even considered worthy of executive action."\(^{12}\)

While Reston believes that Johnson has ignored communications from astute observers, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., is convinced that Johnson has been too selective in receiving advice, preferring information from "hawks" among his military and diplomatic advisers over that of Senate

\(^{12}\)"The Press, the President, and Foreign Policy," *Foreign Affairs*, XLIV (July, 1966), 564-565.
critics. In May, 1966, he charged Johnson with a tacit abdication of decision making. 13 Johnson, himself, in a news conference, admitted he preferred the advice of the Joint Chiefs of Staff over that of the Senate in military matters. 14

Another recent criticism of Johnson's refusal to consider some offered advice has come from Michael Davie, Deputy Editor of The Observer, a London publication. In a guest editorial for U.S. News and World Report, he wrote:

In the White House there are those--Johnson loyalists though they are--who consider that the President is willful, and who feel that advice, sometimes doesn't get through to him. If he is convinced that a particular course of action is the right one, he is inclined to regard attempts to divert him from that course, however well intentioned, as sabotage. 15

A less critical, and rather amusing example of Johnson's tendency to avoid contact with upsetting messages came to the surface in a news conference in 1965. Johnson remarked:

I hear the commentators—I heard one yesterday and heard one today—talk about the dramatics of this situation, the great struggle that was coming about between various men and the top level conferences that were in the offing, where revolutionary decisions were being made and I turned off one of my favorite networks and walked out of the room. Mrs. Johnson said, "What did you say?" And I said, "I didn't say anything, but if you are asking me what I think, I would say, 'God

forgive them, for they know not what they do."16

Perhaps the most candid observation of the effect
dissonance reduction has on his willingness to receive in-
formation, came from Johnson, himself. In a news conference
in March, 1966, he stated:

I'm not sure that Presidents are objective viewers
or listeners. I recall some very distinguished
President not many years ago saying he was reading
more and more and liking it less and less. And I
guess all Presidents feel that way the longer they
are in office.17

For a President directing a war, this personality
feature is fraught with danger. The belief that Johnson has
a strong pride in his own choices of action, which causes
him to screen out, at times, conflicting ideas, could have
an effect upon the sources within his information system.
David Halberstam, an American correspondent covering the
Vietnam war, points to this danger in The Making of a Quag-
mire, in which he claims to expose means by which American
leaders are cut off from the realities of the war by a flow
of wish-fulfilling information from their advisers lower
down the chain of command.18

Reinterpreting Meanings

In a persuasive communication situation, the meaning
perceived by the influence does not always correspond with

16 Public Papers of the Presidents: Lyndon B. John-
1966), Y, 371.
17 New York Times, March 10, 1966, p. 18-C.
the position actually held by the source. Often, this is because the receiver has been motivated to misunderstand what a source has said. Several studies indicate that misinterpretation is one way Johnson unconsciously could be avoiding dissonance-arousing messages. Cooper and Jahoda, for example, exposed subjects to a series of cartoons designed to be a satire on bigots. Among the subjects in the "prejudiced" group, some "derailed" their understanding in order to extricate themselves from their identification with a bigot; they misunderstood the point of the cartoons. Others among them transformed the issues in the pictures into their own frames of reference in order to make them compatible. For example, a cartoon series depicting a congressman with fascist, antiminority views was designed to focus the reader's attention on native antidemocratic movements and bring disapproval of them. Some of the subjects, however, noticed only that a bad politician was involved. They then identified the congressman with whatever appeared to them to be bad politics.19 Other studies tend to confirm this principle of reinterpretation to restore consistency. Feather, for instance, found that dissonant states are more likely to influence a person's evaluation or interpretation of information than his sensitivity to it.20 Manis, in a


series of articles, has suggested that distorted interpretations of persuasive messages often result from the recipient's attempts to maintain his existing beliefs in relatively unchanged form. 21 Manis and Blake, in two experiments, provided their subjects with counterarguments against persuasive messages to which they were later exposed. In both studies, the subjects showed a significant tendency to displace the perceived content of the persuasive message toward the stand advocated in the immunization message. 22

Hovland, Harvey, and Sherif have offered an explanation for this content displacement. They have suggested that when an individual has established attitudes and is personally involved in a controversial social issue, his own "stand" functions as the "major anchorage" affecting reaction to and evaluation of communication. According to them, messages near the subject's own stand would be assimilated to it, while communication at variance with the subject's own stand would be displaced still further away. Whether assimilation, or displacement effects, appear would be a function of the relative distance between the subject's own stand and


22 Melvin Manis and Joan B. Blake, "Interpretation of Persuasive Messages as a Prior Function of Immunization," Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, LXVI (March, 1963), 225-238.
the position of the communication.  

23 Manis found results which he interpreted to be consonant with the theory offered by Hovland, Harvey, and Sherif. Five groups of college students who varied on an attitude scale in their attitude toward fraternities read statements by twelve communicators—four who were profraternity, four antifraternity, and four relatively neutral. The recipients were then asked to indicate on the attitude scale the attitude of each communicator toward fraternities. The committed subjects perceived the communicators as occupying more extreme positions than did the neutral subjects. Subjects who favored fraternities felt the neutral communicators were more profraternity than did the subjects who opposed fraternities.  

24 The principle running through all of these studies seems relevant especially to the controversy between Johnson and his critics as to whether the North Vietnamese have given any genuine indication of wanting to negotiate. In a recent news conference, the President reviewed the five occasions on which the United States had halted bombing with hopes that North Vietnam would take some action which could be interpreted as a desire to negotiate. He concluded:

So I would respond to your question by saying at the beginning of each pause, we made it clear


that we would take action, we would listen intently for action on their part.
And we have, and we've heard the same story every time. I see nothing in any evidence that I have that would give me any indication that they've had a change of mind, or that they're willing to take any serious action to stop this war.25

The Russians, on the other hand, have maintained that North Vietnam has given signals which have been rebuffed by the United States.26 The Johnson Administration has answered, however, by contending that Hanoi is not ready to negotiate because it has advocated a permanent instead of an unconditional halt in the bombing of the North, before they will come to the negotiation table. He recently told reporters: "I think it's rather clear to me that they have laid down conditions that to me mean that they insist that we agree to permanent cessation of bombing before they might talk."27

Senator Robert Kennedy and historian Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., have countered by suggesting that Johnson's continued stand against bombing cessation may be traced to his misinterpretation of Communist feedback. They point out that Russian statements and some from North Vietnam have no wording which insists on a permanent halt in bombing. They have contended that the Johnson Administration, by concentrating on the most extravagant statements from North

26 Ibid., February 28, 1967, p. 18-C.
27 Ibid., March 10, 1967, p. 18-C.
Vietnam, has missed the real message.\(^{28}\)

**Changing Evaluations**

Argument devaluation is a third way in which Johnson may have sought to convert a dissonant situation arising from a communication into a consonant one. A study by Feather has demonstrated that individuals tend to evaluate arguments in a manner consistent with their attitudes. Subjects who differed in the strength of their religious attitude were required to evaluate the logical validity of arguments about religion presented to them in syllogistic form. Results showed that the tendency to accept or reject relevant arguments in a manner consistent with attitude is positively related to the strength of the attitude, negatively related to the level of critical ability, and positively related to intolerance of inconsistency.\(^ {29}\) Rosenberg found evidence supporting the postulate that the affective and cognitive components of an attitude tend toward a stable state of mutual consistency.\(^ {30}\) Therefore, if Johnson is persuaded that a state of affairs will further some end he favors, he could tend to increase his preference for that

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state of affairs, and for arguments favoring it, while decreasing his affection for arguments opposing it.

One of the easiest methods by which he could devalue information he receives is source derogation, since it cuts the idea off from a system from which it draws emotional strength. 31 Dabbs, in replicating an experiment by Leventhal and Perloe, provided some evidence of this. Leventhal and Perloe had observed that low self-esteem subjects showed sometimes more and sometimes less attitude change than did high self-esteem subjects, depending on the content of the persuasive communication to which they were exposed. A pessimistic communication produced more attitude change among those low in self-esteem, while an optimistic one produced more change among high self-esteem subjects. They maintained that individuals high in self-esteem rejected pessimistic communications (which would not prepare them for possible danger). 32 Dabbs did not observe the interaction between self-esteem and optimism-pessimism which had been reported by Leventhal and Perloe. Re-examining their study, he concluded the subjects used by the two could have been responding to communicator characteristics rather than to communication content. He decided the optimistic or pessi-


mistic tone of the communication had no direct effect on the amount of attitude change, but that the tone had influenced the subject's perception of the communicator. He maintained that high self-esteem subjects tended to be individuals who, in their outlook on things, felt they could cope with their environment, and that, consequently, they identified with the communicator bringing the optimistic message. Conversely, the low self-esteem subjects, since they doubted their ability to handle their environment, identified with the communicator bringing the pessimistic message. In short, the attitude of the subjects toward the communicators affected their attitude toward the messages the communicators were bringing. Those who did not identify with a communicator devalued his message.

Therefore, it seems probable that Johnson may have handled some of the tension between his own opinion and a conflicting one from some prestige source, not by a refusal to expose himself to the conflict-producing message, nor by a reshaping of it, but by changing his evaluation of the message.

Re-evaluation to fit his present action.—There are at least three things which may act as frameworks in Johnson's re-evaluation of a message. First, he may change his evaluation of a communication to make it agree with the action in which he is engaged. At the end of 1963, when

Lyndon Johnson inherited from Kennedy the Vietnam conflict, 16,000 American troops were in South Vietnam. In a series of commitments which he felt were necessary to prevent a Communist takeover, Johnson gradually accelerated and increased American participation in the war. With his action under criticism from several quarters, he began a vigorous campaign to defend rhetorically his Vietnam policies. By September, 1966, having noted that 300,000 United States troops were in conflict at that time, he told a Manchester, New Hampshire, audience:

I think it is only right that we constantly ask ourselves the question: Why? Why are they there? I have gone into almost every state in this Union—
I have held more than seventy press conferences in my 1,000 days in office—I have been on television some forty times—trying to answer that question.35

Within the literature of dissonance theory, there are several studies which suggest that the tasks in which a person is engaged can influence the evaluation he places upon a message either supporting or opposing the position represented by his action: Breer and Loche have reported seven experiments, each building on the prior one, which support the basic proposition that an individual's experiences in task performance lead to the development of beliefs, preferences, and values supportive of the reinforced task


behavior. Janis and King divided college subjects into two groups: active participants who made a speech advocating a given point of view, and passive controls who silently read and listened to the same communication. In general, they found the active participants were more influenced by the communication than were the passive controls. Mills found that students who, upon being tempted, decided not to cheat, became more severe in their attitudes toward cheating and that those who did cheat expressed, later, more lenient attitudes toward it. In a study concerned primarily with how opinion change is affected by role playing, and then, by the interaction of authoritarianism with it, Harvey and Beverly found role playing, represented by the subject's presentation of self-prepared, self-negating arguments, had a significant positive effect on opinion change. They further suggested that persons higher in authoritarianism were more influenced by playing the role than were subjects lower in authoritarianism.


These studies suggest that, as Lyndon Johnson has "played a role" defending the present extent of America's intervention in Vietnam, he may have avoided some dissonance by a cognitive realignment in which he evaluates the arguments of others so that his beliefs may continue to agree with his public behavior.

Re-evaluation to fit his past experience.—A second possibility is that Johnson has changed his evaluation of a source-related argument in order to bring it into agreement with his past. One's background can be a strong factor influencing him to accept or to reject group pressure. According to the theory of adaptation-level, adjudicative behavior is determined by three sources of variance: (1) stimuli immediately confronting the individual; (2) background stimuli which have acted just prior to the immediate stimuli; and (3) residual effects of stimuli from past experiences in the form of beliefs, attitudes, and cultural determinants. Behavior is envisioned as the result of the interactions among these three sets of factors. The level of behavior shifts with the changes in the various factors operating within the situation and the individual.40

According to this theory, therefore, Lyndon Johnson's response to advice and criticism concerning his Vietnam policy statements should have been a function of some residual

effects from his past experiences, and not just a reaction to present stimuli. His refusal of pleas to withdraw from Vietnam furnishes us with an example of the influence of the past. In a Chicago speech in May, 1966, he reflected, "We know from hard-won experience that the road to peace is not the road to retreat." A few weeks later, in a televised address to the nation, he was more specific as he drew upon three sets of past experiences. First, he spoke as one who had learned to fear the isolationist sentiment which existed in America before the First and Second World Wars:

Americans entered this century believing that our own security had no foundation outside our own continent. Twice we mistook our sheltered position for safety. Twice we were dead wrong. If we are wise now, we will not repeat our mistakes of the past.

Next, Johnson showed there was an analogy, in his mind, between past success in Europe and his present policy in Asia:

Many of you can recall our faith in the future of Europe at the end of World War II when we began the Marshall Plan. We backed that faith with all the aid and compassion we could muster. Our faith in Asia at this time is just as great.

Finally, Johnson's comments revealed that his firmness in Vietnam was born out of the experience of past conflicts. Maintaining that a "peaceful mainland China is central to a peaceful Asia" and that "a hostile China must

be discouraged from aggression," he declared, "We have learned in our relations with other such states that the weakness of neighbors is a temptation, and only firmness backed with power, can really deter power that is backed by ambition."

Re-evaluation to fit his self-esteem.---From the results of various experiments, Sherif and Hovland have inferred that the highly ego-involved subject has a "more constricted latitude of acceptance and a more extensive latitude of rejection than the less involved subjects."43 They have explained:

It would seem that a greater ego-involvement with an issue produces a raised threshold for acceptance of positions on the issue, a relationship which results in an extensive latitude of rejection. The person who zealously upholds a position tends to be quite particular about accepting positions and is likely to see the rest of the world as opposed to his stand.

Janis has indicated, also, that persuasive communications produce more attitude change among individuals who are lower in self-esteem.44 The hypothesis seems plausible. If low self-esteem individuals have a low evaluation of their own opinions, they might not resist changing them. Conversely, a favorable evaluation of their own opinions would make high self-esteem individuals resistant to change.


At least one astute observer is of the opinion that Lyndon Johnson is high in such self-esteem. Arthur Krock, who recently retired from The New York Times which he served for more than three decades as Washington bureau chief and political columnist, has known, personally, every President since the Taft Administration, and has received Pulitzer awards for interviews with Franklin D. Roosevelt and Harry Truman. In a recent interview for U.S. News and World Report, when Krock was asked if he thought there was any validity in the criticism that Johnson "conceives of the world as revolving around himself," he replied, "All Presidents do."  

45 He then explained:

The mere thought of running for President—first, to think that you are capable of the job; second, to expose yourself to the humiliation of forsaking principle for political expediency that it imposes upon you; third, to acquire the power to get the nomination in a convention; fourth, the cunning to make the deals that are necessary to get the nomination, and then the demagoguery that even the best men have resorted to to get elected—these seem to me to be manifestations of ego.

Some believe, however, that Johnson has an inordinate share of Presidential ego, and that it has affected his evaluation of information from others. For example, noting that the President has refused opinions which imply the United States has achieved only a military stalemate in Indochina, Walter Lippmann expressed this judgment:

It is not easy for Lyndon Baines Johnson to swallow the bitter pill of recognizing the fact

that he is in a war which he cannot win.

It would take a man of noble stature and of the highest moral courage to do that. There is no reason to think that Mr. Johnson is such a man.46

While Johnson, for the most part, has shown restraint under criticism by avoiding discussion of his critics in indecorous terms, there have been occasional slips when he has employed the device of labeling in order to devaluate the sources of pessimistic communications. For example, defending his Vietnam policy at a Chicago fund-raising dinner, he called his critics "Nervous Nellies," and numbered them among those who "break ranks under the strain and turn on their own leaders, their own country and their own fighting men."47 Only a few days before at a Washington, D. C., dinner, he had aimed a barb at his critics on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee: "I can say one thing about those hearings—although I don't think this is the place to say it."48 Later, during the 1966 Congressional campaign, he styled his critics as "complainers," "Prophets of doom," and "fear artists."49

The fact that, in a few incidents, name-calling has risen to the surface of Johnson's public behavior may indicate that much more lies below. The labels may have

46 "Political Woe Rains Heavily," Nashville Tennes-

47 Philadelphia Inquirer, May 17, 1966, p. 3.


functioned in the same way as the Freudian slip, unveiling a larger reservoir of the same inner feelings. While he may not always say it in public, Johnson probably believes inwardly that his critics are just as his less restrained rhetoric has styled them.

The tragedy of this is that it limits the President's ability to evaluate his feedback and, in turn, therefore, limits his response as a communicator. Gordon W. Allport has pointed out that some of the labels we attach to things are "primary potency" symbols that "act like shrieking sirens, deafening us to all finer discriminations that we might otherwise perceive." A. I. Hallowell has expressed the added concept that labels not only influence cognitive filtering but cognitive organization, as well:

From the assignment of a label to an object or class of events, there stems a tendency to attribute characteristics to the object that are consistent with the label, even though such attributions really may not be a part of the nature of the object named. Since labels are a system of ordering, they provide a mold into which impinging events tend to be fitted as a series of channels which set limits and direct the course of cognitive outcomes. Perception and judgment are affected, therefore, by conceptual placement. A system of ordering can lead to a kind of conceptual closedness or blindness to alternative evaluations that are not embodied in the conceptual framework being employed.


James Reston has criticized Johnson for relying too heavily on his own "personal antennae" to sense public sentiment. In a recent news conference, the President seemed to reflect a belief in his ability to read, better than the columnists, the public mind. Maintaining that he gains strength when he sees people without "middlemen," he confessed:

Now to be perfectly frank, when I get out and see the people whether those people are in Ohio or Michigan or New York or even little Delaware, I like what I see and what I hear so much better than what I read that it may reflect itself.

With a self-revealing anecdote, he continued:

I might be like Uncle Ezra. You know the doctor told him he had to quit drinking if he'd improve his hearing. But when he went back the doctor said, "Well, are you still drinking?" And he said, "Well, doctor," he said, "I like what I drink so much better than what I hear that I just didn't take your prescription."

Summary and Conclusions

We began by assuming that to be an effective speaker Johnson must be an effective receiver, since the reception of both pre-encoding and feedback information influence the speaker's inventive process.

We then postulated that a review of literature on dissonance reduction would suggest ways in which a speaker might seek to deal with the conflict between his position and that of an influential source of pre-encoding or feedback information.

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Using our findings to study Lyndon Johnson as a receiver of such information, we have suggested that, as a receiver of invention-facilitating messages, he perhaps has sought the resolution of source-related and message-related dissonance by one of three methods: (1) by reducing his exposure to a message; (2) by reinterpreting the meaning of a message; or (3) by re-evaluating the message or its source.

It would be unfair, however, to conclude that Johnson's belief system is closed to all suggestions from his critics. Four examples will demonstrate this: First, on May 3, 1966, Senators Edward Kennedy and George McGovern proposed that President Johnson appoint a blue-ribbon commission to help develop a new and more effective policy toward Communist China. The proposal was endorsed immediately by a number of liberal Democratic Senators, including J. W. Fulbright, Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee. 54 While Johnson did not appoint the commission, he did attempt to initiate a new policy of flexibility toward Communist China in his White Sulphur Springs address later in July. 55 Again, on September 16, 1966, the late Bernard Fall, who was Professor of International Relations at Howard University, proposed a new peace effort based on negotiations between the


55 Johnson, White Sulphur Springs; an analysis of the address appears in Chapter II of this thesis, under "The Third Campaign."
Saigon Government and the National Liberation Front.\textsuperscript{56}
Six days later, in a major plea for negotiations before the
United Nations, United States Ambassador Goldberg stated
that the President would not be adverse to including the
Viet Cong in the negotiations.\textsuperscript{57}

On July 2, 1966, Charles H. Percy, Republican candi-
date for governor of Illinois, proposed an all-Asian peace
conference, a month before the same suggestion was made by
Thailand's Foreign Minister, Thanat Khoman.\textsuperscript{58} A few weeks
later, President Johnson announced that President Marcos of
the Philippines had extended to him the invitation to attend
an Asian peace conference at Manila.\textsuperscript{59} On July 2, 1966, the
\textbf{Christian Science Monitor} announced that Senators Albert
Gore and Joseph S. Clark had urged President Johnson to con-
centrate on bringing Moscow's influence to bear on a Vietnam
settlement, by pushing ahead with efforts to increase East-
West trade.\textsuperscript{60} In October, the President made a major policy
address proposing a thaw in East-West relations and an in-
crease of trade with Eastern Europe.\textsuperscript{61}

\textsuperscript{56} \textit{St. Louis Post Dispatch}, September 16, 1966, p. 2-A.

\textsuperscript{57} \textit{New York Times}, September 23, 1966, p. 12; an
analysis of the Goldberg address appears in Chapter II of
this thesis, under "The Third Campaign."

\textsuperscript{58} \textit{Christian Science Monitor}, August 26, 1966, p. 15.


\textsuperscript{60} \textit{Christian Science Monitor}, July 2, 1966, p. 3.

\textsuperscript{61} \textit{New York Times}, October 8, 1966, p. 12; an analysis
of the address appears in Chapter II of this thesis, under
"The Third Campaign."
These examples of Presidential action following specific proposals of such efforts from his critics are more than coincidental. Johnson has, at times, listened to his opposition.

**Johnson as a Frame of Arguments**

A second important factor in invention is the formulation of arguments. Normally, this includes not merely ideas, but evidence, as well. "In speechmaking," said W. N. Brigance, "assertion is not enough, for no idea or principle can hang in the air unsupported." Yet, in our investigation of Johnson's Vietnam rhetoric, we have found assertion without support to be one of the most common characteristics of his logic. His ideas have not been lacking in enlargement for the sake of clarity and ease of understanding, but in the enforcement which would help to establish their validity.

Johnson has been able to make some statements without backing because they were ideas which most of his American hearers already considered probable. Take, for example, those accusing North Vietnam of beginning the war in South Vietnam. After two decades of a cold war which had pulled into a vortex every incident abroad and at home even remotely concerned with dangers from Communism, every Communist country had become, in the minds of most Americans, a devilish adversary which had as its first goal the conquering of

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Johnson has not been pressed for support, therefore, to enforce such statements as the following:

The first reality is that North Vietnam has attacked the independent nation of South Vietnam. Its object is total conquest. Of course, some of the people of South Vietnam are participating in the attack on their own government. But trained men and supplies, orders and arms flow in a constant stream from North to South. This support is the heartbeat of the war.64

There have been, however, many other arguments which Johnson left unenforced by evidence, not because the audience considered the assertion probable, but because the conclusion was designed to lead from some phenomena which the audience already considered probable. An example of this type of reasoning is Johnson's argument that the defense of Vietnam is necessary for our own national security and peace. From an idea already accepted as probable by most of his audience, that the war in Vietnam is part of a Communist program to spread their doctrines throughout the world, Johnson has drawn repeatedly the natural conclusion that if the United States does not stop this advance in Vietnam, it will continue. He maintained this, for instance, in his Johns Hopkins address when he said:

The central lesson of our time is that the appetite of aggression is never satisfied. To withdraw from one battlefield means only to prepare for the next. We must say in Southeast


64 Johnson, Johns Hopkins.
Asia—as we did in Europe—in the words of the Bible: "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further." 65

Again, he argued in his White Sulphur Springs speech:

If we are wise, we will not repeat the mistakes of the past... The second essential for peace in Asia is this: to prove to aggressive nations that the use of force to conquer others is a losing game. 66

As a third example, we may note these words from Johnson's remarks at the lighting of the National Christmas tree, December 17, 1965: "Our sons patrol the hills of Vietnam at this hour because we have learned that though men cry 'Peace, peace,' there is no peace to be gained ever by yielding to aggression." 67 Since much of his audience had accepted already the premise that the North Vietnamese were fighting in the South because of wider aggressive intentions, it was relatively easy to build upon it the conclusion that American soldiers should be there to stop the aggression. Because his hearers found Johnson reasoning from premises they already accepted, they had the sense of participating in the making of the argument, or, as Kenneth Burke has expressed it, "the feel of collaborating in the assertion." 68

65 Ibid.

66 White Sulphur Springs address, Department of State Newsletter, August, 1966, p. 3.


One of the earliest expositions of the use of this device in persuasion is found in a treatise on rhetoric written by a contemporary of Aristotle—the Rhetorica ad Alexandrum. Normally, when one speaks of a "probability," he means that which usually happens. But in a discussion of how to use probabilities to form arguments, the ad Alexandrum defined a probability as follows:

It is a probability when one's hearers have examples in their own minds of what is being said. . . . We must, therefore, always carefully notice, when we are speaking, whether we are likely to find our audience in sympathy with us on the subject on which we are speaking; for in that case they are most likely to believe what we say. Such, then, is the nature of a probability.

Now, the difference in this definition and the usual definition of probability is simply the difference between a general focus and a more limited focus of the same thing. To most, a probability is that which most believe probably happens. To the ad Alexandrum, it was that which a specific audience would agree probably happens. The author of the ad Alexandrum was concerned with how probability would affect the persuasion of a specific audience. In his examples of how to derive an argument from probability, one sees clearly that the author had an interest in what appeared

69 Until the time of Erasmus, the Rhetorica ad Alexandrum was attributed to Aristotle. It is considered today by most to be the product of Anaximenes (380-320 B.C.). See E. M. Cope, Introduction to Aristotle's Rhetoric (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1867), pp. 401-415.

70 Rhetorica ad Alexandrum, 1428a, 25-34.
probable to the intended hearer of the argument:

... if any one were to say that he desires the glorification of his country, the prosperity of his friends, and the misfortunes of his foes, and the like, his statements taken together would appear probable; for each one of his hearers is himself conscious that he entertains such wishes on these and similar subjects.\textsuperscript{71}

In this early treatise, therefore, the argument based on probability was the argument using the receiver's pre-existing opinions as to what would probably happen under certain circumstances and his sympathies and prejudices toward what he felt would probably happen.

This basic idea of an argument built upon the prior existence of beliefs in the audience as to what is probable is little different from Aristotle's idea of what he called the enthymeme based on probability. It, too, was an argument built on preconceptions existing in the audience. Aristotle wrote, "Enthymemes based upon probabilities are those which argue from what is, or what is supposed to be usually true."\textsuperscript{72}

The effectiveness of this device lies, first, in the fact that it is an argument based on premises to which the subject already gives credence. By making pre-existing opinions or attitudes an unspoken premise in his argument,

\textsuperscript{71}\textit{Rhetorica ad Alexandrum}, 1428a, 26-31.

\textsuperscript{72}\textit{Aristotle, Rhetoric}, 1357a, 15 ff.
Johnson allowed the audience to help him construct the argument. The one who received the data and heard the assertions Johnson made from it used his own idea of what would probably happen or did probably happen as a warrant authorizing him to make the mental leap from the data given to the conclusion drawn from it.

And few Americans attending to world affairs are disposed to check the probability of premises they already believe. There are two reasons for this. First, people have a tendency to shy away from material which undermines their own attitudes or opinions. Leon Festinger, describing the communication behavior of the average American, says that most Americans who attend to world affairs in mass media are not seeking new points of view, but, rather, approval for existing attitudes. They tend to avoid analytical treatments of international issues which are likely to unearth conclusions different from their own.

In addition, most Americans tend to avoid any complex discussion of foreign affairs. Rosenau's Public Opinion and Foreign Policy describes this public apathy: Except for acute peace-or-war crises (and not always then), the mass public is usually unmoved by the course of world events. Few of its members

73 Lloyd F. Bitzer, "Aristotle's Enthymeme Revisited," Quarterly Journal of Speech, XLV (December, 1959), 399-408. Bitzer holds that the enthymeme succeeds as an instrument of persuasion because its premises are drawn from the audience itself.

are likely to have more than headline acquaintance with public discussions of foreign-policy issues or be willing to listen to more than truncated news broadcasts over radio and television. And even when contact is made with more substantive programs, the mass public does not listen to the content of discussion but to its tone. 75

James Reston has described how this public aversion to complex analysis of the news affects what people read in their newspapers, and, in turn, how it increases the politician's opportunity to argue without the danger of the general public seeing these arguments weighed:

The two Roosevelts were the Presidents who first understood the primacy of news over opinion. Teddy Roosevelt used to joke that he "discovered Monday." He recognized that editors had little news on Sunday night and that if he held back his Presidential announcements until then, he got a better display on the front pages on Monday morning, even with secondary news, than he got on Wednesday with really important news. Franklin Roosevelt, who was elected to the Presidency four times against the overwhelming opposition of the American newspapers, was even better at dominating the news. He concentrated on the reporters and the front pages and vilified or scorned the commentators and the editorial pages.

Every President since then has understood the point. Europe has a press that elevated opinion; America a press, radio and television that emphasize news. The Lippmanns, the Krock, the Alsops, have their audiences, and the brilliant young American satirists, Russell Baker of the New York Times and Art Buchwald of the Herald Tribune, tickle the intellectuals and often come nearer to the truth than all the solemn scribblers, but news is more powerful than opinion, and this is the point the politicians have understood. 76


However, there are ethical and logical dangers in this kind of effectiveness. One danger is that the speaker may frame an argument which is independent of that which is really probable while arguing from that which is accepted as probable. The probability to which the hearer is disposed, and on which a speaker bases his argument, may not exist except in the hearer's thinking. It may be merely a condition of the listener's preconceptions, predispositions, or prejudices.

Further, this device is ethically and logically dangerous because a speaker can lead his audience into a short-circuiting of the logical process by allowing the hearers to build their own predispositions and prejudices into the argument they help construct. This is not to say that men should be able to make decisions in a rational vacuum void of emotional factors. But while few arguments are void of emotional factors, we do need to see the difference between a receiver of persuasion being dominated by his feelings and in his acting from an enlightened self-interest. An argument based on audience predispositions and prejudices may short-circuit this enlightened choice.

**The Wording of Johnson's Ideas**

In presenting a coalescent discussion of Johnson's style, we do not mean to imply that, in his rhetoric, style exists as an entity apart from other factors in persuasion. For Thonssen and Baird, in their discussion of style, have
reminded us: "Its ramifications are elaborate, extending
... deeply into the fundamentals of invention and disposit-
on and losing themselves in them, so that what we arbi-
trarily call style becomes indistinguishable from the other
elements." 77 And Sarett, Sarett, and Foster have explained:

Oral style, then, is not something added to
speech, but is an increment; it is not so much
an element in itself as the manner in which all
elements operate together. It is the integrated
expression of a speaker's ideas and feelings
through the sounds his words make. 78

It seems reasonable, therefore, that we utilize a
discussion of Johnson's choice and arrangement of words in
order to examine his attempts to arouse emotion (pathos),
his efforts to assist the understanding (logos), and his
method of ascribing morality to his cause (ethos).

Arousing Emotion

Edwin D. Shurter wrote: "Men are not moved by mere
abstractions regarding an object or an idea; but present to
their view either the object itself or a vivid description
of it, or the concrete embodiment of an idea, and you awaken
emotions which are wholly unresponsive to abstract reason-
ing." 79

77 Lester Thonssen and A. Craig Baird, Speech Criti-

78 Alma Johnson Sarett, Lew Sarett, and William
Trufant Foster, Basic Principles of Speech (4th ed. rev.;

79 Edwin DuBois Shurter, The Rhetoric of Oratory
Primarily, Johnson has used narration and description to arouse two basic social motives which psychologist Henry A. Murray has termed "nurturance," "aggression," and "harmavoidance." By nurturance, he means the need "to give sympathy and gratify the needs of a helpless object"; by aggression, he means the need "to revenge an injury" or "to punish another"; by harmavoidance, he means the need "to avoid pain, physical injury, illness, and death; to escape from a dangerous situation; to take precautionary measures."  

Note, for example, two excerpts from Johnson's speeches. Each was designed to arouse sympathy for the South Vietnamese, an aggressive hatred of the Viet Cong, and a fear of the Communist menace. In Indianapolis on July 23, 1966, he said:

> The Communist attack of the 1960's is different. Armies do not march across borders in force. They steal in through the night. They drop grenades into markets. They plant landmines in the heart of villages. They kidnap the mayors of small provincial towns. They kill the schoolteachers and the leaders. If they get away with this in South Vietnam, they will try it somewhere else—anywhere in the world.  

A similar description of aggression appeared in his 1966 Memorial Day address at Arlington National Cemetery:

> It takes the form of men and equipment coming down from the North on foot or in trucks through jungle roads and trails or on small craft moving silently through the water at night. It takes the form of well-organized assassination, kidnaping, and intimidation of innocent citizens in remote

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81 Johnson, Indianapolis, p. 228.
villages. Last year, more than 12,000 South Vietnamese civilians were murdered or kidnapped by terrorists. That kind of aggression is just as real and just as dangerous for the safety and independence of the people of South Vietnam as was the attack on South Korea in June of 1950.82

Another example from the Indianapolis address demonstrates how Johnson used description to awaken feelings of nurturance for American servicemen and a corresponding dislike of critics of their efforts:

If you are too busy, or not inclined to help, please count 10 before you hurt. We must have no doubt today about the determination of the American men wearing American uniforms, the marines who are out there fighting in the wet jungles, wading through the rice paddies up to their belts, the sailors who are searching the shores and patrolling the seas, the airmen who are out there facing the missiles and anti-aircraft guns, carrying out their mission, trying to protect your liberty. The least they are entitled to is for you to be as brave as they are and to stand up and give them the support they need here at home.

These men are not going to fail us.

The real question is: Are we going to fail them?83

In his Omaha address on June 30, 1966, Johnson used description to heighten fear of Communist ambitions:

They slipped across the borders of South Viet-Nam more than three divisions of the North Vietnamese Regular Army. Today there are more than three North Vietnamese divisions fighting in South Viet-Nam.

They built all-weather roads. The trails turned into boulevards to replace the jungle trails they had once used. They began sending troops in by trucks rather than on foot.

They shifted over to heavy weapons, using imported ammunition, most of it coming from Communist China.84

83 Johnson, Indianapolis, pp. 227–228.
84 Johnson, Omaha, p. 117.
Adding Emphasis

In our past investigations of Johnson's speeches, we have noted that through repetition, more than any other way, he adds emphasis to his ideas. At times, the redundancy has been employed in restatement of an important sentence; often, the same word has been repeated in a series of sentences; always, his speeches have contained the same basic idea of a desire to negotiate with North Vietnam coupled with a determination to defend South Vietnam. This last device is based upon the power of cumulative effect. Eisenson, Auer, and Irwin have observed: "By employing the principle of summation of stimuli, however, succeeding repetitions of an idea normally encounter less resistance."85

Assisting the Understanding

In listing one of his "seven lamps of planning a speech to persuade," the late W. N. Brigance wrote: "Remember that listeners think in images; be therefore specific, pictorial, and vivid."86 Johnson has used pictures in his Vietnam rhetoric, not just to arouse emotion, but to give the explanation necessary for increased audience understanding. Baird and Knower have explained why such illustration, example, and analogy is necessary:

Since common experience deals primarily with

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86 Brigance, p. 165.
the particulars of specific events, not many individuals develop the habits necessary for following discourse composed principally of general and abstract statements. When such statements are made they should be illustrated frequently. The use of examples serves to epitomize, crystallize, simplify, and make meaning more specific and concrete.87

Note the following three instances in which Johnson assisted the understanding of his audiences by comparing an idea difficult to visualize to something with which his hearers were familiar. In Omaha, he reported:

In 1965 alone the Communists killed or kidnapped 12,000 South Vietnamese civilians. That is equivalent to wiping out the entire population of Columbus, Nebraska, or Alliance County, or one out of every 25 citizens that live in this great city of Omaha.88

In Indianapolis, he twice employed the same basic type of comparison:

When the Communists took over North Viet-Nam, more than a million people—double the city population of the great city of Indianapolis and one-fourth the population of the great State of Indiana—packed up and went south to live.89

A few moments later, he added:

Since 1959, when serious fighting began on orders from Hanoi, the South Vietnamese have already suffered more than 100,000 casualties. The United States would have had to lose 1,400,000 people, on a proportionate basis, to equal their sacrifice.90

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88Johnson, Omaha, p. 116.

89Johnson, Indianapolis, p. 227.

90Ibid.
Finally, once again, in Manchester, New Hampshire, Johnson made use of surroundings familiar to his audience to explain the unfamiliar South Vietnam:

South Viet-Nam is 50,000 square miles smaller than New England; its population is about the same as New York's. But the per capita income of New England is more than 25 times the per capita income of South Viet-Nam.91

Ambiguity

Symbols have communication significance only insofar as the producer and receiver have agreed previously on their meanings. On some occasions, the rhetoric of Johnson's spokesmen on Vietnam has suffered from language for which more than one meaning has been possible. One example may be seen in the September, 1966, United Nations address of Ambassador Goldberg. In his statement of the official American position, he asked whether North Vietnam would be willing to agree to a "time schedule for supervised, phased withdrawal," from the South, of "all external forces—those of North Vietnam as well as those from the United States."92 Goldberg did not explain whether "external forces" included the Viet Cong or only the North Vietnamese regular army.

In late October, another key question was raised by the communique released by the seven countries meeting in the Manila conference. The joint communique said South Vietnam would ask for withdrawal of allied forces "as the

91 Johnson, Manchester, p. 369.
92 Goldberg, United Nations.
military and subversive forces are withdrawn, infiltration ceases, and the level of violence thus subsides.\textsuperscript{93} There was no explanation, however, of what was meant by "subversive forces." The words could have been interpreted to mean merely the North Vietnamese—in which case, Richard Nixon suggested, the South Vietnamese would have been abandoned to the Viet Cong.\textsuperscript{94} At first glance, the terms appeared conciliatory; they were, however, capable of being understood in a very broad sense—as it appears the Administration interpreted them.\textsuperscript{95}

It is entirely possible, however, that in these instances the language was made ambiguous deliberately, because the Administration did not intend to reveal all its purposes to the Communists. Mellinger has suggested that a communicator tends to conceal his real attitudes from those whom he does not trust. By distrust is meant "the feeling that another's intentions and motives are not always what he says they are, that he is insincere or has ulterior motives." A person who is distrusted in this sense is likely to be regarded as potentially threatening. Attitudes to him may be more or less tinged with anxiety, depending on his power in the organization. To the extent that this is so, a primary goal of communication with the distrusted

\textsuperscript{93}\textit{Boston Globe}, October 26, 1966, p. 13.
\textsuperscript{95}\textit{Ibid.}, sec. 4, p. 3.
person becomes the reduction of one's own anxiety, rather than the accurate transmission of ideas. Mellinger concluded that communicator A who lacks trust in recipient B may tend to conceal his own attitudes about an issue, by communications which are evasive. The accuracy of B's perception is impaired accordingly.  

But there have also been times when it has been difficult for friendly audiences to ascertain, from Administration rhetoric, the progress of the war. For example, on August 20, 1966, Johnson said: "I wish that I could tell you today that the end is in sight. To do so would be folly, for only the Communists would gain from such fiction." Yet, on October 20, in Australia, he attested: "I believe there is light at the end of what has been a long and lonely tunnel." The following day, however, Vice President Humphrey, in Denver, reverted to the original position, saying: "There is no prospect of a swift and peaceful solution to the war in Vietnam."

Ascribing Morality

Another characteristic of the Johnson style has been its evangelical tone. Perhaps a description of it was best

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97 Johnson, Manchester, p. 370.


99 Denver Post, October 22, 1966, p. 3.
captured by Arthur Krock who complained that Johnson's Vietnam policy had been stated to the world in the "missionary language of an old fashioned camp meeting." Of its consequences, he wrote:

Incessant professions of 100 per cent purity of motive stimulate an even greater cynical reception when big rich nations employ them than when individuals do. Therefore Communists count on the belief that any sensible foreign policy could not possibly be as totally self-denying as that of the United States is officially represented to be.

And yet, one cannot really be consistent in his criticism of this aspect of the President's rhetoric without demanding, as well, a change in what political scientists Charles Lerche and Abdul Said have termed the "national style." These words refer to the prevailing tradition and self-image of a society that predisposes its officials to perform their duties and make their decisions in a way considered unique and peculiarly appropriate. Lerche and Said have observed that just as part of the French national self-image is a concern with honor or glory, the national style of the United States "has long dictated casting international issues in moral terms."

Naturally, part of this moral tone is due to Johnson's use of what Richard Weaver has called "ultimate terms"

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101 Ibid.
102 Lerche and Said, Concepts of International Politics, p. 42.
103 Ibid., p. 43.
or "rhetorical absolutes." These are words to which Americans pay the highest respect—i.e., "progress," "fact," "science," "modern," "efficient," "American," "freedom," "our boys."

Attributes in General

Earlier in the paper, we noted that Johnson's style, compared to that of John Kennedy, was less sublime. Johnson has used, however, the vocabulary of his time: it is not vulgar, not too erudite, not highly technical, and not noticeably literary. Like Kennedy, he has built many sentences with balance and antithesis.

The speeches studied in Chapters II and III were, on the whole, written and delivered to be spoken compositions addressed to definite audiences. They were not written essays intended for a general group. In these, Johnson maintained contact by direct address in the vocative, by imperatives and questions, and by the use of the first and second persons. In his rhetoric intended especially for American audiences, this quality became more pronounced, as he began to show a new boldness in the summer of 1966.

105 See Chapter II.
106 See Chapter III.
The Delivery of Johnson’s Ideas

Johnson’s speeches have suffered not because his style is inferior, but because his delivery drags. His words are not spoken "tripplingly on the tongue." Surveying his 1965 State of the Union address, the New York Times reported that he "read slowly, pausing long" and that his "planned thirty-minute speech stretched out to about fifty minutes."107 As we have noted, however, by the middle of 1966, Johnson’s speeches took on a new aggressiveness. With this, his delivery lost some of its sluggishness. Tom Wicker of the New York Times wrote that Johnson’s Omaha address of June 30, 1966, adopted "the accusing tone of the most outspoken hawks" and that it was a "vigorou speech—a stump performance."108 Our analysis in Chapter III, of this speech and subsequent ones, revealed that when the President’s delivery became more dynamic, he used more colloquialisms.

Aware that he has a reputation as a subtle politician, Johnson has sought to convey sincerity through his delivery. Not only has his style had an evangelical tone, as we have noted earlier in this chapter, but he has attempted to match his voice and facial expressions to the chosen words. On his Inaugural address in 1965, Reston commented that he "spoke every word as if it were his

108 Ibid., July 1, 1966, p. 11.
last."109  This would account in part for the slower rate of delivery.

After viewing on television many of the Johnson addresses studied in Chapters II and III, it would seem to this writer that Johnson's seemingly measured pace has the advantage of making his thoughts appear more deliberate. His attempts to convey sincerity, however, have been offset to some extent by his squinting facial expressions which have seemed to further the impression that he is a calculating politician who is not to be trusted.

The fruit from Johnson's Vietnam speeches has not always dropped during delivery, but has remained to be picked through reading. The exceptions to this have been the more aggressive attacks which he made on the critics of his policies on the hustings in 1966 and in the Tennessee Legislature address in March, 1967.110 On the whole, however, the delivery of Johnson's Vietnam speeches from 1964 through 1966 was inferior to his style. One comment on his 1965 Inaugural address seems applicable to the aggregate of his speeches on Vietnam. The New York Times reported some members of Congress had suggested privately that the President's delivery was "considerably less inspirational than what he said."111

110 See the analyses of these speeches in Chapter III.
An Analysis of Johnson's Effect

Rhetorical criticism must be evaluative rather than descriptive. And we must not merely evaluate the effect Johnson's speeches have on the critic; we must ask what effect they have had on his intended audiences. As Thonssen and Baird have explained: "Since speaking is a communicative venture, and since a speaker seeks to communicate a particular set of ideas and feelings to a specific audience, it must follow that the rhetorical critic is concerned with the method employed by a speaker to achieve the response consistent with his purpose." 112

In Chapter II, we investigated the rhetoric which Johnson directed primarily to international audiences. We concluded that, while his plea for support in an Asian development program found relatively favorable response, his rhetoric seeking belief in the wisdom of the American intervention in Vietnam and belief in American willingness to negotiate has been largely unsuccessful. In attempting to isolate causal determinants for his failure, we found his primary problem to have been America's image throughout the world. According to United Nations Secretary General U Thant, the two-thirds of humanity which is underfed, underdeveloped, illiterate, and diseased wants change—peaceful if possible. But the United States has left, by its action in Vietnam, the impression that it resists such change. 113

112 Thonssen and Baird, p. 9.
Further, the underdeveloped nations, as well as the Communists, have been unable to understand that the American view of its national interest has been composed not only of national self-interest, but of a genuine national idealism, as well.

Thus, the liability under which Johnson's international rhetoric concerning Vietnam has suffered has not been one concerning logos or pathos, but of national ethos. As James Reston has observed: The official proposals for a peace in Vietnam have had a cool reception in the world, not because they are unfair or unrealistic, but simply because they are not believed. 114

In Chapter III, we investigated Johnson's Vietnam rhetoric intended mainly for domestic audiences. We concluded that public opinion samples, as well as the results of the 1966 Congressional elections, seemed to indicate that while he has been successful in convincing most Americans of the need for being in Vietnam, he has not convinced them that his policies there are proving successful.

Part of his lack of success must be attributed to several ambivalent situations which he faced from January, 1964, through 1966. First, he has been torn between taking military steps he believed necessary to contain what he believes is aggression and the desire to maintain friendship with those who believe Johnson is following the wrong policy.

Second, he has been caught in a vise between his desire to contain Communist expansion and the wish to limit warfare within "safe bounds." As a result, he has accepted the ends of the "hawks"—destruction of the enemy's forces—but not their means; and he has accepted the ends of the "doves"—a negotiated compromise—but not their means, negotiation after the United States unilaterally ceases to bomb North Vietnam. In the third place, he has felt the need to oppose dictation of the South from the Communists, yet has supported, in lieu of that, South Vietnam's reactionary landowner or military regimes.

Finally, Johnson has faced liberal audiences who have felt an ambivalence between duty to state and individual autonomy. For every code calling some United States citizens, to national service, there has been another which has denied any such responsibility. For, while from early childhood the American has been called upon to indicate his commitment to political, economic, and recreational standards, as an ideal, the "man who thinks for himself" is preferred over the "other directed" person. 115

But not all of Johnson's lack of success may be laid at the feet of ambivalence. Part of it must be blamed, as well, upon his personality. First, Johnson is not believed to be trustworthy. Experimental results have shown that there is a positive relationship between the credibility of

the communicator and the extent of opinion change. Hovland, Janis, and Kelley have divided credibility into two parts, "expertness" and "trustworthiness." It is the latter which the American public doubts in Johnson. James Reston has observed: "What he wants is worthy of the faith and confidence of the nation, but this is precisely what he does not have, because his techniques blur his conviction." Johnson's general lack of public charm, however, is as much to blame as anything for his failure to dispel the doubts about his credibility. Arthur Krock has maintained: "Were it not for television, Johnson would not have a great deal of the trouble he now has. It's simply the fact that he projects in public a rather unattractive personality." Godfrey Spaulding, Jr., writing for the Christian Science Monitor, commented that "President Johnson is unique in his inability to evoke warmth among his constituents."


118 Des Moines Register, April 4, 1966, p. 6.


Thus, source ethos—credibility and attractiveness—appears to have been the chief factor which has limited the effectiveness of Johnson's Vietnam rhetoric with his intended audiences, either at home or abroad. His arguments have not been without reason, nor have they been unaccompanied by appeals to human values. But what could be a very persuasive message has suffered from source reputation—a union between the image of the United States and that presented by Johnson, personally.

Johnson's failure is, therefore, an example of the working of the "weakest link" hypothesis in dissonance theory.\footnote{For fuller discussion of the "weakest link" hypothesis, see Robert E. Lane and David O. Sears, \textit{Public Opinion} (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964), pp. 44-53.} In any influence situation, a source is attempting to persuade the influencee to adopt a given position. In a simple influence situation, the influencee will have three basic sets of cognitions: his own opinion on the issue, his judgment of the source's position, and his evaluation of the source. When the influencee agrees with a source whom he likes, the three sets of cognitions are consistent or consonant with each other. When, however, there is a conflict among these cognitions, the influencee is in a state of psychological tension which motivates efforts to restore them to a consistent state. There are a variety of ways to convert a dissonant situation to a consonant one.\footnote{See fuller discussion of dissonance theory earlier in the chapter under "Johnson as a Receiver of Persuasion."}
The source hopes, of course, that his listener will decide to reduce the dissonance by changing his own opinion. There are, however, two alternatives to opinion change: re-evaluation of the source or distortion of the source's position. The better the reputation of the source, the more likely the influence is to agree with the message. He will, however, reduce dissonance by changing those cognitions that are least intensely held.

In Johnson's situation, strong influencee opinions on the war in Vietnam have been approached by a strong attempt to change those opinions. The dissonance created by the clash between the two has been resolved, by many, by repudiation of the source, since his ethos was the "weakest link" among the three factors in influence opinion, source message, and source credibility.

Our explanation for the total effect of Johnson's Vietnam rhetoric has been summed up aptly by Baird and Knower: "Although effective speech is a composite of many skills, there are few if any of these attributes which are more influential in the final effect than the kind of man we find the speaker to be."\(^{123}\)

\(^{123}\)Baird and Knower, p. 159.
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